

## ***Travel Literature***

Travel literature is a form of nonfiction writing which is written by the writers during the time of travel and visit from one place to another. These types of writing are often characterised by the realistic description of the things. The writers often describe what they see with their naked eyes. The history of travel literature is very old. It started many years ago. Now a days, travel literature has become very popular among the readers and the new writers prefer to write travel writings. We have got the highest growth and speed of travel literature in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. We have got some wonderful travel writing by the American writers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For example, Moby Dick, an adventurous travel writing which tells the story of mystery, wonder and adventure.

The travel narrative emerged as one of the most popular, if not the most popular, literary genre among nineteenth-century U.S. readers. Several critics, including Justin Edwards in his *Exotic Journeys: Exploring the Erotics of U.S. Travel Literature, 1840-1930*, have

speculated on the type of socio-cultural work performed by these writings. Edwards and others have observed the travel narrative as a meaningful blend of entertainment and education. Detailed accounts of journeys to locales outside of the nation's boundaries fed the desire of readers for knowledge regarding the foreign and the exotic. Perceived differences in behaviour, custom, and belief held a deep fascination for the nineteenth-century citizen, and, for many, the travel narrative provided the only vehicle for engaging that fascination. In addition to building a foundation of knowledge on foreign locales and populations, these narratives offered individual readers an opportunity to negotiate his/her position within the ever-shifting political landscape of the nation. With their authors/protagonists serving as a sort of proxy for those eager to experience their own encounter with the exotic, these writings encouraged their readers to think through their own national, racial, and gendered identities. The socializing function of the travel narrative, that which affirmed the place of its readers within the nation and subsequently the world, dovetailed nicely with the political project of Manifest Destiny and the westward expansion of the U.S. throughout the nineteenth century. Therefore, many of the most popular travel narratives, including Richard Henry Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast* (1840) and Mark Twain's *Roughing It* (1872), were those that centered around the western

portions of what would eventually become the continental United States.

Reading George Dunham's *A Journey to Brazil* (1853) - part of the 'Our Americas' Archive Partnership a digital archive collaboration on the hemispheric Americas - alongside texts such as *Two Years Before the Mast* and *Roughing It* will prove to be a highly rewarding endeavour for students of nineteenth century U.S. culture and literature. Dunham has compiled a detailed, if somewhat haphazard, travelogue

of his voyage on board the ship *Montpelier* and then his protracted stay in mid-nineteenth-century Brazil. Brazilian plantation owners brought him over in order to help modernize their plantation system through his knowledge of and experience with advanced agricultural technologies as well as the efficient organization of slave labour. If writers such as Dana and Twain provide us with insights into the role played by culture in the processes of territorial expansion that characterized the nineteenth-century.

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