Travelogue on
My Research Voyage
Whatever the task one wants to accomplish on the earth, it can never be materialized without the divine inspiration and graces. The Supreme Will of the Goddess Saraswati (Muse) and blessings of one’s Parents induce one to initiate the dream projects in one’s life. In addition to this; the feather touch of the scholarly learning of the teacher-supervisor who always keeps the path illuminated means a lot. Not only this, the atmosphere one works in acts no less than divine graces, be it HOME or Work-Place.

In my case all this elements have clubbed their hands and the result is nothing but the accomplished task of the voyage in the area of Travel Literature. For years together I hatched a desire to initiate something in the form of empirical Research. My Father’s voracious reading even after his retirement from the job of a Primary Teacher and his dreams to see us acquiring the highest possible degrees in the Higher Education has always inspired me to undertake a task in the field of research. Literature studies and teaching of it for at least a decade in my career made me realize the vastness and infinite possibilities in this realm of gold. Sometimes drama, sometimes fiction, some other time non-fiction riveted my attention. More or less I found myself close to Indian English creative writings. Still nothing took any tangible shape. I kept on turning stones of possibilities upside down. At such juncture of mental exercise to determine the direction of my research voyage, I happened to come across one book, *Nine Lives: A search of sacred in Modern India*. Just going through its initial pages and the captions by the reviewers on the blurb of it made me interested in the author; William Dalrymple. I was interested in travel writing and had read some books of travel in Gujarati, this opened up a new horizon of interest for me. But still, there was no concrete design-map or itinerary upon which I must oceane the sail.

This fog was cleared when a magic twist took me to my Supervisor sir, Dr. Jagdish Joshi. In the very first meeting after my shy and hesitant approach and in tottered confidence on being asked about my interest, when I told him about my topic and the writer of my choice; his confident smile and beckoning that the topic was worth concentrating rejuvenated the flickering flame of my gradually weakening confidence. He sent me some authentic reading materials and provided me with the proper insights as how to frame the research hypothesis, what methodologies and some dos and don’ts of the research temperament. In most cases, I have heard my friends relating their research experiences; in them almost majority of them have never been even introduced to the family of their supervisor. In some if there were any interactions, it might be on the nodding bases or on superficial level. But in my case, not only my sir, but his entire family takes
interest in me and my research. How can I forget the delicious dishes I had
dined at his place not as a guest or an outsider but as the one of the family
members...? My journey, thus initiated under Respected Jagdish sir’s
assuring umbrella of ‘Let us Grow Together’, in the realm of Travel Writing
found many new shores of understanding and new information.

The challenges were not easy. My new job demanded much attention
and grounding efforts. Yet, the Authorities of Gujarat Vidyapith permitted
me to keep up my voyage of Research. For their inspiring support my
humble gratitude is due for Dr. Sudarshan Iyengar sir, Dr. Rajendra
Khimani sir, and special thanks to Dr. Anamik Shah sir. At home my better
half (Deepa) and dear daughter (Ayushi) sacrificed their hours, days, weeks,
months and years which they deserved to spend on the real routes of
journeys, tours and trips. But my being on this travels of Travel Writing,
they managed their time watching TV, Movies alone. Friends (Dr. Utpal
Patel, Dr. N.K.Patel, Dr. Mahesh Bhatt, Dr Chetan Joshi, Dr. Sunil Shah,
Dr. Kaushik Patel and Amarendra) kept inspiring and supporting. My dear
ones be it my brother (Gaurang) or brother-in-law (Umang) too have their
share of credit by not demanding me at every odd ceremony. Persons like
Dr. Kanaiyalal Nayak, Motibhai Devu, Dr. Rajendra Joshi, Milan Bhatt and
Manoj Prajapati deserve a special space and place being the never failing
supports in any form. I must also thank some of my favourite students, to
name Hiren Maheta, Nimesh Abasana, Kuntal Muththa, for their support.
Things start evolving the moment they acquire a concrete shape and
formula. My insights also grew likewise. The more I read, the better my
visions keep developing in the realm of travel writing and make me realize
that it is a vast corpus of writing. It has evolved in all the corners of the
earth in one form or another in almost all the languages. And it would never
be an exaggeration to claim that at the root of almost all the disciplines of
learning; man’s travelling motives and the reporting the avenues of his
travels back home has played a vital and massive role.