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978-0-521-87447-2 - The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing

Tim Youngs

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*The Cambridge Introduction to
Travel Writing*

Critics have long struggled to find a suitable category for travelogues. From its ancient origins to the present day, the travel narrative has borrowed elements from various genres – from epic poetry to literary reportage – in order to evoke distant cultures and exotic locales, and sometimes those closer to hand. Tim Youngs argues in this lucid and detailed Introduction that travel writing redefines the myriad genres it comprises and is best understood on its own terms. To this end, Youngs surveys some of the most celebrated travel literature from the medieval period until the present, exploring themes such as the quest motif, the traveller's inner journey, postcolonial travel and issues of gender and sexuality. The text culminates in a chapter on twenty-first-century travel writing and offers predictions about future trends in the genre, making this Introduction an ideal guide for today's students, teachers and travel writing enthusiasts.

Tim Youngs is Professor of English and Travel Studies at Nottingham Trent University. His publications include the forthcoming *Beastly Journeys: Travel and Transformation at the Fin de Siècle* (2013), and he is the co-editor of *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing* (2002). In 1997, he founded *Studies in Travel Writing* and continues to serve as the journal's editor.

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To Peter Hulme for leading the way

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1. ‘The Miracle of Flight’, from Bhajju Shyam, *The London Jungle Book* (London: Tara Publishing in association with the Museum of London, 2004) *page* 124
2. ‘The Bard of Travel’, from Bhajju Shyam, *The London Jungle Book* (London: Tara Publishing in association with the Museum of London, 2004) 126

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Acknowledgements

This book results from a quarter of a century's work on travel writing. A disadvantage of this fact is that I am conscious, on completion, of all the reading I have not been able to fit into it, and of all the reading yet to be done. There is always more to do, especially in a field as dynamic as this one. A happier outcome is the opportunity to acknowledge, if insufficiently, the number of debts I have incurred. Any list would be incomplete, so, with apologies to those whom I have overlooked (and with the usual but sincere caveat that all weaknesses and mistakes are my own), I am grateful to the following who have variously provided encouragement, support, hospitality and ideas: to Nottingham Trent University for my career so far; to Tara Books for permission to reproduce images and text from Bhajju Shyam, *The London Jungle Book* (London: Tara Publishing in association with the Museum of London, 2004); to the anonymous readers of the proposal for and submission of this work; to Susan Bassnett, Françoise Besson, Dinah Birch, Peter Bishop, William Blazek, Jan Borm, Roy Bridges, Peter Brooker, Adam Burbage, Robert Burroughs, Mary Baine Campbell, Steve Clark, Ben Colbert, Patrick Crowley, William Dalrymple, Robyn Davidson, Jean-Yves Le Dizez, Stephen Donovan, Jacqueline Dutton, R. J. (Dick) Ellis, Charles Forsdick, Indira Ghose, Pere Gifra-Adroher, Jayati Gupta, Betty Hagglund, Martin Hargreaves, Glenn Hooper, Peter Hulme, John Hutnyk, Alison and Andrew and Sarah Johnson, Anna Johnston, Emilia Ljungberg, John Lucas, Gesa Mackenthun, Tilar Mazzeo, Nivedita Misra, Sharon Ouditt, Alasdair Pettinger, Russ Pottle, Silvia Ross, Anka Ryall, Ray Ryan, Dinah Roma Sianturi, Paul Smethurst, Stan Smith, Juan Pablo Spicer-Escalante, Lee Sterrenburg, Claire Thomas, Carl Thompson, John Tomlinson, Gary Totten, Sam Ward, Richard White, Gregory Woods, Tom Wright, Gary Younge, Waldemar Zacharasiewicz, Carl Thompson's and my Travel Writing students at Nottingham Trent University (especially those who graduated in 2011) and my postgraduate travel students, completed and current. The book serves as an inadequate memorial to Sarmukh Singh Sikand and Sohindar Kaur Sikand, both of whom passed away during the time I was writing it, and whose journeys made possible this final acknowledgement: above all, and always, to Gurminder and Natty, with love, gratitude and admiration.