The spatial rationality which emerged in Britain over centuries since the Renaissance, framed not only the British nation as a coherent geographical unit (as seen in the last chapter), but was significantly connected with the extension of its boundary overseas. It is no mere coincidence that the great age of spatial activities in the European continent was also the great age of exploration and imperialism merging with images of imperialist celebration. As these new, yet unexplored spaces opened up to European vision they were also incorporated into the idiom of the picturesque which included temples, ruins, rivers and mountains finding their expression in varied media. A stage, a theatre was created, as it were, for unfolding the colonial trajectory and visually appropriating the spaces in the great saga of imperialist victory. The geographies of the British Empire found expression in the geographical nature of the discourse of the public sphere. Historians of art have illustrated how important certain new spaces were for the display of visual culture and the constitution of viewing public. Significantly, these were the public and private spaces of reception of a scientific geographical consciousness successfully transmitted from their actual sites of production – the colonies. Many public buildings in Britain were inscribed with designs and souvenirs of the East and a common recurring figure in all these was that of Britannica receiving gifts from various continents as tokens of submission. On the other hand, pleasure gardens and places of entertainment such as the Vauxhall dinner boxes came to be painted with fantastic orientalist images. In the eighteenth century, Orientalism was a key component in the context of the spaces to which were attached significations of play and pleasure often clubbed into a schema which sported Chinese, Turkish and Persian scenes and objects. And what better way to look at this theatricality of colonial performance if not the theatrical space itself which contained within it all the undertones of the illicit, profane and the pleasure principle!

129 Ogborn and Withers 2004. 2-23.
130 See Chapter 2.
Continuing from where I left off in the preceding chapter, the theatrical space in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as already seen, was not merely metaphoric but a metonymic expression of a real place. From the late eighteenth century onward, India became a favourite in the arena of spectacle. As Natasha Eaton points out:

Although a certain cohesion is said to exist between governmental techniques [in] the colony and the metropole, [...] the colonial state became far more spectacular than its contemporary.131

**Theatrical empire: Indian landscapes in stage scenery**

As Natasha Eaton points out, the colonial state purported to become far more spectacular than its contemporary British counterpart, the metropole. She talks of the Georgian state in the first half of the eighteenth century obsessed with sensationalism, voyeurism and vulgarity where public hangings, masquerades and exhibitions shared equal exposure and popularity. However, the colonial state soon overtook in the “intimidating theatricality” so that with its Hindu rites with its sensational practices characterised a superstitious primitive India.132

J.S. Bratton talks of the hundreds of spectacular melodramas on military or imperialistic themes that were abundant at this time, with soldiers, sailors or adventurers as their heroes, ending on a patriotic note in the tune of 'Rule Britannica'.133 The simulacrum of the stage began to be used for colonialist panegyric. To match the abundance of colonialist themes, theatre scenes bustled with exotic paintings in order to depict the place where the action was to be set in. (see Figs. 35, 36, 37 and 38) With the popularity of 'on the spot' paintings, the works of traveller-painters were frequently consulted. To match the prolific upsurge of paintings of exotic locales, there also emerged special props, pageants and performances recreated from the eye-witness accounts of travellers.

A typical example is James Cobb's *Rama Droog or Wine does Wonders*, first performed in the Covent Garden on 12th. November, 1798. (see Fig. 34) Comprising both European and many Indian characters, the locale of the drama is India, the scenes being based on drawings made in India by Thomas Daniell.134 The *Morning Herald* of the following day reviewed the scenes of the play in these words:

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132 Ibid. 16.
133 Bratton 1991. 22.
134 The scenery was painted by Richards, Phillips, Lupino, Hollogan and Blackmore based on drawings of Indian scenery by Thomas Daniell.
A view in the fortress of Ramah Droog, the British captives on one side, the walls of the Palace gardens on the other — a distant view of the hill fort of Ramah Droog — an apartment in the Rajah's Palace, the women of the Zenana dancing and singing — the battlements on the rock — an apartment in the palace — a private apartment belonging to the Vizier — a wood near the Pattah, or town, at the foot of the rock — Zelma's prison — and the outside of a fort.  

The playbill of the play talks of a grand procession at the end of Act II of the main piece:

A Return from a Tiger Hunt, to the Rajah's Palace, representing the Rajah on an Elephant, returning from Hunting the Tiger, preceded by his Hircarrahs, or military messengers, and his State Palanquin — the Vizier on another Elephant — the Princess in a Gaurie, drawn by Buffaloes — the Rajah is attended by his Fakeer, or Soothsayer, his Officers of State, and by an Ambassador from Tippoo Sultan in a Palanquin; also by Nairs (or Soldiers from the South of India), Poligars (or Inhabitants of the Hilly Districts), with their Hunting -dogs, other Indians carrying a dead Tiger, and young Tigers in a Cage; a number of Sepoys — Musicians on Camels and on Foot — Dancing Girls etc.

The procession was not an integral part of the narrative or the plot of the play, but it was of course a necessary measure for creating the spectacle which functioned as a visual register for the alien land, people and culture. A few years earlier in 1788, another of Cobb's plays, Love in the East or Adventurers of Twelve Hours boasted of a variety of new scenery, one of them being, "a view of Calcutta, from a painting done on the spot by Hodges" which opened the scene. While the painting in question could not be identified, probably it is Hodges' famous painting, 'View of Calcutta', a boldly painted sketch depicting the Calcutta river bank at sunset. In this picture, whose lithograph now hangs in the Victoria Memorial Hall, Hodges' palette ranges from warm rose tones to yellow and orange in the sunset, clouds and reflections in the water. (see Fig. 39) On the other hand, a likely candidate for the same could also be another of the popular paintings by Hodges titled 'A View of Calcutta Taken from Fort William' which was exhibited in the Royal Academy in 1787. in his Travels, Hodges states that the engraved 'View of Calcutta from Fort William' was taken from his picture which was painted on the spot. When the painting was exhibited at the Royal Academy, it received the following review:

135 Quoted in Hogan 1968. lix.
We learn from those who know the situation, that this is a faithful delineation. Mr. Hodges possesses much of Canaleti's stile, and though he may fail in his exactness, he has infinitely more variety.136

Similar, at least from the spectacle point of view, was Mariana Starke's *The Widow of Malabar*, based on *La Veuve du Malabar* by Antoine Marin Le Mierre. It was first performed at Covent Garden on 5th May, 1790. The playbill advertised “a Procession representing the Ceremonies attending the Sacrifice of an Indian Woman on the Funeral Pile of her deceased Husband.” The above, which was repeated in all subsequent performances, was an enactment of a set piece. With reference to the spectacle of the procession one can possibly draw connection with one of William Hodges' paintings titled 'Procession of a Hindoo Woman to the Funeral Pile of Her Husband' which was engraved in England by W. Skelton. In his *Travels in India*, Hodges stated that he was so moved by the ceremonial death of a Hindu woman in Benares that it was some time before he was able to make a drawing of the subject.137 (Of course, Sati, was a familiar and identifiable motif within the iconographic tradition related with India.) Daniel O'Quinn talks about the political problematics in many of the plays related to the British Empire of the age, such as the aforementioned one, (in this case Sati) which, instead of being sensitively handled as matters of serious import are under subterfuge behind the spectacle of the drama, overshadowed by hippodramatic excesses.138 In the imperial allegory, tangible economic, political and social problems in the colonies received distanced fantastic solutions. Nevertheless, they could not hide the imperial anxiety to control, regulate and rationalise colonial public and private spaces.

Just as Sati formed a pageantry for entertainment in Starke's *Widow of Malabar*, William Thomas Moncrieff's *The Cataract of the Ganges* (1823) participates in a political problematic of female infanticide but manages to subsume it under the artifice of spectacular grandeur and imperial fantasy. (see Figs. 11 and 12) The *Bell's Life in London* of 2nd November, 1823 stated that *The Cataract* “is altogether a dashing, splashing, kicking, prancing, raree show”. Quinn talks of its real objectives being “in the realm of scene painting, hippodramatic spectacle and the management of vast numbers 'embrowned' actors

136 Stuebe 1979, 220.
137 Hodges 1794, 81-83. though the manuscript was published in 1794, the paintings were already in circulation and must have reached the London audience much before.
138 See O'Quinn 2006.
and actresses in all manner of processions). The reviews of the play concentrate only on the visual quality of the play. *The New Times* (28th October, 1823) is typical in this regard:

To the scenery, show and music, the Manager has looked for triumph, and to these we will turn our attention. The opening scene is beautiful: it is by far the handsomest scene in the whole piece, and does the painter, Stanfield, infinite credit. It is a field of battle by moonlight, viewed after a conflict. There are a number of figures in the foreground, and distributed over the stage, which are grouped with admirable effect ...

Yet another review from *The Statesman* of October 28, 1823 justifies the extravagance in representing a scene of Rajput marriage through a procession:

The first act closes with a grand procession of an immense number of soldiers and females, accompanied with bands of music. They rise from a subterraneous entrance, under the gates of a fortress: and though some architectural objections might be taken, the stage effect is grand in the extreme. After the infantry have arranged themselves, the cavalry appear, and are followed by a triumphal car of great dimensions, and drawn by six horses, richly caparisoned. The skill with which the horses are managed almost exceed belief, and no stage ever presented so imposing an appearance.

Clarkson Stanfield, the stage designer of the play had been apprenticed to a coach decorator in 1806, the experience is reflected in the expertise with which he manoeuvred the above mentioned scene. It is interesting to note that Stanfield had been a marine painter employed in the services of Royal Navy for a while in 1808. His voyage to China and India in 1814 from which he returned with a booty of paintings 'on the spot' promptly earned him a career as decorator and scene painter at the Royalty Theatre at Wellclose Square in London, before he finally joined as resident scene-painter at the prestigious Drury Lane in 1823. (see Figs. 33, 35 and 36)

Though the opening picturesque battle scene generated instant applause, the stage scenery was replete with numerous other scenes of Indian architecture and landscapes like the views of Raja's palace, a Hindu temple, 'the Pagoda of Juggernaut', along with representation of private spaces and inner quarters of family life. The tradition of such kind of stage craft was usually that of closing with the grandest of scenes. The final scene was deemed the most important in narrativising the spectacular development and culmination of the play unto a closure. By the nineteenth century, all kinds of artificial stage mechanism and new technological innovations were used to create the much desired mise-en-

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139 Ibid. 73.
140 According to Daniel O'Quinn, such depictions of inner domestic spaces come from the impulse of British policy makers to regulate private spaces.
scene. The culminating scene of *The Cataract* was replete with special effects which utterly subordinated the actors and elicitation of emotion to the spectacular effects of the play:

The change which presented the (final scene) was striking, it was from the 'Wood of Sacrifice' to a view of the Ganges, rushing with all its might down a prodigious cataract. The water was real, and it tumbled with headlong fury and in great quantities from the height of the proscenium to the level of the stage. The effect was fresh, dashing and highly interesting. In the midst of the engagement the heroine mounted a charger and ascended the Cataract with wondrous velocity and invincible resolution, to the inexpressible delight of the Galleries, Pit and Boxes.141

Stanfield's visit to India helped attach the aura of authenticity to the imagery of colonial fantasy. However, Stanfield was especially known for his vast moving dioramas (to be discussed later in the chapter) which were highlights of Christmas pantomimes and certain other pieces.

A number of post colonial critics have seen in this what is talked of as a 'museological mode' or 'exhibitionary complex' when it came to representation of the colonies in theatrical spaces. The same was epitomised in the Great Exhibition of 1851 or the Crystal Palace, arranged by Queen Victoria's consort, Prince Albert, which contained relics or 'objects' (such as the Kohinoor) and several daguerreotypes from all parts of the world.142 The hub that grew up following the Great Exhibition, nicknamed Albertopolis, which consisted the museums of South London such as The Natural History Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Science Museum, provided a space for exhibiting cultures and sciences from across the world. The British Museum had already been established in Bloomsbury in 1759 as a 'universal museum' and housed a collection of numerous curiosities and antiquities from around the world originally belonging to Sir Hans Sloane bequeathed to King George II. The Empire of India Exhibition of 1895 organised by Imre Kiralfi at Earl's Court London, exhibited not only souvenirs but real human beings representing the various tribes of India performing their daily chores.

**Transparencies of the empire: the panoramas**

The visual culture of the times teemed with pictures, objects and artefacts from all over the world and especially the imperial colonies. The panorama was another kind of exhibitionary devise which struck a responsive chord in the nineteenth century on the front

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141 *The New Times*, 28th October, 1823.
of popular art. It sought to satisfy an increasing demand for visual information. The vast apocalyptic canvases and the grandiose scenic entertainments along with providing amusement also served as a means of education of the general public who were already aware of a world outside their own island through the burgeoning print media. That the painter himself had visited the depicted spot and made the preliminary drawings himself was a necessary feature of panorama advertisements. The traveller or military or naval officer with a pencil and proficiency, could on his return to England, make money or gain public recognition by selling or loaning the sketches to a panorama painter. If he had a reserve of talent he could produce a panorama himself. However, in this medium, though artistic taste was advocated, yet artistic license would not be tolerated. Topographical accuracy and authenticity could not be dispensed with at any cost even for art's sake, and this accuracy was independent of principles of art. A panorama of New Zealand, shown in London in 1849, was "not the work of a mere artist, but of a surveyor whose business it was to explore and set down with topographical accuracy the natural features of the colony".  

The panorama, in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, provided, as Ralph Hyde says "a substitute for travel and a supplement to the newspaper". In fact, many of the panorama shows created an illusion of virtual tour (see Fig. 1). Years before the Illustrated London News came into existence, the London panoramas had been providing pictorial details to the current affairs across the world. A writer in the Repository of Arts, writes in a similar spirit:

> What between steam boats and panoramic exhibitions, we are everyday not only informed of, but actually brought into contact with remote objects."  

In fact, the images of the panorama were at times hailed to be even more detailed and perceptive than a visit to the place itself as a Times critic wrote:

> There are aspects of soil and climate which ... in great panoramas ... are conveyed to the mind with a completeness and truthfulness not always to be gained from a visit to the scene itself."  

In short, the whole panoply of the shows of London such as the panorama and the diorama was able to create an inhabitable space, albeit artificial. The colonies and Britannic war settings, usually on the fringes of Britain's expanding empire, were the select favourites, though European cities like Athens, Rome, Marseilles and Venice also found place in the London panoramas. (see Fig. 2)

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144 Quoted in Ibid. 37-38.
145 Ibid. 38.
India soon became a great favourite among the London audiences. Numerous military scenes such as 'The Storming of Seringapatam' showing the defeat of Tipu Sultan in 1799, the 'Defeat of Sikh Soldiers' and of course the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, depicted the news incessantly pouring in from British India and the ever expanding empire pushing its bounds overseas, instilling a jingoism in the audience to the tune of 'pax Britannica'. Among these, 'Seringapatam' was enormously popular and could pull a profit of £1202.14 and toured Edinburgh, Dublin, Liverpool, Plymouth, Glasgow, Belfast, Chester, Tavistock before reaching Philadelphia in 1805. (see Figs 14 and 29) The outstanding success of the panorama images of likes of the military triumph at Seringapatam also gave rise to a market for prints which could be purchased and mounted and hung on the wall. Contemporaries were not blind to the popularity of accounts of warfare in exotic lands to play upon public imaginations which translated also onto the theatre stage in the form of military spectacles. (see Fig. 13) In 1825, the editor and publisher of Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine begged Captain J.R. McNeill, a surgeon serving as British emissary to Persia, to send him accounts of the battles then being fought along the Persian frontier, for “these pictures of Oriental manners interest everyone and stamp quite a new feature on Maga”. Often regarded as “those Noble Exemplars of the True Military Tradition”, Eastern warfare was able to captivate and charm the audience. J.W. Kaye, the artillery officer, later a high ranking official of the East India Company, who later collaborated with John Forbes Watson in their monumental photographic project *The People of India* (1868-75), proclaimed that “Whilst it was somewhat decayed in the West, the poetry of war seems to have its freshness in the East [...] the nature of the country, the character of the people, their mode of warfare, their dress – are all surrounded with poetical associations”.

The pomp and grandeur of the Mughal court never failed to fascinate the British so much so that they would soon follow the symbolism of the spectacular tradition on assumption of the royal office. The 'Durbar' scenes in a Mughal court and processions possessed picturesque quality and could be exhibited as a panorama. (see Fig. 22) A panorama of a Durbar procession of Akbar II c. 1815 is striking in this respect because it was painted by an anonymous Delhi artist in the manner of native scrolls and wall hangings that were popular at the time. It represented the Mughal Sultan's weekly procession from the

146 Blackwood to McNeill, 26th August, 1825. Quoted in Peers 2006. 242. (Maga was the nick name of Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine).

147 J.W. Kaye. 'The Poetry of Recent Indian Warfare'. *Calcutta Review*, ii, (1848) :222. Quoted in Ibid. 243. In their photographic project, *The People of India*, the views and profiles of various tribes and castes of India, detail their typical modes of warfare and expertise in particular weapons.
Red Fort to the Mosque (Jama Masjid) followed by his sons and the British Resident (probably Charles Metcalf) along with covered bullock carts which carried the ladies, horses, elephants, camels, and even a leopard and a huge trail of courtiers. (see Fig. 20 and 21) Mughal India's own version of spectacle is appropriated within a quintessentially British medium of spectacle. Another panorama of the Delhi Durbar showed the British assumption of the same ritual much later in 1911.

As talked of in the preceding chapter, an antiquarianism was noticeable on the part of the British in its delight for ruins and decaying architecture, which fitted into the aesthetic frame of the 'picturesque' and whose images were ever growing in popularity. Indian temples, mosques, caves and forts found their place among a host of images from across the world from pyramids in Egypt, temple of Karnak, Balbek or Thebes or the city of Jerusalem. 'Hindoo Excavations in the Mountains of Ellora' as well as T.C. Dibdin's famous moving diorama based on James Fergusson's architectural trail across India, fall within this paradigm. Tapati Guhathakurta identifies in this kind of pictorial documentation of ancient art and architecture of exotic cultures, an urge to record a graphic history, of architecture in particular and of the civilisation in general. According to her,

The diorama became the natural technological successor of the 'picturesque' "landscape", where the atmospheric and illusionist techniques of a painting was transformed into a performative spectacle before an audience in a darkened room, directly drawing the viewers into the object of their view. 149

Dibdin's diorama had two parts. The first part was a virtual tour following Fergusson's footprints, as it were, beginning with a panoramic bird's eye view of the city of Calcutta, celebrating British architectural genius and then taking the audience through the jungle into where one could see and marvel at the 'Black Pagoda' (the Sun Temple at Konarak then called so due to its moss covered exterior), followed by the 'Temple and Town of Juggernaut' (Puri). The second part was called 'The Diorama of the Ganges' which began with prospect views of the 'Sacred City of Benares', following the river upstream to the Fort of Chunar, reaching city of Allahabad and finally ending at Agra with a view of the Agra Fort and the climactic spectacle of the architectural wonder of the Taj Mahal. 150 The spectacular journey could evoke a foreign land in material terms, the make believe show

148 The panorama images of the architecture of the 'Near East' were born directly out of the expedition undertaken in 1833 by Frederick Catherwood, himself an architect and engineer as well as an archaeologist.
149 Guha-Thakurta 2004. 18.
150 Ibid. 18-19.
could sustain an illusion in the audience that they had actually been on the picturesque trail themselves. The diorama was able to militate against one of the disadvantages the panorama had – that of movement and therefore it could invoke the thrill and experience of the journey before a London audience. According to Mark Roskill, in the case of British occupied India, the aura of mystery and and the fabulous had fizzled out by this time. Therefore also, the nature of subjects depicted changed substantially. It catered to a need of constantly supplementing knowledge through graphic records that could be the basis for prints and book illustrations:

Alongside the growing influx of visitors set on travel, the activities of the East India Company in surveying the provinces of Bengal that had come under its rule, and military and judicial expansion more generally helped for such art, as extensions of the picturesque into new or unexplored territory, included temples and ruins, great rivers and waterfalls, mountains and rock faces, as well as roadways and local architecture more generally. The special sanctity attaching to such places for the natives was recognised and considered descriptively important; but their actual role in everyday life and their religious use was only hinted at within the images by the showing of a few token figures about their business – or else the human presence was left out altogether, in favour of expanse and grandeur.151

'Route of the Overland Mail to India' (April 1850 to February 1852) was another extremely interesting moving panorama employing forty or so tableaux and a singular travel motif. (see Figs. 15, 16 and 17) Though there was a lecturer who was an expert on India to elaborately explain the images, The Times spoke of it as elevating the level of panoramas "from a mere source of instruction to a work of art".152 This one employed the most noted scene painters of the time like Thomas Grieve, William Telbein and John Absolon. The voyage depicted in the panorama began at Southampton Docks. The route was via Osborne, the Needles, Cintra, Gibraltar, Algiers, Malta and Alexandria:

Crossing the desert in vans resembling omnibuses, the travellers were able to observe artificial egg hatching, nomadic encampments, Bedouin tribesmen, Joseph's Well and a dead camel. At Suez they took ship for Jeddah, Mocha and Aden. A voyage across the Indian Ocean brought them to a Point de Galle, Ceylon where the steamer re-fueled before proceeding to Madras and Calcutta.

And as the journey draws to an end, a notice in Punch reads:

151 Roskill 1997. 104.
152 Quoted in Hyde 1988. 152.
Finally, we have reached Calcutta, and by the noise and shuffling are reminded that we have never left London. It is most curious on coming out into Regent Street to find the porters and cabmen are not black, and that persons are riding around on horses instead of camels.\textsuperscript{153}

Similarly, 'London to Hong Kong in Two Hours' c. 1860, done up at the time of the second Opium War carried images of India. (see Figs. 18 and 19) Pictures and prints used in the panoramas often depicted unique land formations in landscape vistas or a remarkable cultural artefact. Such images are in line with a cult which also reiterate in travel accounts of the time, that of employing a descriptive category characterised by the term 'singularity' which was applied to objects in nature that were unusual and remarkable, and served to bridge scientific interest and aesthetic attractiveness.\textsuperscript{154}

'A Sectional View of Mr. Wyld's Great Globe' and 'View of the Exterior of James Wyld's Globe' (1857) included a tour all across the globe. A mapmaker by occupation, Wyld put up a monster globe with a series of wrought iron stairs which carried the audience to regions depicted all over the circumference of the globe. The moving panoramas included models and maps of several regions which had recently seen military sieges titled as 'A Dioramic Tour from Blackwall to Balaclava' or 'The Diorama of the Campaign in India' or 'New Diorama of the War in China' and 'Diorama of Russia'. However, the performances of the 'Diorama of Russia' was alternated with performances of a panorama of Upper India, topical at the time, due to the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. Towards the end of the nineteenth century A.H. Hamilton's 'Excursions' similarly portrayed his journeys all across the world. Hamilton's 'Delightful Excursion to the Continent and Back within Two Hours' included the 'Grand Moving Panorama of Hindoostan' originally exhibited at the Asiatic Gallery in the Baker Street Bazaar.

\textit{British painters of the Company Raj}

So long we have only been discussing appropriation of paintings and prints into a distinctly European visual order. This should lead us to the complex issue of colonial picture making which constitutes an interesting study of the existing economy in the colonial society closely embroiled within both the administration and symbolism of the colonial state.\textsuperscript{155} Art in colonial India was strongly tied up to colonial institutions in a manner which was unlike that which existed in contemporary Britain or the Indian predecessors in the

\textsuperscript{153} Hyde 1988. 140.  
\textsuperscript{154} Roskill 1997. 108.  
\textsuperscript{155} Eaton 2000. 6.
Mughal court. The real world which existed outside the exhibition or the picture consisted of a complex intermix of political and aesthetic debate and the grappling of native subject within an imperial aesthetic frame. As already mentioned, the growing awareness about India in the imperial metropolis extended to diverse spaces such as the polite enclaves such as exhibitions in the Royal Academy to the print shops in Covent Garden, influenced by either elite theory of decorum in art or popular Grub Street sensationalism. Therefore, the trend that evolved by the eighteenth century balanced a form of ethnography and academic aesthetic in dealing with the exotic subject. The return from India of William Hodges and a few years later, of the Daniell duo stirred interest in paintings from India in the late eighteenth century. The meticulous plates known as Oriental Scenery, resultant of seven years' travelling throughout India by the Daniells, was a huge financial as well as critical success. J.M.W. Turner himself observed that the series was “a feast of intellectual and unusual entertainment, [...] bringing scenes to our fireside, too distant to visit, and too singular to be imagined”. Most of the publications in the eighteenth century related to India such as that of Alexander Dow or Robert Orme contained set pieces of its history usually translated from Persian sources such as Firishta or Abul Fazl's Ain-i-Akbari. This was the age, of course, when detailed information was being collected in the fields of linguistics, law, economics and archaeology. More and more information was still required and that too with graphic clarity. The accession to diwan of the East India Company and the formation of the British capital at Calcutta now required art to serve the empire, to invoke India as a fabulous Oriental asset. Now also began, the phenomenon of steady influx of painters on commission from the East India Company. The sequence of military and diplomatic events that took place as the East India Company through conquest and alliance rapidly established itself as ruler of India, were appropriated into the much esteemed genre of the 'history painting'. Thomas Hickey planned an ambitious sequence of the 'Third Mysore War' beginning with 'Storming of the Breach at Seringapatam' and culminating with 'the placing of the Rajah on the Musnud of Mysore'. Officially, the artist Robert Home had accompanied Lord Cornwallis and his army in the campaigns of the Third Mysore War. Benjamin West in 1795 submitted a painting in which the First Lord Clive was seen receiving the grant of the Diwani, or in other words, appropriating the revenues of Bengal from the Emperor Shah Alam. Thomas Daniell exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1805 an elaborate Durbar scene based on sketches by James Wales, in which the British Resident at

156 Quoted in Archer 1980. 224.
Poona was shown concluding a treaty with the Peshwa of the Marathas. The paintings not only roused interest but promised financial gains for their makers.

India seemed to be a fecund field for artistic experiments and success. Back home, artists faced stiff competition to be a Royal Academician. It was nearly imperative for an artist to be a member of the Royal Academy (the body which defined and regulated national art at the time) for it not only provided the artist security but also ensured a respectable clientele. According to statistical data of the time, as many as eight hundred artists were seeking membership to the Royal Academy which registered only forty artists. On the other hand, once a Royal Academician, he was debarred from exhibiting elsewhere: this caused many of its talented artists including those who travelled to India like Tilly Kettle or William Hodges to give up membership. India was a choice as a place of profession for many as it represented a land of luxury and plenty. There circulated stories of Company officials returning home rich from India, commonly nicknamed 'nabobs' and those painters like Johann Zoffany and Willison who too were said to have accumulated enormous wealth during their stay and work in India. On the other hand the myth of prosperity in India, was countered by existing stories of its being a quintessentially tropical land of hostile climate, diseases and death. It was a great risk, but artists often daunted the risk in favour of seeking a fortune. Those who chose to go to India, therefore, often searched for an alternative idiom away from the institutional regimentation of the Royal Academy which dictated art at home, even to the extent of borrowing from native techniques of art. Though the British would vouchsafe for an unadulterated art, trafficking of ideas, styles and forms influenced both the British and the native art. Francis Swain Ward’s landscapes and Tilly Kettle’s ‘Awadhi’ portraits were influenced by native art. Kettle probably borrowed from Awadhi artist Mir Chand. Zoffany used local colours and strokes in his paintings. James Wales began using Indian pigments. Sir Charles D'Oyly employed a Patna artist Jairam Das, trained in the Mughal tradition, who was entrusted his lithographic press. The native techniques and the local touch helped endow the British paintings with a readily identifiable Indian character. These instances, according to Eaton, rule out unilinear structure of British ideas of art and representation in India. The unique colonial pictorial vocabulary which evolved from this transculturation was distinct from metropolitan compositions. According to her:

157 Cooner 1993. 82.
158 Eaton 2000. 42.
(This) further mediates notions of 'orientalist empiricism' and limited likeness ... Such a device, even if not directly derived from specific Mughal miniatures, bestowed an aura of expected 'character'; Indian rulers' likeness being primarily known in Europe through the medium of engravings after Mughal portraits.159

Prior to the visits from British painters, India primarily existed in print through line engravings inserted in travelogues either from the author's own temperamental sketches or based on Indian miniatures. Many European artists including the famous Dutch painter Rembrandt or the British painter, John Flaxman were indebted to Mughal images which were regularly published in scholarly British journals. Eaton points out that, such images continued to exercise an aura of authenticity for a time being, even over the colonial representations which began seeping in later on. Even William Hodges, in his Travels places himself within this tradition saying:

I can not look back at the various scenes through which I have passed these excursions without almost involuntarily identifying a train of reflections to the state of the arts under this as well as under the Hindoo government.

Colonial art therefore had to straddle popular forms of a newly emerging public art with notions of existing aesthetic idioms of national high art.

How the distinctly European genre of the landscape and country house portraits or its subgenre, the garden conversation piece, underwent an Indian adaptation, can be demonstrated aptly in Johann Zoffany's portrait of Warren Hastings, then Governor General of Bengal and his wife. ( see Fig. 40) The emergence of the genre, as discussed in the preceding chapter, revolved around ideological (feudal reactionary) issues of land and labour. The famous portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Andrews by Thomas Gainsborough already mentioned in the last chapter, epitomise this genre which usually depicted landed families outdoors on terrace, lawns or estate parklands absorb the period specific topographical tradition in depicting the setting and background. Zoffany's Mr and Mrs Warren Hastings painted in the mid-1780s, captures the spirit of the social ambition of the British gentry and the outlook towards ownership of land and property, though the topography saw marked overhauling with respect to Indian landscape. In this picture Hastings poses with his wife and her maid as in the portrait of the traditional landed gentry, amidst a vast green park with a palladian mansion in the distant background, though on the contrary the land did not belong to him and neither was he part of the British gentry. Ironically, in fact, he was

159 Ibid. 69.
criticised later on as a quintessentially corrupt, unscrupulous 'nabob' for his extortionist policies of revenue collection and basically for violating gentlemanly code of conduct towards land and property. Zoffany's treatment of vegetation here is differently handled here. Traditionally, vegetation plays an important role in conversation pieces which usually contain ideologically resonant trees symbolising the sitter's roots in an ancient organic community. For example, Mr and Mrs Andrews poses beneath a massive oak tree signifying the ancient lineage and fortitude of the family. In comparison, the Hastings family poses before neither the culturally significant oak nor the elm but a typically tropical tree, the jackfruit tree, not seen with much veneration among the British. Its only function is to add exoticism to the piece thereby undercutting any association with native roots in the foreign environment. It is also pointed out that unlike Mr Andrews or any other sitter in other British pieces, Hastings does not emanate a spirit of mastery over all that is depicted in the piece as his property including the wife, children, horses or dogs. In most such pieces the wife is seated while the husband's erect figure stands in control at the centre of the scene. In Zoffany's portrait however, Mrs Hastings, who is equally tall as her husband or taller, is placed in the middle between her Indian maid and husband, all three standing, with the maid slightly bowing, while Hastings points at the mansion behind with his hat in his hand instead of on his head, as a sign of reverence for his wife. Hastings' affection for his wife was well known in the public circle in Calcutta as were stories of his lavishing wealth upon his wife. Where traditionally, British conversation pieces rarely or never contain figures of servants, most such portraits of East India Company officials depict black male or female servants or native soldiers. In certain British exceptions, however, black servants from Africa or Caribs in exotic garments sometimes feature in such pieces as one among many other luxurious commodities available to the lord and lady of the manor and therefore represent them as owners of overseas plantations. This assumption of a new tradition in colonial portraiture where black bodies of native servants abound only make them objects owned by the imperial official, in marked contrast to the absence of labourers in British conversation pieces who were not seen as part of the property of the manorial lord.

As early as 1731-1732, the landscape and scenery painter, George Lambert (1700-1765) in collaboration with Samuel Scott (c. 1702-1772) was commissioned to paint a series of six landscapes of Indian ports and Company settlements to be displayed at the Directors' Court Room. However, both of them had never visited India and therefore it can be assumed that this work was based on sketches by Company servants and partly from
imagination. Much of these fell in the by now established tradition of country house painting as discussed in the previous chapter. Their peremptory treatment of background detail suggests that they may not have had access to extensive detail. It was only after the 1750s and Lord Clive's victory in Bengal that any serious enterprise was undertaken to represent the colony in art. Francis Swain Ward was the first painter who sent pictures from India though William Hodges (1744-1797) is generally considered the first painter of India. Other painters like Tilly Kettle (1735-86) and George Willison (1741-1797) soon followed suit. However, most of the pictures by the first generation of British painters depicted views of Southern India for Madras was the first settlement and trading centre. It was only after the Battle of Plassey in 1757 and subsequent removal of the administrative capital of Bengal from Murshidabad in 1772, that Bengal and specifically Calcutta received any attention in art. With the loss of American colonies in 1783, Calcutta soon assumed the status of 'second city of empire', second only to London. The architectural construction of the city was minutely recorded by the visiting painters. Views of Calcutta soon became a genre in itself which contributed a great deal to the popularity of India as a subject among British painters. Countless painters in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries painted views of Calcutta like William Hodges, Thomas and William Daniell, James Baillie Fraser, George Chinnery, Samuel Davis, Henry Salt, James Moffat, Henry Salt, Francois Balthazar Solvyns, William Wood and amateur artists like Sir Charles D'Oyly, Robert Smith, Cornelius Smith, Colonel Jasper Nicholls and the Princeps to name a few. On the architectural front, it was built up as a comparison to London as it boasted of broader roads and palatial buildings which needed to be exhibited to the home audience. Calcutta soon acquired a sophisticated manifestation in art as the city space was mythologised and narrativised at the crossroads of three kinds of imperial or civilisational discourses, that are the Roman, Mughal and modern British. Its tradition was invented through reiteration in pictures and prints. Strikingly, as James Rennell's surveys and cartographic activities started from Calcutta gradually progressing outwards to northern India and beyond, often travel writers and painters too followed the same route starting from Calcutta on the trail of temples, shrines and mosques which served as reference points. William Hodges was the first among the British painters to undertake this 'picturesque' journey starting from Calcutta and penetrating into the heart of the country stopping by the Rajmahal Hills and Caravanserai, which had been a strategic location for the Mughals in the past progressing to northern India. The same track was followed about

161 See Chapter 5 for a deeper exploration of Hodges' travel route as expressed in his memoir.
seven years later in 1788 by Thomas and William Daniell and then by numerous other professional or amateur artists like Henry Creighton, Samuel Davis, Charles D'Oyly, James Fergusson, Henry Salt, James Prinsep and many more.

The colonial colonnade in British paintings

The construction of Calcutta as a city space not only bore architectural imprints of the colonial power but required its continual visibility through charts, pictures, maps and later photographs. Though large pockets of Black Town remained excluded from mapping, in most paintings, native figures abound in their daily chores towered and framed by the monumental European construction in the background. At the heart of colonial architecture in any colony were two buildings strategically placed at the city centre representing the emphasis on defence: a massive fort and a government house. The fort from the very onset marked the presence of an occupying power. Initially, meant for shelter and protection of a small mercantile enclave, it underwent renovation and expansion with the strengthening of colonial position. The Fort William of Calcutta received its establishment and confirmation after the Battle of Plassey by routing Siraj-ud-daulla. In other colonial cities too, established by the East India Company – Bombay, Madras or Cape Town the fort remains the central structure emphasising a need to be protected from the indigenous people. In all these cases, the fort became the seat of the Presidency Government, and the design of urban development drew upon this structure as absolutely central around which the city grew and bloomed. Surrounding the very ramparts of the fort grew the white town distinctly bordered with a high boundary wall, protected from the black town. Meanwhile, the white sector got inscribed with various other European structures, such as mercantile offices, churches, club and spacious bungalows. The soaring spires of the churches were not only mere religious symbolism but indicated a growing political power of the English and set out to mark their presence and superiority of their faith on the geography of India. The fort engendered ghettoisation against the subject people who were potentially rebellious and hostile as the incident of the “Black Hole” in Calcutta had shown.¹⁶²

The Government House was another structure which provided the clear statement of assertion of power. This was a representative of the authority of an imperial power and the residence of the power's representative in the colony. The Calcutta Government House

¹⁶² The 'Black Hole' of Calcutta was a small dungeon in Fort William where troops of the Nawab of Bengal, Siraj-ud-Daula, held British prisoners of war under fearful condition after the capture of Fort William on June 20, 1756. There is doubt over whether this event happened at all where many believe the fearful event was fabricated by John Zephanniah Holwell, a Company official to malign Siraj and his soldiers.
revealed this distinguished project. The Calcutta Government House was modelled on the country residence of Lord Scarsdale, Kedleston Hall in Derbyshire, built in the 1760s. According to Thomas Metcalf:

The choice of an 18th century baronial seat as the model for the Viceregal Palace testifies in part to the Whig conviction that the baroque country mansion, more effectively than any other structure, expressed the power and authority of government.¹⁶³

Metcalf shows how the design of the Calcutta Government House was debated and a reproduction of Kedleston was finally decided upon because it was thought to be more suitable to Bengal's climatic requirements. Its formal rooms were grouped in a stately central pile while the domestic quarters occupied four spreading wings which Curzon pointed out would be able to "seize every breath of air from whatever quarter" and thereby, "relieve the petty aggravations of life". The structure was visualized as stretching out in all four directions with the Viceroy seated ceremonially at the centerpoint. The wings symbolised the expansion of British power in all four directions of India. Isolated at the head of the Calcutta Maidan, in its own extensive compound marked by imposing gates crowned with lions, without even trees to obscure the view, the Government House loomed over the city so that all might see and appreciate the powers of the Raj.

Other adjacent structures along the Esplanade and private houses along Chowringhee Road complemented the Government House giving a picturesque quality to the emerging city which by the first decade of the 19th century, was transformed into the 'City of Palaces' with an appearance stately, imperial and elegant. However, the project was emphasised purely as a triumph of the British colonial endeavour who through their sheer pluck and determination could transmogrify the otherwise mundane wilderness into a majestic spectacle. William Hodges describes the entry by the river route into the great colonial capital:

The appearance of the country on the entrance of the Ganges, or Houghly River ... is rather unpromising; a few bushes at the water's edge, forming a dark line, just marking the distinction between sky and water, are the only objects to be seen. As the ship approaches Calcutta the river narrows; that which is called Garden Reach, presents a view of handsome buildings, on a flat surrounded by gardens... these are villas belonging to the opulent inhabitants of Calcutta. The vessel has no sooner gained one other reach of the river than the whole city of Calcutta bursts upon the eye.¹⁶⁴

Travellers were characteristically charmed by their first view of Calcutta. This scene of arrival was replayed in numerous accounts as a sudden appearance of a sparkling and a glittering golden fairyland. This is also the point which captures the painter in transit for painters invariably drew sketches while in passage for they travelled to India in search of unique subjects for painting and went back home with their booty.

In the same way, it became a performative ritual that company painters located at nodal presidencies across India drew and painted these cityscapes and sites adjacent to these. Gradually, the entire subcontinent and its physical features came alive as parts of the map were painted red with regions being steadily annexed to the Company empire. In the South, painters like Alexander Allan, Thomas Anburey, Richard Barron, Robert Hyde Colebrooke, Thomas and William Daniell, James Fergusson, James Hunter, Henry Salt and Francis Swain Ward painted ancient Hindu temples, churches which had come up, the Fort St. George, the Government House and the beaches and harbour. The Presidency of Bombay and adjacent Western India found shape through the paintings and sketches of Thomas and William Daniell, James Fergusson, James Forbes, Robert Melville Grindlay, Henry Salt, James Wales. Similarly, the Himalayas, northern mountains and desert in the north west were depicted by painters like James Atkinson, the Daniells, William Edwards, James Fergusson, James Baillie Fraser, Charles Stewart Hardinge, William Simpson, Alicia Eliza Scott and Anne Eliza Scott. Among these, only few were professional artists from Britain on commission from the East India Company, most of them being amateurs, or otherwise holding various administrative offices. Many scholars have identified an implicit relationship between administration, the scientific enquiry involved and the graphic medium under discussion, which sometimes served as route, topographical or anthropological survey reading the act as part of 'empire and information' equation. However, etching, drawing, paintings and prints formed a vibrant economy with the mechanical reproduction of images usually in Britain but also in India.

**George Chinnery, Charles D’Oyly and the Behar Society of Athens**

I shall at this point discuss the life and works of two British artists, one, a professional and the other, an amateur whose works represent the very ethos that is being described here. Both of them influenced each other to lesser or greater extent and both painted topographical watercolours around the same time. George Chinnery (1774-1852), a Royal Academician, became known as the artist of India and China coast. He set sail for
India after a more or less failed career in Britain. On the other hand, Sir Charles D'Oyly (1781-1845), the son of a senior merchant of the Bengal establishment, was himself a Company official and was employed at various places in India under various capacities. Most importantly, of course, he set up his own lithographic press in Calcutta, one of the first of its kind in India. His influence was in the development of what became known as the 'Company School'. The two of them met in 1818 in Calcutta. This was when Chinnery, by then a noted portraitist, moved from Madras on a commission by Russell, the then Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. The two briefly became involved together in an informal society of artists called the 'United Patna and Gyah Society' or 'Behar School of Athens'. This rather curious title reflects a particular 'antiquarian' interest in the Grecian Elgin marbles which had been bought by the British Museum in 1816.165

Not much is known about George Chinnery's childhood apart from the fact that he was born in a family of book writers. In May, 1791 at the age of seventeen Chinnery had his first picture, a miniature, displayed at the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy in Somerset House, followed by three miniature portraits exhibited the next year. These must have met with a favourable response because soon after the exhibition was over, Chinnery enrolled for the Royal Academy Schools which were informal institutions and were free to applicants who could convince the Council about their abilities. At the Royal Academy School, Chinnery had been a contemporary of the renowned British landscape painter, J.M.W. Turner, then a student and often is said to have been a pupil of Sir Joshua Reynolds, however, without any factual evidence. Henceforth, he regularly submitted paintings to the Royal Academy exhibitions before he decided to move to Ireland. Ireland, before his arrival offered little prospect for artists. Chinnery's visit to Dublin set forth a string of activities like public exhibitions until in 1800 the Society of Artists of Ireland of which Chinnery was the Secretary, reintroduced exhibitions as a regular feature of social life. Chinnery was soon elected a director to the Drawing School of the Royal Dublin Society which was an equivalent to the Royal Academy in London. In Dublin, he also married the daughter of his landlord there named Marianne Vigne. Though Chinnery was seemingly doing very well in Ireland, the nationalist uprising there probably forced him to flee from there. According to others, his unhappy marriage might have been another reason. It was in May 1802, that Chinnery after many efforts finally received permission to travel to India, the land of promises. Those who travelled out as an East Indiaman were generally employed either in

165 Eyre 1989.
the military or in the civil service of the East India Company; if the latter, they were often obliged to pay extravagant sums of their passage in the expectation of far greater rewards when they arrived back. To go out in any other capacity such as 'free merchant' or 'painter', required the specific permission of the Directors of the Company for they were given to believe that British India could allow only a specific number of artists. On 2nd of June, the same year, another British painter set sail for India – Henry Salt. However, Henry Salt had already secured a position of secretary cum draughtsman to Lord Valentia. Chinnery had no such position or occupation to boast of when he set out for Madras on 11th of June on board the 'Gilwell'.

John Chinnery, George Chinnery's elder brother was already posted in Madras and was in a strong position capable of introducing his brother to potential clients. Chinnery first started with portrait paintings on commission from several of his brother's colleagues and their wives. However, the foreign views and people soon caught his attention and he was intrigued by the native people in their daily chores and tasks which he had never seen before. The supple black bodies of the boatmen who deftly manoeuvred the catamarans, groups of water carriers, bearers, labourers engaged in physical activities, the cattle grazing, all of these required intense study in their varied postures and formations, before perfecting them to be used later as motifs in landscapes. His sketchbooks contain many such studies in the manner of Henry Constable's famous studies in England. However, he had not yet given a serious attempt to topographical drawing. He was still a portrait artist though his exposure to the sensational paintings of Hodges and the Daniells in England possibly had made him cherish a wish for future prospect. In Madras, Chinnery did not receive any major commissions and among the better ones he received was that of officially recording a Durbar in February, 1805, when the new Commander-in-Chief Gen. Sir John Cradock, formally presented a letter to the Nawab-ud-Daula, congratulating the Nawab on his accession to the musnud. Another important painting during his stay in Madras was the portrait of Kirkpatrick's children born out of his marriage to a local princess. (see Fig. 25) The portrait had captured attention of many because of the native get up of the children in their glowing oriental hues. In 1806, he undertook to produce a series of etchings with explanatory text which he titled 'The Indian Magazine and European Miscellany'. On 26th of November, in the same year it was announced that:

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166 See Conner 1993; Conner 1995.
Mr. George Chinnery as Jt. Proprietor of the work, will furnish an etching monthly. The first number will exhibit a view of Madras, from the beach; and every succeeding publication will contain either a landscape from nature or figures illustrative of the character, and occupation of the natives.\textsuperscript{167}

The series clearly outlined his interest in depicting not only the natural scenery but the native bodies which inhabited the space became part of the exotic landscape, while the Banqueting Hall or the Government House hovered in the distant background. (see Fig. 26)

The series ran to nine issues from February to October, 1807 before finally being dissolved with Chinnery leaving Madras for Calcutta on 20th June, 1807, which was by now the nerve centre for any artist's pursuit of lucrative commissions, and where the focus of Anglo-Indian society had now shifted. The shift to Calcutta proved to be lucky for Chinnery who soon rose to the position of being acclaimed as one of the eminent British artists in India. His move most probably was in response to a commission he received, the kind which he was looking forward to for long. He was to paint a portrait of the recently appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Judicature of Bengal in 1807, Sir Henry Russell. The portrait would hang in the Town Hall and was to an extent derived from the tradition started by Sir Elijah Impey, the first Chief Justice of Bengal, whose portrait was painted by Johann Zoffany. Though Russell's portrait brought about a reversal of fortune, Chinnery moved away from Calcutta soon afterwards to Dacca in July, 1808. The reason for this move though not quite clear might have been urged by Sir Charles D'Oyly who he had met in Calcutta and who was now the collector in the city. Portrait painting, though considered a higher form of art, by this time had reached a crisis point and its sole pursuit was generally not considered wise for artists in India especially after the embarrassing trajectory of painters like Johann Zoffany, Charles Smith and Ozias Humphrey. According to Natasha Eaton, the portrait market was no longer the primary recourse for aspiring professional painters in India, which had suffered a set back in the recent past. Talking of the late eighteenth century scenario, she points out:

Although Hastings manoeuvred British artists across India, his successors Sir John Macpherson and Lord Cornwallis maintained a far more ambivalent attitude towards these portraits. Given this lack of official interest coupled with the reforms of the Parliamentary India Act of 1784 and economic recession. Calcutta's colonial portrait market had collapsed by 1786. Desperate painters left in search of either exotic

\textsuperscript{167} \textit{Madras Courrer}, 26th November, 1807. Quoted in Conner 1993. 79.
landscapes as the inspiration for print schemes or for portrait commissions at Indian courts.\footnote{168}

This might have been one of the reasons behind Chinnery's choice of leaving Calcutta for Dacca, which was as yet unexplored and unrepresented by any British painter. Charles D'Oyly convinced him of immense possibilities of the 'picturesque' kind available in Dacca. D'Oyly urged Chinnery just as he later proposed in the prospectus for his folios, *Antiquities of Dacca*:

> The ancient Metropolis of Dacca, on the banks of the Ganges, (is) an interesting part of India not visited by the Messrs. Daniell, nor, it is believed, by any European Artist.\footnote{169}

D'Oyly had recently been appointed Collector of the city of Dacca and possibly this invitation was motivated towards throwing open to the gaze the beauty of a virgin territory. Every action of the British colonizer needed to be recorded visually for fellow brethren to witness, every place he visited needed to be scrutinized and examined for its future potential. D'Oyly himself was an amateur painter of no mean importance. He was able to identify the scenic quality of the place which would draw attention from the British public, for the action of reproducing a space in painting was solely driven towards creating interest in the region and applause for those kinsmen who performed the important task of officiating there. Part of it was a sentimental agony of those who remained away from their country and people screaming for attention, to be remembered, recognized and rewarded. Its resultant effect was to give shape and meaning to the British conquest. It is worth remembering of course that imperialism and its legacies are as much cultural products as they are political, social and economic processes, and in their cultural production they came to be influenced by the aesthetic standards of the day.

In July, 1808, Chinnery moved to Dacca to work with D'Oyly, the foremost amateur painter at that time. Chinnery's close association to Charles D'Oyly might have sprung from knowing his father, Sir John Hadley D'Oyly, in Ireland, and his having painted Charles'

\footnote{168 Eaton 2006. 98-99. In an interesting exposition, Eaton talks about the complete upturning of the portrait gifting tradition in colonial India from the one existent in England at the time wherein the portraitist received payment from the person who commissioned the portrait and not the sitter who was generally the one to whom the portrait would be gifted. Generally, British painters were presented to the nawabs by the Company residents who would then paint portraits of the native nawabs as gifts from the Company appropriated in the 'nazr-khilat' symbolism for which they were expected to receive payments not from the Company but from the native ruler who was the sitter. Many a time a raja or a nawab's default in payment to the painters resulted in extortion and land annexation in lieu of the unpaid debt. Often, the thus retrieved amount would not be recovered by the actual creditor i.e. the painter himself, who by now had already left India for Britain.}

\footnote{169 Quoted in Conner 1993: 89.}
cousin and sister-in-law in Calcutta. The painter Francesca Renaldi had been to Dacca in 1789, Robert Home had paid a visit there in the summer of 1799, but neither had tried their hand at depicting the architecture of the place which was native-Mughal in style. It is only through portraying the architecture or in other words, the 'land-marks', that a space could be identified: it is architecture that makes a space a place. The decadent ruins of the Mughal architecture provided opportunity for Chinnery similar in subject to Brueghel or Delacroix in Europe. Many of the buildings there dated back to the seventeenth century which had seen Dacca's peak of glory when it was the capital of Bengal under the regime of Jahangir. Under the British, it was once a trade centre for cotton textiles but had fallen into disuse at the face of increasing rivalry among European trading nations. Bishop Reginald Heber, in his accounts mentions the "stateliness of the ruins ... huge dark masses of castle and tower ... now overgrown with ivy and peepul-trees" as he travelled to the city by river.170

But again, like in Madras, Chinnery returned to depicting native village scenes, huts and cattle, native men and women in manifold chores. His paintings of ancient Mughal mausoleums, mosques and forts could not be a raging success as Hodges' or Daniells' depictions of Indian marvels were. The pictures did not get published and it is not known whether D'Oyly was entirely satisfied with Chinnery's paintings, for he ultimately included only three vignettes from Chinnery's oeuvre at Dacca in his later set of engravings called Antiquities of Dacca (1814-27) published from London. (see Fig. 30) On being back in Calcutta by May, 1812, where he stayed for twelve years, he was to earn his living as a portraitist but his passion lay in depicting rural Bengal. The fact that he was an acclaimed artist and spent so many active years in Calcutta, must have won him commissions for painting the thoroughfares, the public buildings and private manors of Calcutta, but he refused all of these for very few paintings of this kind are extant. His fascination for native life reflected itself in his personal preferences in his keeping a native mistress and indulging in local habits like smoking the hookah. His most remarkable portrait was still the hybrid Kirkpatrick children in their oriental costumes. His 'India' clearly lay in the villages. His village scenes were strikingly original in lush thick overgrowth and vegetation of date palms and broad leafed banana plants, unlike the carefully constructed British countrysides with maintained bushes, thickets and trees. This required different brush strokes too: the native vegetation needed to be clearly defined as silhouettes of the palm towered over thatched roofs or a banana leaf partly hid a mud dwelling in contrast to a homogeneous

mass of greenery in British scenes. (see Fig. 24) Uncouth native figures adorned the scene, very often granted the foreground, gracefully becoming part and parcel of the landscape, their labour and toil making a romantic pastoral significance like those in Brueghel's dramatic pastorals. It is, as it were, Brueghel translated into an antiquarian native landscape. His conscious relegation of both British architecture and the Indian marvels in the great temples and monuments for rural life and scenery foreshadows the larger preoccupation with the Asian village community at various points and its theorization in later years from Munro to Maine or Marx.171 In their works, the village was the basis of South-Asian agrarian history which was thought to be the essential traditional social order. His images are a far cry from the popular 'panorama' culture in its depiction of space as practised (by the native) rather than as passive, acted upon or 'improved' by imperialist annexation. (see Fig 30, 31) Also, Chinnery differed from earlier artists like the Daniells whose endeavour was to catalogue the wonders of the Orient, in that his range of subjects remained limited to his vision of what he understood as the essential basis of South Asian society and life.

Chinnery's more glamorous and colourful paintings belong to his period of stay in China from 1825 to 1852 where he breathed his last. Heavily indebted, Chinnery is said to have fled from India to Macau. He is particularly noted for his paintings he sent from Canton to be exhibited in the Royal Academy. All his life, Chinnery was fascinated by the everyday scenes all around him. His sketches of everything from cows to boats might not have been very commercially successful but they provide vignettes of life in the manner of a camera before photography came into vogue.

The engravings after Chinnery were published in the 'Behar Lithographic Scrapbook' which denotes that D'Oyly had collected examples from his friend before Chinnery left for China in 1825. Chinnery also played an important part in an artistic project undertaken by D'Oyly after he returned to Calcutta in 1818 this was an illustrated book entitled 'Tom Raw the Griffin' and the fashionable portraitist, Chinnery features as the chief subject of the burlesque in Canto V. The influence of Chinnery on D'Oyly is hard to define. D'Oyly was never a pupil of Chinnery in a conventional sense but their exploring the mofussil together in Dacca in search of rural and picturesque subjects was seminal to D'Oyly's evolution as an artist. In the 1820s, he became the most acclaimed amateur artist in British India, of whom Bishop Heber says:

171 Sir Thomas Munro (1761-1827) held various posts in colonial administration in India and had introduced the 'Ryotwari' system of land revenue. See Henry Sumner Maine. Village Communities in the East and West (1871). See Inden 1990, for an exposition of Marx's translation of cast as forces and relations of production and his conceptualisation of the 'Asiatic mode of production'.

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I found great amusement and interest in looking over Sir Charles' drawing books; he is the best gentleman artist I have ever met with. He says India is full of beautiful and picturesque country, if people would stir a little from the banks of Ganges, and his own drawings and paintings certainly make good his assertion.\textsuperscript{172}

From the late eighteenth century onwards, many amateur artists in the East India Company's service searched for and found innumerable opportunities to record the sights of India. As Mildred Archer says, only a few of the large number of British artists in India were actually professional artists and draughtsmen specially employed by the East India Company. Most of the artists were amateurs for whom drawing was a passion or mere pastime and not for monetary gains. According to Archer:

... amateur artists in India could express themselves in two directions. The first was private, when relaxing from their duties as army officers or civilians, they drew landscapes, or painted pictures of life in camp and station or of the people of India with their colourful costume, their many trades and diverse methods of transport. The second was official when, assigned to duties of which drawing was a necessary part, they produced topographical landscapes, records of monuments and studies in ethnography. The skill, technique and attitudes involved were in many cases the same, but the purposes to which their talents were put differed in emphasis and in degree.\textsuperscript{173}

Among the most productive of the amateur artists in India was Sir Charles D'Oyly. Son of a senior Company official, John Hadley D'Oyly the Company's Resident to the Nawab Babar 'Ali at Murshidabad, Charles was educated in England from where he returned to India in 1797. He held minor posts in the Company towards the beginning but gradually rose to holding important positions in the service. His first major appointment was as Collector of Dacca from 1808 to 1812. Following this, he returned to Calcutta first as Deputy Collector and then Collector of Government Customs and Town Duties, a post he held until 1821 when he was appointed Opium Agent in Patna. This sinecure he held for ten years. In 1831, he became Commercial Resident at Patna. Thereafter, he took a long leave when he visited Cape Town, South Africa. In 1833, he returned to Calcutta as Senior Member of the Board of Customs, Salt, Opium and of the Marine Board, until his retirement in 1838 to Italy where he breathed his last.

Charles was a prolific painter and he produced hundreds of paintings of the Indian countryside many of which are now in the collections of the Victoria Memorial Hall, Calcutta. Some of his paintings are so fine that they had for long been falsely attributed to

\textsuperscript{172} Heber 1828. 238. Quoted in Shellim 1989.  
\textsuperscript{173} Archer 1969. 1.
William Daniell or Chinnery himself. He, of course was not trained in the perspective
drawing, and faltered greatly when depicting architectural views. But his association with
Chinnery taught him to overlook Calcutta's Palladian architecture, the subject of most
British artists at the time and look for alternatives in rural scenes. D'Oyly's early style shows
an amateur gaucheness until he came under the influence of George Chinnery. A number of
D'Oyly's sketchbooks which survive show studies in the manner of Chinnery, along with
finished watercolours and oil paintings. He also produced delicately painted little scenes on
embossed cards, many of them meant to be presents for visitors. His second wife, Elizabeth
Jane, whom he married after the death of Marion, his first wife, was herself an amateur
painter and musician. The D'Oylys played host to a circle of amateur artists and their
enthusiasm and hospitality are recounted in the memoirs of many public figures of the time.
In 1824, D'Oyly was the driving force behind setting up a society of dilettanti called the
'Behar Society of Athens' with Chinnery as its patron. The proceedings of the society are
preserved in a volume consisting also a huge number of water colour paintings by D'Oyly.

One of these proceedings record the foundation of the society:

At a meeting of the Sons of Art at Patna the 1st July 1824, it was proposed and after
some little discussion unanimously agreed that a society be immediately formed to be
entitled the United Patna and Gyah Society, or Behar School of Athens, for the
promotion of the Arts and Sciences and for the circulation of fun and merriment of all
descriptions.\textsuperscript{174}

D'Oyly was elected President. Christopher Webb Smith, another amateur artist whose
sketches of birds had particularly made him renowned, was elected Vice President and in-
charge of the Gyah branch and is jocularly mentioned in the proceedings as 'Bird Smith'.
Together, they produced huge number of sketches, drawings, watercolours in varied Indian
subjects from nature, wild life and birds to topography and landscapes and clothes, customs
and rituals of the natives.

In his style, he varied from the picturesque as practised by Hodges or the Daniells. In
his correspondence with Hastings, who seemed to have admired D'Oyly's drawings, he
reveals his passion for Indian scenes completely neglected by other artists. In 1806, when
D'Oyly happened to be briefly unemployed following retrenchment after Lord Wellesley's
extravagance, he engaged himself in painting views in and around Calcutta. In a letter to
Hastings, he speaks of finishing four large drawings which he proposed to engrave before

\textsuperscript{174} Losty 1989, 137.
sending them to Hastings: views up and down the river, a nearby mosque and a banyan tree.

Of the last, he says:

These I know you will value particularly the tree. To this wonderful work of nature I devoted four days of the last cold weather and while sitting under the spreading branches I could not help wondering that no painter had been induced to exert his talents in describing this tree as it ought to be – alone. That is that it should not be brought in as a subservient feature of the landscape as Daniell has made it but that it should stand in the picture as it does in nature unrivalled.175

Likewise, D'Oyly's admiration for Indian nature and native life made him represent these in his drawings with sensitivity. Having no formal European training, he merely depicted what he saw without much stylistic distractions such as that of the 'rococo' which Hodges used to paint vegetation or botanical features thereby framing Indian or Caribbean scenes in a distinctly European style. 'The Great Fig Tree', painted by D'Oyly when he was posted in Patna demonstrates this speciality in him. In this picture he not only gives the tree the centre stage but characterises it as part of ritual custom of the natives. (see Fig. 32) Likewise, he truly moved away from the banks of the Ganges as he prescribed in his views expressed to Reginald Heber, and ventured into the black town in search of authentic Indian views: the streets, bazaars, the huts, the rituals and festivals of the natives to be captured by his gaze. His Views of Calcutta and its Environs, though published much later after 1848, most of the drawings belong to around this time. In most of his drawings there is a clear demarcation of foreground and background. The foreground is usually and strikingly dedicated to native life. Native bodies abound usually engaged in their daily rituals. Animals too often share space with humans on the streets, beside ponds or the Hooghly river. The middle space usually is occupied by thatched huts, whereas the background captures a towering Indian or European iconic architecture, partly shrouded in thick foliage. In 1808, when he was appointed Collector of Dacca, he wrote to Warren Hastings saying:

I shall some time hence please God offer you as companions a few of the ruins of the city of Dacca which I assure you are exquisite for their magnificence and elegance and are calculated to tempt the pencil of an artist.176

The result were the drawings for Antiquities of Dacca, which he had planned as a joint venture with Chinnery. It, however, materialised much later. His sketches and paintings dealing with Dacca were brought out from 1823 onwards in the form of folios from

175 Quoted in Losty 1995. 83.
176 Quoted in Losty 1995. 87.
London. Each of these folios had about four to five sketches or paintings in it together with topical and historical description of them. These brief explanatory notes were submitted by an acclaimed historian who was in the military services, Military Surgeon, James Atkinson. The folios taken together, later took the shape of *Antiquities of Dacca*. These too share a similar format with the Calcutta paintings and capture mofussil life in its plebeian detail with a Mughal architecture then in its ruins hovering atop with dense at times oppressive vegetation taking roots in it.

With acquiring his new press in Patna which was called Behar Amateur Lithographic Press, he published his paintings as lithographs, a process newly introduced in Calcutta in 1822. He published a huge number of paintings by himself or by his circuit of artists, in various scrapbooks and volumes devoted to ornithology and hunting. Several volumes called the *Behar Amateur Lithographic Scrap Book*, *The Feathered Game of Hindustan*, (1828), *Oriental Ornithology* (1829), *Costumes of India* (1830) *Indian Dead Game* (?) came out of the new press. His most serious lithographic work is a series of views published in 1830 as *Sketches of the New Road in a Journey from Calcutta to Gyah*. The sketches, a series of nineteen to twenty lithographs, are strictly topographical in nature, delineating the journey, the remarkable views and landmarks one might encounter by the entire stretch of the road from Calcutta to Gaya. The work, which can now be found in India Office Collection in the British Library, was possibly published from Calcutta itself. Until late in the nineteenth century it was unusual for official reports involving illustrations to be printed and published in India. The reason behind this practice was technical. During this time, the various processes of reproduction such as aquatinting, lithography or photolithography were done far more competently and elegantly in England. Frequently the officer concerned wrote a personal account and published it in London with the support of the Company or the Government of India. *Sketches of the New Road* belongs to this category of work but was produced in India by the relatively new printing process of lithography, which had been invented by Alois Senefelder of Munich in 1798. The task in the *Sketches* is apparently of naming and marking out those landmarks individually which could be seen in the course of a journey by the newly constructed road. Little or no European sign or landmark is visible other than the road itself or objects like the telegraph tower which signify progress and modernisation in an otherwise primitive natural scenery. Most of these being prospects, the

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177 Losty 2008.  
178 D'Oyly 1860.  
179 Archer 1969. 3.  
180 Losty 1989. 135.
travellers on the road at times visible with their horses, camels, bullock carts and in a few cases elephants, appear as tiny, dwarfed figures pitted against the towering scenic landscape in a known Romantic style. J.P. Losty speaks of the high vantage point assumed by the artist in these drawings:

D'Oyly's unexplained high viewpoint for his street scenes (is he on the back of an elephant?) allows him not only a good vista in the otherwise narrow and crowded streets of Patna, but also to record in vivid detail the different textures of the roofs, their makeshift patches and vegetation. 181

In Europe, 'prospects', which emerged in the eighteenth century, and later a widely accepted format for panorama views, were used to portray a social world. Taking a bird's eye view of an entire terrain (or estate), such views usually included a social world of fields, forests, roads and rivers, sometimes town and cities. 'Prospects' as the term signifies, charted both time and space, suggesting a view into the future as well as the distance often of an improving world. 182 The format of the prospect suited D'Oyly's Sketches of the New Road accurately, for fusing a society and territory in this way it clearly defined a form of cultural identity for the entire region. The road paves the way to India's modern future.

Once in Gaya, frontal views of temples occupy the foreground at times framed by the banyan or peepul tree, for example, the tenth sketch in the series 'View from the Summit of the Kutcumsunder Pass' (1828). 'Hazareebaugh', which is the next stage is described as "situated on a flat table land of considerable extent which is gained by a gradual ascent to the top, but in itself owns no temptation to the pencil of an artist." Its topography is recreated meticulously in the drawing supplemented with written piece:

The country about Hazareebaugh is a dead flat and not until you travel about 10 miles beyond it, do you again behold picturesque scenery. Arrived however, at the Kutkumsunder Pass, the descent from the Table land; - one of the finest and most extensive prospects; at once gratifies the eye. From the summit is observed a low green beautifully dotted valley, from which to the right gradually rise hills covered with rich foliage, and the horizon is bounded by a range of hills, varying in their tones by recessions, till they are lost in haze ...  

Similarly, the quasi ethnographic details in the fourteenth sketch of a 'View of the Summun Boorje at Gyah' sets up a resemblance of the shrine to an European structure only to dissolve it:

181 Losty 1995. 90.
182 Daniels 2004.
The first appearance of this singular building strikes the beholder by its resemblance to an old European Castle, but it is in fact merely a shell to a Rocky ascent behind, composed of small narrow rooms inhabited by Gyawabs, the priests and descendants of the priests of Gyah, personages of great reputed sanctity who amass considerable wealth from the rich and liberal pilgrims resorting from all parts of Hindoostan to worship at the different shrines. These persons have large possessions in Gyah and form a kind of fraternity sending out emissaries to collect pilgrims on their way of becoming their guides in the performances of their religious rites.

D'Oyly's *Antiquities of Dacca* (1830?), which deals mainly with the past and present architecture derives from a similar comparative perspective. In describing an old mosque, D'Oyly speaks in the same vein as that of the previous passage from *Sketches of the New Road*:

Like some of those Venetian buildings which adorn the shores of the Adriatic, and are beheld with so much pleasure in the pictures of Canaletti, this Mosque rises immediately from the margin of the river, with an effect at once stately and picturesque. Its neglected domes and arches are now shattered by accidents, crumbling to decay; yet in the general proportions and character of its architecture, the principles of elegance and simplicity appear to be combined; and the tout ensemble can scarcely fail to impress the beholder with respect for the taste and talent of its architect.

In a substantial portion of the treatise, D'Oyly seems to be filling in information in the gaps left by Tavernier who visited this city in January, 1666, or rectifying mistakes appearing to supply specifics and accuracies to generalizations. D'Oyly starts off by recalling the strategic location of Dacca not only because it had once been the capital of Bengal, which rose to pre-eminence during the time of Aurangzebe, but also because of the presence of other European powers prior to the coming of the British and the East India Company:

Long before the English settled at Dacca, the Dutch had established a factory there, and transacted their business through native agents; [...] The English factory at Dacca, having been preceded by that which Tavernier terms "a tolerably good one", was rebuilt about a century ago by Mr. Stark, with the permission of Ittizam Khan, [...] previous to which native agents had been employed to purchase cloths, and convey them for sale to Calcutta. It was not till the year 1742 that the French succeeded in getting permission to rebuild a factory here, which is now, as well as that erected by the Dutch, a heap of ruins.¹⁹³

¹⁹³ *Sketches of the New Road* as well as the *Antiquities of Dacca*, D'Oyly's identity as an administrative officer in the colonial service is quite prominent, and even emphasised
in that both make comments on the state of decay and administrative lapse the region had been suffering from in the recent past. The *Antiquities* deal with descriptions and depictions mainly of the architectural past and present, and there is inevitably an attempt to draw comparisons between past Islamic elegance and the poverty stricken present, while drawing copious references to Alexander Dow and his account of Islamic culture and its decadence:

Thus Ducca for more than half a century was the capital of Bengal, and continued to be enriched by the multitudes which crowded to the courts of its governors. The stupendous remains of gateways, roads, bridges, and other public works, which present themselves on every side, sufficiently prove the former grandeur and magnificence of the city.\textsuperscript{184}

While D'Oyly points out the deficiency in Tavernier's account, he in actuality takes credit for his own 'discovery' or the research done by British administration:

It would appear from this account by Tavernier, that almost the whole of Dacca at that time consisted of habitations built of mud, straw, wood, matting, and bamboo, such as are constructed by the common people at present. He mentions no public buildings excepting those of the Europeans; although the Great Kuttra, a most magnificent edifice, as well as the Mosque of Syuff Khan, had been erected many years before, and the small Kuttra more recently; but still several years before the celebrated French traveller visited Ducca. These splendid buildings, as well as several others, seem to have eluded the observation, or escaped the memory of Tavernier.\textsuperscript{185}

While he takes pride to exhibit his discoveries through his drawings, he does not miss an opportunity to point out the existing flaws in the survey of a representative of a rival European power. In a move that was crucial to the age, he disentangles what is seen from what is already known, demonstrating a spirit of scientific objectivity and enquiry shared with other fellow European artists of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{186} It follows therefore that British survey and governance is by far more efficient and immaculate than any other competing governance structures. However, when he mentions the Daniells and their inability to identify the picturesque significance of the location, he simply gloats in a self glorification in having the artistic vision and acumen too to proceed on and complete an unfinished agenda – to reveal to sight an entire terrain which had been so long (surprisingly) left out. He definitely had a format for the *Antiquities* in mind, for he had to choose from Chinnery's drawings ultimately incorporating only three of his vignettes from his limited

\textsuperscript{184} Ibid. 14.  
\textsuperscript{185} Ibid. 14.  
\textsuperscript{186} Gombrich 1962. 12
repertoire, which could suit the ruling structure of a comparativist paradigm. He definitely trusted more in himself when it came to representing his own findings – of undertaking a systematic recounting of the stately architecture of a lost world overlooked by all. The first among the three of Chinnery's drawings was that of "An ancient Mosque and Modern Habitations of Dacca" which was supposed to contrast "present poverty with Mohammedan importance, and rusticity with architectural elegance". (see Fig. 30) The second was a more explicit comment on the decline of Dacca, according to D'Oyly, though Chinnery might have painted it with utmost passion and admiration, the cottage of "a poor muslin weaver, formed of bamboo, mud, and matting, thatched with straw: his umbrella and a few of his domestic culinary utensils are lying about, and at the right hand corner is part of an old loom".187 (see Fig. 24) The third one, 'Approach to Tungy', a hunting scene has an elephant and a dead tiger slung across its back.188 The work ends with a high romanticist note contemplating on the passage of time, fall of empires and vicissitudes of life and human endeavours:

To the noise of mariners and shipwrights which once resounded along the nulla – to the bustle and pomp of commerce and princely equipage – has succeeded a degree of loneliness and silence. [...] passion is lulled; and the imagination, willingly enthralled by feelings of melancholy pleasure, is instinctively led to compare the vicissitudes of human power and opinion, and mutabilities of human art, with the permanencies of Nature herself. [...] The bridge before us is fast following its predecessors [...] Though now mutilated and mouldering under the effects of time and neglect, and the ruder dilapidations of war, it is still an interesting object to the eye of the landscape painter and poet.189

Understandably, the kind of learning he might have had and the time period he belonged to, inevitably there is a latent anxiety in his work to be remembered through his paintings in future, despite the brevity of human life, as he says in a prior passage:

While we sympathise with the warm consciousness of an artist who hopes to live in his works, we are involuntarily apt to indulge ourselves for a moment in the vain wish that we could have preserved his name also from oblivion.190

188 Conner 1993. 89-90.
189 D'Oyly 1817. n.p.
190 Ibid. n.p.
The systematic unfolding of past history through recounting the spatial configuration and architecture of the region gives the space an identity and grants it a coda of registers for ready recognition and eventually makes it a place.

*The European in India*, a collection of drawings depicting the life style and occupation of East India men, downright addresses the reader at home. It catalogues the dos and don'ts for aspiring British visitors to India. It grants advice for survival in India under the onslaught of a cruel summer, tropical insects, fatal tropical diseases and beguiling and deceptive bilingual natives. The work produced as a vindication of the lifestyle, occupation and activities, both public and private, of the British residents in India at a time when as an aftermath of the Warren Hastings episode, the imperial presence in India and the alleged 'nabobdom' increasingly came to be questioned. In arguing on behalf of the colonial official, it says:

... in lieu of censuring them for indulging in what might appear imprudent, we should probably have a better claim to criticise on the merits of the case, were we to sum up all the dangers, privations, and sufferings, they undergo. [...] with regard to education, morality and liberal principles, the gentlemen of the Honourable Establishments are second to none!!

Interestingly, the work comprising of twenty plates in all, depicts interactions with natives at various levels, at home with the domestic help, the barber, pankha puller and 'khanshama', entertainment with 'nautchgirls', sports and court scenes with native rajahs and nawabs. Attached to the plates, is another thesis called *A Brief History of Ancient and Modern India* by F.W. Blagdon, originally written to accompany a collection of large folio engravings called 'Views of India' designed to "enable the Reader, who may be unacquainted with Asiatic affairs, to form a correct idea of the immense and interesting territory which has so often been the site of British bravery, and which will doubtless long prove a primary source of British opulence". Using a much repeated formula, it habitually demarcates the extent of this "immense and interesting territory" from "the vast chain of mountains of Thebet and Tartary in the North, to the island of Ceylon on the South; and from the great river Ganges on the East, to that of Indus on the West." Identical rhetoric refigures in most

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191 "Preface". *The European in India*; from a collection of drawings by Charles Doyley, Esq. Engraved by J.H. Clark and C. Dubourg; with a preface and copious descriptions, by Captain Thomas Williamson; accompanied with *A Brief History of Ancient and Modern India*, from the Earliest Periods of Antiquity to the termination of the Late Mahratta War, By F.W. Blagdon, Esq. London: Edward Orme, Bond Street, Corner of Brook Street, print Seller and Publisher to His Majesty and His Royal Highness The Prince Regent, 1813.
visual and textual matter produced in the eighteenth and nineteenth century colonial India as is to be seen in the rest of the thesis.

Landscapes and specially topographical paintings, at the specific juncture of history when many colonial painters were actively producing just that, was not seen as a tremendously important form of art. Joshua Reynolds was the greatest influential figure pertaining to the British scenario of art during the period under discussion. Reynolds had placed landscape very low in his hierarchy of types of paintings, with history paintings at the top since its narrative quality and mythic characters appealed to universal sensibilities, which carried one beyond temporal and spatial analogies. Even among landscapes, Reynolds preferred Claude Lorraine's idealised landscapes to Rubens' more particularised and detailed ones, for idealised nature suggested a generalised abstraction of the mind propelling the mind of the viewer to contemplate beyond the immediate representation. On the other hand, topographical views being merely portraiture of places could not, according to him, transcend beyond the representation. At a time when the aesthetic sphere was controlled by these maxims, the landscape views from around the world steadily filtered into the British society beginning with William Hodges' *Travels*. Carefully balancing the poetic vision as explicated by Reynolds, with a certain kind of scientific naturalistic view, these paintings countered the dogma against the genre and made greater truth claims towards human history. Landscape and topographical views might not still have been acclaimed as fine art but their status was certainly raised from mere sensational exotic practices to that of scholarly activity in being connected with the history of various countries and providing valuable views of the manners of mankind with utmost truthfulness. They wholly contributed to the rhetoric of empire in appropriating a contested terrain through its representation while projecting British rule as an effective machinery for controlling and governing the space presented.
MOBILE INCARCERATIONS
In this section, I shall talk about travel as a cultural activity and writing about it as a practice garnered towards constructing particularized identity of a space. Following an identical scheme as that in the preceding section, I shall first look at English travel narratives which primarily fashioned the English society and space and then progressed towards construction of a national identity of the British conglomerate. Though the recording of the experiential facet of the activity is encoded within various generic conventions, that the writer-narrator retains an individual voice is not to be elided. However, the construction of space in the way of what John Urry calls 'place myths' depends on literary representations following aesthetic codes born under specific socio-cultural and economic patterns in India. The technology of spatial construction developed through travel literature is then extended further beyond the nation to encompass a wide array of spaces across the globe.

The English narratives of travel by the British in India similarly constructed the subcontinent in its terrestrial materiality. The construction of spatial identity through writing thus occurred specific aesthetic and observational schemes. The narratives, then supplied information into individual grids within the overarching frame of the map. While the map delineated the extents and bounds of the geographical unit, landscape paintings and travelogues supplied information regarding the appearance of the space.

Therefore, what characterized the narratives was the invocation of the visual dimension in the physical encounter with the foreign space. The contact entailed an examination oriented scrutiny of the space which manifested in the writings attempting to capture the essence of the space in its varied indiscrinate layers, where ethnography mingled with entomology and horticulture merged with an understanding of the ecology. Amidst the prevailing scientism of the age of Enlightenment, the gradual schematisation of the representations in scientific terms become more and more prominent and obvious. This is reflected in the shift of focus in the narratives over time from the late eighteenth century to mid-nineteenth century, with the Royal Geographical Society determining formulaic codes
for travellers who had to abide by rules regarding what to observe and write about. The formulaic codes intervene with the individuation of the different voices which then orchestrate into an image of the space in the collective consciousness.

It is interesting to explore, once again, the parallelism between the systems of organization of space in Britain as a relational model to that in south Asia. The same, as played out through the medium of travel literature is my concern in this section, as are landscape paintings and maps in other sections. A detailed study of the historical evolution of the genera in England only articulates the complexity of the syndrome leading to the production of a spatial abstraction interchangeable with a name within the community's system of nomenclature.