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Beyond the Text: Spatial Reading as a Digital Humanities Approach to Colonial Bengali Women's Travel Narratives

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Abstract

This article examines the relationship between geographical movement and narrative organisation in two Bengali women's travelogues from colonial India: Krishnabhabini Das's Englande Bangamahila (1885), translated as A Bengali Lady in England, and Durgabati Ghose's Paschimjatriki (1936), translated as The Westward Traveller. Combining close reading with digital spatial visualisation, the study reconstructs the writers' westward journeys and compares mapped itinerary with narrative structure. It argues that mapping is most productive not simply as an illustration of where a traveller went, but as a deliberately reduced spatial model against which literary organisation can be examined. Das's narrative initially follows geographical progression from India towards London, after which route increasingly gives way to thematic concentration. Ghose's account, by contrast, retains a more conspicuous relationship among itinerary, chronology and continued movement through Europe. The comparison also distinguishes confirmed stops, excursions and locations mentioned without physical visitation. These differences expose a central limit of cartographic representation: geographical extent does not correspond automatically to narrative importance. The article consequently proposes that the discrepancy between mapped movement and textual emphasis can itself function as evidence in digitally assisted travel-writing analysis. It shows how digital mapping can support literary interpretation while preserving the distinction between route and narrative.

Keywords: Bengali women's travel writing; literary mapping; digital spatial visualisation; Krishnabhabini Das; Durgabati Ghose; narrative space.

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I. Introduction

Krishnabhabini Das begins the principal journey in *A Bengali Lady in England* by departing from Howrah Station on September 26, travelling towards England "via Bombay" (Das, 2015, 3). The opening chapters then follow movement with striking geographical clarity: "Calcutta to Bombay", "Bombay to Venice" and "Venice to London" (Das, 2015, vii). Half a century later, Durgabati Ghose undertook a four-month European tour between June and October 1932. Beginning from Bombay, her route moved through the Red Sea and Mediterranean, across continental Europe and into England before continuing through further European destinations and eventually returning to India (Gupta, 2021, 93–96). Both writers therefore transform physical journeys into written ones, but they do not organise travelled space in the same way.

A geographical itinerary and the narrative produced from it are not identical structures. Travel supplies an apparent chronology of departure, transit, arrival and return, yet writing can expand a brief encounter, compress a long passage, interrupt sequence with recollection, or remain concentrated within a single place after intercity movement has stopped. The route travelled consequently provides one possible organisation of experience rather than a complete account of narrative space.

Digital mapping makes this distinction unusually visible. Plotting locations can clarify sequence and connections between places, but transforming a literary journey into points and lines also suppresses duration, attention and thematic concentration. Maps and other visual elements in travel writing do not transparently reproduce space; they select and construct it (Englert and Vlasta, 2020, 7–8, 17–18). This article treats that limitation as analytically useful. The map is not asked to become a more authoritative version of the travelogue. Instead, its reduction of the journey provides a second representational structure against which the written narrative can be read.

Scholarship on Bengali women's travel writing has already established the historical and literary importance of these texts. Das and Ghose have been situated within a longer history of Bengali women's participation in travel culture and print (Gupta, 2021, 1–20). Women's travel writing across the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has similarly been described as a heterogeneous and changing form rather than a homogeneous category (Dutta, 2020, 15–17). Das and Ghose have also been directly compared through questions including mobility, identity, colonial encounter, public and private space and the traveller's gaze (Kankaria and Banerjee, 2022, 103–120). The present study takes a deliberately different route by treating the relationship between itinerary and narrative organisation as its primary object.

The central question is therefore: what becomes visible when geographical movement recorded in these travelogues is reconstructed spatially and compared with the organisation of the texts themselves? A related question concerns the limits of that reconstruction: where does a digital map correspond to narrative form, and where does the narrative exceed what a route map can represent? The comparison reveals two distinct patterns. Das initially organises her account through geographical progression, but after arrival in London the route loses much of its organising force and thematic discussion increasingly takes over. Ghose's account maintains a stronger relationship among chronology, itinerary and onward movement; London is a major stop, but not the point at which geographical progression ends. Spatial visualisation is therefore most productive when read against the unequal

narrative weight assigned to mapped places. The mismatch between travelled space and narrated space is not noise to be eliminated: it is part of the evidence.

II. Travel Writing Between Route, Text and Map

Travel writing depends upon movement, but movement does not determine narrative form. A journey unfolds through geographical space and chronological time; its written account subsequently selects, compresses, rearranges and elaborates that movement. A physical itinerary may provide an underlying sequence without dictating the eventual structure of the text. This distinction matters especially for digital mapping because cartographic representation privileges spatial sequence more strongly than literary narrative necessarily does.

The interaction between text and visual representation is already embedded in the history of travel writing. Maps, photographs, illustrations and sketches can orient readers, establish claims to authenticity and organise perceptions of place. Such visual forms must nevertheless be treated critically: a map can visualise place names, geographical features and movements while simultaneously shaping the space it appears merely to reproduce (Englert and Vlasta, 2020, 7–8, 17–18). Literary mapping is useful precisely because this process of selection can be made explicit. A reconstructed itinerary isolates one dimension of a travelogue: geographical movement. It can show that one location precedes another, that a traveller changes direction, or that an excursion departs from a principal route. It cannot, without additional interpretation, explain why a brief stop receives several pages while a long geographical passage receives a sentence. The map and the text therefore distribute significance according to different scales.

This problem is particularly relevant to Bengali women's travel writing. Women's accounts became increasingly visible within Bengali print culture during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries while developing different relationships to tourism, domesticity, observation and publication (Gupta, 2021, 1–20). Bengali women's travel narratives should likewise not be treated as a single stable genre, since writers adopt different strategies across changing historical moments (Dutta, 2020, 15–17). Similar destinations therefore need not produce similar narrative structures. The comparison of Das and Ghose has already proved productive for questions of identity, mobility and colonial encounter (Kankaria and Banerjee, 2022, 103–120). Paschimjatriki has also been described as diary-like and chronologically organised, with photographs interspersed through the account (Kankaria and Banerjee, 2022, 111). The present article does not repeat that emphasis on identity or gaze. Instead, it asks how geographical sequence is converted into textual organisation and what is revealed when the two structures are considered separately.

Digital Humanities methods do not remove interpretive choice from this process. A place must be identified and assigned coordinates; a confirmed stop must be distinguished from an excursion or a location only mentioned; and connecting lines must be understood as representations of documented sequence rather than exact historical tracks. Mapping consequently translates textual evidence into another representational system. It does not extract an uncontested geography from the text.

The translated corpus also requires caution. Das's Englande Bangamahila, first published in Bengali

in 1885, is analysed through Somdatta Mandal's 2015 English translation. Ghose's Paschimjatriki appeared as a book in 1936 after serial publication and was translated by Mandal as The Westward Traveller in 2010. For the present article, however, detailed analysis of Ghose's route and selected passages relies on itinerary information and translated extracts reproduced in Gupta's study (Gupta, 2021, 93–110), rather than treating inaccessible portions of the English edition as directly examined. The map therefore includes only movements that can be securely established from the available evidence.

The comparison also benefits from distinguishing cartographic sequence from literary scale. In a conventional map, scale is geographical: distance is represented proportionally and neighbouring places are located through spatial relation. Literary scale is produced differently. A writer can magnify a station halt through description, reduce a country to a passing reference, or make one city contain a series of social and conceptual spaces. The same location can therefore be small cartographically and large narratively. Treating this difference as a formal problem helps prevent the map from becoming a decorative illustration of material already established by close reading.

This approach is related to, but narrower than, attempts to use digital methods to recover every spatial reference in a text. The aim here is not exhaustive geoparsing. Exhaustiveness would create its own interpretive problems because place names in travel writing can refer to memory, comparison, anticipated travel, historical information or destinations never reached. The visualisations instead use a limited set of categories whose evidentiary status can be explained. Such restraint is especially important for historical travel writing, where modern coordinates can give uncertain or differently named locations an appearance of precision that the source itself does not possess.

III. Reconstructing Two Journeys: Method and Corpus

The study compares two travel accounts published approximately five decades apart: Das's Englande Bangamahila (1885) and Ghose's Paschimjatriki (1936). They are useful comparative cases because both record westward journeys from colonial India to London, yet their journeys and publications belong to different moments in Bengali travel culture. Das's account begins with a strongly directional movement towards England. Ghose's interwar account records a planned European tour organised through Thomas Cook and Company, with London embedded within a larger itinerary (Gupta, 2021, 93–96).

Figure 1 was constructed as a qualitative spatial reconstruction rather than a historical transport map. Locations securely documented in Das's translation and in Gupta's reconstruction of Ghose's itinerary were entered as structured route data and assigned approximate modern coordinates. Confirmed route points were distinguished from excursions and from places mentioned without confirmed visitation. The points were plotted against a contemporary basemap and connected according to documented sequence. These lines therefore indicate the order of movement, not exact nineteenth- or twentieth-century railway and maritime tracks.

The decision to classify locations is central to the method. Das physically reaches Jabalpur but only wishes to visit nearby sights; Kashi enters the narrative as a desired destination without becoming

part of the travelled route (Das, 2015, 4–6). Ghose's Cairo and Giza episode is different: it is an actual excursion away from the principal maritime course before the travellers rejoin the route at Port Said (Gupta, 2021, 93–96). Treating all named places as identical markers would confuse textual reference with physical presence.

Figure 2 addresses a different problem. It is a schematic qualitative model of narrative organisation, not a quantitative chart. Block widths do not represent page counts, duration or measured narrative weight. Instead, the diagram condenses the structural contrast established through close reading: Das moves from route-based progression towards thematic concentration after London, whereas Ghose's London remains a major stop within a continuing itinerary.

These two visualisations are deliberately reductive. Figure 1 privileges position and sequence; Figure 2 privileges changes in organising principle. Neither is intended to replace close reading. Their analytical value lies in comparing what becomes clear after reduction with what the prose refuses to reduce: uneven duration, visibility, recollection, thematic expansion and differing relationships to place.

IV. Krishnabhabini Das: When the Route Becomes a Place

The opening structure of A Bengali Lady in England is unusually compatible with cartographic reconstruction. After a brief "Prelude", the contents proceed through "Calcutta to Bombay", "Bombay to Venice" and "Venice to London" (Das, 2015, vii). Movement itself supplies the organising principle. Once London is reached, however, "Different Thoughts" interrupts the geographical sequence, and later chapters increasingly take social practices, institutions and ideas rather than successive destinations as their subjects. The table of contents therefore records a formal transition from route towards concentration within a place.

Das begins the principal journey at Howrah Station at 8:30 in the evening on September 26, travelling to England "via Bombay" (Das, 2015, 3). Mughal Sarai, Allahabad and Jabalpur appear as successive points in the railway journey. At Allahabad and Jabalpur she changes trains, while her description of the railway sectors linking Calcutta, Allahabad, Jabalpur and Bombay makes transport infrastructure part of the narrative organisation (Das, 2015, 5–6). The reader moves westward because the traveller moves westward.

Yet the text already contains more space than the confirmed itinerary. Near Mughal Sarai, the proximity of Kashi prompts a desire to visit, but the journey continues without doing so (Das, 2015, 4–5). At Jabalpur, Das wishes to remain long enough to see the Narmada waterfalls and Marble Rocks, but the ship schedule from Bombay prevents the detour (Das, 2015, 6). These passages distinguish reached locations from unrealised possibilities. Figure 1 therefore marks Kashi separately rather than allowing a named place to imply physical visitation.

The European leg continues the strong relationship between geographical and textual sequence. From Venice Das travels to Milan and then towards Switzerland. The St Gotthard crossing names Airolo and Göschenen and generates extended description of the Alps, tunnels and railway engineering (Das, 2015, 26–29). Basel precedes travel through Germany and France; Calais becomes the final conti-

nental port before the Channel crossing to Dover and the train to London (Das, 2015, 30–32). At this stage, a mapped route largely externalises an order already present in the prose.

The apparent compatibility nevertheless conceals uneven narrative weight. The St Gotthard segment occupies limited cartographic space but expands through descriptions of mountains, waterfalls, valleys, snow and engineering. By contrast, territory after Basel is partly crossed in darkness and receives comparatively little visual description; linguistic change becomes one indication that another border has been crossed (Das, 2015, 30). A map gives that territory geographical extension regardless of what the traveller can see. The narrative contracts or expands space according to visibility and attention.

This discrepancy matters because a line joining two points implies continuous spatial knowledge. Das's account repeatedly demonstrates the opposite. Railway travel offers a mobile field of vision governed by speed, darkness, station halts and the direction of the track. Some landscapes are closely observed, others glimpsed, and others lost to night. The retrospectively plotted line is continuous where experience is discontinuous.

Arrival in London produces the decisive transformation. Das reaches Charing Cross on October 20 after twenty-four days of travel by land and sea (Das, 2015, 31–32). Geographically, the outward route has reached its terminal point; narratively, a much larger concentration is beginning. Later chapters include "London", "The English Race and its Nature", "Queen Victoria and her Household", "Moving around London", "The English Lady", discussions of palaces, clubs, museums, theatres and public houses, and chapters on marriage, domestic life and rural England (Das, 2015, vii–viii). Place no longer operates primarily as a succession of destinations.

"Moving around London" makes the change especially clear. Das describes streets, shops, parks, the underground railway, Thames ferries and multiple forms of urban transport (Das, 2015, 63–74). Movement continues, but it becomes circulatory rather than directional. Her description of the underground railway "encircling the city" shifts the scale of mobility from international transit to movement within one metropolitan environment (Das, 2015, 71). London is consequently one point on Figure 1 but many spaces within the narrative. Adding more urban markers would not entirely solve the discrepancy because the change is not simply a matter of cartographic detail. The text increasingly moves among monarchy, marriage, domestic organisation, labour, leisure and institutions. The opening question "where next?" gives way to a different organising logic: what can be observed and discussed from within this place? Das's journey therefore demonstrates that the value of mapping lies partly in revealing the moment when route ceases to explain narrative form.

The Indian railway passages also show that narrative sequence is not merely a list of stations. Das repeatedly uses movement to organise comparison. The changing view from the carriage allows regional differences to enter one after another, while the timetable determines when observation must end. The railway therefore supplies both connection and interruption: it links distant places into a route while limiting the traveller's ability to remain within any one of them. This tension is visible at Jabalpur, where physical arrival does not become local exploration. A mapped stop can record presence, but the prose records the frustration of a possible journey curtailed by another transport schedule.

The European journey sharpens this tension between cartographic continuity and experienced discontinuity. St Gotthard is memorable not because it occupies an exceptional amount of geographical space but because the combination of landscape and railway engineering sustains attention. Germany, by contrast, demonstrates how a traveller can be physically located within a region without acquiring a correspondingly detailed visual experience of it. In this sense, the map's continuous line is almost the inverse of the narrative: the line remains equally visible across the route, while the prose becomes denser or thinner according to the conditions under which space can be perceived.

London changes the problem again because the traveller no longer needs a sequence of distant destinations to generate spatial difference. Streets, parks, transport systems and institutions multiply within the metropolis. The city can therefore be read at several scales at once: as the terminus of an international journey, as an urban transport environment and as the setting for thematic discussion of English social life. Figure 2 abstracts this transformation as a movement from geographical progression towards thematic concentration. The schematic does not claim that route disappears completely; rather, it marks the point at which route is no longer sufficient to describe the dominant organisation of the text.

V. Durgabati Ghose: Itinerary, Sequence and Visual Travel

Ghose's *Paschimjatriki* presents a different spatial pattern. Based on a four-month European journey undertaken in 1932, serialised in 1935 and published as a book in 1936, the account retains a conspicuous investment in chronology, itinerary and material documentation (Gupta, 2021, 93–96). Whereas Das's arrival in London is followed by a pronounced thematic expansion, Ghose's tour remains embedded within continued geographical movement.

The journey began from Bombay aboard the M.V. Victoria. The travellers reached Aden, entered the Red Sea and approached the Suez Canal. At Suez, Ghose and her companions temporarily left the ship, travelled towards Cairo and Giza, and later rejoined the maritime route at Port Said. The route continued through Naples and other Italian locations, Switzerland and France before the Channel crossing from Calais to Dover and the train to London (Gupta, 2021, 93–96). Figure 1 visualises this outward route to London on the same frame as Das's journey so that the two directional structures can be compared.

The Cairo–Giza episode shows why the reconstruction distinguishes an excursion from a principal route point. A simplified shipping line between Suez and Port Said would omit the inland detour even though it is part of the travelled experience. Conversely, representing the excursion exactly like a transport hub would conceal its temporary departure from the main course. The differentiated marker therefore records a textual distinction rather than merely decorating the map. Chronology reinforces the spatial sequence. The contents of the first edition meticulously trace the route, and dates frequently accompany the journey (Gupta, 2021, 96). Paschimjatriki has similarly been characterised as diary-like and chronologically organised (Kankaria and Banerjee, 2022, 111). The itinerary is consequently recoverable with stronger internal cues for order than a narrative organised primarily through retrospective themes.

London, however, does not terminate Ghose's larger journey. After the English stay, travel resumes through continental Europe, including Brussels, the Rhineland, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Trieste, Venice and Florence. The return journey began from Venice on October 7, 1932; after reaching Bombay approximately two weeks later, the travellers returned by train to Calcutta on October 21 (Gupta, 2021, 96). Figure 2 represents this structural fact schematically: London is a major stop between phases of geographical progression rather than the point at which itinerary gives way permanently to thematic organisation.

Transport also shapes how space becomes available to Ghose. Ship, launch, road travel and railway connect different stages of the tour. In the translated London extract reproduced in Gupta's study, customs at Dover are followed by a Pullman train to London; villages and advertisements are viewed from the carriage before the train crosses the Thames and reaches Victoria Station (Gupta, 2021, 97–98). The sequence shows how metropolitan arrival is produced through movement rather than appearing as an abstract change of setting. The passage also illustrates the difference between physical duration and narrative presence. The Thames is encountered briefly from the train but becomes an occasion for recollection and comparison. A map can locate the approach to London, but it cannot register the disproportion between the duration of an encounter and the textual attention generated by it. Cartographic presence and narrative weight remain separate variables even in an account strongly organised by itinerary.

Ghose's printed volume also differs materially from Das's. The published account of Paschimjatriki contained thirty-two photographs printed on art paper, while Das's nineteenth-century account had no comparable visual apparatus (Gupta, 2021, 94). This matters because the digital map enters a travelogue already shaped by relations between prose and photographic representation. The photographs do not make the journey transparent; like maps, they select particular views and moments. The Giza episode, in which photographers attempted to stage Ghose in a camel pose, makes that selectivity concrete (Gupta, 2021, 94–95).

The strongest comparison with Das therefore concerns London's narrative position. Both writers devote substantial attention to the city, but the same coordinates perform different structural work. For Das, London terminates the directional sequence and becomes the environment for thematic expansion. For Ghose, it remains a major node after which geographical progression resumes. Narrative importance depends not only on how much is written about a place but also on where that place sits within the architecture of the journey.

The comparison should not imply that Ghose's chronology produces a simple or mechanically linear text. A planned tour still contains interruptions, detours and changes of scale. The Cairo–Giza excursion is particularly useful because it temporarily breaks the maritime line without breaking the chronology of the account. The route can therefore remain sequential while becoming spatially branched. This is one reason Figure 1 represents the excursion separately: a dotted connection preserves its relation to the principal route without visually converting it into an ordinary stage of the ship's progress.

Ghose's photographic apparatus further complicates any assumption that visual representation is automatically more immediate than prose. Thirty-two photographs may give the printed volume a strong

documentary character, but each image still depends on where a camera is placed, what is selected and how the resulting photograph is arranged within the book. The Giza episode is useful because the attempted staging of a camel photograph makes this mediation visible. Digital cartography adds another representational layer rather than escaping these earlier acts of selection. The map, photograph and written account each organise the journey differently.

London consequently offers a controlled point of comparison between the two writers. Its geographical coordinates do not change, but its structural position does. This makes it possible to separate destination from narrative function. A city can be equally "visited" in cartographic terms while doing very different work within two travelogues. Figure 2 makes this contrast explicit without assigning numerical values to it: Das's London marks a transition in organising principle, while Ghose's London is emphasised as a major stop after which route-based progression returns.

VI. What the Map Shows – and What It Cannot

Figure 1 places the reconstructed outward routes to London on a common geographical frame. The comparison immediately clarifies sequence and scale: Das travels across India to Bombay and then through Venice and continental Europe to London, while Ghose's outward route approaches Europe through Aden, Suez and the Mediterranean before reaching London through France and the Channel. The figure is deliberately limited to the outward journeys to London. Ghose's post-London continental travel and return are instead represented structurally in Figure 2 and discussed in the text.

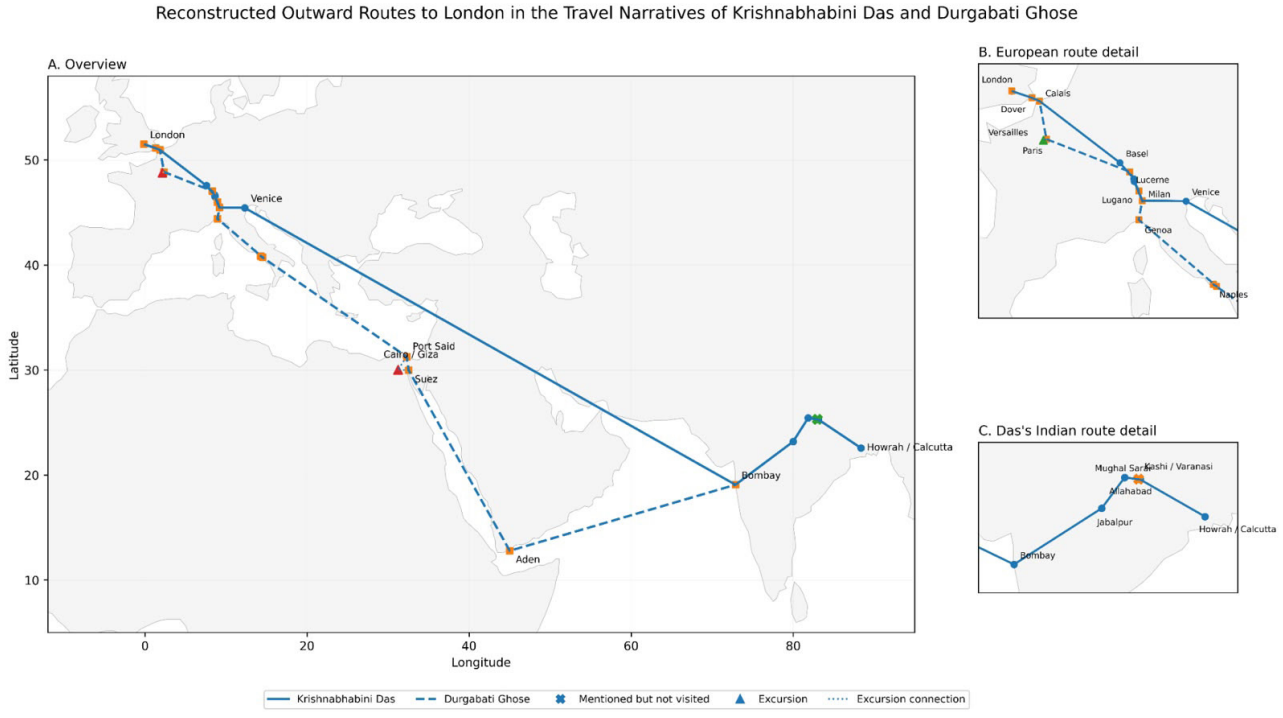


Figure 1. Reconstructed Outward Routes to London in the Travel Narratives of Krishnabhabini Das and Durgabati Ghose.

Source: Author's reconstruction based on Das (2015) and itinerary information documented in Gupta (2021).
Note: Modern coordinates locate historical place names approximately. Connecting lines represent documented sequence rather than exact historical railway or maritime tracks. Triangles indicate excursions, while the X marker identifies a place mentioned but not physically visited.

The first advantage of the reconstruction is condensation. Geographical information dispersed across many pages can be viewed simultaneously. In Das's account, intermediate railway stations, Alpine crossings, ports and the Channel passage become parts of a single directional trajectory. In Ghose's account, the relation among Bombay, Aden, Suez, the Cairo–Giza excursion, Mediterranean stops and the approach to London becomes visually legible. This is information the prose already contains, but the map changes the scale at which it can be compared.

The clarity creates a productive problem. Markers give locations a visual equivalence that the narratives do not possess. Jabalpur, Milan, Basel and London can appear as similarly sized points, even though their textual functions differ radically. The St Gotthard segment is geographically small but narratively dense; territory crossed in darkness can be geographically extensive but textually slight. London is a single marker even when it becomes the organising environment for numerous chapters. A map can therefore be geographically useful while remaining narratively inadequate.

The differentiated markers expose another limit: a travelogue contains more geographical names than a confirmed itinerary. Kashi belongs to Das's spatial imagination without becoming a visited destination. Jabalpur is reached, but desired local excursions remain unrealised. Cairo and Giza, by contrast, are genuine departures from Ghose's principal maritime route. These distinctions justify treating visited, excursionary and mentioned space differently rather than converting every place name into the same cartographic claim. Transport further complicates the apparently continuous route line. Railway windows, darkness, scheduled halts, ships and road excursions condition what can be seen and for how long. The map suppresses many of these differences because a line between two points appears continuous regardless of the traveller's changing access to space. This is not a reason to abandon the map. It is a reason to read the line as a model of sequence rather than a model of experience.

Figure 2 makes explicit what Figure 1 cannot encode. Das's opening route-based organisation moves towards London and then increasingly gives way to thematic concentration. Ghose's London remains a major stop inside a continuing itinerary. The diagram is not a measurement of pages; it is a qualitative representation of the structural difference established through close reading. Read together, the two figures separate geographical sequence from narrative organisation without pretending that either visualisation is neutral. This is the methodological value of reduction. Figure 1 removes syntax, tone, recollection and unequal duration in order to make spatial sequence comparable. Figure 2 removes geographical precision in order to make changes in organising principle comparable. The loss of information is controlled and declared. What matters is what becomes visible when each reduced model is placed back beside the prose.

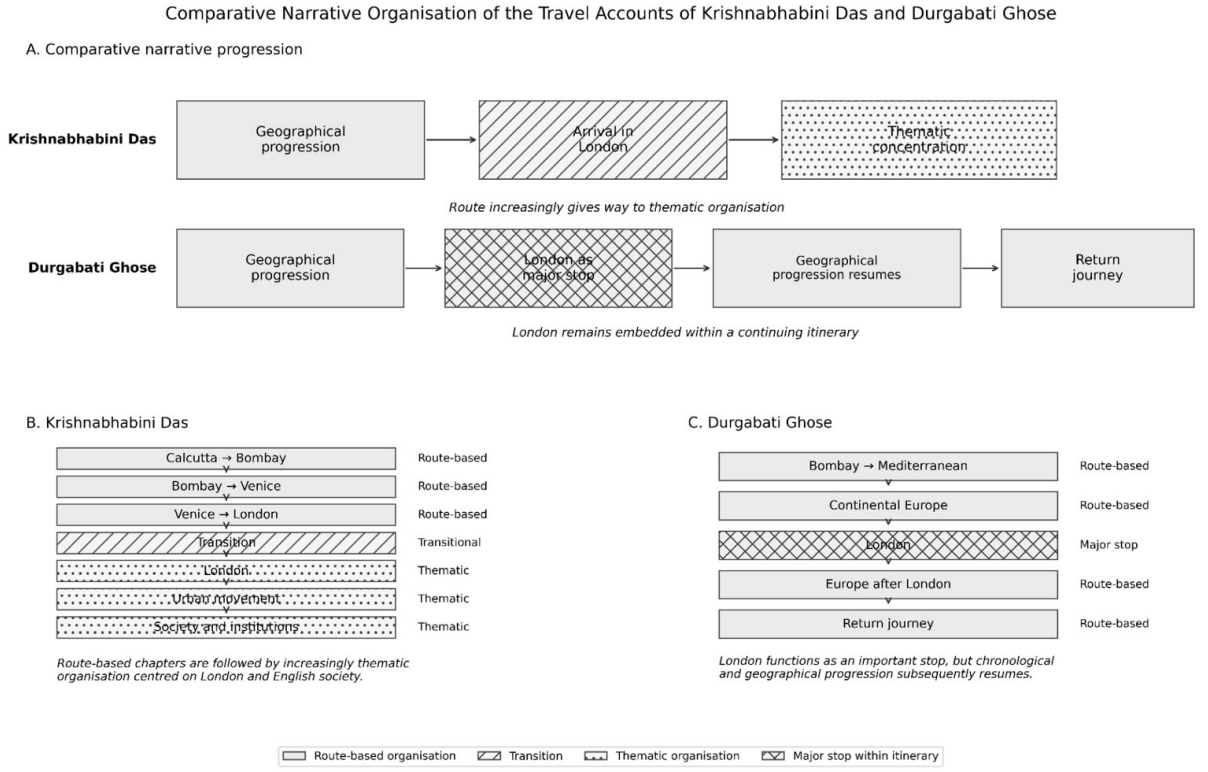


Figure 2. Comparative Narrative Organisation of the Travel Accounts of Krishnabhabini Das and Durgabati Ghose.

Source: Author's schematic reconstruction based on Das (2015), Gupta (2021), and Kankaria and Banerjee (2022).

Note: The diagram represents changes in organising principle rather than quantitative textual distribution. Block widths and positions are schematic and do not indicate page count, duration or relative narrative weight.

The result is not a claim that digital methods reveal a hidden "true" geography of Bengali women's travel writing. Every visualisation depends on decisions about evidence, categories and representation. Apparent cartographic precision can make those decisions look factual when they remain interpretive. Spatial visualisation is therefore most useful here as a comparative and diagnostic method: when map and narrative correspond, it clarifies the importance of itinerary; when they diverge, the divergence itself becomes the finding. The most revealing feature of the comparison is consequently not the line connecting India and Europe, but the mismatch between where movement occurs and where narrative attention accumulates.

Read together, the figures also guard against a common temptation in digital literary work: allowing

the visual output to become the result. Figure 1 is visually persuasive because recognisable coastlines, coordinates and route lines create an impression of spatial certainty. Figure 2 is persuasive for the opposite reason, because it reduces complicated narrative development to a small number of labelled phases. Neither visual authority should substitute for textual evidence. Their role is argumentative but subordinate: each makes a particular relationship easier to inspect, while the prose explains why that relationship matters and where the model ceases to be adequate.

The comparison therefore depends on moving repeatedly between representation and source. A marker for Kashi must be checked against the fact that Das does not visit it; a line through Europe must be read against the uneven visibility produced by railway travel; a London marker must be compared with the thematic expansion that follows arrival; and Ghose's London must be placed back inside the onward itinerary documented in the available scholarship (Gupta, 2021, 96). The digital method becomes most useful at precisely these moments of return, when a simplified visual claim is tested against the more complicated literary evidence from which it was constructed.

VII. Conclusion

Digital mapping offers an intuitive way to approach travel writing, but the comparison of Krishnabhabini Das and Durgabati Ghose demonstrates why itinerary cannot be treated as equivalent to narrative form. Das's outward journey initially preserves a close relationship between geographical and textual progression. After London is reached, however, route increasingly gives way to thematic concentration. Ghose's account retains a stronger relationship between itinerary and chronology: London is important without terminating the larger movement through Europe.

The comparison also shows that cartographic extent and narrative weight are different measures. A small geographical segment can expand through description, while large areas can contract when they are crossed rapidly or in darkness. Places desired but not visited can remain important to the textual geography, while excursions away from a principal transport route can become significant episodes. Mapping therefore requires distinctions among physical presence, detour and reference rather than treating every place name as equivalent evidence.

These limits do not make digital visualisation unsuitable for literary analysis. They define its most productive use. A route map reduces the journey to position and sequence; a schematic model reduces narrative organisation to broad structural phases. Read against close textual analysis, those reductions make it possible to identify where geographical progression explains literary form and where it no longer does. For these two Bengali women's travelogues, the most significant result of mapping is therefore not the reconstructed route itself. It is the uneven relationship between that route and the writing produced around it. The discrepancy between mapped movement and textual emphasis is itself evidence.

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