Life on a Border

The Psychological Journey in Graham Greene's *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads*

By

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to present a reading of Graham Greene's *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads* as an inward, psychological journey. This inner journey is motivated by a deep-felt sense of restlessness, alienation and displacement; it is an attempt at escape from a dysfunctional home society, a search for meaning and an alternative way of life. The psychological journey interacts with the actual, spatial journey; the experience of space triggers memories of the home and the self in the traveller's mind. These memories are furthermore coloured by the expectations prompted by the journey and a desire to find a not-home. The narrative becomes the writing of an unstable, insecure and restless self, a perception of the self strongly connected to the numerous forces of modernisation that worked on Western society in the period between the two World Wars.

Central to my reading of both texts is the notion of home. The idea of home is of great significance to all individuals, it is the primary factor in establishing the sense of self and identity; home, we might say, belongs to identity. Although a strong presence in consciousness, the idea of home is a slippery concept when it comes to determining exactly what it is and what it means. This, I would argue, is because the notion of home is impossible to pin down as such. Home is not simply *one* thing, it is constituted by a multitude of personal, temporal, spatial, cultural, political and historical relationships that are simultaneously interconnected, fragmented, oppositional and multi-layered. A potentially useful notion is to view the concept of home as a series of intersecting circles, which in total make up the idea of home. We may then speak of such circles or sites of home as where one

was born, where one grew up, one's cultural home, national home and religious or non-religious home. The idea of home is furthermore present in an individual's fragmented memories of childhood, and in the history of the home society, that is, in the cultural memories of society. In short, the various representations of home are those places, ideas and communities that together make up the sense of self in an individual. It may be expressed in various temporal and spatial layers, in an individual's personal history and in the wider history of the society.

Furthermore, the notion of home is connected to a sense of belonging, it is a fixed point of order and a safe haven. In the context of *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads* the notion of home may be said to be the starting-point for the journeys. This is closely tied up with Greene's experience of the home as a site of restlessness, alienation and displacement, due to an expressed lack of belonging and a non-presence of a fixed sense of identity. In many ways, this is a reflection of the tremendous upheaval that followed in the wake of the Great War and the numerous processes of modernisation that belong to the inter-war period. The wave of modernity created a new perception or sense of self that, in contrast with the stable and rational self-image of the Victorian age, was marked primarily by a penetrating sense of fragmentation, flux and insecurity. The dissolving of traditions, the increasing doubt in Christianity, the rise of mass-consumerism, the unfathomable mechanical destruction of the Great War, and the growing concern with (and lurking scepticism about) the colonial mission and the supremacy of the West – the list is far too long to be completed – all contributed towards a state of constant flux, 'a state of perpetual becoming'.[1]

It is this sense of restlessness and alienation that penetrates Greene's descriptions of home in *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads*. This negative experience of home – and by extension, of the self – appears to make existence almost unbearable. The response to

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[1] The expression is Marshall Berman's. Quoted in Hammond, p. 170.

this situation, then, becomes an escape in the shape of the journeys to Liberia and Mexico. The desire to escape is intertwined with a quest or a search for an alternative to the modern condition. This aspect is present in the motivation for the journey in a desire to find a place that is not-home. The construct of a not-home is based on a desire for difference. However, the desired not-homes are not exactly similar in the two texts. In *Journey Without Maps* the desire is directed towards a lost state of objectivity, a desire to discover and uncover both a personal childhood and the childhood of society. Childhood is imagined and remembered as a mental state of objectivity and instinctiveness that is expressly opposite to the nerve-ridden, self-conscious state of the self in modern societies. In *The Lawless Roads* we find the same, or perhaps even a stronger motivation to find a not-home. However, in this text the not-home is expressed as a place where (Catholic) religion, or just faith, *matters*, as opposed to the blatant disregard of the faith Greene finds in his home. The notion of faith is portrayed as a fixed point beyond everyday existence from which it is possible to gain some measure of order. If the escape in *Journey Without Maps* is from the torn nerves of modernity to an instinctive, communal way of life, then the escape in *The Lawless Roads* is an escape into religion, religion being a safe-house away from the dreariness of existence; faith as a fixed point of order, a tool to endure life.

The desire or the motivation for the journey additionally has a great significance for the experience of the journey as a whole. The actual experiences or events of the journey will to a large degree be coloured by the expectations; the encounter between the actual not-home and the imagined not-home is of great significance for the traveller's responses. The not-home is simultaneously an imagined space that is invested with meaning as a state of difference and an actual space that is unknown to the traveller. Most journeys, and certainly the journeys at hand, are motivated by a desire for difference, and the fact that the supposedly unfamiliar site

of escape turns out to be familiar in many respects, often makes the journeys (the attempts at escape) inherently confusing experiences.

A significant point of this thesis is that it is impossible for the traveller to escape the notion of home, that the home lingers in memory as the ultimate source of identity and self, and thus that the only way to escape home would be to eradicate memory – which in so many words would be to create a new self. In this respect one may deem the journey(s) as essentially futile.

The psychological journey may be seen as a chain of thoughts, contemplations and reflections on the self and its place and condition. It is inextricably tied to the spatial journey; the two notions run parallel. The physical sites of the journey trigger the memories or the strings of thought in the traveller's mind; the movement through space is mirrored by a movement through the landscapes of the mind. The sites along the journey function as a photograph or a piece of music sometimes does; they bring a memory to the centre of attention. A central aspect here is that distance in space is reflected in a drift in time. The memories that are evoked along with the images of the home are often memories of childhood or adolescence, both periods of life that are important in the formation of the self.

Furthermore, since the sites that are visited on the journey (the countries Liberia and Mexico) have been invested with meaning as a not-home *at the same time* as they are unknown to the traveller, the memory-sequences intensify at borders or thresholds of the not-home. Borders signify both that one is leaving the home and that one enters into a new territory. The presence of the unknown on the other side of the border causes a notion of insecurity that provokes a mental drift towards the home. The home is a site of discontent as well as a fixed point of order for the self to return to. In addition, the experience of the familiar in the (desired) unfamiliar initiates a mental movement towards the home.

The psychological journey is closely linked to the state of self, the home and the desire for a not-home. It is the distressed self that by feeling displaced in its own home desires an alternative, a not-home in another space, and the impressions of the physical journey are mediated through the expectations, the sense of self and the home.

Additionally, the sense of self that is explored is mirrored by an investigation into the state of society; the wider society, of course, being strongly tied to the notion of home. In *Journey Without Maps* this investigation juxtaposes the primitive society of Liberia with the state of modern Western society; in *The Lawless Roads* the comparison is between the anarchy and irreligion of the West with the assumed religiousness of Mexican Society.

Finally, the narrative structure of the texts represents a distinct shift from previous, and especially Victorian, travel narratives. Earlier travel writings are often the product of explorers, traders, missionaries and various officials of empire, and are typically marked by a stronger sense of linearity and chronology. These narratives reflect a steady belief in the state of Western civilisation, Western rationality, the supremacy of the White Man and a secure sense of self and place. The unstable narrative of *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads* may be said to reflect the growing doubt and instability of the self. It is frequently interrupted by analeptic[2] variations that focus on memories, the relating of dreams and Greene's subjective response-s to his experiences.

The inter-war period has been described as the golden age of travel. This view highlights the expansion and increasing efficiency of transportation, the fact that more (but not *too* many) people could afford to travel, as well as the huge number of travel books that were published in this period. Another factor that contributed greatly to the 'habit of flux'[3] was the mood of lost illusions that was felt all over Europe in the years between the two

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[2] My understanding of the use of the terms 'analepsis' and 'prolepsis' derives from Jakob Lothe, *Narrative in Fiction and Film: An Introduction*, 49-62.
[3] Ford Maddox Ford, quoted in Carr, p. 70.

World Wars. This atmosphere, as well as the very possibility to travel for the sake of travel, led to a veritable exodus of travelling writers from the British Isles.

One of these literary travellers was Graham Greene, né Henry Graham Greene on 2 October 1904 in Berkhamsted, England. After a false start with a collection of poetry called *Babbling April,* published when he left Oxford in 1925, he proceeded to become one of the most popular writers of his generation. His collected works include over twenty novels, four travel books, two works of biography, autobiography, several plays, short stories, four children's books as well as a huge amount of book reviews, film reviews and introductions to other authors' works. In addition, many of his books were made into films, and he wrote several screenplays.

His best known, and probably also his finest novels, are *The Power and the Glory* (1940)*, The Heart of the Matter* (1948) and *The End of the Affair* (1951). His greatest innovation was to combine the form of the popular thriller with a keen eye for social realities and a more serious subject matter within the same work. Other attributes often mentioned are a certain cinematic technique of description as well as the notion of 'Greeneland', a term used to describe his fictional landscapes, which more often than not are marked by a quality of *seediness*.

Three aspects of Greene's life may be useful to keep in mind in relation to this study. They are in a way connected, and had a profound influence on his life, both as a writer and as a human being. The first is that of Greene's childhood. The formative years, of course, are of great importance to all human beings; they shape our interests, sense of belonging in terms of family, culture, nationality, and our identity, personality and anxieties. In the context of Greene, an important feature of his childhood was that his father, Charles Greene, was headmaster at the school in which the young Greene was to receive his education. Charles Greene was obsessed with the idea that his pupils might fall prey to the sin of masturbation, or

even worse, downright homosexuality. In order to prevent this, he, and his predecessor, Dr. Fry, had devised a regime of absolute non-privacy at the school.

Greene was trapped throughout his time at Berkhamsted School in a constant conflict of loyalty between his father and his fellow pupils. The situation was not improved by the fact that his home was in the same building as the school, creating a confusing relationship between the two. The situation is perhaps best described with the aid of one of Greene's own metaphors, namely that of living on a border. Greene inhabited not only the borderland between his home and his school, but also led a life on the border between loyalty to his father and to his fellow students.

The strain of living in this environment proved too much for Greene, and he attempted suicide on several occasions. The affair culminated in Greene running away from home, leaving a message firmly stating that he would not return until he was promised that he would not have to go back to school. He ended up being sent to an amateur psychiatrist, a rather astonishing fact considering his father's Victorian outlook.

Second, Greene's childhood trauma led to an emerging sense of faith – his surroundings were so miserable that they made him aware of the existence of hell, and this again prompted the idea that there had to be something more to life than just life. Greene's perception of faith, however, remained vague throughout his adolescence, it was not until his years at Oxford that he made a definite step in the direction of belief. He converted to Catholicism in 1926, ostensibly in order to please his wife to be, Vivienne Dayrell-Browning, who was a devout Catholic.

Greene later described his commitment to Catholicism as intellectual rather than emotional, and claimed that it was only during his subsequent visit to Mexico that he developed any emotional affinity with the faith. The exact difference between an intellectual and an emotional attachment to the faith is somewhat hard to grasp, and Greene's relationship

to Catholicism is never entirely clear. However, much of his writing is concerned with issues of faith, in particular with that of the Catholic idea of sin.

The third aspect is Greene's wanderlust; he was throughout his life a prolific traveller. His travels took him to a number of exotic locations – Liberia, Mexico, Cuba, Indo-china, Sierra Leone, the Congo, Haiti and Argentina, to name a few. The journeys not only gave him an outlet for his restlessness, they also provided the setting for some of his major works – *The Power and the Glory* (1940), *The Heart of the Matter* (1948), *The Quiet American* (1955) and *A Burnt Out Case* (1961) all owe their exotic environment to Greene's zest for travelling. And what is more, of course, his travels produced the objects of the present study.

Journey Without Maps is the result of a four-week long journey in the interior of Liberia which Greene and his cousin Barbara Greene made in 1935. Greene had since reading H. Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (1886) as a child been fascinated by Africa, and his admiration for Joseph Conrad and his *Heart of Darkness* (1899) added to the attraction. The reason for choosing Liberia was most likely that it was one of the few countries in Africa which had not been colonised by a European Power; Liberia was founded in 1847, as a home for former slaves from the US. In 1935, when Greene went there, the interior of the country was largely unknown to Europeans, in fact, apart from some missionaries and the indigenous peoples, hardly anybody knew much about this part of the country. Moreover, what was known did not provide pleasant reading: the country was riddled with disease, poverty and corruption. There had also recently been a rebellion by one of the indigenous peoples, the Krus, which had reportedly been rather severely dealt with by the government in the shape of an American ex-patriot and former mercenary, Colonel Davis.

The title of the book serves not only as a metaphor for an inner journey, it is also a statement of fact. Two attempts at map-making had been made, one was a British map consisting largely of blank space and some dotted lines indicating the probable courses of

rivers. The other, an American military map, was also made up of mostly blank space, but added the mark 'Cannibals' over great areas of the interior.

Greene and his cousin set out from Liverpool on a steamboat, and arrived at Freeport in Sierra Leone, which was then a British colony. Greene took an almost immediate dislike to Freeport, and especially to the white colonists there. He found the place to have an encompassing air of seediness, mainly due to the mismanagement of the British colonists.

After a week of preparations in Freetown, Greene set out for the Liberian hinterland. Greene has a keen eye for descriptions, and his prospects of the villages they pass are vivid and detailed. The landscape, however, receives little attention. Greene describes the scenery as dull and lifeless. His concern is primarily with the people he meets and such indigenous features as the various secret societies, the bush-devils, and the bush-schools. By chance, Greene crosses the path of both the incumbent President Barclay and the infamous Colonel Davis, and is granted an interview with both.

The trek through the interior lasted four weeks in devastating heat, and Greene made surprisingly long marches almost every day from sunrise to sundown. Considering that he was not a particularly sporty person, it is quite remarkable that he made it through the trip – a large number of European gold prospectors had vanished in the interior before him. At one point, though, Greene came down with a serious case of fever, but it broke and he was able to continue the trek, albeit with considerable hardship.

The Lawless Roads is the account of the journey Greene made to Mexico in 1938. The idea of writing a travel book from Mexico originally came from a Catholic publisher; however, the deal fell through and Greene eventually made arrangements with another publishing house. Mexico was at this time suffering from the unrest caused by the Mexican Revolution, the most important effect of which in this context was that the socialist regime had initiated a brutal campaign against the Catholic Church. Religious observance was

forbidden in most states, and in the area Greene was heading for, Tabasco, most of the churches had been destroyed or turned into government buildings.

Greene has a remarkable aptitude for capturing the concerns of the underdog, a characteristic that is evident in this text as well. In San Antonio in Texas Greene portrays the situation of Mexican workers living on the edge of subsistence quite emphatically, and considering the situation of Mexican workers in the US today, with an alarming precision.

Greene crosses the border at Laredo, Texas. The journey then continues via San Luis Potosi to Mexico City by train. After a short stop in Mexico City, the journey goes on to Veracruz, where he boards a small barge destined for the state Tabasco, the real goal of the journey. Greene had hoped to find a Catholic community that was vital in spite of the harsh religious intolerance that reigned in Tabasco, but found that the persecution had created a state of apathy. The journey then goes on to Chiapas, where he visits the ancient ruins at Palenque and spends Holy Week in the city Las Casas. This part of the book is marked by a sense of disappointment with the Catholic community in Mexico, which more or less conforms with the English in its lack of commitment. Greene finds the faith alive and well among the Indians, but is unable to identify with the Indians' brand of Catholicism. The remainder of the journey takes Greene through a bout of dysentery back to Mexico City and then on a ship back to England. *The Lawless Roads* is at some points close to despair in its tone. Signs of the coming war surface throughout the text and intensify towards the end. These signals mix with Greene's growing anxiety and even anger at the state of affairs, and together they create a haunted, restless mood.

Journey Without Maps and *The Lawless Roads*, then, are both texts about journeys; they are examples of *travel writing*. At this point, I believe, it is proper to take a closer look at the genre of travel writing.

My editions of the two books (both published by Vintage in the paperback series Vintage Classics) are classified as 'travel/autobiography'. This indecisiveness on the part of the publisher points to a recurrent problem when it comes to discussions of the genre travel writing, namely the diversity of the works within this category. Works under the heading travel writing range from works of fiction like Virginia Woolf's *The Voyage Out* (1915), to scientific treatises like Charles Darwin's *Voyage of the Beagle* (1839) and to stories of adventure and exploration such as Walter Ralegh's *The Discoverie of the Large, Rich and Bewtiful Empyre of Guina* (1596). The themes of the accounts differ widely, too, from geographical and botanical treatise to adventure story and to social critique. The works themselves are called travel writing, travel books, travel logs, travelogues and travel accounts with no real consensus as to what these categories signify. Furthermore, travel books may display traits of the essay, the reportage, the romance, the memoir and the comic novel, all within the same work. It is also a genre that does not discriminate on the basis of age: it incorporates works from Herodotus' day until today. It seems apparent, then, that rather than trying to narrow down the genre of *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads*, it is more fruitful to view them in terms of their multiplicity.

For most travel books, the claim to authenticity is a matter of life or death. One point in this connection is the identification of the narrator with the historical person of the author. There is a distinct element of autobiography present in most travel books, and Greene's are no exception to the rule. The travel narrative is almost always a first person narrative that is identifiable with an historical person. Barbara Korte has pointed to the autobiographical nature of travel books: 'The narrator of the account and the travelling persona in the plot are fused in the union of first-person narration; the autobiographical nature of the text arises from the further extension of this union to the author him or herself' (Korte, 12). This is, as Korte says, related to most travel books' important claim to authenticity: the narrative has to relate a

journey that has actually taken place. However strong the presence in the text of the purported 'real' author, it does not allow for a one-to-one relationship between author and narrator:

> A narratological analysis of travel writing must distinguish between the author, the narrator and the travelling persona of an account. The voice narrating the journey may appear quite distinct from the 'real' author, for example when the narrator is posing or controlling him or herself in accordance with certain aims or social expectations. The narrator may also, just as the first-person narrator of a novel, create a certain distance from himself [sic] as persona in the plot. (Korte, 12)

Both *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads* display distinctly autobiographical traits. The narrator repeatedly identifies himself as the writer Graham Greene, mentions such issues as a lawsuit the young Shirley Temple filed against him after a film review and relates highly personal childhood memories and biographical information that later were described in his 'real' autobiographies. Furthermore, there is little doubt that the historical person Graham Greene has travelled to the places mentioned in the texts and it is also likely that he has met the people that are mentioned. Additionally, the texts are laden with references to the world – place names, the names of people and ships, boats, hotels and trains all reinforce the impression of authenticity. This, then, seems to suggest a firm tie between the author Graham Greene and the narrator in the books. However, there are some elements that imply the opposite. One is the matter of the books being written in retrospect. Neither of the books is diary composed 'in the moment', which indeed would have tightened the relationship between author and narrator. It is, of course, also impossible to *verify* the various events of the journey, the narrator's subjective responses, and the biographical information that is supplied beyond the aforementioned lawsuit and the fact that there actually existed a person that was Graham Greene who travelled to the same destinations and who was a writer. Yet again, these notions belong to the expectations of authenticity; by linking the 'real' Graham Greene to the narrator, the story that is told is made more believable.

I would like to suggest the notion of a 'shadow narrator' in the texts at hand, an image I find embodies most of the qualities of the narrator of the books. First, the shadow is separate

from the real person, but it bears some resemblance to him/her. Second, the author has control over the shadow, the shadow does what the author wants it to do. Finally, the shadow has followed the author along the way, it has also been a part of the journey. It is important to note, then, that when I refer to 'Greene' in the context of this thesis, I refer to the narrator of the two texts, and not to the historical person, Graham Greene (1904-1991).

Another point to be made is the distinctly literary qualities of the texts at hand. Korte points to the fact that

> the element of storytelling in travel writing is closely related to another genre characteristic, namely its element of fictionality ... patterns, lines of development, cross-references, emphases and other structural elements may arise in the account which, in all probability, were not part of the original experience of the journey itself. (Korte, 10)

The literariness of the travel book was perhaps never as prominent as in the inter-war period, when many of the travel books were written by travelling authors. The narrative of most travel books forms a 'travel *plot*' (Korte, 10, original italics), and the writer therefore sometimes (if not at *all* times) is forced to make certain embellishments and additions to the text. The main plot of travel narratives may be described as a circle; the full circle of the travel book involves three stages; why and how the traveller got there, the experience of being 'there' and the return or the homecoming. The travel plot may also be said to include some notion of adventure or danger, the exotic, and references to issues of travel, that is, trouble with luggage, poor hotel rooms and the inevitable comic misunderstanding due to language barriers.

Greene's travel books fuse the report of the journey and the notion of authenticity with a '"fictionalizing" imagination' (Fussel, 214). Samuel Hynes has called the travel book of the 1930s 'a dual-plane work with a strong realistic surface, which is yet a parable' (Hynes, 228), a description I believe is very much to the point when discussing *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads*. The notion of a real journey gives the travel book actuality, it is relevant because it presumably portrays something that has happened and is 'real'. Against this

background the use of a fictional narrator, the use of literary metaphors, allusions and the creation of a plot become a way to explore the self or society in the same ways as a novel or a poem does. In some respects, *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads* could have passed as 'pure' fictions, but would then perhaps have lost some of the impact of the authentic. The mediation between the actual and the fictional in the travel book is problematic in terms of answering the question of where one ends and the other begins. However, this is also (at least in the view of this writer) the very basis for the genre's attractiveness.

Whereas travel writing as a means of studying Western constructions of cultural others has been addressed by a number of theoretical works, the literary travel book and the writing of the Western self has received scant theoretical coverage (Hammond, 169; Korte, 2). These questions are likely to receive more theoretical attention in the years to come, if the development over the last decade or so is taken as an indicator of future interest.

Travel literature as a field of academic study in its own right is quite a novelty. There has, however, been an explosive increase of interest in the genre since the early 1990s. The only specialist journal, *Studies in Travel Writing*, published its first issue in 1997, *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing* appeared as late as the year 2002, both, incidentally, co-edited by Tim Youngs and Peter Hulme. In the above I tried to classify the genre by pointing to the diversity of the works, and I shall have to resort to the same when describing the criticism on travel writing; travel writing as an academic area of study is very much an inter-disciplinary field. It draws critics from the fields of literature, history, geography, and anthropology. The main concern of the critical contributions to travel literature has been with literature from the age of exploration and empire, particularly pregnant questions being those of the colonial encounter, identity, literature as appropriation, and representations of the other.

The first work to treat the issue of the literariness of the travel books from the inter-war period seriously is Paul Fussel's *Abroad: British Literary Traveling Between the Wars*

(1980), a dedicated and informative study that deals as much with the context of travelling in this period as with the travel books themselves. *Abroad* is highly readable and sometimes borders on the brilliant, although readers should be warned of a somewhat elitist tone when it comes to the issue of tourism.

Most of the criticism on Greene has focused on his novels, and the attention is largely directed at the religious or Catholic aspects of the books. His travel books, however, have received little attention, though there are some exceptions. Casey Blanton offers a fine close reading of *Journey Without Maps* in her *Travel Writing: The Self and the World* (2002), which sees the text as a typical example of travel writing in the modernist period, and which was the original inspiration behind this thesis. Andrew Thacker has also supplied an interesting analysis of the same book in the essay 'Journey with Maps' in *Cultural Encounters: European Travel Writing in the Thirties* (2002), with the main focus on the presence of actual maps in many travel books. The freelance academic Bernard Schweizer discusses both *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads* in his *Radicals on the Road: The Politics of English Travel Writing in the 1930s* (2001) along with works by Auden, Orwell and West. Another essay that deals directly with both texts is Jefferey Meyer's 'Greene's Travel Books' in *Graham Greene: a Collection of Critical Essays* (1973), a good overview, but flawed by a rather disconcerting view on colonial politics.[4] Additionally, both texts are mentioned as part of the literary scene in England in Bernard Bergonzi's *Reading the Thirties: Texts and Contexts* (1978) and Samuel Hynes' *The Auden Generation: Literature and Politics in England in the 1930s* (1976).

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[4] Meyers claims that 'in the 1930s, when most intellectuals were anti-imperialist, Greene, following his predilection for primitivism, was unwilling to concede that the relatively enlightened colonialism of the British had brought the benefits of Christianity, justice, education, medicine, sanitation, agriculture, commerce, communications, transportation and peace ... after the genocidal policies of Bokassa in the Central African Republic and of Amin in Uganda as well as the abysmal record of violence and corruption in contemporary Africa, Greene might well find it difficult to maintain that independence has been better for the Africans than colonialism' (Meyers, 53-4).

One tendency in the criticism on Greene's travel books is that the focus is mainly on *Journey Without Maps*. *The Lawless Roads*, on the other hand, has received very little attention and is for some reason viewed as rather miscontrived. Other works which do not relate to Greene in particular, but have offered fruitful perspectives for this thesis are: Helen Carr's fine survey 'Modernism and Travel (1880-1940)' in *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing* (2002), Andrew Hammond's '"The Unending Revolt": Travel in an Era of Modernism' in *Studies in Travel Writing*, 7, (2003), as well as the special issue of the same journal on 'Modernist Travels', 8, (2004).

Even though this field of criticism is expanding, the literary travel book from the period between the wars remains an area of study that is largely unmapped. Most, if not all, studies I have mentioned are significant contributions; however, they remain few in number and relate more to the period than to single works. It is my hope that this thesis may contribute something to this highly interesting field of research.

The fact that the literary travelling of the inter-war period and the constructions of home and self in these texts represent a newly opened area of study means that it 'remains relatively untheorised' (Hammond, 169). This shortage of theory implies a lack of method for the study of these works. It is then appropriate to indicate the method for my analysis presented in this thesis.

The method for my analysis is that of a close reading: it is a sustained attempt to uncover the diverse rhetorical and narrative strategies of the texts, including the overarching metaphors and the diverse layers of meaning embedded in them. In this respect, my critical aim is to let the text 'speak for itself', or, perhaps better, to try and show how it speaks to me as an historical reader. I rely heavily on quotes from the texts and my critical comments aim to place the quoted passages in the texts' thematic whole. I am aware that the analyses I present stem from my particular reading. It is a reading inevitably coloured by my own

personal views, prejudices, interests, and the historical and cultural surroundings and circumstances that have created my ideas and view of the world. As such, I do not purport to present a definitive reading of the two texts. However, I do hope to offer some perspectives that may prove fruitful to readers of *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads*.

A critical premise in any critic's theoretical outlook lies in his/her perception of language in the production of meaning. To this question, I find myself in agreement towards a statement by M. H. Abrams:

> My view of language, as it happens, is by and large functional and pragmatic: language, whether spoken or written, is the use of a great variety of speech-acts to accomplish a great diversity of human purposes; only one of these many purposes is to assert something about a state of affairs; and such a linguistic assertion does not mirror, but serves to direct attention to selected aspects of that state of affairs. At any rate, I think it is quite true that many of the passages I cite are equivocal and multiplex in meaning. (Abrams, 243)

My view of how language (and implicitly, literature) works is to a certain extent inspired by the linguistic discipline of *pragmatics*.[5] Pragmatics views the use of language as a communicative activity, in which the interlocutors (speaker – speaker, writer – reader, text – reader) are involved in a cooperative project. Language is produced by intentional beings who want to communicate something or other in a communicative project. The cooperative aspect of this communicative project, however, differs widely from conversation to conversation and from text to text. The use of irony, metaphors – the plethora of rhetorical tropes and figures available to the skilled writer – does not eliminate the communicative purpose of a text, it only makes it more interesting to the competent user of language. From my point of view this does not diffuse meaning; it creates meaning.

Another effect of having pragmatics as a starting-point is that a necessary condition for understanding the communicative project of actual language-use, is to have some measure of context. One phrase may mean different things (constitute different speech-acts) according to the context. In fact the nature of a speech-act is dependent on context. Placing a text in its

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[5] My view of pragmatics is influenced by Jacob L. Mey, *Pragmatics: An Introduction*, 1-162.

historical context is not so much about taking some purported traits of a period and retrieving them from the text, it is about the interplay between the text and its historical *environ*, about looking at how the one reacts to the other. The fact that travel writing has a realistic surface indicates that the relationship between the historical period and the text is stronger than in works of 'pure' fiction. The cultural context of a given text is also relevant to it as a bearer of meaning. It is with texts as with people, they are invested with the culture in which they are formed. A text, then, carries not only evidence of its historical period, in terms of social conditions, events, milieu, it is also one of many voices of a historical mentality of a given culture at a given time and a given space.

Another context is the criticism of other writers on this subject. The criticism provides a background for the texts, it produces insights and perspectives that have inevitably coloured my own understanding of the texts. At the relevant points in this thesis, therefore, I have tried to show how other critics view the issues and the passages I discuss.

I have divided my analysis into two chapters, which make up the main part of this thesis. The following chapter will deal with *Journey without Maps*. This chapter aims to show how the psychological journey is played out in the text. I discuss the importance of home in relation to both the physical and psychological journey, and try to show how Greene presents his home as a motivation for leaving for Liberia. The important link between home and identity and sense of self will also receive due attention in this chapter.

The chapter will, as it were, follow Greene on his journey from his home in England, through the way-station Sierra Leone, into the interior of Liberia, and on the way back home to English waters. The benefit of this approach is that it will enable the reader to monitor Greene's responses as they surface along the way, allowing the interplay between surroundings and psyche, physical space and mental space to stand out clearer. It also serves my objective to identify the drift towards home in relation to the physical distance from home,

and the effect of distance on the idea of home and self. Furthermore, following the progression of the narrative in the text will hopefully let the reader experience some of the breaks in the narrative's linearity in a more enlightening way than had I dealt with these issues separately.

The third chapter of this thesis has as its subject *The Lawless Roads*. The aim of this chapter is to document the notion of a psychological journey running parallel to the actual spatial journey. The concepts of home and identity and sense of self are of great importance to my reading of this text as well. The home as a catalyst for faith and faith as a point of order for the self beyond the realm of everyday existence will be given due attention. Furthermore, I will try to demonstrate how the notion of home extends beyond the mere present, to show how the notion of temporality pervades the concept of home. Again, the description of the home and the place of the self within it are motivating factors for the journey. Additionally, the notion of home as part of the sense of expectation and a vital part of the sense of identity becomes a part of the experience of the journey itself.

This chapter also aims to have Greene as its travelling companion on his journey to Mexico and back to England. *The Lawless Roads* and *Journey Without Maps* share some similarities in terms of the progression of the psychological journey. Thus, by following Greene's itinerary the reader will be more inclined to see the psychological responses to space and place. This thesis is about travel writing and the best way to understand it, I believe, is to try to be a passenger on the journey.

Chapter 2

Journey Without Maps

'The motive of a journey', Greene says, 'deserves a little attention. It is not the fully conscious mind which chooses West Africa in preference to Switzerland' (*Journey*, 20). Indeed, it is not entirely clear why Graham Greene chose to go on a four-week trek in the largely unmapped interior of Liberia in 1935. Greene had never travelled outside Europe before and had never been on a trek of comparable duration or hardship. In addition, the only reports that existed on Liberia at that time described a country riddled with internal strife, corruption and disease, as well as allegations of recent government-sponsored slave trafficking.

The aim of this chapter is to offer a reading of *Journey Without Maps* as a psychological journey, a double act of writing and searching for the self in the form of memories. The journey represents a double movement from the home; it is an escape from a dysfunctional home and a quest for meaning in a desired not-home. The personal, inward journey is furthermore paralleled by an investigation of the history of society, that is, of the memories of society.

The starting point of the journey is a distinct sense of displacement and restlessness Greene feels in relation to his home; the home in the modern, Western world is marked by seediness, flux and an unstable, nerve-ridden sense of self. Against this notion of home, then, is presented an idea of a not-home, which is projected onto the space of Liberia. The primitive in Liberia comes to represent a state of objectivity and an instinctive state of being that resembles the psychological state of childhood. Implicitly drawing on theories of

psychoanalysis[1], Greene invokes a rather complex relationship that compares the stages of development of his own self and human individuals with the various stages of development of society. The idea is that the psychological state of childhood is marked by a certain sense of objectivity, a more instinctive perception of reality that does not involve a large measure of self-awareness. This notion of objectivity resembles that of the self in primitive societies, of which Liberia is set up as an example. Greene's home in the modern West is compared with the state of being in adulthood. Central here is the sense of constant self-awareness or subjectivity with which we as adults monitor our own actions. Where the primitive self is marked by instinctiveness and a communal continuity with the world, the adult, modern self is unstable, insecure and in a state of flux. It is important to note that the not-home is a construct in the narrator's mind; it is a desire for difference that is projected onto the unknown space of Liberia and not an observation that carries any kind of truth-value as such. The relationship between the home and the not-home, then, represents both the motivation and the expectation for the journey; the journey is an escape from the subjectivity of the home and a quest for an alternative life-experience.

The psychological journey is inextricably tied to the spatial journey; the encounter with the not-home triggers memories of the home on various spatial and temporal levels. The not-home is based on a desire for difference in the traveller's mind, and the experience of familiar aspects in the *actual* not-home triggers a mental movement towards the home. Moreover, this movement intensifies at actual frontiers or thresholds of the spatial journey; the entry into the not-home causes a sense of trepidation that initiates a drift towards the home. The home holds a dual position in the mind of the traveller; it is simultaneously the locus of the notion of instability and the ultimate instance of identity. The distance in space is

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[1] Nicola King points to 'important controversies raised by psychoanalytic theories of memory' such as 'the implied identification of the "infantile" with earlier stages of human civilisation ... and the idea that the past still exists, "somewhere", to be rediscovered by the remembering subject' (King, 13). I would like to stress that I do not purport to perform any kind of psychoanalytic reading of the text. As I see it, the text evokes conventional conceptions of psychoanalysis as a metaphor for a search for memories and a sense of self.

furthermore reflected by a break in time; the memories present the home on various spatial and temporal levels.

The unstable, fragmented sense of self is mirrored by the narrative, which frequently performs analeptic movements that focus on the drift towards home and Greene's subjective responses. This notion of a narrative flux breaks up the sense of linearity in the spatial journey and highlights the self-awareness of the modern traveller. In a sense, the journey to Liberia becomes an attempt at mapping the self and the society that has created it. Greene explicitly uses the metaphor of mapping to describe the process of an exploration of the self and 'man' or society. To make a map of something is of course to attain knowledge, to make known something that was previously uncharted – *Journey Without Maps* is an attempt to map Greene's personal halls of memory, and society as it was before modernity or 'adulthood'.

The first chapter of *Journey Without Maps* is called 'The Way to Africa' (*Journey*, 15-23) and serves to indicate the motivation for the journey at hand. The sense of expectation is central to any longer journey – when we travel we automatically form certain expectations that will be negotiated or qualified as the journey progresses. This is important for the totality of the journey since the very experience of the journey will necessarily be coloured by those expectations. The motivation for the journey is doubly expressed through descriptions and memories of Greene's home and desires for the primitive in Liberia.

Journey Without Maps resounds with a notion of a fragmented sense of self and a sense of alienation; a notion that is closely tied to the accelerating process of social modernisation in the early twentieth century. Although modernity represents a long-spanning historical process, going back at least to the Renaissance, the impact that the forces of social modernisation had on Western civilisation at the beginning of the twentieth century is hard, even impossible, to overstate. The giant strides of urbanisation, industrialisation, democratisation, mechanisation and rationalisation deeply affected practically every layer of

human interaction. Additionally, the inter-war period, to which our texts belong, was an age

of immense brutality, its main signifiers being the after-shock of the Great War, the

depression, and the rise of fascism and militant communism. The experience of constant

crisis, the dissolving of traditions and the doubt in Western civilisation, according to Andrew

Hammond, led to a new 'sensibility' (Hammond, 171) that was primarily marked by

alienation, fragmentation and instability. In the face of the devastating destruction of the Great

War and the violence of the inter-war period, the belief in rationality, progress, and the secure

sense of self of the nineteenth century was shattered. The abysmal experience of the age,

moreover, affected the literature and the other arts of the period. Michael Levenson has noted

that

> the catastrophe of the First World War, and before that, the labor struggles, the emergence of feminism, the race for empire, these inescapable forces of turbulent social modernization were not simply looming on the outside as the destabilizing context of cultural Modernism; they penetrated the interior of artistic invention. They gave subjects to writers and painters, and they also gave forms, forms suggested by industrial machinery, or by the chuffing of cars, or even, most horribly, the bodies broken in the war. (Levenson, 4)

The forms and subjects of modernism were also reflected in travel writing, a notion

that is accentuated by the fact that much travel writing in this period was produced by authors

otherwise employed in the production of imaginative literature.[2] This shift in travel writing

was most markedly represented by a haunting subjectivity, but also by a tendency towards

narrative instability (Blanton, 19-23; Hammond, 171). I will return to the change in the form

of travel writing later in this analysis; for the present purpose, however, the chaotic

experience of the home in this period serves as a starting-point for the journey to Liberia. The

home's penetrating atmosphere of instability and insecurity, as it were, rubbed off onto the

sense of self. There is then a sense in which Hammond's new 'sensibility' represents the

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[2] In addition to Greene, W. H Auden, Christopher Isherwood, George Orwell, D. H. Lawrence, Rebecca West, and a host of other writers travelled in order to write. The most thorough account of the numerous travelling authors in this period may be found in Paul Fussel's *Abroad*, 15-23.

motivation for Greene's journey to Liberia: the journey becomes an escape from the dysfunctional home society and a quest for a not-home.

The narrative begins with Greene's attempt to locate the Liberian Council's office in London. This first meeting with 'Liberia' has some significance in terms of travel in this period. Highlighting the growth of government control over its people and the increasing restraints and restrictions on the freedom of movement, it also underlines the feeling of enclosure this led to: '"Before the war," a large man said, "you didn't need passports. Such a fuss"' (*Journey*, 16). The passport is one of those things that those of us who were born after the First World War take as a matter of fact and as a matter of obvious necessity. In fact, one only has to go back some ninety years to a time when

> His Majesty's Government did not require a passport for departure, nor did any European state require one for admittance except the two notoriously backward and neurotic countries of Russia and the Ottoman Empire. (Fussel, 24)

The passport was a result of the First World War and was perpetuated by the growth of state control over its subjects, a control which is central to modernity, and of which we have not yet seen the ultimate consequences.

Greene claims that he knew almost nothing about Liberia before his departure. The information Greene did have on Liberia had come from the British Government Blue Book, which had few words of encouragement about the conditions in the country:

> The rat population may fairly be described as swarming ... Altogether forty-one villages have been burnt ... One woman who had that day been delivered of twins was shot in her bed, and the infants perished in the flames ... As far as is known, the principal diseases in the interior include elephantiasis, leprosy, yaws, malaria, hookworm, schistosomiasis, dysentery, smallpox and nutritional conditions. In the whole country there are only: two doctors in Monrovia, both foreign and both engaged in private practice, a medical officer on the Firestone Plantations, and three or four missionary doctors working in the interior ... In Monrovia itself malaria is practically universal. (*Journey*, 17-18)

As Greene says, there is 'something satisfyingly complete about this picture. It really seemed as though you couldn't go any deeper than that' (*Journey*, 18). In a sense, the picture one gets of Liberia from this passage is something like total anarchy, lawlessness and danger. The

abundance of diseases and the handful of doctors to combat them provoke the notion of a

country where the inhabitants are left to care for themselves; a situation that is remarkably

different from that of the West. The chaotic condition of Liberia and the quality of seediness

that is associated with it strangely offer a large measure of attraction:

> There seemed to be a seediness about the place you couldn't get to the same extent elsewhere, and seediness has a very deep appeal: even the seediness of civilization, of the sky-signs in Leicester Square, the tarts in Bond Street, the smell of cooking greens off Tottenham Court Road, the motor salesmen in Great Portland Street. It seems to satisfy, temporarily, the sense of nostalgia for something lost; it seems represent a stage further back.
>
> > Streets that follow like a tedious argument of insidious intent
> > To lead you to an overwhelming question . . . (*Journey*, 19)

Liberia is here placed in a different age than Western civilisation; it represents 'a stage

further back'. Apparently, both Western civilisation and the primitive (Liberia) have an

inherent quality of seediness, but of a different kind. The concept of 'seediness' often surfaces

in Greene's writings, but it is never really fully illuminated. However, it appears to be

associated with a sense of drabness, instinctive sexuality, and cruelty. It is something that is

hostile or alien to man – at the same time as it seems to be an instinctive, primal drive.

The quote from T. S. Eliot's 'The Love Song of Alfred J. Prufrock' is an important

hint as to what Greene is aiming at: the poem is rampant with an extreme self-consciousness,

insecurity and even despair. Eliot, of course, became a kind of spokesperson for a whole

generation of readers and writers. The fragmented sense of self and the desolate image of the

modern city Eliot produced indicate the state of existence Greene wanted to escape. In the

context of *Journey Without Maps*, the 'overwhelming question' at the end of the streets in the

poem would be where the sense of self-awareness has come from and what the origin of

modern society is:

> But there are times of impatience, when one is less content to rest at the urban stage, when one is willing to suffer some discomfort for the chance of finding – there are a thousand names for it, King Solomon's Mines, the 'heart of darkness' if one is romantically inclined, or more simply, as Herr Heuser puts it in his African novel, *The Inner Journey*, one's place in time, based on a knowledge not only of one's present but of the past from which one has emerged. There are others, of course, who prefer to look a stage ahead, for whom Intourist provides

cheap tickets into a plausible future, but my journey represented a distrust of any future based on what we are. (*Journey*, 19-20)

If Liberia presents the possibility of performing a leap in time to 'the past from which one has emerged', the space of Liberia represents for Greene a different temporality *in the present*. It is set up as an alternative to the 'urban stage', which is modern England or Western civilisation – that is, Greene's home. The temporality of the passage is elaborated by the indication of the future of Greene's home, a future that for Greene holds no great promise due to the dismal state of the present. By presenting the possibility of finding an origin for the self, 'one's place in time', the journey is linked to a sense of quest. It is not solely a question of escape from England, it is a possibility for finding some sort of explanation or understanding of the restlessness and subjectivity that troubles Greene.

The idea of Liberia as representing a kind of time capsule is connected to the fact that it had not been colonised by a Western power:

> The psychoanalyst ... finds that some images have immediate associations; to others the patient can bring out nothing at all; his brain is like a cinema in which the warning 'Fire' has been cried; the exits are jammed with too many people trying to escape, and when I say that to me Africa has always seemed an important image, I suppose that is what I mean, that it has represented more than I could say ... It is not then *any* part of Africa which acts so strongly on this unconscious mind; certainly no part where the white settler has been most successful in reproducing the conditions of his country, its morals and its popular art. A quality of darkness is needed, of the inexplicable. (*Journey*, 20, original italics)

This quote has several implications. First, it is not Africa as such that attracts Greene. At this time in history most parts of Africa were under colonial rule and Greene is particularly seeking a place that is untouched by the West. Greene emphatically wants to escape his home, to the point where even a colonial reproduction of the home is unacceptable. His desire for Liberia is then directly connected to a place that is not-home. This desire is highlighted by the association-jam that arises in Greene's mind; Africa 'represented more than he could say'. It is almost as if the desire for 'the inexplicable' represents a non-rational drive. Second, the indication that Africa works on the unconscious is significant. The unconscious is both a harbour of desire and a container of memories. If the state of uncontaminated Africa

approximates the psychological patterns of childhood, the presence of a desire for 'Africa' in Greene's unconscious may be read as a desire for his personal childhood as well. Third, the passage is relevant for the narrative structure of the text. Again, it is the implication of the desire for a not-home that is the focal point. The emphasis on Africa void of Western civilisation at this point is a narrative prolepsis, as we shall see when we have followed Greene to his first stop in Africa.

The contrast between the crisis of the West and the hope of attaining some sort of understanding through the journey is further underlined:

> Today our world seems peculiarly susceptible to brutality. There is a touch of nostalgia in the pleasure we take in gangster novels, in characters who have so agreeably simplified their emotions that they have begun living again at a level below the cerebral ... It is not, of course, that one wishes to stay forever at that level, but when one sees to what unhappiness, to what peril of extinction centuries of cerebration have brought us, one sometimes has a curiosity to discover if one can from what we have come, to recall at which point we went astray. (*Journey*, 21)

The year 1936, when this was written, was of course a year when brutality reached towards new heights, and the events that culminated in the Second World War gained momentum. The 'cerebral level', I think, indicates the kind of self-awareness, subjectivity or even rationality that Greene tries to escape. It is this subjectivity that has caused the torn nerves of the unstable modern self and that has led the West to the 'peril of extinction' by means of rational and mechanical warfare. The level below the cerebral that Greene expects to find in primitive Liberia, then, seems to represent a more instinctive way of life, life more in continuity with the 'natural world'. It is important to note that Greene does not seek an idyllic paradise on earth. Nature, it is sometimes useful to recall, is not always a benevolent force. Furthermore, it seems clear that Greene does not indulge in the romantic notion of 'going native': the aim of the investigation is to remember a different way of life, to recall his and civilisation's childhood.

As the title indicates, maps and map-making are of some importance in *Journey Without Maps*. The making of a map, of course, is to make known something that has not

previously been known (known to the map-maker, that is), but that has always been 'there'. Furthermore, it traditionally involves the *discovery* of this something that was unknown: in order to make a map, one has to travel. Maps, then, surface in the narrative at various points and places. Significantly, the only actual, physical maps of Liberia that were available at the time Greene went there were not of much help:

> I could find only two large-scale maps for sale. One, issued by the British General Staff, quite openly confesses ignorance; there is a large white space covering the greater part of the Republic, with a few dotted lines indicating the conjectured course of rivers ... The other map is issued by the United States War Department ... it shows a vigorous imagination. Where the English map is content to leave a blank space, the American in large letters fills it with the word 'Cannibals' ... there is something Elizabethan in its imagination. (*Journey,* 45-6)

Andrew Thacker has claimed that the lack of information, the 'blankness' of the maps, 'offers [Greene] the chance to characterize his journey as an epic into the unknown, replete with the frisson of fear indicated by the possibility of cannibals', and that the blank map 'constructs Liberia as an archaic space, as "something Elizabethan" and hence unlike the "done globe" of the twentieth century' (Thacker, 17-18). Thacker is right in identifying the presence of 'cannibals' and the 'blank space' of the maps as a connection to the 'epic' notion of adventure. However, this does not take into consideration the genre's tradition: the history of travel literature abounds with tales of 'perilous adventures', and I would argue that the quote above may be seen as a way of playing with this tradition. There is a double movement in relation to the idea of adventure in this quote. By connecting the 'cannibals' and the 'blank space' – which after all are stock marks of exploration and adventure – to an 'Elizabethan' grand adventure, the passage also indicates that that kind of journey in fact belongs to the past – it belongs to a different 'imagination'. Additionally, the quote goes indirectly to the point that Liberia had not been colonised, it had not yet been contaminated by the corrupting influence of Western civilisation and hence offered an authentic state of otherness to Greene.

The quote is also an example of the text's awareness of time or history that is strongly connected to the *motif* of the text. The investigation of the self by virtue of necessity involves

a temporal or historical comparison. To understand the present self, Greene must compare it to its state in previous times. Furthermore, though 'fear' plays an important part in this journey, it is a personal, private sense of fear that is encountered, and not a fear of cannibals or other monstrosities. As I will try to show in the following, the trek did not offer great, 'perilous adventures', in fact, for most part of the journey Greene and his cousin experienced a tremendous boredom. The only thing that will be explored in any proper sense of the word in this narrative is the sense of identity and self and its place and condition.

The presence of blank maps can also be read as an allusion to the blankness of the maps of Greene's own mind. The blank (or, almost blank territory) of the interior of Liberia mirrors the blank interior of Greene's mind. In order to provide a map of both areas, Greene has to journey into the actual territory of Liberia and the 'actual' territory of his own mind.

In the epigraph, Greene quotes Oliver Wendell Holmes:

> The life of an individual is in many respects like a child's dissected map. If I could live a hundred years, keeping my intelligence to the last, I feel as if I could put the pieces together until they made a properly connected whole. As it is, I, like others, find a certain number of connected fragments, and a larger number of disjointed pieces, which I might in time place in their natural connection. (*Journey*, epigraph)

As Casey Blanton rightly points out regarding this quote, the 'theme of the individual's fragmented psyche is described in terms of a map ... so that the motifs of the journey, being lost, and a desire for wholeness prefigures these same themes in *Journey Without Maps*' (Blanton, 62). The 'life of an individual', of course, is stored in that individual's 'halls of memory', in those fragmented images and impressions that are so important to our sense of identity and self. The notion of making a map of memory is in a way to make known forgotten memories, to make known the parts of the self that have 'always been there', but of which the self has been unaware. In order to provide a map of memory, then, it is essential to make a journey into the 'countries of the mind' – making a map presupposes the experience of a territory.

Greene implicitly connects the actual, physical journey and the idea of map-making with the process of psychoanalysis. When Greene leaves the British colony Sierra Leone on the threshold of Liberia, he comments that 'the *real* journey was going to begin' (*Journey*, 95, my italics) and then links this 'real journey' to psychoanalysis:

> The method of psychoanalysis is to bring the patient back to the idea which he is repressing: a long journey backwards without maps, catching a clue here and a clue there, as I caught the names of villages from this man and that, until one has to face the general idea, the pain or the memory. (*Journey*, 96-7)

The spatial journey is here explicitly tied to a psychological, inward journey and the object of the journey is to discover the fragmented bits of memory. Once discovered, these fragments of memory will make out the topography of the map, the rediscovery of memories, as it were, will write the landscapes of the mind.

Blanton identifies three different maps in *Journey Without Maps*, 'all acting as metaphors for each other' (Blanton, 63). The first kind of map is a 'personal, psychological' map that represents 'those byways into our past that connect us to our present which, when followed, presumably lead us to a place called Who We Are' (Blanton, 63, original capital letters). This map is represented through a series of memories of home at different stages of his life, but with particular emphasis on those of childhood. Closely linked to this map are the 'literal geographical maps of Liberia' which in their 'outright falsity' parallel the personal map's 'arbitrary constructs' (Blanton, 63). Blanton claims that 'when we think we understand the mapless soul, we are merely constructing a map according to our own prejudices and desires' (Blanton, 63). Blanton is probably right to indicate that the soul or the mind is impossible to map correctly (even though there is no way to *know* this), but it still seems somewhat strange to dispose of the notion altogether. If Greene's project is to re-remember memories that exist in his unconscious, and the map of his mind results in a stronger sense of self or leads to some understanding of the self, the arbitrariness of this mind-map is of little consequence. The third map Blanton discusses is a 'cultural' map, with which to 'navigate

different cultural waters' (Blanton, 63), a map that Greene obviously lacks as a European in a West-African country.

One further aspect of the metaphor of the map that Blanton does not discuss, but which is very much present in *Journey Without Maps*, is yet another parallel map that Greene draws up of civilization. This map, analogous to the 'personal, psychological' map, is an attempt at a map of a 'general, historical' kind. Greene's drift towards memories of his childhood and his attempt to 'map out his life', are paralleled by a map of what 'man had made out of the primitive' (*Journey*, 224). In this map, the childhood of civilisation is represented by the primitive culture of Liberia and adulthood is represented by the modern societies of the West.

Greene travels on a cargo ship to his first stop in Sierra Leone. As the ship approaches Africa, memories of the home and the wider home society crowd in. This sequence is triggered by an episode where the captain of the ship shoots a hawk that is perched in the rigging. The sense of home is a significant part of the notion of identity and self and is important in understanding the way of existence that Greene tries to escape. Additionally, these passages have some bearing on the narrative strategies of the text, and I shall therefore quote some of them at length before I turn to my discussion.

The memories are collectively introduced as 'a reminder of darkness' (*Journey*, 35). The first image is that of a lonely girl crying by herself in a London bar, shunned by the other guests, with the comment 'it's always happening all the time everywhere' (*Journey*, 35), which on a melancholy note introduces the character of the lonely individual. The next paragraph jumps to a description of memories of a turbulent descent to the Tempelhof Airport in Berlin:

> The lights in the cabin went out and one could see the headlamps sweeping the asphalt drive, the sparks streaming out behind the grey Lufthansa wing, as the wheels touched and rebounded and took the ground and held. That was happiness, the quick impression; but on the ground, among the swastikas, one saw pain at every yard. (*Journey*, 35-6)

Here, we perceive an attraction to danger, to excitement, expressed through the shaky descent to the ground. The notion of excitement and danger that is prompted by the descent ('the quick impression') for a moment draws Greene away from the concerns of the world. However, the moment passes and he soon enough returns to the cruelty of that particular historical reality with images of 'pain' and 'swastikas'.

In an analeptic variation, the narrative again performs a spatial and temporal jump to a memory of Paris in 1924 which describes the 'seedy' Gare St. Lazare, a communist meeting which is surrounded by soldiers and then:

> That night from the window of an hotel I saw a man and a woman copulating; they stood against each other under a street lamp, like two people who are supporting and comforting each other in the pain of some sickness. The next day I read in the paper how the Reds had tried to get out, but the soldiers had stopped them; a few people were hurt, a few went to prison. (*Journey*, 36)

The reference to the communist meeting and the soldiers suggests a state of chaos and insecurity on the political level. The connection between this insecurity and 'a man and a woman copulating' adds a notion approximating despair. The 'sickness' the copulating pair is under metonymically represents a sickness of the whole society.

The memories then proceed back in time to childhood:

> The first thing I can remember at all was a dead dog at the bottom of my pram; it had been run over at a country crossroads, where I later saw a Jack-in-the-Green ... There was no emotion attached to the sight. It was just a fact. At that period of life one has an admirable objectivity. Another fact was the man who rushed out of a cottage near the canal bridge and into the next house; he had a knife in his hand; people ran after him shouting; he wanted to kill himself. (*Journey*, 36)

Childhood becomes a locus for a sense of trauma of lack of control and aversion to the adult world. It also indicates an early awareness of death and adult concerns in Greene's consciousness, and of the outside world as a chaotic, dangerous arena. The jumps continue to adolescence:

> Like a revelation, when I was fourteen, I realized the pleasure of cruelty ... There was a girl lodging close by I wanted to do things to; I loitered outside the door hoping to see her. I didn't do anything about it, I wasn't old enough, but I was happy; I could think about pain as

something desirable and not as something dreaded. It was as if I had discovered that the way to enjoy life was to appreciate pain. (*Journey*, 36-7)

Life or, perhaps better, adulthood, is in this quote closely linked to the idea of pain and cruelty. It seems to suggest an early awareness of life as hard and painful, and at least a partial recognition of the cruelties that people inflict on each other. Additionally, the quote appears to document the kind of sexual awakening that belongs to adolescence.

There is a sense of progression in the emotional state of Greene in these memories which resembles the various stages of society that are investigated in the narrative. The child's psychological state is that of an 'admirable objectivity' that suggests a lack of reflection of the self. The sights of the dead dog in the pram and the man trying to commit suicide – traumatic experiences for anybody – are experienced by the child as simple 'facts'. There is no sense of reflection over the events in the child's mind. As the memories progress towards adolescence, Greene becomes more aware of his own self. Sexuality, of course, involves a tremendous sense of insecurity and self-awareness, especially in the earliest stages of the experience. In the adult memories we perceive a sense of boredom as well as a notion of the self's insignificant place in the wider society. Although it is not explicitly stated in this context, the stages of development from child to adult are seen as parallel to the development of society.

Together, these images serve to paint a severely bleak picture of the narrator's home. First, the reference to the German war-machine and the growing threat of war as well as the riotous communists point to the great sense of crisis that lay thick as the thirties closed in on the coming disaster. Furthermore, the internationality of the memories – Germany, France, Britain – suggests that it is Western civilisation that is the locus of discontent and not solely Greene's home in England. The troubled state of society is associated with a sickness, of which the copulating pair is only one of many symptoms. Second, it is not only 'the outside world', or other people who are affected by this sickness – even his personal memories of

childhood are laden with an awareness of death, as well as a feeling of insecurity and instability. The bleakness of this portrait of the home is made complete by the fact that the solution to the dreariness of existence is to resort to some of the same cruelty himself; to grow up is to become immersed in pain to the point where it becomes a pleasurable experience.

Furthermore, the passages create a sense of duality, a strange commingling of pleasure and pain. In relation to the woman in the bar we are reminded that 'you don't weep unless you've been happy first; tears always mean something enviable' (*Journey*, 35). The descent into Berlin, too, involves a measure of satisfaction, and even though the dead dog in the pram is a dark memory, it is still only 'a fact'. What this doubleness indicates, I would argue, is a state of confusion for the self. The basic tone of the passages is one of unhappiness, even pain, and this is made all the more traumatic by the fact that happiness is inseparable from the experience of unhappiness.

The memory-passage, and with it the voyage to Africa, is concluded with a final statement as to the motivation for the journey:

> I thought for some reason even then of Africa, not a particular place, but a shape, a strangeness, a wanting to know. The unconscious mind is often sentimental; I have written 'a shape', and the shape, of course, is roughly that of a human heart. (*Journey*, 37)

Africa is here presented as an idea, it is not a 'place' as such, but more like an origin, by reference to the shape of 'a human heart', the conventional locus of true human sentiment. Moreover, the passage plays on the traditional notion of Africa as the 'cradle of humanity', the place from which humanity spread throughout the world. The journey is additionally more strongly connected to that of a quest, it is 'a wanting to know' that drives Greene towards Africa.

The fact that this series of memories is invoked at a distance is important to this discussion. In some ways the journey to Liberia is a transition to the state of exile, in that it

involves an escape from the home and a quest for meaning through an attempt at self-discovery. According to Andrew Gurr,

> exile as the essential characteristic of the modern writer anticipates the loss by the community as a whole of identity, a sense of history, a sense of home … The basic response to such conditions is a search for identity, the quest for home, through self-discovery or self-realisation … a search for a past, a cultural heritage, explicitly in James, Eliot and Auden … Overriding all other elements in the exile's mind of course is his self-consciousness: both cause and effect of the flight into exile. (Gurr, 14-15)

This, I think, has some bearing on the discussion above. The discontent with the state of the homeland is central to the motivation for departing into exile. The journey, or the state of exile, then, triggers reflections on the home and the self's place in that society. Significantly, the aspect of escape, which is an important part of the exiled condition, is made impossible by the fact that the locus of identity lies within the home.

Gurr adds another dimension to the state of exile that is significant to this discussion. The memories of home '[are] typically ... set in the past, in memories of childhood, as a *recherche* for the *temps perdu*, the home of memory, which is the only basis for a sense of identity which the exiled writer can maintain' (Gurr, 11, original italics). In *Journey Without Maps*, Greene's drift into a personal childhood as a locus for his own, troubled condition is mirrored by a drift, or a desire, to enter 'the childhood' of modern society that may be found in Liberia. The condition of the primitive in Liberia is marked by a state of innocence, of minds that 'are so little differentiated' (*Journey*, 23). The primitive has retained a sense of community and continuity with the world, which resembles in some ways the world of childhood. Childhood is (imaginatively) pictured as an experience of quiet, order and stability, which is precisely what Greene seems to find missing in the modern world.

Gurr remarks that the element of a 'drift in time' in the exiled condition is negotiated through a movement in space: 'Distance in space reinforces the effect of distance in time. Physical departure from the scene of one's personal history provides a break in time and separates the present from the past' (Gurr, 10-11). It is significant that the memory-passage,

as I have called it, comes at a time when Greene is at a 'safe distance' from his home. Moreover, the site which triggers the memories is not only marked by being at a distance from the home, it is also set on the threshold or the border to Africa. Borders, as we shall see in the next chapter, may connote a range of notions; however, a central aspect of traversing a border is a sense of expectation for the travelling subject. The border as an agent in provoking memories and mediating these memories through a sense of expectation resurfaces in *Journey Without Maps* as the journey progresses into the unfamiliar and will receive further attention in the course of this analysis.

The memory-passage furthermore carries implications for the narrative pattern of *Journey Without Maps,* which may be connected to a wider shift in the narratives of travel literature in the period of modernism. Helen Carr has pointed to the fact that in previous centuries, travelogues had mainly been the products of scientists, soldiers or officials of empire, merchants or adventurers, and the texts they produced were mainly 'grand narratives' of empire. The travel writing of the early twentieth century, she claims, 'has become more a subjective form, more memoir than manual, and often an alternative form of writing for novelists' (Carr, 74). There was then a change in the form of the trave book:

> There was a move – as in imaginative literature – from the detailed, realistic text, often with an overtly didactic or at any rate moral purpose, to a more impressionistic style with the interest focused as much on the travellers' response or consciousness as their travels. (Carr, 74)

This 'move' is strongly connected to the feeling of doubt in Western society and the sense of alienation that led to a search for the self and identity. Gone is the traveller-as-Hero, epitomised by the narratives of adventurers and profit-seekers like Henry Morton Stanley. The self-confidence and sense of innate superiority that were central to previous narratives no longer suited the concerns of a generation of writers (and readers, one might add) that had experienced the Great War and the depression, and who were losing faith in their own selves. From the detailed descriptions and the accruing of knowledge of Victorian and earlier narratives, the emphasis was now on emotive language and the response of the self to the

events of the road. Andrew Hammond identifies this shift in form as the representation of 'the random, disjointed memories that run through [the writer's] mind' as opposed to relating a 'fixed, eternal "truth"'(Hammond, 185).

The new form of the travel books reflects the perception of the self and of society as being in constant flux. Previous travel narratives were marked by a sense of linearity, of relating the journey from A to B and back again in a strict chronological manner. What the memory-passage in *Journey Without Maps* does is to break up this typical linear narrative. By presenting a series of memories of a personal nature, the narrative's analeptic variations indicate that this journey is as much about Greene's psychological responses to his experiences, as an account of the events of the road as such. It is a reflection of the new sense of self that is marked most of all by uncertainty and instability.

Leaving one's home does not mean that one is fully able to escape it; it is always present in one's memory. And as we now turn to the African part of the journey at hand, we shall see that it is sometimes not even enough to leave the continent of one's home to escape successfully.

The first stop on land in Africa for the two Greenes was Freetown in the British Colony Sierra Leone, which is described in a chapter tellingly called 'The Home from Home' (*Journey*, 37-74). Although Greene had finally arrived in Africa, he had not escaped his English home yet. Not even the African landscape could disguise the Englishness of the place: 'nature, conventionally grand, rising in the tree-covered hills above the sea and the town, a dull uninteresting green, was powerless to carry off the shabby town' (*Journey,* 37). Freetown had been taken over by the English colonialists.

> There was no doubt at all that one was back in home waters. This was an English capital city; England had planted this town, the tin shacks and the Remembrance Day posters, and had then withdrawn up the hillside to smart bungalows, with wide windows and electric fans and perfect service ... They had planted their seedy civilization and then escaped from it as far as they could. Everything ugly in Freetown was European: The stores, the churches, the Government offices, the two hotels; if there was anything beautiful in the place it was native. (*Journey*, 37-8)

The other place of Freetown is occupied by the agents of Empire. It is one of the many places in Africa where 'the white settler has been most successful in reproducing the conditions of his country' (*Journey*, 20) that Greene explicitly wanted to stay away from. The colonial masters are indirectly compared to vultures: 'On the roofs the vultures sat nuzzling under their wings with horrible tiny underdeveloped heads' (*Journey*, 38). Vultures are synonymous with death and decay, and in Freetown it is the native who has died. The scavengers become a symbol of a 'fallen state', which is repeated both in *Journey Without Maps* and in *The Lawless Roads*.

For Greene, Freetown represents a state in between Western civilisation proper and Africa proper. The colonial presence even affects the characters of the natives:

> They had been educated to understand how they had been swindled ... they had died, in so far as they had once been men, inside their European clothes ... [they were] funny to the heartless prefect eye of the white man. (*Journey*, 38-39)

The natives, according to Greene, are corrupted by the influence of the white man's civilisation. In a sense, the natives of Freetown are representatives of adolescence in terms of the stages of societal development, a notion that is underlined by the idea of the colonialists as 'prefects'. Greene is quite adamant in his attacks on the white masters and the various agents of Empire that reside in Freetown:

> These men in the city bar, prospectors, shipping agents, merchants, engineers, had to reproduce English conditions if they were to be happy at all. They weren't the real rulers; they were simply out to make money; and there was no hypocrisy in their attitude towards 'the bloody blacks'. The real rulers came out for a few years, had a long leave every eighteen months, gave garden parties, were supposed to be there for the good of the ruled. It was these men who had so much to answer for: the wages, for example, of the platelayers on the little narrow-gauge line which runs up to Pendembu ... This was perhaps the meanest economy among the many mean economies which assisted Sierra Leone. (*Journey*, 43)

From the perspective of 1936 I think it is fair to say that these are strong words, coming from a member of the privileged classes in England. However, Greene does not place the whole responsibility on the English in Freetown:

> One could exonerate the men in the bar; they were not guilty of these meannesses; they were only guilty of the shabbiness of Freetown ... to be fair to these men one must recognize a certain fidelity, a kind of patriotism in the dust and anglicanism and the closing hours; this is 'their corner of a foreign field' ... If one must condemn, one should condemn not the outposts but the headquarters of Empire, the country which has given them only this. (*Journey*, 44)

Although in many ways quite radical, this outright critique of colonialism is part of a growing sense of distrust of the colonial project that surfaced in this period. The damaging influence of the West on colonial societies is now an accepted fact; however, the process of colonisation and globalisation (the phrase is an anachronism, not the actual process) also affected the West. As the century graduated into the catastrophe of the Great War and the dreariness of the depression, the idea behind the colonial project and particularly the notion of the supremacy of Western civilisation grew increasingly problematical. It was hard to maintain an image of Western man as the more civilised after the atrocities of the Great War. In fact, in a number of texts this relationship was reversed; the colonial other was seen as remaining in a state of innocence in comparison with the European self, and Western civilisation was perceived as a force of corruption rather than a benevolent civilising agent. In the context of *Journey Without Maps*, the importance of this growing doubt is that it reinforces the unstable and insecure image of the self. Furthermore, Greene points indirectly to the significance of the colonial enterprise on the perception of the home. After all, the colonies were only the extended arms of the mother country and the reproduction of the home in the other country Sierra Leone presents itself as a reminder of the condition of the home. As he travels away from Freetown into more unfamiliar territory, Greene experiences a moment of insecurity:

> I could appreciate the need in a strange place of some point of support, of one or two things scattered round which are familiar and understandable, even if they are only Sydney Horler's novels, a gin and tonic. For even the railway journey was strange. (*Journey*, 52)

It is a rather curious paradox that the home acts as a 'point of support' at the same time as it is the cause of a sense of alienation and instability. What this points to, I think, is yet again the permeating presence of the home in memory and the link between home and identity. As the

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real part of the journey commences this insecurity is mixed with a sense of calmness. While anxious about having to 'dash' the native chiefs along the route a few shillings in return for food and lodging, Greene also thinks it 'a relief to enter the Republic and no longer feel that [he] was a member of the ruling race' (*Journey*, 52).

The distance from the colonial centre is reflected in the way the white people behave towards the natives as well as in the very character of the natives:

> The Englishmen here didn't talk about the 'bloody blacks' nor did they patronize or laugh at them; they had to deal with the real natives and not the Creole, and the real native was someone to love and admire. One didn't have to condescend; one knew more about some things, but they knew more about others. And on the whole the things they knew were more important. (*Journey*, 54)

The 'real native' presumably is someone who has been saved from the damaging influence of the colonial enterprise, from becoming a Creole. The real native is posited in a state of difference from the modern man; the knowledge that the native possesses is the knowledge of an alternative reality, of a more primitive way of life.

As he is on the move towards the border between Liberia and Sierra Leone, finally about to cross the frontier into Africa proper, signs of a past age start to surface. Having to deliver a message to a convent along the way, Greene comments that 'the act of sending a letter by messenger a day's journey ahead into another country was pleasantly medieval' (*Journey*, 64). The way of communicating is not the only thing that is on a level below modernity as he moves into uncontaminated Africa. The notion of Western time is also lost in this territory:

> I was vexed by the delay at Kailahun. I had not yet got accustomed to the idea that time, as a measured and recorded period, had been left behind on the coast ... Later I got used to not caring a damn, just to walking and staying put when I had walked far enough, at some village of which I didn't know the name, to letting myself drift with Africa. (*Journey*, 64-66)

The strict keeping of time, of course, is a modern invention, and it is a notion Greene has to abandon on his journey back in time to the primitive. In Africa proper, the merciless punctuality of mechanical time is replaced by a more organic notion of time; time, 'measured

and recorded' in the West, is in Africa experienced as a flow, suggested by the use of the term 'drift'. Liberia has preserved the notion of an organic or cyclic conception of time. This is of further interest concerning the idea of Liberia as similar to the mental state of childhood. Although it is impossible to prove, there is a strong notion that the child's perception of time is closer to the organic concept than the mechanical keeping of time. One obvious point in this respect is that the child has to *learn* how to tell the time. Greene's entry into 'timeless' space, then, may also be read as a movement towards the state of childhood.[3]

Setting off into the Liberian hinterland, Greene's mind again moves towards home: 'The way forward through the clearing was as broad as the primrose way, as open as a trap; the way back was narrow, hidden, difficult, to the English scene' (*Journey*, 68). At this point, the narrative performs an analeptic variation; it is interrupted by memories of home. Whereas the first jump into memory was at the threshold of Africa, the second jump comes at the threshold of Liberia, that is, what Greene presumes to be Africa proper, void of the English colonial presence and the reminders of home. The physical borders or thresholds signify movement – they are signposts along a given trajectory indicating distance. The movement involves a notion of duality; it represents simultaneously a move away from the home and a motion into the not-home. This notion is significant in terms of the concept of the not-home; it is both an imagined place of difference and an actual place that is unknown. The entry into the not-home, then, provokes a sense of disquietude in the traveller. The response to this commingling of anxiety and excitement is a drift towards the home, which serves as a point order. The home holds a double position for the self. On the one hand, it is the cause of the sense of instability and insecurity Greene wanted to escape. On the other, it is the only fixed point of identity for the self to return to.

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[3] I am indebted to Professor Lothe for pointing out the significance of time in this passage.

The memories of home are replete with a sense of corruption, fragmentation and instability and immorality, the fate of the lonely, seedy individual. The first sequence describes the memory of a major Grant, who 'used to visit a brothel in Savile Row ... he liked the idea of ordering a woman, as one might order a joint of meat, according to size and cut and price' (*Journey*, 69). Sexuality, like the tarts in Bond Street, is again presented as a trait of modernity; it develops the notion of the sexual drive as a token of self-awareness. There is also a rather sinister touch to Major Grant's view of women as a commodity that echoes Greene's adolescent experience of sexuality as something connected with cruelty. The following analepsis leaves Greene at the memory of a meeting with a woman named Ms Kilvane, a firm believer in some obscure prophetess. The passage is introduced by the comment '"having to construct something upon which to rejoice"' (*Journey*, 69), indicating that existence in itself in modern society is not sufficient for a happy life. Ms Kilvane had to resort to some sense of spirituality to endure existence. The next incident described is of a man called Charlie Sykes who had gone mad from overstudy, and who was found several days after his death, his flea-infested body put 'quickly into his coffin ... the ground hard enough for an electric drill six inches down' (*Journey*, 72). The picture of home as a seedy, despairing place has not decreased in intensity, in fact quite the opposite. The journey into Liberia, then, becomes a drift away from the instability and individualism of home, 'from the holy and the depraved individualists to the old, the unfamiliar, the communal life beyond the clearing' (*Journey*, 74). The emphasis is on Liberia as a different stage of development, representing a communal life that is other than the individualism and depravity of home.

In Bolahun, the first village *en route*, Greene meets a Liberian bush devil for the first time. The bush devil holds a position of great authority in Liberian society and is the head of the bush school, which all children have to attend. This is not the place to enter into the not entirely unproblematic field of West-African religion; suffice it to say that Greene compares

the bush school to the English public school, 'the school and the devil who rules over it are at first a terror to the child. It lies as grimly as a public school in England between childhood and manhood' (*Journey*, 90). Furthermore, the bush devil's rituals are linked to English customs of the past:

> I remembered a Jack-in-the-Green I had seen when I was four years old ... That as late as the ninth century in England had religious significance, the dance was part of the rites celebrating the death of winter and the return of spring, and here in Liberia again and again one caught hints of what it was we had developed from. It wasn't so alien to us, this masked dance (in England too there was a time when men dressed as animals and danced) ... One had the sensation of having come home, for here one was finding associations with a personal and a racial childhood, one was being scared by the same old witches. (*Journey*, 92-3)

This passage carries several tenors in terms of the temporality of the narrative and the collation of Liberia or the primitive with the state of childhood. First, there is the experience of the familiar in the desired unfamiliar. The sight of the bush-devil's dance initiates an act of memory. This is a double experience; the bush-devil is on one level unfamiliar, however, it also bears some resemblance to the 'Jack-in-the-Green' Greene had seen as a child. Greene then links this childhood memory directly to an historical England; that is to say, he connects it to the childhood of his home. Intriguingly, Greene ties the notion of cyclical or organic time ('the death of winter and the return of spring') to 'England's childhood', creating a material conjunction among his own memories of childhood, the childhood of modern society and the *present* state of Liberia. There is also a sense in which the passage echoes Marlow's remark in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*: "'And this [i.e England] also ... has been one of the dark places of the earth'" (Conrad, 19), in that it presents the idea of Liberia as representing a childhood that is in essence the same for all human societies. Liberia lingers in a time capsule, it represents a past age in the present. Second, the notion that Greene has a 'sensation of having come home' merits attention. It points to the wide application of the notion of home; home is here understood as a place of origin. It extends the notion of the home into a cultural past, 'a personal and racial childhood'.

Significantly, the village Bolahun represents yet another border or a threshold on the way to primitive Africa. Greene had been staying at a convent which had some modern conveniences that reminded him of home: 'This place was luxury, it was civilized in a way that I was used to and could understand' (*Journey*, 98). As Greene moves further into Liberia, he again turns to memories of the past. These memories, however, differ from the previous in that they are not to the same extent as before focused on his home. Rather, they are memories of a previous attempt at an escape from his torn nerves and self-consciousness: 'Coming in to Riga', he says, he had expected a 'relationship with something new and lovely and happy' (*Journey*, 99). However, what he found was 'something decaying' (*Journey*, 99) in the Latvian capital, which he juxtaposes with an 'unspoiled' (*Journey*, 99) peasant girl. The Latvian peasant girl becomes a representative for the primitive, for the communal life of the countryside, and she is unspoilt explicitly in comparison with the decaying capital, which, by being 'an urban scene', is a synecdoche for modernity.

The narrative analepsis then proceeds back in time to memories of Nottingham, where Greene converted to Catholicism. The description of Nottingham invokes the notion of the 'seediness of civilization', and, interestingly, his conversion is referred to as a journey 'into new country' (*Journey*, 101). Religion may be said to represent something outside existence, something similar to the belief in the supernatural that Greene expected to find in the primitive Liberia – a notion that we shall see becomes the main motivation for the journey in *The Lawless Roads*. However, in the present context, Greene's conversion did not cause any sense of change in his life: he kept his old name, and after the baptism was over, he retired to his 'salmon tea, and the dog which had been sick again on the mat' (*Journey*, 101). Both the journey to Latvia and his journey into the realms of religion, then, may be said to have failed.

Returning to the present of Africa, Greene claims that 'I had got somewhere new by way of memories I hadn't known I possessed. I had taken up the thread of life from very far

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back, from as far back as innocence' (*Journey*, 102). In order to follow this thread, Greene has to proceed further into the interior. The movement into the primitive landscape and the experience of primitive customs allow Greene to retrieve a primal memory of his own:

> I wasn't confident enough to see the journey as more than a smash-and-grab raid into the primitive … There was a dream of a witch I used to have almost every night when I was small. I would be walking along a dark passage to the nursery door. Just before the door there was a linen-cupboard and there the witch waited, like the devil in Kpangblamai, feminine, inhuman … At last, after many years, I evaded her, running blindly into sanctuary, and I never had the dream again. Now I seemed to be back in the dark passage: I had to see the witch, but I wasn't prepared for a long or careful examination. (*Journey*, 119)

The journey 'as far back as innocence' represents a journey back to memories of childhood. The devil in Kpangblamai triggers the memory of the witch in the closet because of its similarity with Greene's nightmare. The image of the devil has a profound effect on Greene's mind, it makes him feel that he is back in the 'dark passage' of a childhood dream. Although the state of childhood is marked by a notion of innocence, by an 'admirable objectivity', it is also a scene of terrors represented by the witch in the cupboard. However, the child's terror is not the same as the adult's sense of fear:

> Mine were devils only in the African sense of beings who controlled power. They were not even always terrifying … It was only many years later that Evil came into my dreams: the man with gold teeth and rubber surgical gloves; the old woman with ringworm; the man with his throat cut dragging himself across the carpet to the bed. (*Journey*, 181)

Greene here links his childhood terrors directly to the primitive belief in the supernatural; the notion reinforces the experience of Liberia as a state of childhood. Furthermore, the child's state of mind is more closely linked to a sense of objectivity; his 'devils' were not 'terrifying'; they are experienced by the child as mere 'facts'. The sense of evil, then, is a trait of adulthood; it is the self-awareness of adulthood that initiates the recognition of evil. If the child's terrors resemble the African belief in 'power', the adult's sense of evil is mirrored by the violence of modern society. Moreover, the passages provide a point in relation to the subjective form of the travel narrative. Greene does not only describe childhood memories, he provides an intimate account of his dreams and innermost fears.

After an absolutely gruelling trek, Greene and his cousin arrive in Dougambai with only half their carriers, without their important mosquito nets, most of their provisions and the filter needed to clean their drinking-water, and for some time appear to be left to themselves in a rat-infested hut. This, however, seems to please Greene to some extent:

> And suddenly I felt curiously happy and careless and relieved. One couldn't, I was sure, get lower than Duogobmai. I had been afraid of the primitive, had wanted it broken gently, but here it came on us in a breath, as we stumbled up through the dung and the cramped and stinking huts to our lampless sleeping place among the rats. It was the worst one need fear, and it was bearable because it was inescapable. (*Journey*, 126-7)

However ugly and dirty Greene finds it, Dougobmai is also a sort of haven away from self-consciousness:

> And yet all the time, below the fear and the irritation, one was aware of a curious lightness and freedom; one might drink, that was a temporary weakening; but one was happy all the same; one had crossed the boundary into country really strange; surely one had gone deep this time. (*Journey*, 132)

The deepness of the journey 'this time' is reflected in the village Zigita, the capital of the Buzie people and the Liberian 'magic-capital'. The devil of Zigita is reminiscent of the witches of Greene's childhood, in that it represents a force that is not necessarily just the same as evil. Zigita lives under the bush devil's rule, in a state of constant terror. When the Greenes arrive at the village, they get a message from the devil's henchman that they have to stay inside their hut because the devil is about to venture outside in the village. To some extent, the relationship between the Buzie devil and the villagers is similar to the one between adult and child, in that the adult has control over the child because of a knowledge of the (adult) world in the same way that the devil has knowledge of the world of supernatural forces. Furthermore, the fear the villagers in Zigita experience resembles the fears of childhood. Another example of innocence, the villagers' belief in the power of the devil is the same as the child's belief in witches in the closet.

At this point, the trek has entered into a state of routine, of getting up early in the morning, walking to the next village over and over again, and this notion is reinforced by the

Liberian forest being on the whole quite lifeless. However, the notion of boredom is intermingled with a sense of happiness. Both belong to the state of childhood that Greene has 'touched' in the course of the journey:

> But it was only fair, I suppose, that the moments of extraordinary happiness, the sense that one was nearer than one had ever been to the racial source, to satisfying the desire for an instinctive way of life, the sense of release, as when in the course of psycho-analysis one uncovers by one's own effort a root, a primal memory, should have been counterbalanced by the boredom of childhood too … I sometimes wonder whether, if one had stayed longer, if one had not been driven out again by tiredness and fear, one might have relearned the way to live without transference, with a lost objectivity. (*Journey*, 158)

Again, childhood is linked to a state of objectivity, to a lack of self-consciousness. This state of being is, however, 'lost' to modern man, in the same way that it is impossible for an adult to return to childhood. In addition, the journey is linked to the process of psychoanalysis in that Greene effectively starts to re-remember his childhood. It is the experience of living close to an instinctive way, 'without transference', that has enabled Greene to recover his 'primal' memories; the primitive space has allowed him to experience a different state of mind.

As Greene turns north on his trek, in the direction of the coast and, ultimately of England, his desire to get home grows stronger. In a sense, this turning north represents yet another threshold or frontier between the home and the not-home. This crossing, however, is different from the previous in terms of direction; Greene is now moving away from the not-home towards his home. The feeling of trepidation that arose on the threshold into the not-home (unknown) is then in a manner cancelled and we do not get a similar cluster of memories of home. However, the movement towards home does affect Greene's perception; the unfamiliar forest of Liberia starts to take on very British qualities: 'I was happy with the sense that every step was towards home, there was something peculiarly English about the fish, the pond, the quite small trees' (*Journey*, 182). Furthermore, the way towards the coast is also a road towards civilisation, marking the 'ascent' into adulthood. The movement away from the childhood-like state of the interior into the adulthood of society is represented by the same notion of sexual awareness that marked Greene's personal experience of adolescence:

'A young girl hung around all day posturing with her thighs and hips, suggestively, like a tart … she knew that breasts had a significance to the white man they didn't have to the native' (*Journey*, 215).

Moving towards the coast, Greene's growing illness and the sheer exhaustion of the trek serve to fill the last pages with scorn over the troubles of civilisation. The road that leads to the coast is populated by a group of people called the Bassa, for whom Greene develops 'a bitter dislike … The Coast had corrupted them, had made them liars, swindlers, lazy, weak, completely undependable' (*Journey*, 218). The Bassa remind Greene of the 'depraved individualists' of his home. The difference in consciousness between the interior and the Coast is reflected in the aggressive drunkenness of the carriers that is induced by strong cane juice: 'I could tell the difference between their drunkenness now and the happy sleepy mellow state the palm wine had put them in. This was crude spirit and a crude coastal drunkenness' (*Journey*, 224).

There is a sense in which the return to the Coast represents the first stage of Greene's home-coming, in that it is a return to civilisation. When he pays the carriers, the local police circle in to get their share of the money. The police are in a way reminiscent of the vultures of civilisation that we saw in Freetown. As the images of corruption and seediness crowd in, the familiarity of the Coast home yet again initiates a drift into memory. Greene remembers

> the thin distinguished military grey head in Kensington Gardens with the soft lips and the eye which dwelt with dull lustre on girls and boys of a certain age ... There was cruelty enough in the interior, but had we done wisely exchanging the supernatural cruelty for our own? ... The airman had dived, playing the fool before his younger brother and the other boys, he had miscalculated the height and struck the ground and was dead before he reached [sic] hospital. (*Journey*, 225)

The return to civilisation is described on a note of disappointment or loss. The notion of the 'supernatural cruelty' of the interior for Greene is preferable to the viciousness of civilisation. The objectivity of the childlike state of perception in the interior, as it were, would void the sense of evil and despair that is connected to the memories; the memories would remain

simple 'facts'. The notion of loss is reinforced by the fact that this for Greene 'is home ...

where we will soon forget the finer taste, the finer pleasure, the finer terror on which we

might have built' (*Journey*, 226). Moreover, the experience of the Coast as similar to his

home may be described as a double experience, since it places his home in the space of the

not-home. In this respect, the Coast resembles Freetown in that it is a 'home from home'.

However, in Freetown the experience of home was connected to the English colonial

presence, whereas at the Coast it is the break from the way of life in the interior that initiates

the notion of sameness.

On the voyage back, Greene ponders on the familiar aspect of the experience:

> But what had astonished me about Africa was that it had never been really strange. Gibraltar
> and Tangier – those extended just parted hands – seemed more than ever to represent an
> unnatural breach. The 'heart of darkness' was common to us both. (*Journey*, 248)

Liberia was not unfamiliar, it seems, because Greene had experienced it in his childhood. The

state of objectivity and instinctiveness Greene found in the Liberian hinterland was also

present in his childhood memories. The primitive landscape had allowed him to remember his

own primal years.

When Greene arrives in Dover, he hears a child crying:

> The wail of a child too young to speak, too young to have learnt what the dark may conceal in
> the way of lust and murder, crying for no intelligible reason but because it still possessed the
> ancestral fear, the devil was dancing in its sleep. There ... was Africa: the innocence, the
> virginity, the graves not opened yet for gold, the mine not broken with sledges. (*Journey*, 250)

This final paragraph places the state of innocence and continuity with the world that Greene

experienced in the interior firmly in a different age. This state of mind is for the Western

citizen a stage that is past, it belongs to those years of childhood that we can only return to in

the form of the incomplete fragments of the imagination that are stored in the halls of

memory. Liberia, then, at the same time represents both the familiar and the unfamiliar. It is

unfamiliar from the viewpoint of the adult individual and 'adult' (modern) civilisation; once

one has advanced to the cerebral level, it is impossible to return to the virginity of

undifferentiated minds. However, it is familiar in relation to Greene's childhood memories and to the history or the cultural memories of modern society; the state of objectivity of the native in Liberia lingers in the memories of the individual and society.

In the course of this analysis, we have, as it were, followed Greene on his itinerary from England to Liberia via Sierra Leone and back again. In order to conclude this chapter, it is relevant to see how the various parts affect the journey as a whole. The starting-point of the journey is Greene's home in England, both the actual, spatial home and Greene's perception of the home as a site of insecurity and instability. Greene's sense of home is crucial for understanding the motivation for the journey. The description of his home takes its cue from T. S. Eliot's 'The Love Song of Alfred J. Prufrock'; the poem's encompassing air of seediness and the desolate image of the urban scene present a dismal state of the home. This image of the home is tightly tied to the events of the inter-war period; the home is 'peculiarly susceptible to brutality', hovering on the brink of 'extinction' (*Journey*, 21). The state of the home, furthermore, disturbs Greene's sense of self. The experience of crisis and the lack of a fixed point of order create a perception of the self that is marked by a penetrating sense of fragmentation and insecurity. The notion of despair Greene feels then leads to a desire to escape the home on a quest for an alternative. Greene imagines a not-home that is constructed as a place that is different from the home. The idea of a not-home is then projected onto the space of Liberia; the reason for choosing Liberia is that it is not colonised by a Western power – it is uncontaminated by the corrupting influence of the modern world. The not-home or the primitive is compared with the state of being of childhood; Greene deploys the notion that the child's state of mind involves a certain innocent objectivity that is marked by a lack of self-consciousness. The home or the modern world is then compared with the state of adulthood, which is signified by an extreme sense of self-awareness. Importantly, there is a duality to the concept of the home that is mirrored in the construct of the not-home. The home is at the same

time the locus of the sense of instability and insecurity of the self as it is the only point of identity the self can turn to. Similarly, the not-home is simultaneously an actual space that is unknown and a space that is invested with a projected desire.

The second part of the journey is constituted by the journey to and through Liberia via the British colony Sierra Leone. Although a way-station along the road to Liberia, Sierra Leone is important to the discussion; it represents the first threshold or border into the not-home. Borders, I have said, indicate movement; in this instance the border signals a drift away from the home (the known) and a move into the not-home (the unknown). The entry into the not-home, then, provokes a feeling of disquietude that is responded to by a drift towards the home, which here serves as a point of order. However, Greene's actual entry into the not-home is delayed. Freetown, being a colonial capital, is similar to Greene's home. The notion of a threshold between the known and the unknown is repeated in the text, and each time Greene proceeds further away from his home and into the actual not-home. When he passes the third frontier at Bolahun there is indeed a sense in which Greene comes close to the imagined not-home: the bush devils and the notion of neutral power they represent remind him of his own experience of childhood as well as the childhood of his home.

In terms of the travel plot the narrative produces, the third stage of the journey is represented by the way back to the Coast and, ultimately, back to England. The re-entry into the home in the form of civilisation is another instance of border-crossing. However, since Greene in this instance is moving towards a known place, the sense of trepidation and the subsequent drift towards the home is not invoked to the same extent as in the crossing into the unknown. The latter part of the journey is most of all marked by a sense of disappointment. As the images of corruption and instability crowd in, Greene laments what 'man had made out of the primitive' (*Journey*, 224). This notion is reinforced by the fact that the primitive in

Liberia in some aspects had been familiar; the primitive state of objectivity is, however, irretrievably lost to the modern man.

The extreme self-awareness and the unstable sense of self that trouble Greene are at once mirrored by and created by the narrative structure; the fluctuating narrative produces and underlines the notion of a fragmented self. In a marked break from earlier travel narratives, the frequent analeptic variations in *Journey Without Maps* highlight the insecure sense of self of the narrator.

I have described *Journey Without Maps* as an escape from a dysfunctional home and a quest for an alternative life-experience. However, the attempt to escape the home is made impossible by the fact that it lingers in the traveller's mind as the only possible source of identity and self. There is also a sense in which the quest-aspect of the journey may be said to have failed; even though Greene in some ways was able to 'touch' the primitive condition, it represents a state of mind that is hopelessly lost to modern man. *Journey Without Maps* powerfully documents the *travail* of the lonely, seedy, modern individual's search for a sense of self.

Chapter 3

The Lawless Roads

In the first months of 1938 Graham Greene went to Mexico on a commission to write a book on the religious persecution of Catholics which followed in the wake of the Mexican Revolution. The Mexican Revolution sprang out from social turmoil in the 1910s; it was a socialist revolution concerned with land reforms that soon evolved into shifting military dictatorships, guerrilla warfare and social hardship. At the time Greene went there, some of the federal states had softened on the religious intolerance by allowing the churches that had not been turned into government buildings or cinemas to be reopened for worshippers. However, in the states of Tabasco and Chiapas, Greene's destinations in Mexico, any religious observance, including personal crosses and possession of the Bible, was strictly prohibited.

The aim of this chapter is to present a reading of the journey to Mexico in *The Lawless Roads* as an inner, psychological journey, a search for meaning and stability for the self through faith. The notion of faith here is best understood as a fixed point of order as opposed to the experience of the world (home) and everyday-life as fleeting, insecure and unstable. Central to my argument is Greene's relationship to his home, which is marked by a deep-felt feeling of displacement and alienation as well as a strong sense of restless boredom. This notion of displacement is presented through a complex set of personal and general discontents or anxieties and desires, and works on multiple interconnected temporal, cultural, and spatial levels. Moreover, these discontents serve as the basis for the motivation for the journey – the journey becomes an escape from the home and a quest or a search for meaning.

From the opening paragraph Greene presents his home as a drab, hopeless place and his own position within it as alienated, displaced, restless and highly insecure. The notion of home, of course, represents a complex set of emotions and relationships and is of central importance to any individual's sense of self and identity. The idea of home is, furthermore, a fixed notion, as a source – the source – of identity, as well as it may (at the same time) express a number of temporal, spatial, and cultural communities. Greene, then, presents his home as a personal memory set in childhood, a collective cultural 'memory' of historical England, a present version of the home in England and the home in the wider context of Western civilisation (a 'general', wider home) and a religious home in the community of (Catholic) believers. Even a notion of a future home is indicated in the text. As I will try to show in the following, all these notions of home are associated with a distinct sense of displacement, anxiety and restlessness. The displacement and the anxiety that Greene feels towards his home become the foundation and the motivation for the journey to Mexico. The motivation and the expectations for a journey are essential as to how the journey itself unfolds and how it is experienced by the travelling self. Before one sets out on a journey, one necessarily forms certain hopes and expectations that will be negotiated and reconsidered throughout the journey, and these expectations will therefore colour the experience at large.

Against the idea of home, then, we get a motivation or a desire to find a not-home, or an 'other' place – in Casey Blanton's phrase, an 'antidote' (Blanton, 21) to the drabness of existence in England. This antidote seems to be found primarily in the (Catholic) faith. In the above I wrote that Greene felt displaced from the community of believers; however, it needs to be stressed that the alienation is from the faith as it is *practised by the community of Catholics in England*. Greene consistently presents religiousness, as in the Catholic faith, as a fixed point from which to gain some sense of order from existence – a safe haven away from the world. Mexico becomes a site of projected desire where Greene expects to find that the

faith *matters*, that in spite and because of the persecution of Catholics there, the faith becomes stronger. This idea is directly and explicitly in contrast to the current state of (his home in) Western civilisation, which is a fleeting, superficial place where nothing really matters. The journey becomes a private search for meaning, for a sense of peace for the self, for an antidote to the restless displacement of home. It is important to note that the inward journey is not only on the personal level – it is also an attempt at an anatomy of the state of mind of society. *The Lawless Roads* is then in some ways similar to *Journey Without Maps*, in that it is the writing of an escape from a dysfunctional home in addition to being a quest for an alternative way of life.

The various notions of home as well as the idea of a not-home, the 'other place', are throughout the narrative expressed by the metaphor of the border. If the various notions of home and not-home are complex in nature, the differing uses of the border constitute a highly complex and interrelated set of divisions and similarities that will be attended to in detail in this analysis.

Finally, the project is marked by a note of disillusionment that extends to the hope of actually finding an alternative way of existence. Greene expresses early on that even though he strongly *hopes* to find an antidote, he is also haunted by the doubt that he will not. This doubt may be placed in the context of the 'surge in doubt' (Hammond, 170) that surfaced in much modernist literature (and in society at large, for that matter), and it is expressed through a narrative, that in comparison with its Victorian predecessor, may be described as unstable and insecure – a reflection, that is, of the modernist sense of self. Furthermore, the sense of doubt is connected to an awareness of a 'done' globe, the growing hegemony of the West and the idea of a different age that is hopelessly lost to modern man.

Greene sets the tone in the epigraph to the book, where, among others, we find a quote from Cardinal Newman:

The corruptions, the dreary hopeless irreligion, that condition of the whole race, so fearfully yet exactly described in the Apostle's words, 'having no hope, and without God in the world' – all this is a vision to dizzy and appal; and inflicts upon the mind the sense of profound mystery, which is absolutely beyond human solution ... *if* there be a God, *since* there is a God, the human race is implicated in some terrible aboriginal calamity. (*Lawless*, epigraph, original italics)

Not only does this passage emphasise the importance of religion to Greene, it also points to the secularisation of the West and England that had taken place and that was growing in strength as Greene wrote – the West was increasingly becoming a society without 'God in the world'. Additionally, the reference to the 'terrible aboriginal calamity' may be said to take on a new significance as to the period in which *The Lawless Roads* was written – first there was the calamity of the Great War, then the crisis of the depression and fascism, and, as the thirties drew to an end, the threat of a new war.

One other point that I think is fair to make, is that the 'calamity' has a different significance for Cardinal Newman than it has for Greene. Newman, in a style of curiously calculated fervour, seems to emphasise religion as salvation from the list of endurances humans must put up with, that is an emphasis on the after-life, whereas Greene, with his rather inexplicable idea of religion is concerned with religion as a tool in the *present*, earthly life.

Greene consistently contrasts the areas of conflict through the image of the border in this narrative. His use of the border as a literary metaphor, however, is not unique in this period. In *Reading the Thirties: Texts and Contexts*, Bernard Bergonzi claims that 'in the literature of the 1930s the frontier is an insistent element, whether as literal description or emblem or symbol' (Bergonzi, 66). The frontier represents 'a metaphorical division between states of feeling, between known and unknown, present and future, the small group and society. The image was precise, but its implications were very general and capable of almost endless extension' (Bergonzi, 66). The background for the prevalence of the frontier as a literary metaphor lies of course in the social realities of the 1930s. A period of tremendous

upheaval in almost all respects, it also represented a tightening of the borders, at least in Europe, between nation and nation. As I discussed in the previous chapter, it was possible to travel without papers of identification throughout Europe before the Great War; the passport is a result of the First World War and is symptomatic of the ever increasing state control of its subjects in the West. The increasing difficulty for individuals to traverse national borders in the thirties, as Bergonzi points to, came at the same time as the idea of national borders in many ways became more and more obsolete. Tanks, planes and international trade, after all, do not relate to borders as the individual human being does. However, since the individual was hindered considerably by the growing prevalence of borders, it was a metaphor that was (and is) potent because of its universality.

The narrative begins with a prologue that is divided into three subsections where we are offered a description of Greene's home and his expectations for the journey. The first subsection is called 'The Anarchists' (*Lawless*, 13), and is a highly personal section that deals with a description of Greene's home in 'flamboyant decay' (*Lawless*, 17). 'Anarchy', of course, suggests a state of lawlessness, instability and flux. The opening takes us to a vivid relation of a childhood memory, to an instance when Greene had stolen away from a school concert and stood outside the school building, listening:

> Two countries just lay here side by side. From the croquet lawn, from the raspberry canes, from the greenhouse and the tennis lawn you could always see – dominatingly – the great square Victorian buildings of garish brick: they looked down like skyscrapers on a small green countryside where the fruit trees grew and the rabbits munched. You had to step carefully: the border was close beside your gravel path. (*Lawless*, 13)

The 'two countries' of the quote are the Greenes' family house and the school. Since Greene's father was headmaster of Berkhamsted School, the Greene family lived in a building adjacent to the school itself. The school is symbolised through the threatening presence of skyscrapers, whereas Greene's home is an idyllic site where rabbits roam free to 'munch' as they please.

No young school-boy or girl is very happy to attend the school where one of their parents holds a position. However, the situation of Greene was particularly vulnerable in that a) his father was headmaster, and not a very popular one, and b) that as an officially recognised boarder of the school, he was not allowed to come and go freely into his own home, which after all was in the same building as the school:

> I was an inhabitant of both countries: on Saturday and Sunday afternoons on one side of the baize door, the rest of the week of the other. How can life on a border be other than restless? You are pulled by different ties of hate and love. For hate is quite as powerful tie: it demands allegiance. In the land of the skyscrapers, of stone stairs and cracked bells ringing early, one was aware of fear and hate, a kind of lawlessness ... one met for the first time characters, adult and adolescent, who bore about them the genuine quality of evil. (*Lawless,* 13-14)

Greene here describes the conflict of loyalty between his father and his fellow pupils quite brilliantly in the notion of 'life on a border'. The border, of course, is closely associated with a state of transition, of movement as well as hinting at the possibility of development, the notion of a new start on the other side of the border. However, Greene, quite literally, was not going anywhere, he was trapped on the border between his home and the school, in a constant state of being in-between, with no real sense of belonging. The result of this situation, as Greene puts it, was a heart-felt sense of restlessness and displacement from his home.

Madan Sarup points to the relationship between home and identity: 'The notion of home is not the same in every culture ... Nevertheless, I want to suggest that the concept of home seems to be tied in some way with the notion of identity – *the story we tell of ourselves and which is also the story others tell of us*' (Sarup, 95, original italics). The notion of belonging somewhere is of central importance in the formative years (if not throughout the life) of any individual; the notion of home is a fixed point in people's imagination and the ultimate source of identity. The conflict Greene felt, then, contributed towards a strong sense of displacement.

Furthermore, the passage evokes a notion that I discussed in relation to *Journey Without Maps* in the previous chapter, namely that adolescence marks a level of

consciousness that involves an awareness of human cruelty, a 'genuine quality of evil'. The idea is that as the level of self-awareness rises as the individual grows older, so does the presence of 'cerebral cruelty' increase.

The circumstances of Greene's childhood, the severe tensions of his days at school and the awareness of 'evil' are described as the starting point of his growing sense of religious faith:

> Hell lay about them in their infancy. There lay the horror and the fascination. I escaped surreptiously for an hour at a time: unknown to the frontier guards, I stood on the wrong side of the border looking back ... It was an hour of release – and also an hour of prayer ... And so faith came to me – shapelessly, without dogma, a presence above a croquet lawn, something associated with violence, cruelty, evil across the way. I began to believe in heaven because I believed in hell, but for a long time it was only hell I could picture with a certain intimacy. (*Lawless*, 14)

Although the ascension of faith does not at first establish itself in any positive sense (it is not, say, the glory or goodness of God that awakens him, it is 'violence, cruelty, evil'), it is still, I would argue, very much a counterpoint to the restlessness of 'life on a border', it is a fixed value, from which he could gain solace and order. Furthermore, it is of some significance that he again applies the metaphor of the border to his situation. To be alone with his faith ('the presence above a croquet lawn') he has to pass the 'frontier guards', and once safe and on his own, he looks back at 'the crowd across the border' (*Lawless*, 14). This serves to develop, to expand, the metaphor of the border, which was first applied to the border between his home and his school. The 'border' in this instance indicates the divide between those who have faith and those who have not, between the 'anarchists' and (those who have) 'the faith'.

Additionally, the faith may be connected to the notion of escape, in that it to the young Greene represented something like a psychological safe-house, a mental mechanism of self-defence from his tormentors at school. Faith becomes a safe haven away from 'the pitchpine partitions of dormitories where everybody was never quiet at the same time; lavatories

without locks: "'There, by reason of the great number of the damned, the prisoners are heaped together in their awful prison'" (*Lawless*, 14).

As Greene presents it in the text, he gradually moved from the Anglican Church towards Catholicism. Against the hell-like conditions of his school, 'the Anglican Church could not supply the same intimate symbols for heaven; only a brass eagle, an organ voluntary, "Lord Dismiss Us with Thy Blessing"' (*Lawless*, 14).

Later in life, Greene continued to define his faith in contrast to the rest of the world, which still appears to be a world of 'anarchy', though he is drawn towards Catholicism as he grows older:

> Those were primary symbols; life later altered them; in a midland city, riding on trams in winter past the Gothic hotel, the super-cinema, the sooty newspaper office where I worked at night, passing the single professional prostitute trying to keep the circulation going under the blue and powdered skin, I began slowly, painfully, reluctantly, to populate heaven. The Mother of God took the place of the brass eagle: I began to have a dim conception of the appalling mysteries of love moving through a ravaged world ... It remained something one associated with misery, violence, evil, 'all the torments and agonies', Rilke wrote, 'wrought on scaffolds, in torture chambers, mad houses, operating theatres, underneath vaults of bridges in late autumn'. (*Lawless*, 14-15)

The cruel 'tormentors' of Greene's school days have now been replaced by images of that great symbol of modernity, namely the city. The images presented all underline a sense of alienation – of the individual being adrift in the mass of people, the presence of a prostitute again, as in *Journey Without Maps*, pointing to moral corruption. Importantly, the faith is seen as a counterpoint to the violence of everyday experience, to the point where it is almost associated with misery.

I think it is possible to see a connection between the Catholic denomination and Greene's conception of religiousness as it is presented in the text. If the 'purpose' of the faith for Greene is to have some kind of fixed point outside and beyond the realm of everyday life, Catholicism is particularly apt in that it is rich in symbols and sacraments – that is, concrete symbols of the faith. Admittedly, this is to allow oneself rather wide interpretive liberties, but I would argue that it is not without relevance.

The narrative then performs another analepsis and returns to a description of memories of his home set in early childhood, in a move that places the feeling of alienation and restlessness into his very first memories:

> It was a place without law – I felt that even then, obscurely: no one really was responsible for anyone else ... I remember the small sunk almshouses by the canal and a man running furiously into one of them – I was with my nurse – he looked angry about something: he was going to cut his throat with a knife if he could get away from his neighbours, 'having no hope, and without God in the world'. (*Lawless*, 15)

The list goes on with stories of teenage pregnancy, murder and suicide, and a penetrating drabness, creating an image of the home close to a 'fallen state', ripe with disillusionment. This depressing state of home has some bearing on Greene's sense of self: 'People are made by places, I thought; I called this "home", and sentiment moved in the winter evening, but it had no real hold ... You couldn't live in a place like this' (*Lawless*, 16). The level of alienation is such that Greene does not seem to find any sense of belonging in his home. The passage points directly to the role of home in the creation of an individual's identity, to the importance of the formative years on the self.

With the ascension of faith comes a new sense of home, namely that of the community of believers, which could potentially offer a positive alternative to his family and cultural home. However, his fellow believers appear to be immersed in the same dreariness and moral corruption as the rest of the home community:

> The Irish servant girls crept out of back doors in the early dark. They were 'Romans', but they were impertinent to the priest if he met them in the high street away from the small, too new Catholic church ... They couldn't be kept in at night ... There were so many fish in the sea ... sexual experience had come to them too early and too easily. (*Lawless*, 15-16)

What Greene portrays here is in a sense a double-displacement. First, he feels alienated from his family home and the home of the school and the wider community; second, his second home in the sense of the community of (Catholic) believers only repeats and doubles the displacement from his original home.

From this point of view, the journey to Mexico takes on a significance beyond that of writing a report on the religious persecution there: 'Well, next month, perhaps Mexico ... and why Mexico? Did I really expect to find there what I hadn't found here?' (*Lawless*, 17). Mexico presents itself as a positive counterpoint to the blatant disregard of the faith in his English home. Although there is an underlying doubt in this quote, a doubt as to whether Mexico will in fact provide something different, there is, at least from the point of view of England, the *hope* that Mexico will offer an alternative. In the analysis of *Journey Without Maps* in the previous chapter, I discussed the importance of the expectations that exist before a journey, and the influence of these expectations on the experience of the journey itself. The idea of Mexico as different from England as to the presence of religion may in this regard be seen as a projected desire. As the real journey progresses, this desire for something different will be negotiated through the actual events of the journey.

The idea of Mexico as a place where religion *matters* is presented through the story of Father Pro, a young Jesuit who despite the severely anti-Catholic climate in Mexico in the 1920s had given Mass and taken confessions tirelessly and without much concern for his own safety. Pro was later wrongly accused of an attempted assassination of President Obregon, imprisoned and shot. The government had issued a picture of him before the execution squad while he was 'praying for his enemies by the pitted wall, receiving the *coup the grace*' (*Lawless*, 20, original italics). The picture had later been banned – Pro had become a martyr and a symbol for the Catholic struggle. The general idea, then, of the faith in Mexico, is that the faith matters there because of the religious oppression, that persecution leads to a strengthening of the community of believers: 'Where the eagles are gathered together, it is not unnatural to expect to find the Son of Man as well' (*Lawless*, 34).

There is also an implicit comparison of the situation in Mexico with that of Greene's home in England in the prologue that is highly interesting in relation to the varying

temporality of the narrative. Mexico, we are told, is the site of 'the fiercest persecution of religion anywhere since the reign of Elizabeth' (*Lawless*, 19). This may be seen in connection with the preceding descriptions of Greene's home, which emphasises 'the diamonded Elizabethan pane ... the Tudor café across the street' (*Lawless*, 16), which, I would argue, may be read as an awareness of the history of the home. This reading is reinforced by a later comment: 'So many years have passed in England since the war began between faith and anarchy: we live in an ugly indifference' (*Lawless*, 34), the titles of the sub-sections of the prologue, we may recall, are called precisely 'the anarchists' and 'the faith'. The similarity between an historical England and the present of Mexico is tightened by juxtaposing Father Pro with the Catholic saint Edmund Campion, who was killed in Elizabethan England:

> I thought of Father Pro coming into this country in disguise – the badly cut suit and the striped tie and the brown shoes ... They had killed Campion, they said, for treason, not for his religion, and they said the same of Pro in 1927. The war doesn't change its character in a few centuries. (*Lawless*, 34)

The insistence on naming the struggle between the faith and anarchy a 'war' ties in with the idea of a frontier between the two factions. Wars, of course, are typically fought at frontiers, over frontiers and often on both sides of a frontier. The use of the term 'war' additionally suggests a note of seriousness to the struggle – war, as we know, is a matter of life and death.

In laying out the motivation for the journey, Greene has invoked a personal history in the form of childhood memories as well as a collective or cultural history by the implicit connection of a past age in England with the present of Mexico. This relationship will become more important in the course of the narrative, as it relates both to the ever-developing metaphor of the border, and to questions of the self, and it will receive due attention in this analysis.

In the prologue, the concept of the border is first applied to Greene's situation of being in a conflict of loyalty on the border between his home (father) and the pupils of the school. It

also signifies the divide between those who have faith and the anarchists. The notion of a religious divide is also applied to a desired difference between the importance of the faith in England and Mexico. Furthermore, there is a border in terms of a divide in the temporal sense, an historical border between the present England and historical England, where there again is an assumed difference in the importance of religion. As the narrative takes us to the real border between the US and Mexico, Greene continues to develop the idea of the border as a means to describe the two factions of faith and anarchy.

'The border', Greene says,

> means more than a customs house, a passport officer, a man with a gun ... The atmosphere of the border – it is like starting over again; there is something about it like a good confession: poised for a few happy moments between sin and sin. When people die on the border they call it a 'happy death'. (*Lawless*, 23)

The border traditionally connotes a state of transition, a sense of movement, expectations and anxiety as well as adventure. However, here, Greene adds a notion of sameness as to the two sides of the border, in that on the border, one is situated between 'sin and sin'. Once one has crossed the border, the hopes and desires for adventure and otherness dwindle away, and one is prone to the same sins as one was on the far side of the border. Being on the border, 'was like looking at yourself in a mirror' (*Lawless*, 24), that is, the self is the same on both sides of the border. Although one may cross the border into a different country, to another cultural landscape, the sense of self-awareness or subjectivity that makes up our identity does not alter by crossing a physical border. This notion is of some importance in the book, and it accounts for some of the doubt Greene expressed earlier in the narrative as to his hope of attaining an experience of difference, the hope of finding something other in Mexico. Some of this doubt in the existence of difference, I think, may reasonably be placed within the context of the growing hegemony of the West in this period, in the words of Andrew Thacker 'the feeling outlined by numerous writers in the 1930s of the earth as a known place' (Thacker, 16).

The notion of sameness extends beyond the sense of self. Standing on the border at Laredo, Greene indicates a common humanity, a sense of sameness on the level of human experience of everyday life:

> The world is all of a piece, of course; it is engaged everywhere in the same subterranean struggle, lying like a tiny neutral state, with whom no one ever observes his treaties, between the two eternities of pain and – God knows the opposite of pain, not we. It is a Belgium fought over by friend and enemy alike. The horror may be the same, it is an intrinsic part of human life in every place: it attacks you in the Strand or the tropics. (*Lawless*, 33-34)

In some ways, this is a continuation of the statement that being on the border was 'like looking at yourself in the mirror', the human struggle may be seen as the struggle of the self with its self-awareness. On a more general level, the remark points to an idea of a common humanity, that is, Greene presents the struggle of the self – the horror of life – as something that is present everywhere. This struggle is then connected to the struggle between the anarchists and those who have the faith: 'There is no peace anywhere where there is human life, but there are, I told myself, quiet and active sectors of the line. Russia, Spain, Mexico – there's no fraternization on Christmas morning in those parts' (*Lawless*, 33). This is a rather bleak assessment of the condition of the self – and human nature – but it also hints at a note of hope, of some sense of difference. The difference lies in those 'sectors of the line' where religion matters because of and in spite of persecution. Russia, Spain and Mexico are of course places where the faith (in its various denominations) was prohibited by the contemporary regime (socialists in Russia and Mexico, fascists in Spain), as opposed to the materially complacent West, where the faith lived freely, but did not matter.

Greene then evokes a divide between the material wealth of the West and the social hardships of Mexico. In San Antonio on the way to the Mexican-American border, Greene points to a border within that city, a border which parallels the real border between the two countries:

> Take a bus into the dreary hovels of the Mexican West Side, where the pecan workers live who shell pecan nuts by hand for a few cents a day. Nowhere in Mexico did I see so extreme a poverty. In Mexico the standard of living is appallingly low outside the great towns, but here

that low standard lay next door to the American standard: the West Side hovels were mocked by the Plaza Hotel soaring yellowly up to scrape against the sky. (*Lawless*, 27)

This comment echoes the remarks Greene made in *Journey Without Maps* as to the condition of the workers in Sierra Leone, it shows a social consciousness, a concern for the other's lot that in many ways represents a growing trend in the historical period in which it was written. It also represents Greene's particular aptitude in recognising social and historical processes (a good example of this is Greene's description of increasing American influence in Vietnam in *The Quiet American* (1955)). The description of the Mexican workers is an early comment on a process that today finds millions of Mexican and Hispanic labourers in deep social need in the US. This divide is developed and temporalised in another remark:

> A Texan in the car talked continuously in the Will Rogers voice, the commercial drawl, the small-town complacent wisdom. All through the night the proverbs welled out full of fake kindliness and superficial truth – a Metro-Goldwyn philosophy. And a New Mexican with an exotic shirt covered with polka dots and an untrustworthy mestizo face talked back, neither paying attention to the other, all through the night talking at a tangent over the hip flasks ... the New World and the Old World talked in the carriage. (*Lawless*, 25)

The New World of American commercialism and superficiality (the 'Metro-Goldwyn philosophy') and the Old World represented by the mestizo are locked in a communication breakdown.

Once across the border into Mexico, Greene has his first encounter with the faith:

> I went to eight o'clock Mass in the cathedral ... I remember what President Cardenas had said in a public speech at Oaxaca, 'I am tired of closing churches and finding them full. Now I am going to open the churches and educate the people and in ten years I shall find them empty.' The girls giggled their way up Cavalry and I wondered if Cardenas had made a true prophecy. (*Lawless*, 39)

This first, negative impression is negotiated through a new experience only the next morning:

> In the Avenida Hidalgo a great bare pulled-about church hummed gently and continuously with the prayers of people doing the Stations of the Cross. There was no ignorance in this devotion – even old peasant women carried their books of devotion and knew how to contemplate the agony. Here, one felt, was a real religion – the continuous traffic of piety. (*Lawless*, 40)

This experience is in marked contrast to the Catholics in his home who were 'impertinent to the Priest'. Greene, who is constantly recording his personal responses, then qualifies his first

meeting with the faith: 'That is the danger of the quick tour, you miscalculate on the evidence of three giggling girls and a single Mass, and malign the devotion of thousands' (*Lawless*, 41). The second experience of the faith reinforces his expectations of Mexico as a place where faith matters, and the difference is visible also outside the domains of worship. Greene perceives Mexico as an other country:

> At night I found a little square scented with flowers and leaves, a silent fountain, and demure courtships going on upon every bench – I thought of the couples sprawling in ugly passion on the Hyde Park grass or on chairs performing uglier acts under the shelter of overcoats ... They [the Mexicans] didn't feel the need of proving their manhood by pressing on the deed of darkness before its time. Fear was eliminated: they each knew where the other stood. (*Lawless*, 41-2)

Here we see that by crossing the border into Mexico, Greene has entered a *different* country in terms of religion. This passage carries some importance as to the representations of other peoples or cultures and the subjectivity of description, in that Greene, who had only been in Mexico for a few days, could of course not possibly *know* that the people he observed lead extraordinarily moral lives and that 'fear was eliminated'. The description is an instance of a projected desire, a statement of Greene's own, personal vision of a life with 'no fear, no exasperated nerves' (*Lawless*, 42). To his credit, though, Greene is aware of this mechanism, the fact that sometimes, we see what we want to see: 'And again if only I'd known it, I was taking the tourist view – on the strength of one prosperous town on the highway, on the strength of a happy mood, I was ready to think of Mexico in terms of quiet and gentleness and devotion' (*Lawless*, 42).

This insight – a partial understanding of our limited ability to see – is an example of the new 'sensibility' of the modernist period in terms of representation, both in imaginative literature and travel writing. In the course of four pages, Greene has made a statement, made a counter-claim, changed that opinion only to go back again to somewhere close to his original comment. Little remains of the positivist belief in rationality of the nineteenth century, any sense of a belief in a true objectivity is void, as Greene changes his mind back and forth and

at last places the problem of representation and knowledge on his own fluctuating self. Subjectivity is one of the main subjects of this book, and it is accomplished through a relentless honesty on Greene's part, a determination to investigate his own streams of consciousness.

Whatever the disposition of the Mexican Catholics, Greene persistently holds the principle of the faith as a fixed point of order. After witnessing a cock-fight in a small town called San Luis ('That, I think, was the day I began to hate the Mexicans' (*Lawless*, 48)), Greene is distressed and goes into a church:

> I went into the Templo del Carmen, as the dark dropped, for Benediction. To a stranger like myself it was like going home – a language I could understand – '*Ora pro nobis*' ... Even if it were all untrue and there were no God, surely life was happier with the enormous supernatural promise than with the petty social fulfilment, the tiny pension and the machine-made furniture. (*Lawless*, 48-49, original italics)

The church (and the faith) provides Greene with a haven from the outside world – it is a 'home' in a strange country, where he is familiar with the rituals and the language. The point is again made of a distinction between material wealth ('the petty social fulfilment') and a greater promise. The fact that Greene seems only to have a half-way belief in the after-life himself does not interfere with the argument that faith is some fixed point *outside* the haunting notion of self-awareness. Faith as a point of order and reference in contrast to a fleeting or chaotic outside world is a point that is made throughout the narrative:

> Here the weekly religious class was being held for poor girls, domestic servants and the like. The priest talked to them gently, with many jokes – they were in the catacombs, learning the dangerous lesson of modesty and love ... he was like a beloved officer going the round of his company in the trenches ... Outside was complete irresponsibility – waves of it breaking over a countryside – lawless roads, the reversed signpost, the desert pressing in ... It wasn't merely an Indian general in an obscure state of a backward country: it was a whole world. I remembered the game called 'Monopoly' they were playing at home with counters and dice, the girl of fifteen on the railway-line, a world where the politicians stand on the balcony, where the land is sold for building estates and the little villas go up on the wounded clay with garages like tombs. (*Lawless*, 50)

This passage brings us back to the divide between faith and anarchy. The lawlessness outside the dominion of religion is indeed similar in Mexico to what it was in England. This, I

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would argue, is an example of a double process of displacement in the realm of the other. Greene had expected Mexico to represent an experience of otherness, of difference, from his home in England in terms of the importance of the faith. However, once he is in Mexico, these expectations are negotiated through the actual experience of otherness, and we see a sort of double-movement. The Catholic faith is not all he thought it would be, at the same time as the churches represent a home from the unfamiliar outside, and the general pains of the outside world ('the anarchy'). Simultaneously, Greene experiences the same sense of a border between the faith and the outside, in fact to such a degree that the experience triggers memories of the home. Again, this process, essentially, in my opinion, is a recognition of sameness in the face of the other, an awareness of a common humanity that we also saw in *Journey Without Maps*. It is important to note that disturbing experiences seem to be negotiated through at least three factors; that is expectations, memories, and the idea of home. In this situation memories of home are provoked through the recognition of the familiar in a supposedly unfamiliar or different country.

The relationship, then, between faith and 'anarchy' is central to the narrative. However, it is not a simple, clear-cut philosophy Greene presents; it is a complex relationship that involves spatial, temporal and political factors that are constantly negotiated.

In Mexico City Greene visits the site of Rivera's fresco the Creation, where he makes a comment that exemplifies the awareness of these relationships: 'But the Son in Rivera's "Creation" – what is he but Progress, Human Dignity, great empty Victorian conceptions that life denies at every turn' (*Lawless*, 70). First, this quote represents an awareness of a break in time from the positivist ideas of the Victorian age. Second, it is an awareness of the interchangeability of symbols that is further contextualised by a recognition of the fact that also Christianity has a past:

> Perhaps we have no right to criticize – Christianity itself adapted the feast days and the holy
> places of the older faiths. In Mexico City the Cathedral is built on the site of the great Aztec

temple, and perhaps we are only experiencing the uneasiness of the old Aztec priests when we turn impatiently away from these murals of rural teachers dressed in white with pious apostolic faces and fingers raised in blessing – 'Suffer little children to come unto me.' Perhaps they are only making things gentle for us, so that we shan't miss our faith in the new, drilled totalitarian day. (*Lawless*, 71)

The sense of a past is intermingled with anxiety for the future, and Greene makes an interesting comparison between the rise of Christianity in Mexico and the onslaught of totalitarianism that marked the 1930s. It is also a representation of Greene's personal anxieties; instead of a descriptive sequence with the frescos in focus, Greene emphasises his subjective response. Continuing his discussion of the relationship between the government and the faith, he puts emphasis on the historical aspect:

It is the technique the totalitarian state has always employed: In the time of Elizabeth in England, just as much as in Mexico, Russia, or Germany today, and Campion's reply is still the valid one, 'In condemning us you condemn all your own ancestors – all the ancient priests, bishops, and kings'. (*Lawless*, 75)

En route from Mexico City to Veracruz, he stops in a town called Orizaba. Orizaba had been the scene of a religious uprising in the wake of the shooting of a child in a church that resulted in the re-opening of the churches. Greene could then go to mass and make a confession before he went to Tabasco. The confession effects a change in Greene's mood, and he is able to distance himself from the concerns of the everyday world of Mexico: 'Then suddenly it became one of those evenings that conspire for happiness, when everything for a while goes right, and during a few hours you experience peace' (*Lawless*, 95). This points to the idea of faith as a mental escape from the dreariness of existence as well as it underlines the constant presence of Greene's subjectivity in the text. There is a pervading emphasis on Greene's changing state of mind, a monitoring of his own consciousness that serves to build, that is the very basis for, the inner journey. Furthermore, it points to Greene's feeling of restlessness, of his sense of displacement – the fact that he is happy for a *few hours* of peace says something about his general mental condition. The fleeting state of happiness becomes apparent as his mood changes yet again the next morning: 'Happiness never lasts long and the

next morning was not so good. At early Mass one missed the mortifications of the Mexican plateau – it was more like an English Mass, sedate and unenthusiastic and familiar' (*Lawless*, 96). Again we see that his mind drifts towards home in the encounter with the other. However, in this instance it is because the other reminds him of home ('an English Mass'); his mood changes from happiness to a state of mind that he associates with his home. The experience of sameness in what he expected to be different brings his mind towards home, the experience, as it were, provokes an act of memory.

Greene eventually arrives in Veracruz, where he takes a boat across to Tabasco. The boat first stops in Frontera, and to get to the capital of Tabasco, Greene must take the boat upriver. This passage resounds with echoes from Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. First of all is the setting, a small riverboat with a crew and passengers of both European and native heritage, that sails up an unfamiliar (for Greene, that is) river in an unfamiliar country. The narrow river, the jungle-like surroundings and the sense of slowly approaching the unknown all resemble the voyage up the river Congo in *Heart of Darkness*. Furthermore, before Greene embarked on the journey upriver, he was related a story about a priest who evaded the government forces for ten years by hiding in a swamp – a character that bears strong resemblances to Kurtz in *Heart of Darkness*: 'Every priest was hunted down or shot, except one who existed for ten years in the forests and the swamps, venturing out only at night; his few letters, I was told, recorded an awful sense of impotence – to live in constant danger and yet be able to do so little, it hardly seemed worth the *horror*' (*Lawless*, 106, my italics). The priest in the swamp is similar to Kurtz, however, here the horror is not the familiarity of the primitive, the recognition of a common heart of darkness, but that 'terrible aboriginal calamity' of 'having no hope, and [being] without God in the World' (*Lawless*, epigraph). We may, however, identify one common theme in *The Lawless Roads* and *Heart of Darkness*, and that is the notion of Western civilisation gone astray. In *Heart of Darkness* the concern lies

with the colonial mission, whereas in *The Lawless Roads* the West is a fleeting, unstable place, a chromium world of complacent materialism.

Tabasco, along with the state of Chiapas, was the real destination for Greene's journey and investigation into the persecution of the Catholics. The Tabascan General Garrido Canabal had almost succeeded in destroying all the churches and had shot or deported all the priests in the two states. No form of religious service was allowed, even emblems like the cross or amulets with the images of saints were strictly prohibited and subject to severe punishments. According to Greene's original impulse, this state of persecution should have initiated a growing sense of religion in Tabasco, it should have lead to a marked strengthening of the faith. Once he is there, however, Greene finds none of the religious fervour he expected from the vantage point of England. At Frontera, Greene had been told that the people 'don't care about religion round here. It's too hot' (*Lawless*, 110). This narrative prolepsis serves in a sense as a warning of what the conditions would be like in Villahermosa, the capital of Tabasco, where he would 'know how hot the world can be' (*Lawless*, 105).

The morning after Greene lands in Villahermosa, he is at ease in the city: 'I was excited and momentarily happy: the place seemed beautiful' (*Lawless*, 112). However, the initial thrill does not last, Greene is soon demoralised by the state of affairs in Villahermosa ('the beautiful city'). The city is under strict rules, beer is sold at prohibitive prices and the streetlights go out at nine-thirty. The prevalence of the faith in the face of persecution that Greene had expected to find is not there:

> There was no priest, she said, left in Tabasco, no church standing, except one eight leagues away, now used as a school. There had been one priest over the border in Chiapas, but the people had told him to go – they couldn't protect him any longer. 'And when you die?' I said. 'Oh,' she said, 'we die like dogs'. (*Lawless*, 114)

Villahermosa in some ways takes on a quality of a 'fallen' state, a place where the people have been robbed of their faith and dignity – and do not seem to care too much about it. Villahermosa eventually presents itself as something like the rock bottom of human

dwellings: 'I remember the confessor saying to me in Orizaba, "A very evil land." One felt one was drawing near to the centre of something – if it was only of darkness and abandonement' (*Lawless*, 114). The food in Villahermosa is 'unspeakable' (*Lawless*, 115), the police all corrupt crooks and:

> The vultures group themselves on the roofs like pigeons: tiny moron heads, long necks, faces like carnival masks ... They looked domesticated, as if they were going to lay an egg ... Nothing to do but drink gassy fruit drinks (no miracle in the Godless state will turn this aerated water into wine) and watch the horrifying abundance of just life ... The only place where, if you are a Christian, you can find some symbol of your faith is in the cemetery up on a hill above the town ... the blind wall round the corner where Garrido shot his prisoners, and inside the enormous tombs of above-ground burial ... the sense of a far better and cleaner city than that of the living at the bottom of the hill. (*Lawless*, 124)

The lethargy in Villahermosa is absolute – it is the anarchy Greene fears – with a touch of evil. Furthermore, this fallen state is also Greene's home: '"That's fine," he said, "fine. You've come home. Why, everybody in Villahermosa is called Greene – or Graham"' (*Lawless*, 115). Symbolically speaking, Villahermosa represents all the qualities Greene associates with home, it is the lawless, careless and godless state of being that permeated his English home that is repeated in this city. The fact that Greene had so desired this to be a place where the faith was alive and well only increases the level of displacement and disappointment. In a sense, Greene's experience in Villahermosa resembles those of Dougbmai in Liberia. Both places represent in a manner of speaking a low-point of humanity in terms of dirt, drabness and deprivation, however, in Dougbmai, Greene was searching for the primitive – the uncleanliness and the rats – whereas in Villahermosa, he had in fact hoped to find a vigorous and active faith and not apathy in every respect. A dentist that Greene gets to know and with whom he spends his days (Greene later developed this character into the dentist in *The Power and the Glory*) becomes a representative of the general condition of the place:

> Skulking abstractedly round the corner of the hotel ... suddenly lost to all the world with his chewing gum, humming in the plaza ... without a memory, and without a hope in the immense heat, he loomed during those days just as big as a symbol – I am not sure of what, unless the aboriginal calamity, 'having no hope, and without God in the world'. (*Lawless*, 127)

Greene, at this point, is becoming exceedingly exhausted with Villahermosa, and he is left in despair by the apathy, the blatant showing of hatred:

> There has always been hate, I suppose, in Mexico, but now it is the official teaching: it has superseded love in the school curriculum ... But this hate – one cannot believe it will be succeeded by anything at all: it poisons the human wells; like rats we shrivel internally, suck water with a frantic thirst and swell and die. (*Lawless*, 127)

This is a representation of a divide that is both political and historical. It is a restatement of the divide between faith and anarchy, as well as a division between now and then, religion and totalitarianism. Importantly, Greene tries to escape this emerging totalitarian day and the 'abundance of just life' through a romantic image of his home in England in a book by Trollope that he has brought with him: 'So England faded out and Mexico remained. I had never in my life been so homesick, and the fault was Trollope's. His England was not the England I knew, and yet ... I lay on my back and tried to project myself into home' (*Lawless*, 130). Interestingly, this is in line with what Peter Nicholls has called a '"homesickness" for a more habitable age' (Nicholls, 168). Trollope's England, of course, is a highly romanticised version – an England of country lanes, idyllic villages, manor houses and kindly village-doctors – that never has existed in any meaningful way, and it is far removed from the England Greene poured his scorn on in the opening chapter. However, the desire for something familiar (even if it is only a fantasy) in strange environs, as well as the pressing in of the real world causes the mind to drift towards a safe haven. In the same way, the nostalgia for a past age that is such a strong presence in much Anglo-American modernist literature, is similarly an escape-mechanism from the current state of affairs. The illusion of romantic England does not last for Greene, though, and soon enough, reality comes knocking on the door: 'But it wasn't real: *this* was real – the high empty room and the tiled and swarming floor and the heat and the sour river smell' (*Lawless*, 130, original italics).

After an intermezzo in which Greene travels to the ancient ruins at Palenque, in a most horrible ride on mule-back, Greene eventually descends on Las Casas, just in time for holy

week. Whereas Greene had been warned that Tabasco was 'a very evil land', Las Casas, on the other hand was said to be a 'very moral town' (*Lawless*, 144). However, what Greene finds in Las Casas is 'all the symbols of God's presence and nothing there at all' (*Lawless*, 174). Las Casas is in some ways similar to Tabasco in terms of a religious apathy – even though the churches in Las Casas were open to the public (priests, though, were still banned). The city appears to have been in the grip of the 'pistolero-politicians' that haunted Mexico at the time. Greene laconically sees the inanition in the context of the occasion: 'Well, it was Easter, we were celebrating the death of God. This emptiness and desolation was right, in a way' (*Lawless*, 173). Greene soon discovers that Mass is said secretly in a private house, the priest arriving in disguise. The Mass, however, is rather tame and Greene chooses to emphasise the pride the owner takes in holding the Mass. This is contrasted with the worship of the Indians, who gather in the churches in Las Casas. In a way, the Indians come to represent the fervour and dedication that Greene desired from the vantage point of England. However, Greene is unable to identify with the Indians' religiousness:

> When I came out from Mass [on Holy Thursday] it was like an invasion. The Indians were pouring in from the mountains, down the long cobbled street from Guadalupe ... they lined the sidewalks everywhere, they came in thousands to see the crucified Christ ... They handed their bouquets to a half-caste inside the rail, who laid them for a moment on the altar and then gave them back ... Families greeted each other loudly in the aisle and stood laughing and talking with their backs to the altar, the day's magic task done, the medicine blessed, the prayers said. (*Lawless*, 179-80)

The Indians have their own brand of Christianity, which Greene portrays as something like a magic cult, and it is far removed from the pious ideal of Father Pro he had hoped to find. There is a distinct sense of disappointment in *The Lawless Roads*, a sense of the futility of the journey, even before it is over, an underlying note of doubt that borders on despair. The process of displacement is also of some importance here, in that what supposedly would be a familiar site in the other country of Mexico, namely the community of Catholics, is (as represented by the Indians) a strange cult in which Greene recognises nothing. Furthermore,

the notion of displacement becomes even stronger in that the lawlessness of Mexico outside the churches resembles his home, which makes it a deeply confusing experience.

Still, there appears to be a difference between home in England and Mexico in spite of Greene's almost 'pathological hatred' (*Lawless*, 145) of the Mexicans. Reading an American magazine – a relic of his home in Western civilisation – in Las Casas initiates yet another comparison of home and Mexico:

> I loathed Mexico – but there were times when it seemed as if there were worse places ... Here were idolatry and oppression, starvation and casual violence, but you lived under the shadow of religion – of God or the Devil. 'Rating for Dating' – it wasn't evil, it wasn't anything at all, it was just the drugstore and the Coca Cola, the hamburger, the sinless graceless chromium world. (*Lawless*, 184)

Partly, then, Greene's disillusionment stems from a sense of hopelessness with the cultural context of Western civilisation – this is a recurrent and widely important aspect of both *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads*. The 'sinless graceless chromium world' is of course a world where there is no idea of right or wrong, no fixed values to hold on to, only a smooth, hard chromium surface that is impenetrable and lifeless. It is this uprootedness that infested the West in the wave of modernity that seems to haunt Greene, that is one of the main causes for his deep-rooted restlessness. In order to cope with life, Greene seems to be saying, one needs something outside material surroundings: 'Nobody can endure existence without a philosophy' (*Lawless*, 200). By 'existence', Greene here refers to the experience of the modern world. In the course of the journey, Greene experiences a glimpse of another, older world,

> Something simple and strange and uncomplicated, a way of life we have hopelessly lost but can never quite forget ... It was like a scene from the past before the human race had bred its millions – England of the conquest before the forests had been cut, a herd called Sweyn, the wattle huts, the world of Ivanhoe. And there was an even older world beyond the ridge; the ground sloped up again to where a grove of tall black crosses stood at all angles like wind-blown trees against the blackened sky. This was Indian religion – a dark, tormented, magic cult. The old ladies might swing back and forth in the rocking chairs of Villahermosa, the Catholics might be dying out 'like dogs', but here, in the mountainous strange world of father Las Casas, Christianity went on its own frightening way ... The great crosses leaned there in their black and windy solitude, safe from the *pistoleros* and the politicians, and one thought of the spittle mixed with the clay to heal the blind man, the resurrection of the body, the religion of the earth. (*Lawless*, 170-71, original italics)

This echoes the reverence for the primitive, communal life in *Journey Without Maps*. The unspoilt, uninhabited nature of Chiapas invokes a cultural memory, that is a romantic idea of life before modernity. The experience stands out because of the distinctly unfamiliar quality of the undeveloped land and the Indians' crosses in relation to Greene's present home. Consistently, Greene sees the religious disposition of the Indians as representing a stage even farther back than the conquest of England, which after all had been christened some hundreds of years before. It appears then that Greene at this stage has abandoned the hope of a life where faith matters – this quality lingers with the Indians, but they are placed in a 'hopelessly lost age', far beyond Greene's reach.

The notion of a border between the religious world of the Indians and the modern, 'political life' of the rest of Mexico is made explicit when Greene leaves the region of Chiapas:

> At the edge of a huge precipice above our road, facing the midday sun, a party of Indians stood in prayer, hands raised above their heads, beside a rusting scoop, but when we had mounted to their level they had gone. It was like the boundary of a faith – we were leaving behind that wild region of great crooked crosses, of cavedweller faces bowed before the crucified Christ, of the talking saint. We were going back and down to the picturesque Mexico of the *pistolero* and the ruined monastery. (*Lawless*, 193, original italics)

The region of Chiapas, even though it did not offer the sense of 'strength under persecution' that Greene had expected, is still a land of religion because of the Indians' worship – the Indians have a philosophy of life that is absent in the 'political' part of Mexico.

The journey from Chiapas is the beginning of the journey home, that is a journey into materialism, into the 'chromium' world of the West:

> All the cares and irritations and responsibilities of ordinary life came hurrying back; and I had imagined on that interminable ride to Palenque that once in Mexico City life would become so fine, easy, and luxurious – all brandy cocktails and bourbon and Coca Cola ... Money cares crowded in, things which had to be seen to ... and I had been unhappy in Las Casas because there had been nothing to do ... On the floor below a hysterical woman screamed and sobbed and a man spoke every way in vain – patiently, roughly, with love and with hate. (*Lawless*, 205-06)

Again the tropes for the 'anarchy' or modernity are the mass produced items of consumerism and materialism, and the torn nerves, the sense of hopelessness and alienation and violence that we saw in Greene's home.

Eventually, Greene leaves Mexico on a German steamship bound for Lisbon, and as he moves towards the future scene of another war, the signs of the impending disaster gain strength: his fellow passengers are Mexican volunteers waiting to fight for the fascist side in the Spanish Civil War, and a German deserter destined for prison in Nazi Germany.

When Greene arrives in England, he does not experience joy to be at home in familiar surroundings, as one might have expected. The England he returns to is getting ready for war; the descriptions mirror those of the prologue: drabness, grit and alienation:

> The ARP [air-raid warnings] posters were new, as one jolted through the hideous iron tunnel at Vauxhall bridge, under the Nine Elms depot and the sky-sign for Meux's beer. There is always a smell of gas at the traffic junction where the road is up and the trams wait; a Watney's poster, a crime of violence, Captain Coe's finals. How could a world like this end in anything but war? I wondered why I had disliked Mexico so much: *this* was home. One always expects something different. (*Lawless*, 223, original italics)

This passage takes up the thread from the passage at the border in Laredo, namely that the self is the same on both sides of the border, that the subjectivity that defines the self in some ways is inescapable. Additionally, it adds weight to the notion that 'the world is all the same' – the anxiety for the future, the fear of war, the hopelessness of the West, and the miniscule possibilities for the self to be at peace with itself. The notion of displacement lingers on, also in relation to his second home, the faith:

> Mass in Chelsea seemed curiously fictitious; no peon knelt with his arms out in the attitude of the cross, no woman dragged herself up the aisle on her knees. It would have seemed shocking, like the Agony itself. We do not mortify ourselves. Perhaps we are in need of violence. (*Lawless*, 224)

The idea is reiterated, that 'we live in an ugly indifference', that the apathy, the mental state of nothingness that rules in England and the West is simply not worthwhile, not worthy of life:

> Violence came nearer – Mexico is a state of mind. One sat in the hideous little convent gymnasium while the rain fell and the bells outside sounded for evensong and a man explained how our children were to be evacuated. An aeroplane flew low overhead and the tradesmen sat in their drab Sunday best and listened, and a woman cried melodramatically. ... And then nothing happened at all – the great chance of death was delayed. The motor-cars came cruising back along the Spaniards Road and through Hyde Park; poverty and lust called to each other as usual in the wintertime early dark. (*Lawless*, 224)

The threat of war, and the apparent lack of emotion in the face of such a disaster, the continuation of apathy, reach such heights that violence is needed to effect a change, to stir emotions, and clean up the current indifference. This end of the book leaves the self little hope of finding peace through the journey, on both sides of the border there is nothing but alienation, fear and the constant hope of something different that is always disappointed, a mirage at the end of the horizon. In a final mockery of any romantic notion of a happy homecoming, not even death is granted the restless, haunted subject.

In the concluding remark of his brief and effective analysis of *The Lawless Roads*, Bernard Bergonzi claims that '*The Lawless Roads* is a magnificent travel book, but it does give the sense that, for all the hardships and real dangers Greene underwent, Mexico remains something of an inner landscape' (Bergonzi, 81). Bergonzi would, perhaps, have preferred a more traditional account with a more romantic and heroic traveller, and more descriptions of the landscape, scenery and people of Mexico rather than Greene's inner landscape. The inner landscape that is explored in *The Lawless Roads* is a landscape that is marked by the new sensibility of the modernist era, and may be said to mirror the social and cultural landscape of the period, the sense of instability, restlessness and even despair.

The *motif* of a search for the self in *The Lawless Roads* involves at least three stages, all of which parallel the stages of the actual spatial journey. The search is developed or actualised through concerns that are recognisable to all travelling human beings. In the course of this chapter I have tried to analyse these various parts, and it is now proper to tie them together.

All journeys, in some way or other, begin at home. The notion of home has a penetrating and immediate presence in the consciousness of every individual – we may hate our home or we may love it, but it is always there, consciously or unconsciously present in the halls of memory. Although it is such an important mental presence, it is difficult to pin down exactly what this notion is and how exactly it works through the human mind. As the issue of home is presented in *The Lawless Roads*, home is made up of multiple layers or levels. Greene thinks of his home in terms of his family home, his home town in Berkhamsted, his home in the country England and in Western civilisation and his religious home in the Catholic faith and the community of believers. Additionally, these notions of home are temporalised through an act of memory – Greene compares his present home(s) with both a personal and a cultural home set in the past. The central issue here is that Greene feels strongly alienated from all these homes, past and present; in his own words, the idea of home 'had no real hold' (*Lawless*, 16). The state of displacement is expressed through the notion of 'life on a border' (*Lawless*, 13), that is a constant state of being in transit, of arrested movement. From this vantage point, the faith becomes an antidote, a counterpoint, a fixed point of order beyond 'just life'. Greene's faith becomes a safe haven, a mental escape from the torn nerves of modernity. The metaphor of the border then comes to represent a divide between faith and the anarchy of existence. Again, the divide is presented on multiple personal, temporal, and cultural levels. From this restless existence where it appears that he is permanently posited on the wrong side of the border (when he is not *on* the border, that is), Greene projects his desire for difference onto Mexico, where he hopes to find that faith matters. The Mexico of his desire is a not-home, constructed in terms of opposites from his original home. We may describe the journey to Mexico also as multi-faceted: it is an escape from a dysfunctional home, a quest for difference and a search for the self. Moreover, the notion of a not-home that is a personally adjusted mental construct has some significance,

because it necessarily dooms the journey to Mexico to failure – Greene's personal Mexico is only that: 'A state of mind' (*Lawless*, 148, 224) which does not exist in the world.

The second stage of the journey consists of the journey to and in Mexico from England via the United States, or, in other words, the escape from England and the negotiation of the expectations of the idea of a not-home. It is also an actual traversal of a 'real' border into an other place. The first impression Greene receives of the faith in Mexico is disappointing, however as we have seen, this first impression is renegotiated almost at once before the meaning of the encounter as such breaks down due to Greene's unstable sense of self; the issue remains undecided.

Evoking the border as a symbol of divides, contrasts and similarities between the home and the not-home, Greene describes a complex set of relationships that has significance for the self and the search for meaning. The encounter with the other, or the not-home, and the self leads to a series of confusing double experiences of sameness and difference. Bearing in mind that the starting point was a desire for difference, we see that the experience itself actually just as much came to a feeling of similarity. Greene finds in the lawlessness of the 'outside' of Mexico the same sentiments – violence, cruelty, hate and irresponsibility – that he tried to escape from. When he arrives in Tabasco, the site to which his initial desire was directed, he finds only a 'Godless state' and the 'horrifying abundance of just life' (*Lawless*, 124). The disappointment continues as he arrives in Las Casas, but with a vengeance. In Las Casas he finds a sense of real religion, an instance of the faith as something beyond the dreariness of existence, however, this 'true faith' belongs to the Indians and to a past age that to Greene and modern man is 'hopelessly lost' (*Lawless*, 170).

The third and last stage of the journey is represented by the coming home to England. The terrible irony of this stage is of course that his home has in many ways become even worse; the threat of another disastrous war lies heavily on Greene's mind, to the point where

he now desires death as a means of finding a measure of peace for the self. This bleak assessment and the fact that death is denied the haunted self end the narrative on a grim note with the understanding that there is no escape from the horrors of the self.

Chapter 4

Conclusion

At the outset of this thesis I stated that my aim was to present a reading of *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads* as a psychological journey. The object of this concluding chapter, then, will be primarily to trace this journey, to advise on the interconnection between space, memory, time, home and self.

The two texts of this study both describe journeys to a foreign country. However, as I have tried to show, the texts are just as much about Greene's home in England and the relationship between the home and the self as they are about Liberia and Mexico. The notion of home, I have said, is closely connected to the sense of self and to identity. Greene's experience of his home is marked by a heart-felt notion of displacement, alienation, restlessness and instability. His home, Greene says, 'had no real hold' (*Lawless*, 16).

The concept of home, as it is described in these texts, involves multiple temporal personal, political, cultural, and historical levels or layers. In both *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads* the home is portrayed in terms of flux, instability and a sense of restless fleetingness. The state of the home is reflected in the sense of self, which is marked by a tremendous notion of a nerve-ridden self-awareness or subjectivity. The concept of home is, moreover, not only confined to its present state. Greene describes his home in terms of childhood memories and through an awareness of the history of the home society – the collective cultural memories of the home. He also points to his home within the religious community and even hints at a future notion of the home.

This description of the home is of great significance. First, it underlines the complexity of home; home is not a fixed idea, it is a multiplex set of emotional connections that intersect on various levels. Second, it ties the concept of home directly to the sense of self. The concept of home is important in that it involves a notion of *belonging* – the self looks to its home for confirmation of its identity and views it as a source of stability. The numerous aspects and levels of home, and the state of instability these notions represent in the texts are, in a sense transferred to the notion of the self, creating a self that is primarily marked by fragmentation and instability. Third, the narrator's preoccupation with the home and the self instead of the places he visits highlights the importance of this relationship as well as presenting the self on a search for meaning, on a quest for stability. Finally, the notion of home is connected both to a physical, spatial presence and a personal, psychological sense.

The search for meaning is represented by the self's desire for a not-home. The not-home is imagined as a place that is the direct opposite to the home; the not-home is invested with qualities the self finds missing in the home, qualities that hopefully will represent a notion of stability and a stronger, more secure sense of self. In the case of *Journey Without Maps* we have seen that the not-home is represented by the state of the primitive in Liberia. The primitive way of life in this place is imagined as having a sense of continuity with the world. 'The communal life beyond the clearing' (*Journey*, 74) represents an instinctive way of life that is the expressed opposite to the modern, fragmented way of existence. The state of the primitive is compared with the psychological state of being of childhood, and modern society is likened to that of adulthood. In *The Lawless Roads* the object of desire is a life where religion *matters*, a way of life where faith acts as a fixed point of order from which the self may gain a sense of stability. This desire is projected onto the space of Mexico, where Greene imagines the faith has taken on importance as a means to fight the oppression of the socialist regime.

The desire for a not-home, I have said, represents both the motivation and the expectations for the journeys. This carries great significance in that the actual events of the journey necessarily will be coloured by the expectations. The notion of a not-home is a construct in the narrator's mind; it is an instance of projected desire. The expectations exist as a mental image of desire in the traveller's mind and the actual not-home is not likely to meet with these expectations. The not-home, then, holds a double position in the traveller's mind. It is at the same time understood as a space of difference *and* a space that is unknown.

The journey itself, I have tried to show, takes on the double role of an escape from the home and a quest for difference and meaning. However, since the notion of home belongs intimately to the sense of self and identity, it is not possible to escape the home in terms of the psychological attachment the traveller holds to his home. Furthermore, since Western civilisation in this historical period had penetrated into every corner of the world in some way or other, even the notion of escaping the physical or spatial presence of the home is made virtually impossible.

The journey itself mediates between the desire and expectation for a not-home and the notion of home itself; the movement in space is paralleled by a psychological itinerary. In the novel *Austerlitz* (2001) by W. G. Sebald, the main character, Jaques Austerlitz, has been adopted by a Welsh family and has lost all traces of his childhood prior to the adoption, and is thus in a sense deprived of his true self or his true identity. When Austerlitz by chance enters into a sealed-off waiting room of a train station that happens to be the same place that he arrived at in England when he was adopted, the familiarity of the space initiates a movement of the mind, and Austerlitz is able to remember his childhood. The experience of space, then, has a profound effect on memory. The situation of Austerlitz is of course not the same as Greene's. Greene is powerfully aware of his home and his personal memories from his

childhood. In fact, the situation in *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads* is quite the opposite; Greene desperately wants to escape his home.

The events and the experience of space along the course of the journey, I have tried to show, serve as catalysts for a psychological movement towards the home. Furthermore, this psychological movement is in a sense a double movement that converges in the notion of home. First, it is a drift into Greene's personal memories of home; the home as it is represented in the halls of memory. Second, it is a contemplation on the home society and how it has affected the sense of self.

Two features of the actual journey appear to have a specifically strong effect on the mind. In the analysis of *Journey Without Maps*, we have seen that the psychological movement intensified at borders or thresholds between the home and the unknown. Borders, I have indicated, signify movement; they mark both that something is about to be left behind and that the traveller is about to venture into the unknown. The proximity to the unknown seems to initiate a notion of insecurity, to which the self responds by a movement towards the home, that is, towards the ultimate point of identity and sense of self. This process points to the complexity of the concept of home. It is simultaneously the cause of the sense of displacement and restlessness that troubles the self as well as it is the self's ultimate recourse to a notion of stability and identity. It is, furthermore, not without a certain irony that the attempt at escape from the home in *Journey Without Maps* is cancelled not only by a psychological movement towards the home, but also to a large extent by the physical presence of the home in the not-home. The physical affinity with the home lessens as the journey takes Greene further into Africa, from the reproduction of England in Freetown to the faint traits of a Western mode of dwelling on the border of the Liberian hinterland. However, even when there are no physical traits of Western society, indigenous features such as the bush devil still draw the narrator towards home, albeit a *past* version of the home.

In *The Lawless Roads* the main trigger for the psychological journey is the encounter between the imagined not-home and the actual not-home, the encounter between the world and the mind. From the viewpoint of home, Greene had created an image of Mexico as a place where faith *mattered*, based on an assumption that the persecution of Catholics there had led to a strengthening of the faith, that existence in Mexico was so horrible that faith necessarily would become a way of handling life. This idea of faith as a tool for enduring existence is then confronted by the reality of the situation. Tabasco, where the persecution was most aggressive, lingers in a state of apathy that resembles the conditions of Greene's home. The familiar (home) in the desired unfamiliar (not-home) then provokes the psychological movement towards the home.

In short, we can isolate two features of the spatial journey that appear particularly apt in effecting the psychological movement. First, there is the notion that the encounter of the *idea* of the not-home with the *actual* not-home triggers a drift towards the home. The expectations for the journey are negotiated through the actual experience, resulting in a mental movement towards the origin of the idea of the not-home, that is, towards the home. Second, spatial distance from the home itself seems to draw the mind in the direction of home. This aspect becomes increasingly clear at borders or thresholds between the home and the unknown, significantly because borders act as concrete signs of movement.

Moreover, these two features of the spatial journey seem to create a break in time. The French philosopher Gaston Bachelard claims that our memories 'are fixed in space' (Bachelard, 9). This, I believe, is true. When Greene retrieves memories from his childhood they are fixed in space, like the school in Berkhamsted or the pram where he saw the dead dog. However, space to some extent also indicates time; these spaces are inextricably tied to the temporal entity of childhood. In the same way, we have seen that the encounter with the bush devil in Liberia and the Indian culture in Mexico evoked memories of a historical

England. The escape from the home and the quest for meaning that lie behind the instinct to travel in the two texts may then be said to traverse time in both physical and personal space.

The notion of instability and displacement that haunts the home and the self in *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads* is at once generated and reflected by the texts' narrative strategies. Travel narratives are traditionally marked by a sense of linearity, of narrating the itinerary of the journey in a chronological manner. Some narratives, of course, are interrupted by descriptive sequences, such as in a botanical or geographical treatise. In *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads*, however, the narratives repeatedly perform analeptic variations that focus on the narrator's memories. This narrative strategy mirrors the unstable sense of self that travels through the text. Moreover, the narrative is frequently interspersed with Greene's subjective responses and dreams and nightmares in a way that reinforces the importance of the narrator's subjectivity.

The intense search for a sense of stability for the self and the discontent with the state of home are firmly located in the historical period in which *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads* were written. The shock and destruction of the Great War, the economic depression, the rise of totalitarianism and the threat of a new devastating war occurred at the same time as uncountable forces of modernisation changed the way people lived and thought of themselves. This state of flux initiated a shift in the sense of self from the more secure and stable Victorian outlook. The upheavals of the age were mirrored on the micro level by an unstable and insecure sense of self, a self that would gladly suffer some *travail* on a search for meaning. Furthermore, *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads* are travel books; they are books about travel, and travel was also going through profound changes at this point in history. The increasing efficiency in transport combined with the imperial efforts of most European Powers created the notion of the world as a 'done' or known place, with no real chance of escaping the imprint of Western civilisation.

Travel literature, I have said, is a newly opened area of academic study. Although most commentators on travel literature appear to be aware of the importance and the presence of the home and the aspect of self-writing in travel writing, the focus is mainly on the representation of the other and the writer's complicity with Western modes of domination. Andrew Hammond has rightly pointed to the fact that '[the] full potential for the study of western constructions of the self, that second pole in the "Manichean binarism" of cross-cultural representation, has yet to be fully realised' (Hammond, 169). Any such attempt to map this area of travel literature would be well advised to consider Graham Greene's travel books. Furthermore, the travel book's mediation between the fictional and the authentic is yet another area of research that has been largely neglected, especially with regard to the autobiographical elements of the travel book. In the context of *Journey Without Maps* and *The Lawless Roads*, this has particular relevance where the narrator presents information that intersect with known biographical elements of the historical person Graham Greene's life. In these instances it may be difficult to identify precisely where the one ends and the other begins. Although the travel book's balancing-act between the fictional and the authentic is problematic in terms of defining the genre of travel writing, it is also in the opinion of this writer part of the genre's attractiveness: it is in some ways an expression of most human beings' occasional difficulty in separating the world from the imagination.

People have travelled through time immemorial to find land, lodging, food, companionship, and for the sake of the experience itself. The journey as a metaphor for life itself is deeply entrenched in our language and our understanding of ourselves. Life, we say, is a journey from the cradle to the grave. This is perhaps the reason for the powerful impact of the travel book: its concern – the journey – is something that is of great significance to all human beings regardless of space and time. The journey is also embedded in the art of storytelling and in literature itself; the journey has been at the centre of attention since the

beginning of storytelling. It is therefore appropriate that the travel book finally is received into the area of academic study and no longer is considered as second rate literature. If the journey is such a significant part of our existence, the travel book has a profound potential to further our understanding of human concerns. I have tried to show in the course of this analysis that the travel book contains complex layers of meaning and that it potentially provides a number of insights; it is in no way the little brother of the novel or any other form of literature. It is my hope that this thesis will contribute something towards the understanding of the genre; it is also my hope that it will be only one of many studies on the fine art of travelling.

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