

Travel Writing as a Multi-Faceted Discourse

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Abstract:

The current article addresses the travel writing trope with its multi-faceted premises. As an interdisciplinary construct, the travel text seems to encompass a wide arena of purposes that float up challenging its proclaimed exploratory and informative functions. These purposes include political, religious, ethnographic, cultural, ideological and even colonial facets that are interwoven within the folds of the travel account. We opt for three travel works to reflect the evolutionary spirit of the genre and how it impacts the shift in its load.. In so doing, and for the sake of a critical analysis of their textual enunciations, the postcolonial and deconstruction approaches are adopted to decipher the travel discourse in the three works. Such selection aims to prove that the interdisciplinary structure of the travel text has a tremendous effect on its ideological load rendering it a hybrid and polyphonic construct which disguises a discrete imperial agenda behind other facets.

Keywords:Travel Writing – Discourse – Facets - Ideology - Imperialism

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1. INTRODUCTION

Travel writing represents one of the unique literary genres in the twentieth century. Since its emergence in bygone times, it kept flourishing and evolving to develop a distinctive content and structure. The early beginnings were factual accounts of journeys undertaken by different types of travellers, explorers, missionaries, adventurers and so on. They aimed to document their travels in the form of non-fictional textual accounts. Gradually, the travel book drew more attention and acquired wide readership as the other literary genres. This incited many travellers to diversify the content of their travel accounts to approach and compete with the other genres, mainly the novel. In this evolution, travel writing drifted steadily to the adoption of some fictional details which increased over time to be an integral part of the travel book. Thus travel writers started fusing the two narrative aspects to deliver new perspective for the travel book. This latter is no longer that documentary book of factual events as it has become injected with the travellers' intellectual, social, cultural, political and ideological orientations. Herein, the travel book has become a multi-faceted construct which reflects all these orientations under the guise of exploration. Therefore, we tend to embark on this critical study to analyse the discourse of travel writing through deconstructing three model travelogues. These are respectively, *Journey Without Maps* by Graham Greene, *Naked Lunch* by William Burroughs and *Blue Highways: A Journey into America* by William Least Heat-Moon.

2. The Multi-Faceted Dimensions of Travel Writing in *Journey Without Maps*

Being overwhelmed by travel, Graham Greene is considered as one of the distinctive proliferate writers of the century. His huge body of literature together with his countless travels mirror his immersion in an endless state of quest. For example, his novel *Stamboul Train* (1931) was his first work which pertains to the theme of travel in a mysterious setting. In addition, after his travels to Mexico, he

issued *The Lawless Roads* (1938), a travel journal where he documents the inhumane persecution and oppression against the Catholic priests in Mexico. This shows his interest in religious theology, namely Catholicism. Then came his journey to Liberia, Africa which represents one of his unique stations that propels his insight and evokes his inner sense of exploration resulting in his masterpiece, *Journey Without Maps* (1936).

Right at the beginning of *Journey Without Maps*, Greene (1936) affirms his religious commitment when he states: "I am a Catholic with an intellectual if not an emotional belief in Catholic dogma; I find that intellectually I can accept the fact that to miss a Mass on Sunday is to be guilty of mortal sin" (p. 4). Through this Catholic commitment, he aims to allude that his journey is triggered by a sacred religious quest. The seed of this quest lies in a mysterious spiritual interest that characterises the first period of his career. Hoskins (1999) maintains: "Greene's writing career went through three main phases; each one has its own features and effects on him. The first phase reflects his religious and spiritual interest. It is characterised by his treatment of Catholic themes of fallen humanity and the mysterious working of God's grace" (p. xi).

Such spiritual inner quest finds in Africa a fertile space of mysticism which fuels his exploratory sense. It is a promising material space that corresponds to the spiritual aspect of his quest. In this respect Maria Couto (1988) argues: "In *Journey Without Maps* the *prima materia* for the metaphysical quest is the physical journey" (p.14). This intimate interaction between the physical and metaphysical impacts the novel's content resulting in a harmonious texture where the factual narrative is voiced by Green's inner sense of exploration. Couto (1988) adds: "Greene's selection of the facts of his travel in *Journey Without Maps* is determined by an inner metaphysic which perceives both his world as well as the realities of Africa" (p. 14).

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On the other hand, some critics consider Greene's travel book as an account of self exploration or what Jeffrey Meyers (1990) considers "a quest for primeval roots and self-understanding ... Greene's travelbooks are both an exorcism and a journey into self" (p. 2). In fact, tracking one's inner spirituality is pointless without fathoming his inner self. Both entities have a dialectic relationship that entails the existence of one for achieving the other. Hence Greene's journey has also this psychological dimension when the spiritual quest intersects with the psychic queries which pave the way for a better grasp of the traveller's self. In this context, Michael Brennan (2010) hints to how travel functions as a reconciliatory bridge between the spiritual and the psychological quests to maintain Greene's well being. He states:

At this point in his Liberian travelogue Greene's fascination with the interaction of Christian spirituality and native superstition leads him to consider how both elements cater for the kind of human needs and fears which are also treated by psychoanalysis in the West. Indeed, *Journey Without Maps* is permeated (and often directed) by psychoanalytical perspectives upon the working of the author's mind (p. 39).

Other critics emphasise the moral aspect of the journey justifying that Greene's journey is meant to set a demarcation between the world's conflicting forces. Out of moral consciousness vis-à-vis a world torn apart by wars and agonies, this quest aims at localising Greene in an objective stance. Such stance allows him not only to perceive the good/evil strife objectively but also to redress the world's dark forces of injustice. Bernard Bergonzi (2006) clarifies: "The opposition between Good and Evil, on the one hand, and Right and Wrong on the other, has become a crux in discussions of the novel. Its Catholic admirers regard the former as pointing to authentic spiritual values and the latter as reflecting a godless humanism, and have assumed that Greene sees it that way" (p. 96). Even the novel's "agonies and terrors of travel become a metaphor for the evil in the universe" (Meyers, 1990, p. 49).

However, like all the other facets of quest, the moral aspect of the journey should not be considered idealistically. Regardless of the journey's spiritual, religious, psychological and moral motives, there is always a political dogma which is underlied within the folds of the travel writer's journey as Maria Couto (1988) reveals: "Graham Greene's novels illuminate the moral sense by structuring the narrative within a framework of political consciousness and the religious sense. They illustrate that religion and politics, traditionally seen as antagonistic forces, Church and State, sacred and secular, God and Caesar, are elements of the same reality" (p. 2). This hybrid equation foregrounds the fact that it is the political ethos which represents the core of Greene's travel discourse as a logical reflection to the era's surrounding political atmosphere. Couto (1988) adds: "Greene's exploration of these frontiers reveals a world of divergences, heterogeneity, multiple voices. Since those years in the 1930s he has consistently displayed a capacity to listen and to comprehend the experience of a shared humanity which is also the global reality of geopolitical power" (p. 3).

Even at the level of that emotional religious drive, the then political circumstances played a crucial role to integrate politics in Greene's travel as Adamson (2016) states: "At the end of the thirties Greene was pushed by the gathering forces of war to an emotional pitch of Catholicism" (p. 89). Therefore, Greene often declares himself to be a political novelist first hand, not a Catholic novelist who happens to be a Catholic (as cited in Couto, 1988, p. 1). Morally speaking, Couto (1988) emphasises the importance of Greene's political perspective and its importance for grasping his moral philosophy: "To live morally in Greene's world view is to live politically" (p. 28). This political background conceals an ideological orientation that alludes to an imperial attitude Greene strives to embed in his narrative, yet in vain. The colonial clues encoded in his discourse confirm the fact that

every traveller is an ideologue who seeks the glorification of his colonial history.

3. The Multi-Faceted Dimensions of Travel Writing in *Naked Lunch*

Over time, travel writing evolves within a range that allows it to approach more increasingly fictional narratives. Therefore, its evolution casts its shadows on its content and structure. The 1950s witnessed the birth of a unique wave of travellers whose objective was to defy the then common mainstream culture of conformism. The Beats undertook the responsibility of freeing their postwar generation from the clutches of the system's consumerism culture, hedonistic lifestyle and the blinding material affluence. In so doing, they devised their own countercultural tools of liberation, namely jazz, sex, narcotics and mainly the spontaneous journey. One of the seminal books of the Beats is *Naked Lunch* where its author, William Burroughs, adopts the journey as a key-motif in his work.

Interestingly, this journey's distinctiveness lies in its imaginative setting where most of the events take place in three fictional cities, Interzone, Annexia and Freeland. Discerning the depth of these fictive locations and how they interact with the factual space is illuminated by Michele Russo (2015):

Like multifaceted mosaics, the “temporary autonomous zones” coexist in the novel as independent spatial entities, whose casual interaction conditions the deepest aspects of human beings. The geographical setting within which the author includes real places, from the U.S.A. through Mexico to North Africa, develops itself towards the frontiers of the unreal, since Burroughs goes beyond the geographical areas of this world. He crosses their frontiers and creates new imaginary lands. As the narrative goes by, the readers suddenly find themselves in the middle of nowhere (p. 333).

Furthermore, the implementation of the fictional journey is meant to counter the blinding materialism dogma of the 1950s. Through this

fictional journey, Burroughs attempts to satirise the postwar America's unfair deal, the material comfort in return for spiritual deprivation. For advocating the cause of his generation, Burroughs elaborates this fictional travel to combat the policy of constant watch. In *Queer* he refers to his commitment stating: "I live with the constant threat of possession, and a constant need to escape from possession, from Control." (Burroughs, 1985, p. xxiii).

The Beatific journey also debunks the containment policy which propels stasis at the expense of mobility. Through stasis culture, the individual is fixated and injected with common material pleasures that result in a typical obedient identity. An identity which is cloned and dictated from above and not one's own construct. As a revolutionary figure, Burroughs defamiliarises his exploratory journey to defy the common with the odd, culture with counterculture and the familiar with the peculiar for the sake of liberating his generation and voicing their cause in a unique artistic way. For achieving such purpose, he adopts his own peculiar tools of liberation.

Culturally speaking, the fictive aspect of the journey and its characterisation represents the mould of resistance towards the 1950s miserable reality. Thanks to them, Burroughs can inject his travel account with whatever countercultural tools to overthrow the suffocating Square culture. As a creative Beatific writer, he gets inspired by the same countercultural tools of resistance such as jazz, sex, drugs and the non-stop journey. By experimenting with them, he offers his deprived self a state of highness to achieve its spiritual being far from the constraints of the social conformist culture.

Thematically speaking, the imaginative setting is also implemented as an exotic destination where the traveller experiments with the sense of freedom he misses in his reality. This exotic setting allows him to interweave a world of his own, a world set on Beatific markers of defiance. Yet, the creation of this imaginative exotic world is not meant to mimic the real world; on the contrary, it aims at subverting it

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through incorporating two key anti-social motifs, drug addiction and sexual obscenity. The frequent recurrence of these countercultural tools renders them the two dominant leitmotifs in the book.

It is an attempt to debunk the common social structure by replacing it with what is considered by the Beats as insightful sources of creativity and inspiration. In postwar America, these are immoral aspects of delinquency, but for the Beats, they are the ideal means to evade the blinding hypnotising culture. Drugs in particular offer the individual a state of ecstasy to conceive the truth by his own perception and not by the system's. In fact, Burroughs counters the suffocating social conventions by defamiliarising their essence and transposing their functions always to free the individual and heal his wounded spirituality.

In the same respect, drug addiction represents a sacred ritual of spirituality to explore high sensations of ecstasy. For the Beats, the addicted junkies are not an aspect of moral decay as the social concept tends to portray; instead, they are the epitomes of spiritual salvation who rid their psyches of the manufactured consciousness in favour of a genuine unconsciousness and free selfhoods. They choose willingly to withdraw from that mapped reality to their own realm of hallucination for congregating unique senses of beauty. Burroughs (1966) writes: "During withdrawal the addict is acutely aware of his surroundings. Sense impressions are sharpened to the point of hallucination. Familiar objects seem to stir with a writhing furtive life. The addict is subject to a barrage of sensations external and visceral. He may experience flashes of beauty and nostalgia" (p. 242).

These junkies devise their own markers of freedom and shape their identities off the artificial moral consciousness. They are considered as the new American heroes; Antonin Zita (2011) argues: "*Naked Lunch* is thus considered a metaphorical representation of drug addiction and withdrawal, an allegory of the world seen through the hallucinatory mind of a junkie, or a hero's quest for freedom and from addiction; no matter what concrete metaphorical reading is chosen,

most places, people and events described by the discourse are unreal” (p. 115).

On the other hand, the Beatific obscene language of sexuality has a pertinent flavour over the atmosphere of the travel account. By siding off the mainstream moral conduct, it strives to overthrow the social code of morality considering it an aspect of hypocrisy. Maintaining one voice of morality in postwar America can never mirror the individual’s thirst for freedom; by contrast, it contributes to entangling the individual in the trap of blinding social containment to repress his freedom and pluralistic spirit.

Thus raising a louder voice with a fiercer immoral language seems to be a necessary evil to voice the Beats’ cause and to disseminate awareness among the masses. Only the outrageous vernacular speech can awake them to uncover the conspiracy of social and cultural conditioning. All the immoral scenes in the book are implemented as a counter-discourse that is required to keep up with the book’s revolutionary fragmented structure. This latter also aims to subvert the conventional artistic expression to liberate the individual and his spirituality from the dogma of that 1950s typical discourse of conformism.

Structurally speaking, the spontaneous journey casts its shadows on the structure of its narrative account. Thus the fragmented structure of *Naked Lunch* is adopted to defy the conventional linearity which is no more than another aspect of conformist art. For Burroughs, art should be free of any conventionality; it has to opt for its own inspirational tools as well as rebellious forms and structures. As a postmodernist masterpiece, the fragmentary style represents one of the crucial subversive techniques to decentralise the artistic arena and free it from any subordination. It also plays a decisive role in constructing the ideal model of the free identity. It is the disintegrated model rather than the unified one which epitomises *Naked Lunch*’s concept of identity; Micheal Sean Bolton (2012) clarifies:

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For Burroughs, disintegration rather than unity represents the possibility of freedom of the self. Stable, fixed identities allow for oppression by societal power structures since the subject that can be defined can be subjugated. Consequently, his characters never settle into distinct identities. Whereas conventional autonomy includes a continuity of identity based on the integrity of a character and the coherence of his/her perceptions, Burroughs does not allow characters to maintain any fixed identity or perspective by which to establish such continuity. For him, autonomy [and anatomy] derives not from continuity but from multiplicity of identity (p. 67).

Even the temporal and spatial dimensions are modelled on the basis of this disintegrated artistic criterion. As far as temporality is concerned, breaking the common concept of time into a defamiliarised fragmented temporality has two major objectives. First, it challenges the traditional linearity which leads to anticipating the individual's actions. By pursuing the logical tripartite linearity of past, present and future, the individual's behaviour can be expected than dictated by the Square power. Hence it is avoided. Second, this dispersed temporality helps the individual evade the system's temporal containment where every step is counted and prescribed. In return, it redefines his free being in his own temporal perspective. This justifies the sudden frequent shifts between the past and the present as Michael Sean Bolton (2012) points out:

Burroughs's novels destabilize chronology to such a degree that time no longer provides firm context. Distortions of temporality in the novels include the destabilization of the present time of the narrative, the inclusion of characters who are not bound by time, and the blending and blurring of genres, all resulting in anachronisms and temporal instabilities that sabotage attempts to make historical connections (p. 57).

As far as space is concerned, the fragmented spaces enrich the ideological load of the book through enunciating a multiplicity of voices to back up the Beat's cause. Hence Burroughs opts for a mixture of imaginary and factual settings that draw no clear demarcations between them, as if they overlap and diverge absurdly according to the narrative requirements. In fact, "The presence of different and autonomous narrative spaces explains the polyphonic import of the narrative voice, which is apparently fragmented into mysterious and unrecognizable voices, but accounts, at the same time, of a multi perspective view of the world" (Russo, 2015, pp. 333-334). They are the illusive borders which act as a bridge between the temporal and spatial aspects of fragmentation to deepen and sharpen the credibility of the book's discourse, besides to issuing a Beatific polyphonic voice as Russo (2015) maintains: "Borders constitute both the time-space dimension of the book, with its numerous geographical references, and its linguistic structure, as lines of frontiers among the different narrator voices. The dissolution of the borders is primarily evident in the fragmentation of the spatial and geographical dimension" (332).

In this respect, *Naked Lunch* became a manifesto of resistance which aims to alienate the art forms to the free periphery far from the system's clutches of artistic affectation. This latter's ideology tends to commodify arts for the sake of blinding the masses. Therefore, Burroughs adopts an impressive hybridity at the level of structure and content to widen the scope of his rebellion. Dylan Belgrado (2014) deciphers this hybrid combination:

Naked Lunch is an amalgamation of different forms or genres of literature, going from scientific treatise, [to] conventional hard boiled-detective fiction[,] parodies of pornography, lyric poetry, and spy adventures. The novel further consists of dialogues, streams of consciousness, scenery descriptions, hallucinations, encyclopedic information and parts of a diary.

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Switches between genres and forms often occur within the same chapter. A rather striking combination consists of standard fictional text interrupted by factual information (p. 31).

Additionally, the dispersed spaces contribute to generating a fragmentary linguistic structure which evokes another aspect of creative rebellion. Such distinctive language represents the core of the Beats' counter-discourse. Russo ((2015) contends:

Such a remarkable spatial fragmentation obviously reflects itself on the linguistic level, owing to the confusing “sounds” of the different narrative voices throughout the text... After an attentive reading of the book, it emerges that Burroughs operates a disintegration of the language and that every word, on the wake of certain 20th century literary movements, is deprived of its real “content”, of its symbolical and allegorical import. Different voices mingle and clash to cross the linguistic borders and generate further explosions of senses and meanings... The presence of different and autonomous narrative spaces explains the polyphonic import of the narrative voice, which is apparently fragmented into mysterious and unrecognizable voices, but accounts, at the same time, of a multi perspective view of the world (pp. 333-334).

This multi-perspectival view is in favour of the polyphonic counter-discourse which defies the monolithic hypnotising discourse of material hedonism.

It is the same discourse that long addressed Americans with its resonant mottos and fake promises of *the American Dream*. Yet, it turned to be a dark nightmare the Beats found themselves, as engagé artists, forced to unveil its tangible face. Therein, they adopt a strategy of linguistic estrangement to combat the traditional subjugating discourse. Michele Russo (2015) details:

This sense of estrangement is supported by the use of a “pseudo-physical” language, expressing and analyzing the new frontiers of Burroughs’ pseudoscience. Traditional language is, in fact, the means by which totalitarian regimes express themselves and maintain their power. The anarchic language of *Naked Lunch* subverts social hierarchical structures and totalitarian systems and, by demolishing the geographical and linguistic boundaries, it gradually outlines the real monsters of the book (p. 338).

Antonin Zita (2011) emphasises the same point:

The language of *Naked Lunch* is highly diverse: the discourse offers humorous passages, parts that at the first sight contain the meaning of the text as well as parts that seemingly have no significance for the discourse. Furthermore, these different —languages‖ often contrast with one another, in effect constantly changing the flow and, for the lack of better words, —shapel‖ of the text. The discourse flows unexpectedly and moves from a humorous part into a rather brutal one, from a seemingly scathing satire to an apparently meaningless and rather poetic passage only to substitute it with a dry, scientific-sounding statement (pp. 90-91).

Another interesting feature that characterises *Naked Lunch*’s language is the cut-up technique. Its function is to subvert the traditional linguistic modes of expression by destabilising order even at the artistic level; Burroughs (1966) regards it an essential pathway to overlook the future:

I would say that my most interesting experience with the earlier techniques was the realization that when you make cut-ups you do not get simply random juxtapositions of words, that they do mean something, and often that these meanings refer to some future event. I’ve made many cut-ups and then later recognized that the cut-up referred to

something that I read later in a newspaper or a book, or something that happened ... Perhaps events are pre-written and pre-recorded and when you cut word lines the future leaks out (as cited in Sterritt, 1998, p. 198).

The playfulness of the cut-up words free his language and its structures from any hegemonic dictation. Moreover, it exceeds the stage of randomness to create its own linguistic structure “to evade the logic of dualism, the need to choose between one or the other, through insisting on the importance of each element of the discourse” (Zita, 2011, p. 110). Impressively, this technique aspires to challenge even the then political order by its counter-order as William Harris ((2017) states: “Cut-up methods sought to sabotage lines of power, create new possibilities, and recruit allies in a war”(p. 134). Burroughs goes further when he says: “The cut ups are not for artistic purposes. The cut ups are a weapon”(as cited in Harris, 2017, p. 134). This political note is encoded metaphorically within the folds of the narrative, but it flows to the surface with an ideological taint as soon as Burroughs proceeds representing the other in his journey.

4. The Colourful Symbolism of Travel Writing in *Blue Highways: A journey into America*

Unlike the two previous representations of the other in *Journey Without Maps* and in *Naked Lunch*, where the otherness aspect is separate from the traveller's entity, William Least Heat-Moon's model is unique with its inward portrayal of the other. *Blue Highways* presents a quest for roots which are historically in conflict. His white bloodline represents the catalyst power which drives him to hover the blue highways in search of his red Indian root. The colourful interaction on the road is of much significance. These colours play an essential role in mapping the traveller's journey. Likewise, his identity is also mapped and impacted by that very colourful spectrum.

Symbolically speaking, the blue, white, red and green colours act as emblems for those interacting powers on the road. The blue

highways acquire much depth when associated with the blue colour as Heat-Moon (1999) states:

On the old highway maps of America, the main routes were red and the back roads blue. Now even the colors are changing. But in those brevities just before dawn and a little after dusk—times neither day nor night—the old roads return to the sky some of its color. Then, in truth, they carry a mysterious cast of blue, and it's that time when the pull of the blue highway is strongest, when the open road is a beckoning, a strangeness, a place where a man can lose himself (p. 5).

The blue highways are the traveller's ultimate destination. On the map, they are the back blue roads which stand for that peaceful and refreshing space the self requires to enjoy a sense of peace and rest. It is the same mysterious sense the self feels when it looks at the clear blue sky. Therefore, the writer portrays this association between the highway and the sky for their common blue radiation. A radiation that allows the self to experiment with a sense of loss to keep off this material world.

Simultaneously, the traveller's avoidance of the main red routes stand for shunning a direct clash with the centre of America. A centre that is represented as a dangerous space that would aggravate his self's state instead of healing it. Thus the two spaces are distinguished to hint at that conflict between the centre and periphery the self should avoid for its welfare. Another interesting feature of the blue highway is its association with history. Heat-Moon (1999) sets it as a rule, "Rule of the blue road: the highway side to where you've been is better marked than the one to where you're going" (p. 305). This rule pertains to the nature of his journey with its inward and outward facets. A journey which prioritises the past, as a self's key component, over the future. A past that stimulates the facets of his roots.

Being born to a mixed blood, the red Indian Osage and the white European one, incites an inward quest to restore his lost Indian roots

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in the modern white America. Similarly, his loss of his wife and job arouses his inner quest to look for his broken and lost self. These two motives fuel his outward journey to keep up with the inward one. Thus he sets out after being attracted by the whimsical blue highways which appeal to delving into the history of his ancestors to restore what he considers the genuine part of his self. Opting for the back blue roads on the map is another clue for a quest back in history since *a place on the map is a place in history*, as the American saying goes.

Throughout the book, Heat-Moon keeps mythologising that sacred bond between all what is blue and history whether implicitly or explicitly. As far as the blue coast is concerned, he writes, “In the morning I took U.S. 101 up the blue coast of high headlands and broken sea stacks that demark the old shoreline. The route was a far stretch of history and beauty” (Least, 1999, p. 196). Even, the mountain valley’s blue water is depicted as a distinctive marker of history; he contends, “In a mountain valley full of greenness and blue water, we stopped to stretch. A historical marker explained the geology of the basin”(1999, p. 222).

Impressively, the blue highway is portrayed as a bridge that interrelates the traveller with his Indian roots; it acts as a spatial context that embraces and leads him to a temporal quest for his genesis as he explains, “To drive blue highway 21 is to follow Texas history. Older than the mind of man, it started as a bison trail (buffalo walk in surprisingly straight lines); then Indians came up it to hunt the buffalo” (1999, p. 119). Such significant equation of blue roads, history and Indian root seems to reflect a state of nostalgia to bind the present with the past. This nostalgic yearning reinforces the self’s sense of belonging to the past by experimenting with self loss in the present. Heat-Moon maintains, “... it’s that time when the pull of the blue highway is strongest, when the open road is a beckoning, a strangeness, a place where a man can lose himself” (1999. p. 5).

This resort to the past on the blue highways evokes the traveller’s ultimate sense of being he seeks from his journey. Thus he ironises the

image of self's being for self loss as a sacred ritual on that holy space, the road. It is a strange space where the true self is resurrected when set in touch with its past. It is the Indian Osage origin that matters much for Heat-Moon; therefore, he incessantly strives to reinvigorate it through his travel. This conviction seems clear even through his choice of his name Heat-Moon instead of Trogdon to distinguish his identity as Greasely (2001) maintains: "Trogdon adopted the name 'Heat-Moon,' drawing upon the name his family used, particularly in Boy Scouts, to honor their part-Osage heritage" (p. 253).

Even the label of his van, Ghost Dancing, Beal (2005) argues, "the van's name gave expression to Heat-Moon own nostalgia for lost origins and hope for resurrection" (p. 18). He adds detailing the label's correspondence to his Indian genesis and calling for its resurrection when he considers it as a "heavy – handed symbol referring to the desperate resurrection rituals of the Plains Indians in the 1890s, calling for the return of warriors, bison and the fervor of the old life that would sweep away the new" (Beal, 200, p. 18). This powerful sense of belonging to the past, mainly to his red roots, overwhelms the writer's self which is inspired by its ancestors' philosophy of the blue road, "Black Elk says, the blue road is the route of 'one who is distracted, who is ruled by his senses, and who lives for himself rather than for his people'" (Least, 1999, p. 191). His spirit is haunted by his Indian forefathers' philosophy, but he surprisingly realised after deep meditation that the greater impact comes from his racial memory. He admits, "I was stunned. Was it racial memory that had urged me to drive seven thousand miles of blue highway, a term I thought I had coined?" (Least, 1999, p. 191)

So this racial memory which is stemmed from his red Indian half rather than the white European one represents the tangible catalyst power. A memory that refreshes history by reinvigorating the traveller's belonging to his red bloodline. Throughout the book, the writer keeps glorifying the Indian genesis over the white European

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one. For him, it is a matter of honour when not to sacrifice one's past for the present, an honour he inherited from his red forefathers. In addition, this Indian mindset is the best source of hope that drives him on the road. He points out:

Yet to the red way of thinking, a man who makes peace with the new by destroying the old is not to be honored. So I hear. One summer when Heat-Moon and I were walking the ancestral grounds of the Osage near the river of that name in western Missouri, we talked about bloodlines. He said, "Each of the people from anywhere, when you see in them far enough, you find red blood and a red heart. There's a hope" (Least, 1999, p. 9).

Moreover, the traveller regards his Indian ancestors as the professional mappers of self. He celebrates one of their mystic symbols considering it a spiritual masterpiece that draws skillfully the soul's course of life. He describes:

The symbol appears among other Indians of the Americas. Its lines represent the course a person follows on his "road of life" as he passes through birth, death, rebirth. Human existence is essentially a series of journeys, and the emergence symbol is a kind of map of the wandering soul, an image of a process; but it is also, like most Hopi symbols and ceremonies, a reminder of cosmic patterns that all human beings move in (Least, 1999, p. 165).

This symbol represents only an example of their genius as master designers of spirituality.

Heat-Moon is so influenced by his red bloodline that even his choice of his wife was based on the same racial equation. He admits, "One last word about bloodlines. My wife, a woman of striking mixed-blood features, came from the Cherokee. Our battles, my Cherokee and I, we called the 'Indian wars'" (Least, 1999, p. 9). Therein, fighting such battles proves that the writer seeks no reconciliation between his two racial facets, by contrast; he favours

the red facet with its spiritual glamour over the white facet with its materialist dogma as he justifies, „...the Shakers-like the red man-could love craft and yet never become materialists”(Least, 1999, p. 27).

In fact, portraying the two facets as two struggling entities alludes to the same historical conflict between the traveller and the other. Hovering the roads in search of Osage traces embodies the same image of the white explorer who travelled to explore the exotic lands of other races, including Indians. In spite of the exploratory claims in *Blue highways*, evoking such racial conflict metaphorises the traveller's white facet to conquer the red one. It is an attempt to revive the historical roles of his white and red ancestors to mimic their traditional relation of coloniser and colonised. This image floats to the surface when Least Heat-Moon portrays the following scene that uncovers his colonial attitude: He asserts:

The beaver, almost as much as the horse, helped shape the course of early American history. Some *Mayflower* colonists paid their passage with beaver pelts; and a good fur could bring an Indian three steel knives or a five-foot stack could bring a musket. But even more influential were the trappers and fur traders penetrating the great Northern wilderness between the Mississippi River and Rocky Mountains, since it was their presence that helped hold the Near West against British expansion from the north; and it was their explorations that opened the heart of the nation to white settlement. These men, by making pelts the currency of the wilds, laid the base for a new economy that quickly overwhelmed the old. And all because European men of mode simply had to wear a beaver hat (1999, p. 243).

In this scene, the writer praises the influence of the early white colonists on the promotion of the economic life in the new world. Yet,

this is at the expense of depicting the Indians as wilds with stone-age tools.

5. Conclusion

In short, the interdisciplinary structure of travel writing casts its shadows on the multitude of its facets. While the prominent orientation among travel writers is to conduct exploratory journeys, experiencing an encounter with the other and getting informed about those exotic destinations has never been their only concern. Yet, scrutinizing many travelogues and focusing on the three aforementioned samples demonstrate that the genre embodies more than that factual documentary facet. It also incorporates religious, cultural, political, ethnographic and other ideological dimensions that lurk behind the traveller's exploratory claims.

As far as *Journey Without Maps* is concerned, the journey to Africa bears many theological and political implications which are evoked through the incessant comparisons between the traveller's homeland and Africa. Greene's racist depictions of Africa and its people resemble the same repercussions of Joseph Conrad. Therefore, it has become clear that his religious and psychic quests are not the only objectives behind his journey which disguises other ideological perspectives that tends to deepen the disparity between the two realms.

Similarly, Burroughs' countercultural commitment towards his generation cannot deny the duality of his discourse. While his major cause seems very noble as his work defies the Square culture of material containment, his representation of the non-Western other shows distinctive markers of a racist portrayal. His defamiliarised travel account with its fictive destinations uncover many ethnographic clues which aim to taxonomise two versions of the other, the western and the oriental Arab other. This elucidates the ideological dimension of his discourse which is embedded in his travel's countercultural cause.

Additionally, the quest for self has ever preoccupied travel writing as a key leitmotif. Hence William Least-Heat Moon opts for ironising

it with the concept of self loss. His quest for roots mirrors the ambivalent formula of his bi-racial self. Apparently, he portrays his travel on the blue highway as a nostalgic drift towards his red bloodline. Yet, the catalyst role he assigns to his white bloodline reveals a racial stance to resurrect the historical roles of his coloured and white ancestors under the term of racial memory. This latter alludes to reviving the historical queue dogma which proves that Heat-Moon's travelogue pertains to more than that existential facet of self tracking; it is also about ideology, racial valorisation and historical memory.

All in all, any reading of any travel book should be aware of its multi-faceted discourse. It should be accompanied by the conviction that every traveller is more than an explorer or adventurer. He is an ideologue, an anthropologist, a historian, a cultural iconoclast and all what his travel purpose determines. As an interdisciplinary genre, travel writing should be treated as an autonomous and independent genre which deserves equal attention like all the other literary genres.

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