

This is a book about land. It is about a land- about India and how that vast and diverse region came to be known to, and conceptualized by, British and other European travelers and observers in the first half of the nineteenth century. But it is also a book about the land, about the ways in which Indias material environment became increasingly subject to the colonial understanding of landscape and nature, and to the scientific scrutiny of itinerant naturalists. . . . [It] is concerned with European responses to an unfamiliar landscape, about the land as an object of colonial fear and desire, utility and aesthetics. It seeks to show how India, in passing under British control, was evaluated in ways that combined scenic delight and practical opportunity with a harsher appraisal of India as a land of death and disease, of desolation and deficiency. from the Introduction

The Tropics and the Traveling Gaze considers the European representation and understanding of landscape and nature in early nineteenth-century India. It draws on travel narratives, literary texts, and scientific literature to show the diversity of European (especially British) responses to the Indian environment and the ways in which these contributed to the wider colonizing process. Through its close examination of the correlation between tropicality and otherness, and of science as a means of colonial appropriation, the book offers a new interpretation of the history of colonial India and a critical contribution to the understanding of environmental history and the tropical world. It will be of interest to historians of the environment, science, and colonialism; South Asianists; and cultural and environmental anthropologists and geographers.

"An eminently readable book, *The Tropics and the Traveling Gaze* unravels the mysteries of the tropics in India as constructed by nineteenth-century Europeans. . . . A richly documented and important book which will be useful to students from a range of interdisciplinary fields." *Victorian Studies*

"*The Tropics and the Traveling Gaze* deserves a wide audience. Any historian of biology interested in British imperialism, Romanticism, scientific networks (particularly those linking metropolitan and colonial naturalists) and imperial environmental history will find it an enjoyable, informative, and intellectually stimulating read." *Journal of the History of Biology*

"*The Tropics and the Traveling Gaze* is a valuable book for historians and anthropologists..Despite the vast literature on all the themes presented in the book, none connects these various topics as elegantly as the current volume. Arnold's writing style is graceful, his arguments are persuasive, and his creative use of non-governmental sources allow for an original approach to a history of the land." *Itinerario*

"David Arnold's absorbing study will reward anyone interested in botany and biogeography, scientific travel, colonial science, and the impact of Romanticism on nineteenth-century science." *ISIS*

"In *The Tropics and the Traveling Gaze*, David Arnold deftly untangles and analyses the nature of the connections between literary representations of the land, the development of botanical knowledge, and the consolidation of colonial power." *Times Literary Supplement*

"A fascinating cast of travelers, scientists, and others populate Arnold's account it addresses important conceptual issues and provides an entertaining account full of specific insights and fascinating characters. Anyone interested in the cultural dimensions of the constructions of power and knowledge in colonial settings will find the book worthwhile." *History*

"A rich study of changing British perceptions of India it will provide scholars of science and nature in colonial India many new insights about an overlooked period and subject. Arnold's arguments about how scientific travelers of the early nineteenth century reimagined India as a place of death and tropicality are nuanced and powerful. His contentions about the their connection to growing British power are also important." *Environmental History*

"*The Tropics and the Traveling Gaze* is an insightful study of the changing ways Britons (and other Europeans) responded to and described India during the first half of the nineteenth century. The authors interpretations are original and challenging, and the fine research and extensive reference notes make Arnolds argument convincing." Michael H. Fisher, Robert S. Danforth Professor of History, Oberlin College

"This book will become a valuable text in the field of environmental humanities, as well as for students of postcolonial literature and for the wide field of cultural studies. The elegant narrative is written in a clear and lucid style, sprinkled with wry and understated humor, and sensitive to the personal tragedies of many of the travelers through whose perspectives David Arnold evokes nineteenth century Indian landscapes." K. Sivaramakrishnan, University of Washington

"Arnolds discussion of the relationship between botanizing nature and travelers perceptions is a new and thoughtful reworking of some wellknown and some relatively untapped sources. For anyone with an interest in the issues of colonial knowledges, imperial projects, and the natural world." Mahesh Rangarajan, author of *Indias Wildlife History: An Introduction*

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