Women's Travel Writings in India 1777–1854

Volume I

Edited by
Carl Thompson

ROUTLEDGE

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The seven narratives assembled in this four-volume set of *Women's Travel Writings in India* were published between 1777 and 1854; they recount journeys undertaken in India, or periods of residence there, between the 1760s and the 1830s. This was a turbulent, transformative period in Indian history and in Britain's relationship with the subcontinent. This was not yet the era of the British Raj, in which the British Crown ruled India directly in an overtly imperial idiom. But it was in these years that Britain first established its dominance in the region, through the activities of the East India Company. The 1760s saw major advances in the East India Company's power and influence in the subcontinent; by 1840 the Company (by this date partly regulated by the British government) controlled most of what is now the nation-state of India, as well as neighbouring territories such as Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and parts of modern Bangladesh and Pakistan. The seven accounts collected here therefore offer diverse perspectives on a key acquisitive and expansionist phase of British involvement in India. And crucially they offer in each case a woman's perspective on these developments. Women's presence in colonial India, and their influence and impact, has generated much discussion and scholarship in recent years. The majority of that scholarship, however, focuses on the Victorian memsahibs of the later Raj, the period of direct imperial rule that came into being from 1858 in response to the widespread rebellions or 'Mutiny' of 1857.[1] The four volumes of *Women's Travel Writing in India* offer a substantial reminder that women were also participants in the earlier era of British rule – a period that was foundational in terms of British attitudes to empire, India, and, not least, women's travel writing.

More than any previous set in Chawton House Library's *Women's Travel Writing* series, then, the present volumes throw a spotlight on women whose travels were overtly enabled by Britain's growing global power and incipient imperialism.[2] These accounts take us back to a more fluid, formative period in which the British established not only the territorial foundations of their empire in India but also its ideological underpinnings. The 'memsahib' stereotype – which led in some quarters to women being blamed for the increasingly poor relations between the peoples of India and their British colonial rulers – did not yet exist, though by the end of the period under consideration here one can undoubtedly see this role

and persona beginning to crystallize. Many of the other assumptions and agendas underpinning the later British Raj were similarly still taking shape; some were the focus of considerable contention. The seven texts selected for *Women's Travel Writings in India* – six by British women and one by an American – do not merely reflect such wider debates; in a variety of ways, and with differing degrees of influence, they were also interventions in those discussions, helping to shape contemporary understandings of both empire and India. These texts accordingly have much to contribute to scholarly enquiries into the emergence of imperial attitudes and practices in Britain; they are especially pertinent to the often vexed issue of women's involvement in the colonial process.[3]

As these last remarks suggest, another important 'frame' to put around the accounts presented here, and a further point of intersection with current academic enquiries, is the contribution they make to our understanding of women's public agency in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Here these texts amply demonstrate women's many and varied undertakings in this period as authors, intellectuals, educators, activists, missionaries, social reformers, and businesswomen. One development to which they especially speak is the growing acceptability of women taking up the genre of travel writing, or as it was more usually labelled at this date, 'voyages and travels'. In a period when 'literary representation of the foreign was at the cutting edge of emergent discourses both of the self and of scientific knowledge',[4] and when travel was strongly invested with epistemological prestige and civic responsibility, this was a significant threshold for women to cross. The accounts in this four-volume collection – presented here for the first time in reset scholarly editions – illustrate in diverse ways the intellectual and literary ambitions often motivating women's writing of travelogues; they also indicate the authority and influence women could attain through the form, the new types of female subjectivity that travel writing enabled, and new directions the genre was taking in an important, transitional phase of its evolution.

The themes and concerns outlined above are not the only reasons why the seven texts included in *Women's Travel Writings in India* might interest modern readers. In many periods travel writing often operates as an *omnium gatherum*, a medium for addressing diverse and miscellaneous themes and preoccupations. This tendency is apparent in the present collection, which accordingly offers insights into topics as varied as reading habits and shifts in literary taste across the period; women's balancing of rationalist and sentimental discourses; the spread of print culture and the emergence of an Anglo-Indian public sphere; the material culture of early nineteenth-century British India; and even the educational uses of visual media like magic lanterns. For students of Indian history and culture, they contain much information about a variety of communities and environments in the early colonial era – although all observations in this regard of course need to be treated cautiously, with acknowledgement of each writer's inevitably limited, ethnocentric viewpoint. The introductions to individual volumes highlight some of these subsidiary themes and points of interest. This General Introduction maps the historical and generic contexts to the material assembled here, then gives a

brief initial overview of these texts' depiction of India and their relationship with contemporary British colonialism.

Firstly, however, further remarks are in order on the selection of texts in this collection and on their designation as travel writing. As many studies have emphasized, travel writing as a generic label has historically embraced many different modes and types of writing; it is consequently problematic to offer too rigid or prescriptive a definition of the form. There is no need to rehearse the extensive debates on this score, other than to say that every account included here is travel writing in the sense of being a first-person, ostensibly non-fictional narration of travel and of other cultures.[5] That is to say, these accounts offer eyewitness observations from travellers who have genuinely undertaken the travels they describe (although as is now well-established in travel writing studies, even accounts attempting to be wholly 'factual' are inevitably selective, interpretative, and therefore to some extent fictionalizing). However, two of the accounts – *Memoirs of Mrs. Harriet Newell* (1815) and *The Life of Mrs Sherwood* (1854) – were not presented to their original audiences as 'voyages and travels' but as memoirs combining autobiographical material (letters and journals) with further biographical information from family members. They are included here, however, because they meet the criteria for travel writing just outlined, with both texts placing strong narrative emphasis on the Indian phase of the author's life. Like contemporary 'voyages and travels' accounts, moreover, both memoirs contributed to the 'imagined geographies'[6] of their readers by the picture they painted of India; this is perhaps especially the case with Newell's memoir, an enormously popular volume in both Britain and the USA which offered a groundbreaking portrait of the female missionary as martyr (and the book's transatlantic appeal and influence is why we include it here in a set principally focused on British travellers). However, the depictions of India offered in Newell and Sherwood's volumes are structured and inflected according to the different generic norms of memoir; one of these norms is the greater space allotted to the author's life before (and in Sherwood's case, after) their India experiences. We include these larger reminiscences for scholarly completeness and to establish in each case the context for the India account, just as we include, with travel narratives like Jemima Kindersley's or Eliza Fay's, their discussion of destinations en route to India.

Women travellers in early colonial India

The earliest traveller included in this collection, Jemima Kindersley (1741–1809), arrived in India in 1764; Julia Maitland (1808–1864) departed the subcontinent in 1839. Across the intervening 75 years, the British relationship with India changed dramatically. The East India Company's power and territorial reach greatly increased; this brought significant shifts in British attitudes to India and Indians and in the Company's modes of governance. One consequence of these broader developments was a steadily growing number of women in the Anglo-Indian community (and in keeping with usual nineteenth-century usage, 'Anglo-Indian' here

denotes British residents and visitors in the subcontinent, rather than individuals of mixed British and Indian parentage). Yet throughout the period – and indeed, during the imperial Raj after 1857 – women were very much a minority in this community, with the disproportion between men and women especially marked in the decades before 1820.

When the East India Company established its first trading posts in the subcontinent, women were expressly barred from travelling out. This proscription was subsequently relaxed and from the mid-seventeenth century wives and daughters sometimes accompanied Company officials. The final decades of the seventeenth century also saw the emergence of the so-called 'fishing fleet', whereby unmarried women travelled to India to seek husbands.[7] Yet the numbers involved in both practices remained small. The Company's principal outposts – or Presidencies, as they were later called – were Calcutta (Kolkata), Madras (Chennai), and Bombay (Mumbai). According to contemporary sources, by the 1730s the number of British women in Madras stood at around 45; two decades later in 1756 there were still fewer than 80 even at Calcutta, the largest British settlement in this era.[8] By the latter date, the Company had greatly increased its military presence in the subcontinent; in 1765, after victory in the battle of Buxar (1764), it secured from the Mughal Empire the right to collect rents and tax revenues in the provinces of Bengal, Bihar, and Odisha, and so for the first time began direct governance of extensive tracts of India. It was this advance in British power that brought Kindersley to the subcontinent, when in 1764 she accompanied her husband Nathaniel as he took up a post as artillery officer in the East India Company's army. With Nathaniel, Kindersley travelled as far up the Ganges as Allahabad, which had only recently come under British control; she was possibly the first European woman to visit this important Mughal capital.

The battle of Buxar and 1765 Treaty of Allahabad inaugurated a more vigorously expansionist phase of East India Company operations in India. The next decades brought four wars against the powerful Mysore regime of Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan (between 1767–1769, 1780–1784, 1790–1792, and 1798–1799), and three wars against the Maratha Empire (1775–1782, 1803–1805, and 1817–1818), along with many smaller conflicts and extensive diplomatic manoeuvring. This brought new territories under the Company's rule, generating in turn a steadily growing Anglo-Indian population and a consequent rise in the number of British women visiting or residing in India. These included the bulk of the women authors included in this collection. The first (if we order them by date of arrival in India) was Eliza Fay (1756–1816), who travelled out with her lawyer husband in 1779 and soon found herself directly caught up in the East India Company's political and military rivalries. Arriving in Calicut she was held hostage for three months by the town's governor, Hyder Ali's brother-in-law. She eventually reached Calcutta in 1780, where she resided for two years (separating from her husband during this time) before returning to Britain; she then spent three further periods in Calcutta between 1784 and 1816.

The next traveller, Ann Deane (1770–1847), arrived in India 20 years after Fay. Like Kindersley she was the wife of an officer in the East India Company's army,

although Charles Deane subsequently took on the role of District Collector for the Company; and for Deane as for Kindersley her husband's career entailed a fairly peripatetic life, which chiefly took her to northern India (again to territories only recently acquired by the British). After arriving in 1799, Deane remained in India for the next 15 years, bar a short return to Britain to place one of her children in an English school. Mary Sherwood (1775–1851), also an Army officer's wife, lived in the subcontinent between 1805 and 1816; she similarly moved around British India extensively in this period. Maria Graham (1785–1842) made a shorter visit, chiefly to Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta, between 1809 and 1811. Although a more genteel, leisured, and scholarly traveller than either Kindersley, Deane, or Sherwood, she too travelled initially as the companion of a military officer, in this case her father who was taking up a Naval posting at Bombay; en route to India she met and in Bombay married her first husband, another Naval officer.[9] Then in 1812 the American Harriet Newell (1793–1812), the wife of a Christian missionary, made an even shorter visit of just six weeks to Calcutta and the small Danish colony at nearby Serampore; she soon thereafter died from an illness whilst sailing from India to Mauritius. All of these voyages and journeys took place not only in an era of aggressive British expansion within India but also in the shadow of the Napoleonic Wars, which saw Naval engagements in the Indian Ocean and the acquisition of several new British colonies elsewhere in South Asia.

The overlapping visits of Fay, Deane, Sherwood, Graham, and Newell testify to a growing female presence in the Anglo-Indian community in the decades either side of 1800. However, this was still a fairly small presence in these years. Calcutta and the surrounding province of Bengal was the centre of Company operations, but even here, it has been estimated, there were only 250 Anglo-Indian women in 1810 (in the whole province), against around 4,000 men.[10] Numbers were lower in the other Presidencies; and in all the Presidencies, the female population was chiefly centred in the capital cities of Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta. In the Company's 'up-country' outposts, women were even more sparsely distributed. By the 1790s and early 1800s, however, developments were underway which would lead to more substantial growth in the number of 'memsahibs' (although this specific term, a conflation of 'ma'am' and Hindi 'sahib' or master, would not emerge until the 1850s). These developments also significantly adjusted women's role in the colonial enterprise, giving them greater symbolic and ideological prominence.

One reason why the number of women remained low in late eighteenth-century British India was the widespread preference at this date, among Company officials and employees, for forming sexual relationships with Indian women. Partly this was a matter of expense: it cost £50 a year to set up a household for an Indian partner, as against £600 per annum to maintain a British wife in a moderately respectable style.[11] These cross-cultural liaisons were additionally often a type of sexual tourism and exploitation (although some do seem to have developed into fairly respectful and loving relationships).[12] Yet they also arguably reflect a greater openness and receptivity to Indian culture in this early period of British rule. This was the age of the 'White Mughals', in William Dalrymple's phrase,

who often adopted Indian clothing and other local practices. In similar spirit, the East India Company under the Governor Generalship of Warren Hastings from the 1780s encouraged Sir William Jones and the newly founded Asiatick Society to make extensive scholarly enquiries into Indian history and culture. The underlying agenda here was firmly colonialist: the aim was to advance and legitimate the Company's control of its territories. But the intention was simultaneously to govern as far as possible in an 'Indian' style, in accordance with local laws and customs. For the same reason, the Company adopted a policy of religious toleration and banned missionary activity in the territories it controlled.

In the early nineteenth century, however, this 'Orientalist' outlook, as it has been dubbed, gave way to a more 'Anglicist' attitude.[13] The Company's activities in India had generated much scandal and controversy back in Britain, where the public was especially shocked by the rapacious methods often used to extract revenues from Indian communities and by the famine and suffering that had resulted from this exploitation.[14] Amidst huge publicity, Hastings was impeached for corruption in 1788 (although eventually acquitted, after a long, seven-year trial). There was consequently a growing sense that the East India Company needed major reform and greater governmental oversight.[15] The early nineteenth century also saw the spread of utilitarian and evangelical attitudes across much of British society, which generated in turn a more haughty, disdainful attitude towards Indians and Indian cultures. In the closing decades of the eighteenth century, the Asiatick Society's translations of classic Hindu texts such as the *Bhagavad Gita* had generated considerable respect, in some sections of the educated public, for traditional Indian culture, and novels from this period such as Phebe Gibbes' *Hartly House, Calcutta* (1789), and Elizabeth Hamilton's *Translations of the Letters of a Hindoo Rajah* (1796) often portray Indians quite sympathetically. But this (moderate) cultural and moral relativism was on the wane by the 1810s. Depictions of India increasingly foregrounded – often in sensationalized, even Gothic renderings – those parts of Indian culture that the British found most alien and repugnant, such as sati (the practice of widows immolating themselves on the funeral pyres of their dead husbands), child sacrifice, and the Thuggee criminal gangs. Such accounts reflected and reinforced a growing belief – expressed in texts such as James Mills' *History of British India* (1817) and Thomas Macauley's 'Minute on Indian Education' (1835) – that India was backward and barbarous, and accordingly should not be governed according to its own traditions. Rather, the subcontinent needed to be more radically 'modernized' and 'civilized' through the importation of British culture and values. A key marker of this change of attitudes was the lifting of the East India Company's former ban on missionaries; this was insisted upon when the Company's charter was renegotiated with the British government in 1813.

This shift from an Orientalist to a more Anglicist outlook impacted in diverse ways on women. With cross-cultural liaisons increasingly frowned upon, it became more common for wives to accompany their husbands on East India Company postings. This trend was also encouraged by the subjugation of most

military threats close to the Company's main bases of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay. The decades after 1820 saw ongoing expansion of British India, the conquest of new territories in Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Burma (Myanmar), Sindh, and the Punjab, and an ill-fated intervention in Afghanistan; however, these campaigns took place some distance from the Company's traditional Presidencies, which the British consequently came to consider as more settled, stable territories (although in truth these regions were never entirely free from uprisings, mutinies, and rumours of potential insurrection, as Maitland's account in the present collection testifies). This period also saw steady improvements with regard to the ease, safety, and duration of the voyage out to India.[16] All these factors combined to bring a surge, from the 1820s, both in the overall size of the Anglo-Indian population and in its female component. Thus contemporary censuses record 1,345 women in Bombay's colonial community in 1849 and 2,686 in Calcutta in 1850.[17]

As well as encouraging a greater female presence in the British colonial community, the Anglicist turn adjusted the symbolism and ideological resonance of these expatriate women. With the new emphasis on not simply governing but rather transforming India, women were increasingly regarded not just as onlookers and helpmates in the colonial endeavours of their menfolk, but as more active agents of empire and 'civilization' in their own right. Their role was to transplant British values in Indian soil, through the model they supposedly provided of exemplary British domesticity and Christian charity. This was an ideological function to some extent imposed upon Anglo-Indian women, yet it was in equal measure engineered and exploited by many of these early memsahibs, as a means of legitimating activities and female agency beyond the home. For example, women were prominent members in the evangelical and missionary networks which became more established in India from the 1810s onwards, as Newell and Sherwood's accounts in the present collection testify.[18]

Women also undertook numerous projects of social reform (often focused on the plight of women and girls in Indian society) and especially education. This emerging sphere of female endeavour is presaged in Sherwood's India career, but finds fullest expression in the present collection in Julia Maitland's narrative. Maitland arrived in India in 1836, accompanying her first husband, James Thomas, first to Madras and then to the up-country district of Rajahmundry, where James was appointed District Judge. Recounting her residence in Rajahmundry, Maitland fashions a powerful early example of what would become a central theme or genre in Victorian women's writing on India, the narrative of homemaking and domestication.[19] This contrasts with the earlier, more itinerant narratives of Kindersley, Deane, Fay, and Graham which generally foreground the author's mobility and often elide periods of extended residence from the final published account. At the same time, however, Maitland's descriptions of sweeping out rooms and clipping hedges are combined with a detailed account of her efforts in setting up a 'Native School'. Like Sherwood's similar endeavours three decades earlier, this was a project which on the one hand built on and extended contemporary notions of women's domesticating, 'Angel of the House' role – yet on

the other hand simultaneously (and somewhat paradoxically) transformed this emphasis on private virtues and personal endeavours into a public mission and something like a career.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, women's more conspicuous presence in British India gave rise in some quarters to what Indira Ghose has dubbed 'the myth of the memsahib', an embittered sense that colonial wives had somehow soured relations between Britain and its subject peoples in India. To this way of thinking, women's promotion of British domesticity in an Indian setting diminished cross-cultural curiosity, sympathy, and contact and so heightened the cultural and racial divisions between colonizer and colonized. While this is perhaps a broadly accurate account of the general trajectory of British colonial attitudes and practices in India over the nineteenth century, to castigate women as the prime force in this development is deeply unfair. As Ghose and others have argued, it neglects both the extent to which women were obliged to perform this domesticating role and the extent to which they in fact often surreptitiously subverted it, finding ways of engaging with local communities in the manner outlined earlier. Maitland's account, the most 'domesticating' of the narratives included here, amply corroborates such critiques of the narrow-minded memsahib stereotype. Although she complains of the insularity of many other colonial women, she also shows that by the 1830s a 'John Bull' attitude, as she dubs it, was just as common among men as women – including her own husband, who Maitland has to chivvy into engaging socially with local Indian dignitaries. And prior to Maitland, with women having had such a small presence in British India, the stereotypical memsahib role had yet to take shape. Kindersley, Graham, Fay, and Deane are far more concerned to present themselves as seasoned travellers – and authoritative travel writers – than as housewives; Kindersley, Graham, and Deane, at least, demonstrate considerable curiosity about many aspects of Indian culture, even if they are not always approving of what they find in the subcontinent.

Women writing India

Another possible form of public agency for Anglo-Indian women was publication of an account of India: a route chosen by six of the seven women included in this collection. The exception is Newell, who does not seem to have intended publication but nevertheless had extracts from her letters and journals published posthumously by her husband. Sherwood and Fay's accounts were also published posthumously; however, these were texts intended for publication and almost completed when their authors died. Sherwood, it should further be noted, had already established herself as a published author of children's fiction even before she sailed to India; as her memoir recounts, she continued this career in the subcontinent, producing stories such as *The Ayah and the Lady* (1813) and *Little Henry and His Bearer* (1816) – works which we might again loosely consider a branch of travel writing, since their Indian settings and characters helped shape contemporary British perceptions and imaginings of India.

Five of the seven women included here – Kindersley, Graham, Fay, Deane, and Maitland – presented their volumes as travel writing in a more straightforward sense, as contributions to the genre then known as 'voyages and travels'. This was a relatively new and potentially controversial form for women to take up, in print at least. Although it enjoyed enormous popularity with the reading public, travel writing was still widely regarded as an important 'knowledge genre', in Ina Ferris's phrase, which was ideally dedicated to the accumulation of useful empirical information about peoples and places.[20] To publish a travel account was accordingly to present oneself as a reliable, authoritative commentator on a range of public affairs, and to assert one's fitness to enter civic debate on these matters. These generic expectations and assumptions prevented women from publishing as travel writers for most of the early modern period, although many produced letters and journals for private or family consumption during their travels. But just a handful of what we can loosely call travelogues by women appeared in print in the century or so before 1770: one of these texts is Jane Smart's *Letter from a Lady at Madrass* (1743), an eight-page pamphlet which is the first published account of India by a woman, at least in English.[21] In 1763, however, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's posthumously published *Turkish Embassy Letters* achieved popular and critical success, inspiring other women to take up the form. This was an important genre breakthrough, which seems to have been motivated in part by a proto-feminist desire to demonstrate women's civic-mindedness and capacity for empirical observation and rational debate.[22] Yet one should not overstate the extent to which women authors now took up travel writing. Although the female travel writer struck many contemporaries as a remarkable innovation – an innovation seen as laudable in some quarters, deplorable in others – the number of women publishing in the genre remained fairly small, both in absolute terms and relative to the many male-authored travelogues appearing most years.[23] The cessation of the Napoleonic War, however, brought a more significant increase in the number of female-authored travelogues in the late 1810s and 1820s; then by the 1830s travel writing was fairly well established as a medium that an aspirant 'woman of letters' might turn her hand to.[24] However, the genre as a whole was still dominated by men, and women might still receive chauvinist reviews that questioned the usefulness, and sometimes even the propriety, of their travels.[25]

The first text in the current collection, Kindersley's *Letters from the Island of Teneriffe, Brazil, the Cape of Good Hope, and the East Indies* (1777), was part of the initial, post-Montagu wave of women's travel writing. In an era when the majority of Anglophone travelogues by women recounted travels in Britain or western Europe, Kindersley's narrative was especially notable for its far-flung, exotic destination; thus one contemporary review praised the author for being not simply a 'female traveller' but rather a 'female voyager'.[26] Another female-authored travel account of India would not appear until 1812, which saw the publication of the second text included here, Graham's *Journal of a Residence India* (1812). Graham subsequently produced further travel accounts of Italy, Brazil, and Chile, thereby building a sustained, critically respected career specifically

as a travel writer; this constituted another significant authorial breakthrough for women, since prior to Graham most women travel writers published just a single travelogue. Graham's example probably played some part in the post-1815 upsurge in women's travel writing; certainly there was a sense in this later period that travel writing by women – and indeed all forms of female authorship – was now more common and acceptable. Evidence of this shift in attitudes comes from another of the writers included here, Eliza Fay. Although the second of our authors to arrive in India (in 1779), Fay was the fourth to publish, with her *Original Letters from India* not appearing in print until 1817. In her Preface (written in 1816), she gives as one reason for this lag in publication the hostile reception often given to women writers in the eighteenth century. But now, she suggests, 'a female author is no longer regarded as object of derision, nor is she wounded by unkind reproof from the *literary Lords of Creation*' (Volume II, p. 154; emphasis in the original).

Between Graham and Fay's volumes, the posthumous *Memoirs of Mrs. Harriet Newell* appeared in 1815; after Fay, the number of female-authored travel accounts of India quickly increased, in line with the general increase of women's travel writing in the 1820s and 1830s. However, India travelogues were always a small subset of this larger field, with just a dozen or so such texts produced between 1820 and 1850.[27] These included noteworthy volumes by Sarah Lushington, Anne Katherine Elwood, Biddy Hasan 'Ali Mir, Emma Roberts, Marianne Postans, Maria Nugent, Fanny Parkes, and others, alongside the two further texts selected here, Ann Deane's *A Tour through the Upper Provinces of Hindostan* (1823) and Julia Maitland's *Letters from Madras* (first published in 1843, but reproduced here from the second edition of 1846). Our final selection, *The Life of Mrs Sherwood*, then appeared in 1854: although organized as a memoir rather than a travel account, it offers a detailed account of Anglo-Indian life between 1805 and 1816.

If Graham's sustained career as a travel writer probably contributed to the 1820s escalation in female-authored travelogues, her *Journal of a Residence in India* served as an important template for later India travelogues by women. In her Preface, Graham identified a need for 'a popular and comprehensive view of [India's] scenery and monuments, and of the manners and habits of its natives and resident colonists' (Volume I, p. 142). Her own volume, she implied, filled this gap in the existing travel literature, offering a wide-ranging yet accessible account which avoided the more specialized and so narrower focus of many contemporary male travellers, whose narratives inevitably revolved around their professional activities in the subcontinent (as, variously, soldiers, merchants, administrators, or Orientalist scholars). At once self-deprecating and subtly aggrandizing – Graham implicitly positions herself as a more 'philosophical' or 'curious' traveller than many of her male counterparts – this ingeniously made a virtue out of women's enforced unemployment and lack of professional expertise. It simultaneously established a rhetorical and commercial strategy which many later women travel writers would follow, presenting their accounts as introductions

to the subcontinent which better captured the flavour and quotidian realities of Indian life than more recondite tomes.

As Rosemary Raza has suggested, the niche that women travel writers on India thus established for themselves served an important colonialist function.[28] As well as disseminating to a wider readership useful information about this increasingly important British dominion, the more generalist and quotidian focus of many women's travelogues arguably helped to normalize and naturalize – for both British and Anglo-Indian audiences – the British presence in India. Yet Raza and others have simultaneously emphasized that these accounts are by no means monolithic or unanimous in their ideology and outlook. Amongst the texts included in this collection, a divergence of views is perhaps most apparent in the various writers' attitudes to the East India Company's governance of India. Kindersley, Fay, and Deane implicitly endorse the Company's rule, offering almost no criticism of its activities (although Fay's account does indirectly offer insights into Company politics and factionalism in 1780s Calcutta). Graham, Newell, Maitland, and Sherwood in contrast offer a range of critiques, which vary in their targets and motivations. Newell, Maitland, and Sherwood share an evangelical dissatisfaction with the Company's policy of religious toleration and (for Newell and Sherwood prior to 1813) its ban on missionary activity. Graham, however, evinces little interest in converting Indians to Christianity and offers mixed comments on missionaries. But she is clearly mindful, in at least one comment, of the rapacity and corruption that accompanied the Company's rise to dominance in India, and elsewhere implies incompetence in some aspects of the Company's current administration.[29] The latter theme emerges even more emphatically in Maitland's narrative, which at several junctures accuses the Company of exacerbating, and even causing, famines in its subject territories, through ruthless revenue collection. However, such criticisms of contemporary British governance in India should not be read as a call for the end or diminution of Britain's control over the subcontinent; rather, both Graham and Maitland are implicitly urging reform of the imperial system in India and greater regulation of the East India Company.

There are more commonalties in how these writers depict India and Indians, yet even here it is important to register some significant differences in emphasis and attitude. On the one hand, all the accounts draw, to a greater or lesser extent, from a broadly similar set of anecdotes and motifs which collectively serve to denigrate and 'other' India's Hindu and Muslim communities. They thus offer numerous observations seemingly illustrative of Hindu passivity, fatalism, and superstition and of Hindu society's alleged inability to advance or improve because of these tendencies. In similar fashion, Muslims are routinely depicted as avaricious, hypocritical, and militaristic, while almost every native ruler, whether Muslim or Hindu, is to some degree cast as an Oriental despot, inclined to luxury, intrigue, and arbitrary, brutal retribution. Sati is referenced by every writer here, albeit to different degrees (in Graham, significantly, it merits just a passing mention); every account to some extent presents Hindu and Muslim women as oppressed,

emphasizing variously their confinement in the zenana, lack of educational opportunities, and general mistreatment.

Even as they assert in such ways the moral superiority of British culture, however, these texts also exhibit some significant variations in tone and include many observations which complicate any simplistically Manichean schema of British-Indian relations. They differ firstly in the degree of interest and empathy they show towards India and Indians. Once freed from captivity in Calicot, Fay barely engages with India at all, beyond complaining about the honesty of servants and offering in one letter a fairly standard digest of contemporary cultural stereotypes; instead her focus falls overwhelmingly on social interactions and gossip in the Anglo-Indian community and her own journeying to and from the subcontinent.[30] Newell is similarly myopic, albeit for different reasons; because she only reaches India in the final stages of her narrative and then spends just six weeks there, what she offers the reader is essentially a fantasy projection of a benighted, heathen land in which the author will heroically test her spiritual mettle (a potent 'imagined geography' which helps us understand the later allure of missionary work in India for Charlotte Brontë's heroine Jane Eyre). Graham in contrast is steeped in Orientalist scholarship, evinces genuine admiration for many past cultural achievements in the subcontinent, and is much more curious about the different Indian communities she encounters. The other four writers then sit somewhere between these poles of cross-cultural curiosity and incuriosity, with Kindersley and Deane sharing more of Graham's sociological or ethnographic tendency, and Sherwood and Maitland principally focused on their own Anglo-Indian communities but engaging more with 'native' Indians than either Newell or Fay.

Most of the accounts also acknowledge – or in some cases, inadvertently reveal – facets of Indian culture and conduct seemingly at odds with the more negative broader picture presented of India. Sherwood writes with warmth and affection of the loyalty of many of her servants, and especially of the love and devotion displayed by many *ayahs* and *dhayes* as they cared for Anglo-Indian children: a portrayal conducive to colonialist ideology insofar as it stresses the fidelity and contentment of the colonized, yet which complicates any simplistic evangelical understanding of Hindus as universally depraved, degenerate heathens.[31] Maitland's account, conversely, on the one hand reflects through its use of terms like 'blackie' and 'nigger' the emergence in the 1830s of more straightforwardly racist attitudes among the Anglo-Indian community. (Earlier writers like Kindersley and Graham, it is worth noting, generally attributed what they perceived as the stock characteristics of Hindu and Muslim Indians to climate and culture rather than race.) Yet if Maitland early on labels 'the Hindoos' a 'lazy, inert race' (Volume III, p. 204), her narrative simultaneously accumulates numerous counterexamples of a hunger for learning and self-improvement in both Hindu and Muslim communities. In its references to Gentoo newspapers and native debating societies, moreover, it also reveals a growing print culture and emergent public sphere amongst urbanized Indians in Madras.

Like many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century travel accounts by women, the narratives assembled here often have a complex, 'double-voiced' aspect.[32] Whether by accident or design, they articulate and disseminate contemporary colonial ideology whilst simultaneously revealing tensions, contradictions, and lacunae in that ideology. Similarly, they generally assume a clear moral schism between Europeans and Indians, yet frequently discover a range of unsettling equivalences and parallels across the cultural divide. And their authors emerge as equally complex, ambiguous figures, at once beneficiaries, accomplices, and victims of Britain's burgeoning empire across the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. India undoubtedly gave these middle-class women material wealth, status, and a route to public agency that most of them would probably not have enjoyed if they had remained at home. For women as well as men, these narratives demonstrate, India in the less regulated era of Company rule was a land of opportunity and adventure, where lives might be transformed. Yet such transformations – of circumstances and of the self – often came at a cost. All the journeys and voyages recorded here involved a degree of danger and discomfort, as these narratives frequently acknowledge (clearly seeking, in some cases, to contest any notion that women are less hardy travellers than men). More impactful, however, were the threats to health, which often had long-term or fatal consequences for either the authors themselves (Kindersley and Newell, for example) or their husbands (Kindersley, Deane, and Maitland), and the financial hardships that might follow widowhood. Still more poignant was what Maitland termed 'the grand Indian sorrow – the necessity of parting with one's children' (Volume III, p. 290); she is referring to the custom of sending them back to Britain for schooling and to preserve their health, but infant mortality was also very high in the Anglo-Indian community, as Newell and Sherwood's accounts sadly testify.[33] In such ways, the four volumes and seven narratives of *Women's Travel Writing in India* yield kaleidoscopic perspectives on the competing influences, aspirations, and pressures, and on the opportunities yet also constraints, that might shape women's lives, subjectivities, and authorial careers in this foundational period of British empire-building in India.

Notes

1 Popular histories on this theme include P. Barr, *The Memsahibs: The Women of Victorian India* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1976); M. MacMillan, *Women of the Raj* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1988). More scholarly studies include M. A. Lind, *The Compassionate Memsahib: Welfare Activities of British Women in India, 1900–1947* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988); S. Suleri, *The Rhetoric of British India* (Chicago, IL and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), Chapter 4: 'The Feminine Picturesque'; A. Burton, *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865–1915* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); I. Ghose, *Women Travellers in Colonial India: The Power of the Gaze* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), which does include some discussion of pre-Victorian women travellers; M. Procida, *Married to the Empire: Gender, Politics and Imperialism in India, 1833–1947* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002); S. Roye and

R. Mittapali (eds), *The Male Empire under the Female Gaze: The British Raj and the Memsahib* (Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2013); É. Agnew, *Imperial Women Writers in Victorian India: Representing Colonial Life, 1850–1910* (London: Palgrave, 2017). A key starting point for research into the pre-1857 period is K. K. Dyson, *A Various Universe: A Study of the Journals and Memoirs of British Men and Women in the Indian Subcontinent, 1765–1856* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1978); further studies of this earlier era are referenced in the notes.

2 Earlier sets in the Chawton House Library *Women's Travel Writings* series have addressed women's accounts of Italy, France (in both the Revolutionary and post-Napoleonic eras), Iberia, Scotland, and North Africa and the Middle East.

3 For important discussions of this theme, see S. Mills, *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Writing and Colonialism* (New York: Routledge, 1991); N. Chaudhuri and M. Strobel (eds), *Western Women and Imperialism: Complicity and Resistance* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1992); V. Ware, *Beyond the Pale: White Women, Racism and History* (London: Verso, 1992), and also Burton, *Burdens of History*; Procida, *Married to the Empire*; Agnew, *Imperial Women Writers*.

4 N. Leask, *Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing, 1770–1840* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 10.

5 For an overview of competing definitions of 'travel writing', and the diverse forms the genre has historically taken, see C. Thompson, *Travel Writing* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), Chapter 2: 'Defining the Genre'.

6 For the concept of 'imagined' or 'imaginative geographies', see E. Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1995), pp. 49–72.

7 See J. M. Gaughan, *The 'Incumbrances': British Women in India, 1615–1856* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 40.

8 R. Raza, *In Their Own Words: British Women Writers and India 1740–1857* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. xix.

9 Graham would be widowed in 1821 and then married again in 1827; she continued to publish successfully under her second married name, Maria Callcott.

10 Gaughan, *The 'Incumbrances'*, p. 109.

11 Ibid., p. 109.

12 See, for example, W. Dalrymple, *White Mughals: Love and Betrayal in Eighteenth-Century India* (London: HarperCollins, 2002).

13 This terminology of 'Orientalist' and 'Anglicist' has its origins in early nineteenth-century debates about the East India Company's educational policies in India; for more information, see L. Zastoupil and M. Moir (eds), *The Great Indian Education Debate: Documents Relating to the Orientalist-Anglicist Controversy, 1781–1843* (Abingdon: Curzon Press, 1999). For a discussion of the broader changes involved in this shift of attitudes, see J. Marriott, *The Other Empire: Metropolis, India and Progress in the Colonial Imagination* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003).

14 For useful discussions of the controversies associated with the East India Company in this period, see J. P. Greene, *Evaluating Empire and Confronting Colonialism in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), Chapter 4; K. Teltscher, *India Inscribed: European and British Writing on India, 1600–1800* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995), Chapters 4 and 5; Suleri, *The Rhetoric of British India*, Chapters 2 and 3.

15 A degree of parliamentary oversight of the British India began as early as the 1773 Regulating Act, which established a judicial system presided over by Crown appointees. Other measures to constrain and regulate the East India Company's administration of its territories were then introduced in subsequent legislation over the decades, the most notable being perhaps the decision in the 1813 Charter Act to allow missionary activity in the Company's territories.

16 The 1820s saw growing use of the so-called overland route to India, by which travellers sailed to Egypt and then crossed the Sinai peninsula (or went by some similar route) before re-embarking at the Red Sea for the final leg of the voyage. This cut down on journey time and also avoided the dangerous waters around the southern tip of Africa. Then in the 1830s steam vessels began to be used between the Red Sea and India, further increasing the reliability and speed of the journey. See Raza, *In Their Own Words*.
17 Raza, *In Their Own Words*, p. xix.
18 On the growing presence of Protestant missionaries in India, see Marriott, *The Other Empire*, pp. 82–95.
19 On British women's domesticating influence in India, see Agnew, *Imperial Women Writers*, and also I. Ghose, 'The Memsahib Myth: Englishwomen in Colonial India', in C. R. Daileader, R. E. Johnson, and A. Shabazz (eds), *Women and Others: Perspectives on Race, Gender and Empire* (New York: Palgrave, 2007), pp. 107–28, especially pp. 118–19.
20 I. Ferris, 'Mobile Words: Romantic Travel Writing and Print Anxiety', *Modern Language Quarterly* 60:4 (1999), pp. 451–68; this quotation, p. 452.
21 For the other female-authored travel accounts published in English prior to 1763, see B. Colbert, 'British Women's Travel Writing, 1780–1840: Bibliographical Reflections', *Women's Writing* 24:2 (2017), pp. 151–69, at p. 165 (note 11).
22 For useful discussions of the wider intellectual, civic, and even political valences of women taking up travel writing in this period, see Y. Schlick, *Feminism and the Politics of Travel after the Enlightenment* (Lanham, MD: Bucknell University Press, 2012); K. O'Loughlin, *Women, Writing and Travel in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).
23 See Colbert, 'British Women's Travel Writing, 1780–1840'; and for further discussion of Colbert's bibliographical findings, C. Thompson, 'Journeys to Authority: Reassessing Women's Early Travel Writing, 1763–1862', *Women's Writing* 24:2 (2017), pp. 131–50, especially pp. 133–4.
24 See L. Peterson, *Becoming a Woman of Letters: Myths of Authorship and Facts of the Victorian Market* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), p. 4.
25 See, for example, the anonymous volume *Woman: As She Is and As She Should Be*, 2 vols (London: John Cochrane, 1835), which inveighed against women producing travel accounts and pronounced 'Must not delicacy – not to speak of other obvious inconveniences – preclude a female from doing literary justice to a *tour*; and, alas! how few travel except in their own dust' (vol. 1, p. 67).
26 *Critical Review* 43 (1777), p. 439.
27 This figure is derived from B. Colbert's, *Database of British Women's Travel Writing, 1780–1840*, available at www4.wlv.ac.uk/btw. Last accessed February 2020. However, Colbert defines 'travel writing' very broadly, and I have accordingly deducted from his list of India travel accounts works that contemporaries probably would not have regarded as 'voyages and travels' – for example, Barbara Hofland's educational novel *Alfred Campbell, the Young Pilgrim* (1825) – and works which were edited rather than written by women. I have also added Fanny Parkes's *Wanderings of a Pilgrim In Search of the Picturesque* (1850).
28 Raza, *In Their Own Words*, pp. 4–26.
29 See, for example, note 387 to Graham's *Journal*, in the present volume.
30 In fairness to Fay, it should be acknowledged that hers is the only account in the present collection published in India (in Calcutta). This suggests that the volume was aimed at an Anglo-Indian audience, who of course had less need of any introduction to the Indian communities in Calcutta and the other Presidencies.
31 For a useful account of such complexities in Sherwood's depiction of Indians, see J. Grossman, 'Ayahs, Dhayes, and Bearers: Mary Sherwood's Indian Experience and "Constructions of Subordinated Others"', *South Atlantic Review* 66:2 (2001), pp. 14–44.

32 See Grossman, 'Ayahs, Dhayes, and Bearers', p. 15; and for more general discussions of the 'double-voiced' tendency in women's travel writing, see Mills, *Discourses of Difference*; S. Morgan, *Place Matters: Gendered Geography in Victorian Women's Travel Books about Southeast Asia* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1996).
33 On the theme of children, see N. Chaudhuri, 'Memsahibs and Motherhood in Nineteenth-Century Colonial India', *Victorian Studies* 31:4 (1988), pp. 517–35.

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INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME I

Jemima Kindersley's *Letters from the Island of Teneriffe, Brazil, the Cape of Good Hope, and the East Indies* (1777) and Maria Graham's *Journal of a Residence in India* (1812) are the first book-length travel accounts of India published by British women. Indeed, Kindersley's volume is probably the first such account by any European woman. In the anglophone tradition, an earlier *Letter from a Lady at Madrass* [sic] *to her Friends in London* was published in 1743; however, this text, written by Jane Smart, runs to only eight pages and recounts a single incident, the visit paid by Smart and several other women to the wife and female retinue of a Nawab visiting Madras. Kindersley and Graham's volumes are not only much longer but they are also far more ambitious in scope. Although couched in forms which might now suggest an emphasis on anecdote, personal reminiscence, and self-reflection – letters in Kindersley's case, a journal in Graham's – both books largely subordinate these elements to the project of assembling and disseminating useful information about India. They are thus more carefully crafted, consciously mediated texts than one might initially assume from their epistolary and diary formats. And in each case the aim was evidently to offer a broad, summarizing overview of Indian (and Anglo-Indian) society and culture, combining personal observations with reflections and wider research.

Kindersley and Graham were thus pioneers of the authorial role and narrative strategy that for Rosemary Raza underpins the majority of British women's accounts of India in the early colonial era. As discussed in the General Introduction, by the mid-nineteenth century, women authors had established a niche for themselves by offering accessible, non-specialist accounts which conveyed daily life in India whilst also introducing prospective travellers and metropolitan readers to recent developments in this increasingly important overseas dominion.[1] Even as they inaugurate this tradition, however, Kindersley and Graham must be distinguished in several regards from the women travel writers who followed their example in the 1820s, 1830s, and 1840s. Their accounts are more overtly erudite than most later travelogues by women; linked to this, both Kindersley and Graham show a greater readiness to address topics and adopt attitudes that we now assume were off-limits or unusual for women in this period. In this way any ideology of 'separate spheres' in discourse seems less pronounced in these first

female-authored travel accounts of India, although both authors also emphasize on occasion the distinctive perspectives they offer as women travellers. Finally, we also find in these two early accounts – and especially in Graham's *Journal* – a more multifaceted and in some regards more sympathetic engagement with Indians and with Indian culture(s) than is generally the case in later travelogues.

Biographical and historical contexts

Kindersley was born Jemima Wicksteed in 1741. Much in her biography remains obscure, but her family hailed from Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, and were later described by Kindersley's son, Nathaniel Edward, as 'very humble' in status.[2] Since the same source suggests Jemima met her future husband Nathaniel at a ball, this presumably designates a lower-middle-class rather than labouring-class background; nevertheless, it is clear that her marriage in 1762 brought a rise in the social scale. Nathaniel Edward was born in 1763; the following year Jemima and the baby accompanied Nathaniel when he took up a post as an artillery officer in the East India Company's Bengal army. After a voyage which took in Tenerife, Salvador in Brazil and the Cape of Good Hope (all described in Jemima's later narrative), the family reached India in May or June 1764, stopping first in Nagapatam in the Dutch Coromandel Colony.

Kindersley thus arrived in India in the final phase of a tumultuous transitional period in Anglo-Indian relations. Between 1756 and 1763 the Third Carnatic War – an offshoot of the wider Seven Year's War between France and Britain – had seen the East India Company and its Indian allies engage and ultimately defeat the French and their allies in fighting principally centred in southern India, around Madras and the French-held city of Pondicherry. In Bengal to the east, the British also won momentous victories. In 1756 the last independent Nawab of Bengal, Siraj ud-Daulah, captured Calcutta, giving rise to the notorious incident of the 'Black Hole' of Calcutta, in which many European prisoners died due to overcrowding in the gaol where they were held. When the Nawab was subsequently defeated by Sir Robert Clive at the battle of Plassey (1757), the East India Company became the dominant power in region. This led to further hostilities in 1763, when the Company faced an alliance between Siraj ud-Daulah's successor Mir Qasim (even though it was the British who had originally installed him as Nawab), the Moghul Emperor Shah Allam II and Shuja ud-Daulah, Nawab of nearby Oudh. However, their combined forces were again defeated by Clive, at the battle of Buxar in 1764, after which the East India Company further extended its power through the 1765 Treaty of Allahabad. Most notably, the Company acquired the right to collect tax revenues in Bengal, Bihar, and Odisha, thereby becoming responsible for the governance of these provinces.

Nathaniel Kindersley was not directly caught up in these campaigns, but his postings meant that Jemima visited many notable sites not long after these major events. After Nagapatam, they visited Pondicherry (recently captured from the French and still devastated from the British siege of the city) and Madras, before

reaching Calcutta in August 1765. After a year in Calcutta (a period Kindersley gives no account of in her subsequent narrative), the family made a slow journey up the Ganges by 'budgeroo', or barge, taking in Mongheir, Patna, and Benares before arriving in Allahabad in June 1767. Kindersley must have been one of the very first British women to visit this ancient Indian city, an important administrative centre under the Mughals and at this date the home of the current Emperor Shah Allam, who was confined to Allahabad under the conditions of the 1765 treaty. She spent nine months there, then in May 1768 returned to Calcutta where she stayed five months before departing from India, apparently because of poor health.[3] Nathaniel remained behind and died in India in 1769; Jemima and Nathaniel Edward returned to Britain via the island of St Helena (as later described in *Letters*). Her husband's death left Kindersley financially straitened, and this may be one reason why she subsequently chose to produce and publish her travelogue. However, the highly impersonal narrative in *Letters* provides little explanation of its author's private circumstances, her motivation for publication, or the long delay between Kindersley's return from India and the volume's appearance in 1777.

Forty years after Kindersley's departure from India, Maria Graham (as she would shortly become) arrived in the subcontinent. Like Kindersley before her, she arrived amidst recent and ongoing wars that encompassed both India and the wider world. Between 1809 and 1811, the duration of Graham's visit, the Napoleonic War was at its height, leading to confrontations in South East Asia and the Indian Ocean between Britain and France and their respective allies and proxies. During this period, British forces seized Dutch colonies in the Spice Islands, having previously taken the Cape of Good Hope, St Helena, and the Dutch colony in Sri Lanka after Holland formed an alliance with revolutionary France in 1796. In India itself, the East India Company's power now extended – either directly or indirectly, through nominally independent puppet rulers – over much of the subcontinent, due to the defeat of Mysore in the 1790s and victory in the Second Anglo-Maratha War of 1803–1805. Like Kindersley in Pondicherry, Graham recorded in her narrative the devastation caused by this last conflict. Having strong Naval connections, she was also cognizant of the wider regional confrontation with France, alluding frequently in her narrative to the British Navy's operations in the Indian Ocean.

Graham was 24 when she arrived in India: a similar age to Kindersley, who was 23. However, her background was significantly different to Kindersley's. Born Maria Dundas in 1785, her immediate family was of comparatively modest means – her father was a Naval officer – but her wider kin were genteel and well connected. She was educated at a boarding school and then, in a crucial phase for her intellectual development, lived in Edinburgh in her late teens and early 20s.[4] Here she absorbed the ideas and debates of the late Scottish Enlightenment, counting among her friends and mentors the philosopher Dugald Stewart and the geologist John Playfair. It was also in this period, however, that she first contracted tuberculosis, which would dog her throughout her life.

When her father was appointed in 1808 to a senior post at the Naval dockyard at Bombay, Maria chose to accompany him. Given her literary and scholarly connections, she may have intended from the outset a future travelogue, but this is not certain. The voyage out in H.M.S. *Cornelia* took in Madeira and the Cape of Good Hope (although these visits are not recorded in Graham's later published *Journal*); it also introduced Maria to Thomas Graham, son of a Scottish Laird and Second Lieutenant in the *Cornelia*. A romance blossomed and the couple married a few months after arriving in Bombay in May 1809. Thereafter Thomas was frequently away on Naval service, while Graham generally resided and travelled with friends and acquaintances among the Anglo-Indian social elite. In Bombay she initially lived with the celebrated Scottish jurist and historian Sir James Mackintosh, with whom she visited local sites and antiquities, as well as making longer trips to Pune, the capital of the Maratha Empire, and Sri Lanka. In June 1810 she sailed from Bombay to Madras, where she spent two months before sailing on to Bengal. She spent four months in and around Calcutta (staying principally at the city and country residences of the Governor General of India) before returning to Madras in January 1811. After visiting the Hindu antiquities at Mamallapuram, Graham then departed from Madras (and India) in February; her voyage back to Britain took in the Cape of Good Hope and St Helena. *A Journal of a Residence in India* was published in 1812, and was followed in 1814 by *Letters on India*, a broader survey of the subcontinent's history, religion, and culture couched not as a travelogue but as an educational primer for potential travellers.

The craft of travel writing: form, persona, voice

Kindersley publishes her account of India in epistolary form; Graham presents her observations in print as a 'Journal', although the opening pages additionally claim that the volume is based on a series of letters sent to an unnamed correspondent (based in Edinburgh, it later emerges). In adopting these formats, both women were following fairly standard practice in contemporary travel writing. Since the late seventeenth century, the importance of making immediate, on-the-spot observations had been enjoined on travellers by the Royal Society and others. Letters, logs, and diaries were one means of achieving this, and subsequent print publications often maintained this presentation of the material, since it implied that the observations therein had only been lightly edited and were thus a more reliable eyewitness record. These formats were accordingly much used by both men and women travellers – and for women, they had particular appeal, since it could plausibly be suggested that letters or journals were originally intended just for private consumption. Graham in her Preface explicitly makes this claim, suggesting that her observations 'were really and truly written, nearly as they now appear, for the amusement of an intimate friend' (p. 143); she also stresses that her account transcribes her first impressions of India, and therefore records important details that longer-term residents have become habituated to. Kindersley offers no such prefatory explanation or justification for her publication; however, both claims – of