Executive Summary
Travel is not something new to us. It is a fascinating part of human life. The human history is a history of travel. Man had to travel from place to place either in order to fulfill his basic needs or to retain his existence from time immemorial. Even it won’t be an exaggeration to claim that today’s modern-developed-world has turned into reality as a result of man’s tendencies of traveling.

Travel is one of the indispensable activities of human life. Whether one travels to foreign lands or just across the city, it is a journey, and from the journeying one shapes oneself, history and the stories one tells.

Traveling expands the circumference of horizons of knowledge and insight of any human being. It not only brings different cultures and cultural heritages closer but also induces understanding and social integrity. In ancient times the apparent purposes behind any travel were either that of religious- i.e. Pilgrimage or that of Trades and Business. But with the advancement of time, the intentions have changed. Now, people travel to understand different cultures, for joy, for change, for reducing stress. Even one travels for literary, political or economic reasons. A tendency to travel for the sake of travel, just wander without any defined purpose, is also found in some persons. It is noticed that, in the ancient times the ecclesiastical personalities traveled from place to place with a view to spreading the scopes and horizons of their specific religious beliefs and attract people of other religions towards their own. With these motives many Christian missionaries ransacked all over the world. Same is the case with the Buddhist Lamas and the Jain Monks. The purposes of European, Japanese, Chinese and Mughal travellers were different.

It is very famous that travelers like Columbus, Vasco-De-Gama, Fahiyan, Hue-sang, Itsing, Alberuni, Ibn Batutta, Marco Polo, even Indian saints like Swami Vivekananda, Shankracharya, Swami Ramtirth, etc. have travelled for different purposes.

Such TRAVELERS, who have got the creative bent and ability to mould their experiences with due amount of fictional creativity give account of their journeys in artistic vein and this gives shape to what can be termed as ‘Travel Literature’ – i.e. Travel writing of literary value.

Travel writing remains a loosely defined body of literature and the general assumptions about it would be that Travel writing is a factual, first – person account of a journey undertaken by the author. Whereas, in reality as a form of literature it involves absorption of differing narrative style and genres, the writer’s captioning of the issues, attachment, etc. and hence, it can be regarded as a relatively open-ended and versatile form of literature. William Dalrymple, born in Scotland and living in India, has proved his merits as a competent History and Travel writer of the present day. He captured the attention of the literary world with his first book ‘In Xanadu’ in nineteen ninety, which won him Yorkshire Post Award, an award for the best first work and was also short-listed for John Llewellyn Rhysine Memorial Prize. According to him, “Traveling to places is merely a starting point for an intellectual journey through past civilizations and cultures.” The Researcher has pursued the subject and brought forth the critical, analytical and literary significance of travel literature with reference to travel writing of William Dalrymple. The study will be greatly
helpful for literary perusal of travel literature, to understand the focus of the author understudy, Viz. William Dalrymple.

Chapter 1: “Introduction” (I) Travel Literature: The first chapter Introduction focuses on basic conception, part and role of ‘travel’ in the development of human civilization, the presentation of panoramic history of travel literature and the modern scenario of Travel writing. It also introduces the author, William Dalrymple.

One of the many ways that human beings have bound themselves to each other and have attempted to bridge culture and geographic distances is through ‘travel.’ ‘Travel’ has greatly and deeply influenced the developments of human civilization. Eric Leed comments “Recorded history—the history of civilization—is a story of mobilities, migration, settlements, of the adaption of human groups to place and their integration into topography, the creation of ‘homes’.” The religion, the integral part of human life, also inspires ‘travels’—just as the tradition of ‘pilgrimage’ is a secure step for those who seek salvation. The ‘traveler’s tale, ‘travel’ , ‘travelogue’ , -is as old as fiction itself. Earliest extant writing fairly represents ‘travel’—as a form of heroic adventure. In the western extant writings, the earliest stories, composed in Egypt during twelfth dynasty, a thousand years before ‘Odyssey’ is a story of ship wrecked sailor alone on a marvelous island. The biblical and classical traditions are also rich in examples of travel writing, literal and symbolic—Exodus , the punishment of Cain, the Argonaut , the Aneid, etc . In Indian mythology too, ‘travel’ has secured important place. The Vedic texts, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Purans all these are replete with accounts of travel in which the protagonist undertake journey to the unknown lands.

From the Ancient ones, the modern conceptions have developed in exactly different directions. In the ancient times, ‘travel’ was taken as a painful chain of unexpected circumstances, as a curse, as a dome of sufferings. Today—‘travel writing’ encompasses all kinds of accounts—Scientific travels, Voyages of exploration and discovery, description of foreign manners. It has equaled and excelled in popularity as well as in quality as an independent body of literature. The general assumptions about it would be that “Travel writing is a factual, first—person account of a journey undertaken by the author.” Whereas, in reality as a form of literature it involves absorption of differing narrative style and genres, the writer’s captioning of the issues, attachment, etc.

After an in-depth study of the various critical approaches to the travel writing and having concentrated on several popular travel texts, the researcher has pinpointed certain salient key-features of travel writing, which to a greater or lesser degree operate in the composition of the travel narratives

(II) Life and Works of William Dalrymple

William Dalrymple (born 20 March 1965 in Scotland) is an award winning historian and travel writer, as well as a distinguished broadcaster, critic, art historian, foreign correspondent. Dalrymple was born William Hamilton-Dalrymple, the son of Sir Hew Hamilton-Dalrymple, 10th baronet, a cousin of Virginia Woolf. He was educated at Ampleforth College and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was first a history exhibitioner and then senior history scholar.

Dalrymple, who has lived in New Delhi on and off since 1989 is married to the artist Olivia Fraser and has three children, Ibby, Sam, and Adam, and a cockatoo called
Albinia. The South Asia correspondent of the New Statesman since 2004, he is a fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society and the Royal Society of Literature

Dalrymple's interests include India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, the Middle East Mughal rule, the Muslim Traditions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Clash of religions in the Middle East regions. All of his seven books have won major literary prizes, as have his radio and television documentaries. His first three were travel books based on his journeys in the Middle East, India and Central Asia. His early influences included the travel writers such as Robert Byron, Eric Newby, and Bruce Chatwin. More recently, Dalrymple has published a book of essays about South Asia, and two award-winning histories of the interaction between the British and the Mughals between the eighteenth and mid nineteenth century. His books have been translated into more than 30 languages.

Chapter 2: In Xanadu: This chapter covers the critical evaluation of In Xanadu; the first book of William Dalrymple. It was published in 1989 when the author was in his early twenties. It traces the path taken by Marco Polo from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem to the site of Shang-tu, famed as Xanadu in English literature, in Inner Mongolia, China. William Dalrymple took a vial of holy oil from the burning lamps of the Holy Sepulchre, which he is to transport to Shang-tu (Xanadu), the summer seat of the King Kublai Khan. He traverses this journey via the silk route, which Marco Polo was supposed to have passed.

The author has recorded his reflections of the places he visits and the people he meets. He nicely weaves the narration of his travels sometimes in the serious Historical research vein and sometimes in comic. The core success and the interesting part of his book lies in his mastery of enacting dialogue with the local persons and his co-travelers and dramatization of his experiences and the characters with whom he interacts. The entire work revolves round his scheme of following the route of Marco Polo and thereby issuing his own reactions to the journey and observations of Polo, verifying the narrations and the details provided by this senior traveler and marking his own observations on to how the scenario has withstood the course of time and traits of development.

Chapter 3: City of Djinns: This chapter covers the critical evaluation of City of Djinns (1994) by William Dalrymple. City of Djinns is a unique sort of travel book. Generally travel books narrate the routes and travelling places and the writer’s own reflections on such travels. But, the City of Djinns stands apart in the sense that it records Dalrymple’s year long stay at this Historic city – which stomachs within it, like the layers of onion, layers of historic developments and destructions, adding tastes to the Indian History but at the same time bringing gush of tears in one’s eyes too. William Dalrymple claims it to be ‘the story of one year in Delhi’. He describes the city as the 'most complicated city he knows'. Dalrymple had visited Delhi when he was of seventeen and was instantly under its spell. His initial attraction and wonder stricken reactions gradually matured into serious research stuff. He says in prologue: “Moreover - I soon discovered – (Delhi) possessed a bottomless seam of stories, tales receding far beyond history, deep into the cavernous chambers of myth and legend”. [Pp.08, City of Djinns]
William Dalrymple records his quest of the Historic Developments of this city and in the course of it he nicely captures his encounters with a variety of people which range from a Sufi, a Taxi-Driver, Government officials, a clan of Anglo-Indians who have made India their home with their numberless grudges for ‘new civilization’ emerging in Delhi, and India at large.

Chapter 4: *From the Holy Mountain*: This chapter covers the critical evaluation of *From the Holy Mountain: A Journey in the Shadow of Byzantium* (1997) by William Dalrymple. This book is again schemed to follow in the footstep of the famous historic Figure. This time it is the great Byzantine Saint Moschos and his disciple Sophronious, the sophist. John Moschos’s “*The Spiritual Meadows*” provides the prime inspiration to William Dalrymple to explore the parts of the Middle East and he tries to have the glimpses of John Moschos’s world of Byzantium.

The visit, vista and encounters of John Moschos and William Dalrymple in this world stand far apart. The experiences and presentations of both the travelers have polar differences as at time of Moschos visit, the Byzantium was full of bustling Christian communities, glorifying Churches, renowned Monasteries, but after hundreds of years, at the time of William’s visit, the scenario has lost the tinge of Christianity altogether, and what remains has been in the state of decline and decay and the remains can be said to have survived only through the chance of fortune ---abandoned/deserted Churches, depeopled Monasteries waiting their destruction and a few Christian communities with palpatating hearts uncertain about their security. Now, it is only a Muslim world ruling supreme the Middle East and constantly trying to drive the left over Christians out of the region by hook or crook. The struggle of Christian cult to hold on to their roots seems yielding to the socio-political forces engineered only in the favour of one particular group at the cost of the other. To be more precise, the decline and disturbances started well at the time of Moschos’ travels and are captured in his accounts too and the traces of it are found Moschos’ pronouncements.

What William witnesses is the culmination of all atrocities to the Christians in the very lands where it first originated. The Christian population was either crumbled and suffocated through consciously calculated policies or they immigrated to the safer parts of the earth to save themselves from the atrocious treatments from the powerful forces in the entire region of the Middle-East. The beginning of the process of the decadence of Christianity which Moschos witnessed during his journeys, William finds it on the verge of its completion.

Chapter 5: *The Age of Kali*: This chapter discusses Dalrymple’s fourth book, *The Age of Kali*. With this book he once again comes to the subject of India. It was published in 1998 and is a collection of essays collected through almost a decade of travel around the Indian subcontinent.

The book encompasses many controversial subjects such as Sati, the caste wars in India, political corruption and terrorism. It was released in India renamed as At the Court of the Fish-Eyed Goddess i.e. the Goddess Meenakshi of Madurai. He describes the various changes that have undergone since independence and the also the cultural heritage being retained by the people since ancient times.

Being a traveler, journalist and Historian the varied and eerie things about this part of the globe attracts him. And the outcome of his toil on the socio-political conditions of these
Asian nations is – this collection of essays. On witnessing the bloodshed violence spread throughout the subcontinent, he states, he feels convinced that the Age of Kali has in reality cuffed the human race here, and made them thirsty of each other’s blood- no matter whatever is the ground. Be it social, political or the religious, or on the grounds of morality, status or family feuds, the human race seems on the dagger drawing stance. Tolerance and broadmindedness are no longer in the index of human virtues, rather they are considered to be the attributes of weakness in the social arena. Man finds himself entangled with his own fellow people and he feels he has to struggle hard to get what, he thinks, is essential for his well-being and happiness. The weakest points of Democracy have got surfaced and the reins of power have been grabbed by the persons with criminal backgrounds.....

The book covers the author’s meetings with Benazir Bhutto, cricketer Imran Khan, his interview of author Shobha De and Baba Seghal as symbols of modern India. Dalrymple covers Sri Lanka just as the IPKF is pulling out of the country. He also visits Reunion, an island in the Indian Ocean which is an overseas department of France.

Chapter 6: Nine Lives: Nine Lives: In Search of Sacred in Modern India is again a new experiment of William Dalrymple in the genre of Travel Writing. During his stay and travels in India, Dalrymple has come across a lot many characters. But out of them, he picks up Nine special characters on the grounds of their special religious cult and practice of austere life on the rules of it. The characters include a Jain Nun, A Devadasi, A Theyyam Dancer, a Buddhist Monk, a Sufi Qalandar, a Bronze Idol Maker, a nomadic Epic Singer, Baul Singers and the curers of the Skulls from Kolkata,. In many of his interviews, newspaper articles and in public meetings as a part of the promotion of his ‘Nine Lives: In Search of Sacred in Modern India’, William Dalrymple clearly mentions that he has adopted a new scheme in this book. And he has been favourably received on this plain too. In his column in the Guardian, in connection to his scheme of narratives in Nine Lives, he asserts, “I decided to adopt a quite different form. When In Xanadu was published at the end of the 80s, travel writing tended to highlight the narrator: his adventures were the subject; the people he met were often reduced to objects in the background. I have tried to invert this, and keep the narrator in the shadows, so bringing the lives of the people I have met to the fore and placing their stories centre stage”.

Chapter 7: Conclusion: The chapter finally examines critically and analyses comparatively the writings of William Dalrymple with the general conceptions of travel literature. It also analyses as to what extent his travel writing touches the issues of modern civilizations as the pieces of creative literature. It also establishes how indigenous critical/theoretical tools of criticism can give us a fruitful reading of travel writings of William Dalrymple.

In all the books studied, the researcher has found that William Dalrymple has carefully interwoven his personal reflections, memoirs, historical facts which he collects through his toiling through different Archives, personal or Institutional libraries, interviews of the natives who command the authority in the area of knowledge of the topics/issues under focus, references to the earlier travel accounts along with his journey and encounters with the local people and culture. He constitutes a very jovial and free narrative with sparkles of humour and informative cubes. Close perusal of the texts gives us an idea that William
Dalrymple has carefully developed his persona in the narrative who is the centre or the hero of his narrative.

His first book, *In Xanadu* has been framed upon the readymade route of the historic traveler, Marco Polo and his silk route from Jerusalem to ShangTu in China. The scheme of traveling on such a readymade route gives the travel writer two privileges; firstly, as he is travelling in the footsteps of the senior, more popular traveler whose travel texts are well-known, he gets a route and the destination. Secondly, it gives him the opportunity to look into the measures of the cultural developments from the view points of ‘then’ and ‘now’; the latent theme of his travels as to compare and contrast and validate the previous version of the journey. His second book, *City of Djinns* documents his travel in residence in the city. It covers the span of one year stay of the writer in the city and presents the tale of the city. The scheme here is that of historical excavation of the facts that have contributed greatly to the development of the city. As the author keeps travelling among the recesses of the city, he comes across the various facets of the city which he brings in his narration interweaving the past and the present scenario. His third book, *From the Holy Mountain* again follows the framework of following the footsteps of the historic and famous traveler. This time he travels in the central Asian territories. He follows the footsteps of the great Gregorian Saint Moschos and documents along with the present day ethnographic scenario, the process of wiping out of the Christianity from its very origin place which initiated in the time of Moschos which Moschos noted in his book *Spiritual Meadows*. William here notes that the process which Moschos saw initiated has reached to its culmination and he himself with pains found the wild play of atrocities exercised on the left over groups of Christian faith.

*The Age of Kali* and *Nine Lives* focus on the Indian subcontinent. In *The Age of Kali* he presents the socio-political issues of India, Sri Lanka and Pakistan whereas in *Nine Lives: In Search of Sacred in Modern India*, he presents the accounts of some nine ecclesiastical personalities who belong to different spiritual practices practiced in India and takes an exercise to understand how faith and the spiritual practices have retained their effectiveness and remained in terms with India’s switching over to the modernistic western-centric developments.

On the whole William has emerged as a luminous star on the literary horizons who works meticulously on the projects on his hand, tries to get to the original sources of the first hand knowledge and tries to contribute to the literary world with his meritorious and best-selling stuff of travel narratives.