NOT JUST TRAVEL WRITING:
AN INTERDISCIPLINARY READING OF THE WORK OF BRUCE CHATWIN

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In this thesis, I make a contribution to Chatwin scholarship by taking a view of his oeuvre as being thematically coherent. I give a reading of identity formation in his work: marking a departure from much other criticism, which has tended either to consider his texts in isolation, or to make comparisons between them and other literary texts. The thesis is innovative in the discipline of literary studies for its use of interdisciplinary materials to offer close readings. Chatwin has most frequently been categorized as a travel writer, and in this thesis I argue that due to the diverse nature of his writing, which includes fiction, reportage and autobiography as well as depictions of travel, criticism of his work only in relation to questions of literary genre is limited, and does not articulate the thematic coherence of Chatwin's work.

Chapter One deals with the problematic issue of genre. In Chapter Two, I examine the authorial strategies of realist and reflective ethnography, and examine Chatwin's authority as a narrator in the light of this work. In Chapters Three and Four, I establish further inter-disciplinary comparisons by examining theories of globalization and reflexive modernization. Again, I offer readings of Chatwin's work which identify the same processes in literary texts as are described in the theoretical material. In Chapter Five, I examine the opposition of collecting and nomadism in the light of theoretical work in the fields of collector psychology and consumer research. Throughout the thesis, the close readings of Chatwin's work focus on the theme of identity formation, both of characters and narrator. The conclusion proposes other possibilities for interdisciplinarity, and for the reading of both theoretical and literary texts.

Acknowledgments

"Occasionally a note of doubt creeps in. 'I am afraid that I have conducted in truly nomadic fashion cavalier raids on specialised disciplines I have not even begun to master.' Yet he never doubts the magnitude of his task."
Nicholas Shakespeare on Bruce Chatwin.

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Introduction: Identity-Formation and Interdisciplinarity

"His wanderings were never stunts to gather copy for a travel-book: he hated the term so fiercely that he launched his own under the undeceiving camouflage of novels."[1]

"In Patagonia was intended as an anti-travel book ... This was the first of books which Chatwin called "searches", imaginative mixtures of anthropology, history, biography and fiction."[2]

These two extracts from obituaries of Bruce Chatwin are by Patrick Leigh Fermor and Susannah Clapp respectively. Both knew Chatwin and his work well, and both comments focus on the generically ambiguous nature of his work. Leigh Fermor claims to be undeceived by Chatwin's claims that his work was fictional, whilst acknowledging that Chatwin did not wish to be read as a travel writer. The implication is that a "travel-book" is necessarily distinct from a novel, and that, despite Chatwin's claim, his work belongs to a fixed genre: that of travel writing. Clapp gives an incomplete list of the genres and disciplines whose influence she identifies in Chatwin's work, noting the range of disciplines upon which his work drew. Her comment, however, also acknowledges that Chatwin's intention was to escape categorization by genre, and that he saw his work as having a consistency rather than as a disparate oeuvre with no thematic coherence. Much of the burgeoning critical work on Chatwin has focused on the question of genre and has frequently drawn comparisons between Chatwin's writing and other writing which focuses on travel as a theme.[3] My critical approach to Chatwin's work is not led by his own claims, but nor is it dominated by the problematized question of genre. I read a thematic coherence in his depictions that has often been ignored in the attempt to classify his work according to genre.

Travel writing is a problematized form, as the critical studies quoted in Chapter One will make clear,[4] and in this thesis I suggest that comparison of Chatwin's work with other

literary texts is insufficient to fully understand the generically complex but thematically unified nature of his work. Instead of considering each text in isolation, I identify a concern with identity formation in the Chatwin oeuvre and focus on this throughout the thesis. In doing so, I propose several new fields which provide comparative material for readings of his texts. These new readings respond to the unwillingness of some previous critical work to engage with the whole oeuvre: my intention is to identify the themes and techniques which are consistently present in Chatwin's writing. In this introduction, I discuss the nature of the identity formation which is a focus of the thesis. I then set out the interdisciplinary methodology which marks my work as a departure from other studies of Chatwin and which I hope will also have implications for the study of work by other writers. I also describe the structure of the five chapters, and explain how they allow both close readings and cross-referencing of Chatwin's work. Finally, I give a working definition of 'meta-textual' as it is used in the thesis.

My close readings will be concerned with processes of identity formation as described in Chatwin's work: the identity formation which I refer to throughout the thesis is cultural identity. Although formation of identity is a result of economic and political processes as well as of cultural ones, my focus is a response to Chatwin's work, which depicts specific individuals and communities rather than political institutions and economic causality. Identity is represented in Chatwin's work as being related to the practices of everyday life: this representation is informed by Chatwin's own travel encounters, and by his own preoccupations. The descriptions given in his work concentrate on the immediate forms and expressions of cultural practice, and my thesis therefore concentrates on this aspect of identity formation in its close readings. This focus also allows me to comment on Chatwin's work itself as cultural product, and on its interventions in the sense of self of the author and the readership.

Concerns with nation, territory, tradition, ritual, travel and possessions are behind the confrontations with different identities that are important in Chatwin's texts. Perhaps

understandably for a writer whose work involves encounters with other cultures, Chatwin pays great attention to the ways in which individuals and groups, from the family to the nation, conceive of and articulate a sense of identity through cultural practice. Frequently in these depictions, individuals or communities identify themselves in opposition to others, for example in the case of the rural population differentiating itself from the urban in <u>On the Black Hill</u>.[5] As in the case of the Welsh in <u>In Patagonia</u>, there are constructions of community in which individuals share meanings and values with other communities at great distance.[6] There are also Chatwin's depictions of communities, or whole culture, whose identity contrasts with the practices and values of Western capitalism, for example the Aborigines in <u>The Songlines</u>.[7] A frequent perception of the Chatwin oeuvre has been that each narrative describes a different setting and subject matter. My aim is to counter the perception of a disparate and fragmentary group of texts by demonstrating that the themes identified above are consistently addressed throughout the oeuvre. My comments will not only address identity formation of characters depicted in the text, but also that of the narrator. An important part of my argument, especially in the areas of genre and reflective ethnography, will be that it is possible to offer a reading of the narrator's identity as well as of the other characters: in addition, the narrator's performance in the text affects the impression given of the cultural identity of the other characters. All are textual constructs, I will argue, and all are open to the interdisciplinary readings which I give.

Apart from the notable exception of a thesis by Matthew Graves, critical work on Chatwin has not engaged with his work as a thematically unified oeuvre.[8] Nor has it gone beyond comparison with either literary texts or ethnography. Chatwin's first book on nomads was never printed, but sections were used as a basis for other work, and the ideas which it contained continued to be important to the writer. Graves makes much use of Chatwin's first major writing project, the book on nomads.[9] My thesis contextualizes Chatwin's work on the premise that an understanding of it must address the fact that the different modes of writing employed in his texts: anthropology, history, biography and

fiction, for example, make purely literary comparisons partial and specific to individual texts. My thesis turns, therefore, to work produced outside the field of literary studies. I give a series of close readings of Chatwin's texts in parallel with syntheses of theoretical work which also addresses aspects of identity formation in the twentieth century. Despite the concentration on a few of Chatwin's texts in each chapter, I contend that all the comparative material could be used to offer readings of any of Chatwin's texts. I will therefore deal not only with Chatwin's book-length texts but also with the collected pieces of journalism, short fiction and essays collected in <u>What Am I Doing Here</u> and <u>Anatomy of Restlessness</u> as well as with the text of <u>Photographs and Notebooks</u>.[10]

My thesis is therefore an interdisciplinary one. The comparative material is drawn from reflective ethnography, globalization theory, reflexive modernization theory and consumer research, as well as from literary studies. My readings employ theoretical material that, as far as I am aware, has not been applied to Chatwin's work previously. The thesis has five chapters, which will each deal with a different area of comparison. As the opening paragraphs of these first sections will make clear, I do not provide comprehensive reviews or critiques of each theoretical field. The focus on processes of identity formation in Chatwin's work will also be the focus of these selective, summative and concise sections. The first section will outline arguments and establish the relative positions of commentators on the area under consideration, and will cover only those aspects that are relevant to the close readings of identity formation in Chatwin's work that follow them. For example, the first section of Chapter Three quotes from Malcolm Waters's introduction to the subject,[11] before concentrating on Featherstone's work on clash and conflict,[12] Friedman's comments on global awareness,[13] and Giddens's formulation of tradition and local identity.[14] The first section therefore quotes and discusses aspects of work from these commentators that deals with globalizing processes, local responses to them, and the conflict which globalization engenders. It is organised along thematic lines, and the areas covered are dictated by the comparison between the theoretical texts and, in the case of this example, <u>On the Black Hill</u>. The first

section of each chapter will thus be concerned with establishing the analytical tools to be used in relation to processes of identity formation depicted in Chatwin's text.

In the second and third sections of each chapter I offer close readings of Chatwin's work. In the second section of each chapter I give a reading of one text, but my third section extends the use of the analytical material to others of Chatwin's work. In the case of globalization theory, therefore, I give a close reading of On the Black Hill, followed in Section Three by a discussion of how globalization is depicted in The Songlines and Utz.[15] The relevance of each theoretical area is thus demonstrated by its application to a reading of two or more of Chatwin's texts in any one chapter. I therefore propose an alternative to previous criticism of Chatwin, which has often considered individual texts in order to make particular literary comparisons. Not only do my close readings provide a range of comparative material which is applicable to all Chatwin's work, but the comparative material is drawn from outside the problematized area of genre studies.

The thesis will take The Songlines as the cumulative text of Chatwin's oeuvre. Several commentators have argued that it represented the achievement in a single text of the expression of several of Chatwin's most important concerns.[16] The thesis on nomadism presented in The Songlines is typical of Chatwin's style in its use of meta-textual resources, superimposed upon a narrative involving travel, in its fundamental concern with the identity of individuals and communities, and its use of depictions of travel in the narrative. It has been criticized in academic work and in reviews for its depiction of the Aboriginal culture, and for Chatwin's practice of using real people as models upon which to hang transparent characterizations. Although the thesis will respond to some of these points, particularly in Chapter One, the focus on The Songlines is not intended to represent a response to these criticisms. Instead, it demonstrates the suitability of the theoretical material, by allowing this important text to be discussed in each chapter. The wide range of contexts can thus be seen to apply across Chatwin's work. Comparison is

also possible between the ways in which processes of identity formation are depicted for a range of characters in different narratives, locations and genres.

The order in which I give close readings of Chatwin's texts is the order in which they were published, but the order of the chapters and my presentation of the analytical material has an internal logic as well. The first chapter deals with the textual in terms of genre, and considers other literary texts. Comparisons are made between Chatwin's work, and texts which are considered to be typical of some aspect of travel writing. These include texts by Paul Theroux, Ronald Wright, Dervla Murphy and Robert Byron. The close readings of In Patagonia, On the Black Hill and The Songlines which are given in the second and third sections make clear the inability of this material alone to address the range of techniques and themes which feature in Chatwin's work. The chapter identifies Chatwin's departures from travel writing, and itself marks my departure in this thesis from conventional literary studies. The second chapter continues to be concerned with the textual in its consideration of ethnography, and its reflective expressions, for example as discussed by James Clifford, George Marcus and Dick Cushman.[17] I will make use of analyses by commentators in reflective ethnography about the performance of the writer in establishing authority in the text, and about the innovative form of recent ethnographic writing. Chapter Two marks the introduction of material from outside the discipline of literary studies, and establishes an approach which can be used to give an interdisciplinary reading of Chatwin's work.

The second chapter, however, also introduces as concerns the ideas around modernity and capitalist cultural hegemony which inform the two subsequent chapters. From the textual, the thesis moves to consider theoretical work on globalization and reflexive modernization in Chapters Three and Four. These chapters use theory from the social sciences to analyse the processes of identity formation depicted in Chatwin's texts, and are, I believe, the chapters that make the strongest and most original contribution of the thesis to Chatwin scholarship. I establish a comparison between the time-periods in

which Chatwin's narratives are based and the era of modernity discussed in the theoretical material. In the light of this theoretical material, I again demonstrate in both chapters that a reading of consistent thematic concerns is possible across the Chatwin oeuvre.

The work by Featherstone, Friedman and Giddens is inextricably linked with capitalism and consumption in various ways, and so overlaps with the concerns of the final chapter, which employs consumer theory by Belk and collector psychology by Pearce[18] in juxtaposition with work on nomadism and Laumonier's and Delvaville's figuring of it.[19] In doing so, I combine literary criticism of Chatwin's depictions of nomadism with a subject which has previously received little attention, especially as one side of an important dialectic in Chatwin's work. Consumer research and collector psychology can be used in combination with discussions of the nomad figure to allow a reading even of those texts in the Chatwin oeuvre which do not explicitly address nomadism. The use of biographical material by Nicholas Shakespeare and Susannah Clapp,[20] whilst it informs the whole thesis where relevant, is most pronounced in the final chapter, and so completes a progression through genre and setting to the relationship between Chatwin's depictions of identity formation, his own perception of self, and his biographical and cultural contexts.

An advantage of my approach is that it develops several ways of reading Chatwin's work, which allow for differences of form, subject matter and genre that have frequently been a focus of other criticism, as the quotations from Clapp and Leigh Fermor, above, suggest. In fact the final chapter of the thesis will address the theme of nomadism which was the focus of Matthew Graves's thesis, but will do so only in opposition to collecting, and only in the sense in which, in Chatwin's depictions, it performs another possibility for identity formation. Although the processes of identity formation which the close readings identify are fundamental to Chatwin's work, I will not attempt to argue that they are the only ones present in the oeuvre. Instead, they are chosen as providing a focus for

the interdisciplinary readings which each chapter offers; identity formation is a key idea in the non-literary work which I will use in my analysis, and therefore provides a dynamic between literary text and non-literary context.[21]   Although these are necessarily selective readings of all of these subjects, the thesis will demonstrate the appropriateness of all of them to the literary texts under consideration.   It is a secondary aim of the thesis to propose the possibilities of reading other literary texts through the same interdisciplinary methodology, and making use of the same theoretical material.   Little or no critical work has engaged with these possibilities, and none that I have encountered in the course of my research has seriously engaged with the processes described in the theoretical material specifically in order to give a reading of Chatwin's work.   The limited mention of globalization in relation to contemporary fiction, for example, has been in reference to a media-led popular conception of the more self-evident aspects of the process.   In other cases, 'globalization' has been used to refer to other processes than the ones intended in the academic work that I use in this thesis, which has offered not only examples of its effects but its causes, and the secondary, but vital consideration of local response to it.[22]

It remains here to clarify one term that is frequently used in the thesis, which suggests engagement with other areas of debate.   The term in question is 'meta-textual'.   I use this term to refer to Chatwin's use of sources from beyond the immediate experience depicted in the narrative.   It applies equally to fictional and non-fictional works, and is particularly useful when discussing the literary aspects of Chatwin's work, and the range of texts and other materials that inform it.   The term is used to avoid involvement in the multiple and contested uses of 'inter-textual', as I wish to employ a term which refers specifically to the material used by Chatwin, and to his use of it in literary narratives. My use of "meta-textual" in the thesis does not only refer to the convergence or intertwining of text with text, as the sources which Chatwin brings to bear on the immediate concerns of his narratives are not solely textual, it is therefore used in the sense of 'beyond': as the material to which it refers comes from beyond the narrative being recounted.   Examples include the interview with Konrad Lorenz recounted in <u>The Songlines</u>,[23] as well as other

textual sources, which inform on a thematic level the concerns of the work in which they are referenced. In short, the term is used in service of a specific technique of Chatwin's, not as part what Thais Morgan identifies as the text/discourse/culture triangle,[24] and my use of it will be made clear in Chapter One of my thesis.

My thesis, therefore, rests on the focus of offering readings of Chatwin's work in a way which understands his oeuvre as a group of texts unified by a set of concerns. Of course there are other writers whose work can be seen as unified by thematic concerns, and others in whose work cultural identity formation is important. I am not arguing that Chatwin's oeuvre is unique in this respect. I am, however, arguing that previous critical attention to his work has neither identified this unity in Chatwin's work, nor employed an interdisciplinary methodology to give close readings of a sustained thematic concern. The tri-partite structure of the chapters allows the interdisciplinary methodology to operate without confusion between the range of theoretical work which I use and the close readings of Chatwin's work. My interdisciplinary readings of texts will be their own demonstrations of the working method which combines text with theory in each chapter. Apart from my immediate focus on Chatwin, therefore, I will also propose by example the possibilities inherent in a comparison of the processes described in a set of theoretical texts with those depicted in literary work. The thesis suggests new ways of dealing with groups of literary texts that cross generic boundaries, and represents a new departure in the study of Chatwin's writing.

Endnotes to Introduction

[1] Patrick Leigh Fermor, "Bruce Chatwin", The Spectator 18th February 1989, 19.

[2] Susannah Clapp, "What Am I Doing Here?", The Guardian 19th January 1989, 27.

[3] For example R. H. Wright's thesis, which questions the fact and fiction content of Chatwin's work in "Literature by Foot: Travel Writing and Reportage by Novelists Graham Swift, Colin Thubron, Bruce Chatwin, V.S. Naipaul and Poet James Fenton" (Unpublished D.Phil. Thesis: University of Oxford, 1985); and Jan Borm's thesis, which identified the place of work by Chatwin, Raban and O'Hanlon in an ongoing genre of travel writing: "Le Récit de Voyage Contemporain: Essai sur le Renouveau d'un Genre". (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: Université de Paris - Denis Diderot, 1997).

[4] Travel-writing is perceived as a hybrid form by most commentators, and my analysis goes further in demonstrating the limited worth of generic categorization in a sub-genre which has so little clear definition. My argument makes use of, amongst other work, the essays in Michael Kowalewski, ed., Temperamental Journeys (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1993), as well as of specific work on Chatwin which notes the problematized nature of the travel writing genre, for example Manfred Pfister, "Bruce Chatwin and the Post-Modernization of the Travelogue", Literature, Interpretation, Theory 7, 3-4 (1996), 253-267.

[5] Bruce Chatwin, On the Black Hill [1983] (London: Picador, 1985).

[6] Bruce Chatwin, In Patagonia [1977] (London: Picador, 1979).

[7] Bruce Chatwin, The Songlines [1987] (London: Jonathan Cape, 1988).

[8] Matthew Graves, "Depaysement et ressourcement dans l'Oeuvre de Bruce Chatwin". (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1992).

[9] Graves also gives a masterly summing up of the Chatwin oeuvre in "Bruce Chatwin, ou l'alternative nomade", Les Cahiers Forell 8 (November 1994), 28.

[10] Bruce Chatwin, What Am I Doing Here [1989] (London: Picador, 1990); Matthew Graves and Jan Borm, eds., Anatomy of Restlessness (London: Jonathan Cape, 1996); Photographs and Notebooks (London: Picador, 1993).

[11] Malcolm Waters, Globalization (London: Routledge, 1995).

[12] Mike Featherstone, Undoing Culture (London: Sage, 1995).

[13] Jonathan Friedman, "Global System, Globalization and the Parameters of Modernity", in Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash and Roland Robertson, eds., Global Modernities (London: Sage, 1995).

[14] Anthony Giddens, Modernity and Self-Identity (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994).

[15] Bruce Chatwin, Utz [1988] (London: Jonathan Cape, 1989).

[16] For example, Colin Thubron's writing of "The Songlines, his masterpiece, the culmination of the obsession of more than twenty years". Colin Thubron, "Bruce Chatwin", The Sunday Times 22nd January 1989, 9.

[17] Important among these are George Marcus and Dick Cushman, "Ethnographies as Texts", Annual Review of Anthropology, 2, (1982), 25-69; and James Clifford and George Marcus, eds., Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography (London: University of California Press, 1986).

[18] For example: Russell Belk, ed., Highways and Buyways (Provo. U.T.: Association for Consumer Research, 1991) and Susan Pearce, On Collecting (London: Routledge, 1995).

[19] Alexandre Laumonier, "L'errance, ou la pensée du milieu", Magazine Littéraire 353 (1997), 20-24, and Bernard Delvaville, "Une quête métaphysique", Magazine Littéraire 353 (1997), 18-21.

[20] Nicholas Shakespeare, Bruce Chatwin (London: The Harvill Press, 1999), and Susannah Clapp, With Chatwin (London: Jonathan Cape, 1997).

[21] I am aware that certain schools of thought would find the division between literary and non-literary texts problematic, and I am certainly willing to see the fundamental similarities between different kinds of texts. However, in the context of this thesis, it is instructive to have terms which differentiate between texts which are essentially descriptive and those which are theoretical in their concerns. Hence the division can be posited between Chatwin's texts and other fiction and travel writing as literary, and the theoretical material such as texts of globalization theory as non-literary. Although I am concerned with identifying the intersections between these two kinds of texts, the division is a useful one for the clarity of structure and argument in my thesis.

[22] Michael Moses Valdez, The Novel and the Globalization of Culture (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). This study references none of the work on globalization which I use in this thesis, but considers multiculturalism in an overarching posthistorical framework in which to read literary texts. Marshall

Berman's work in <u>All That Is Solid Melts into Air</u> (London: Verso, 1983) is a closer precedent for reading literary texts in the light of the development of modernity. It is again the case, however, that Berman does not look at theoretical work from the fields of globalization or reflexive modernization that I do. It is also the case that his work does not problematize genre-based criticism of a single writer's work as I do with regard to Chatwin in this thesis.

[23] Chatwin, <u>The Songlines,</u> pp.121-125.

[24] Thais Morgan, "The Space of Intertextuality", in Patrick O' Donnell and Robert Con Davis, eds., <u>Intertextuality and Contemporary American Fiction,</u> (London: John Hopkins University Press, 1989).

Chapter One: Chatwin and the Problem of 'Genre'

Section One: Critical Approaches to Travel Writing

This section will consider Chatwin's oeuvre in relation to travel writing, and to critical response to travel writing: I will use the section to suggest affinities with and differences between Chatwin's work and other texts of travel. Chatwin's popular reputation is as a travel writer. As I have explained in the Introduction, my thesis reads Chatwin's work taking his difference from other travel writers as a starting point. Although Chatwin was profoundly influenced by travel writing and other literary texts, this chapter will show him writing against the grain of many texts that share his concerns or themes. The chapter will demonstrate that Chatwin's work displays a range of idiosyncratic concerns, and that literary comparisons cannot fully articulate the processes of identity formation embedded in it.

One of the main concerns of scholarly writing is the fictional status of Chatwin's work. The chapter will suggest that the formation of identity, of characters and author, is fundamental to Chatwin's work in ways which are not true of comparable travel writing, and that undue concentration on the fact and fiction divide can only give a narrow account of Chatwin's work. The same is true of criticism which confines itself to comparison between Chatwin and other travel writers. The way in which his texts are constructed not only marks a departure from other travel writing, but demands contextualization beyond straightforward comparison with other writing from the travel genre.

As will be the case with subsequent chapters, my first section will be selective in its choice of material, intending a specific study of Chatwin's work, rather than a study of genre. In order for the rest of the thesis to examine other aspects of Chatwin's writing, this chapter will demonstrate his departure from conventions which some commentators have seen as generic to travel writing and will establish the concern with textual processes

of identity formation which unifies this and subsequent chapters. The literary contextualization will make no attempt to be comprehensive, as work on travel writing is diverse, and often comments on texts which have little in common with Chatwin's. I also have no wish to rehearse well-established comparisons between Chatwin and his literary predecessors.[1] Instead, the intent of the chapter is to provide background to the further interdisciplinary contextualizations made in the subsequent chapters. This section will thus prepare the ground for the second section of the chapter, which will offer a reading of In Patagonia as demonstration of the ways in which Chatwin writes against the grain of other contemporary travel writing, and will therefore go beyond the concerns of much critical work on travel writing. In the third section, my readings of The Songlines[2] and On the Black Hill[3] will also demonstrate Chatwin's departure from the norms of travel writing.

Changes to the methods of travel, to the status of previously unexplored terrain, and greater possibilities for travel for greater numbers of people have changed the relationships between travel writer and travel, and between travel writing and its readership. As Matos puts it, "Postwar literary travellers have had to devise new strategies both for travelling and for writing about it - some of which create new points of departure, some of which constitute a reappropriation of older routes".[4] This explains, for example, the traveller who prefers a single mode of transport, such as Theroux, discussed below. It also explains the extremes to which writers will go to find subject matter that has not previously been written about.[5] The repetition of older journeys, by different methods, or in a different age, also gives rise to another common trope, travel in the footsteps of a previous figure. Writers have thus introduced new subject matter into the description of travel through terrain with which the reader may already be familiar. The writer's claim to have a body of knowledge which the reader does not is intended to offset the reader's familiarity with the location of the travel. Travel writing has therefore evolved to incorporate changes of focus as well as location.

The different representations of the same culture or place across different eras therefore reflect changing possibilities, mobilities and cultural norms. This is true of the culture from which travel writers depart, and the culture to which they travel. Hence Dodd observes that "Comparison of the travel writing of different periods about the same place suggests that an individual's stance ... can be as much determined by cultural factors as by personal preference".[6] This is certainly true of the difference between the assumptions made in texts which Chatwin quotes in In Patagonia,[7] and the implied judgement of these texts which Chatwin makes by juxtaposing them with description of his own experience. The distance is not only caused by the positioning of the earlier writers, but also by that of Chatwin. Chatwin's class, background and cultural location inevitably inform his choice of texts, as well as the context in which he uses them.[8] It is notable that despite the wide range of texts quoted in In Patagonia, there is no mention of either previous or contemporary native South-American literature.

Another trope of late-twentieth-century travel writing is the sense that earlier writers, in earlier textual representations, saw a world that has now been lost.[9] This is linked with the idea, certainly purveyed by Chatwin, that the travel writer is privileged to have witnessed the cultural 'moment' which they describes. The reader is made aware of the fragile, transient nature of the world described, although attention is rarely drawn to the transient, subjective nature of the representation. Instead, it is suggested that the value of accounts of these disappearing worlds lies in their ability to depict them accurately and clearly for the reader. In many examples of travel writing, the tropes described here are used as stabilising techniques. They are intended to convince the reader of the unique qualities of the writer, the location and that particular encounter. Colin Thubron has identified a related tendency in recent travel writing: "If I had to define what has happened, I would say that we have taken a voyage away from the beautiful, the historical and the objective, to something more representative, and immediately human and subjective".[10] It is telling that Thubron sees 'beautiful', 'historical' and 'objective' as part of the same abandoned project. In the acknowledgement of the subjective nature of

late-twentieth-century travel writing, there seems to be a lament for objectivity. Thubron seems to desire a return to the earlier trope, in which the account was taken as reliable, and was given value by the transient, beautiful world it described. Thubron's own concentration on Asia as a subject may suggest a partial response to this, an attempt to render a coherent account of place and moment. In other words, he seems to suggest that travel writing should present itself as objective, as a contribution to our knowledge of the world. As I have suggested, however, cultural circumstance has always been a dominant factor in the nature of textual representations of travel. Claims of objectivity, which attempt to separate travel writing from fiction, and to ally travel writing and its ambitions with ethnography and journalism, are nonetheless open to interrogation. Thubron's lament for objectivity may in fact be the realization that travel writing no longer claims to be presenting realistic, unbiased accounts of other cultures.

There are certainly possible comparisons between Chatwin's work as travel writing, and other texts whose status as travel writing has not been problematized. Pfister provides another useful list of the tropes of travel writing:

> Travelogues, to the extent that they go beyond a mere factual report, have a plot that perspectivizes the chronological series of events, and gives meaning to the locomotion. In the history of travel writing a number of such plots have been operative across the centuries: the journey as, or towards, some ordeal that constitutes a *rite de passage*; the pilgrimage or quest in search of some totemistic object enshrining a *summum bonum*; the journey as metamorphosis or rebirth of the self, as a finding of oneself by a losing of oneself in the other; the circular journey which normally implies a spiral of increasing awareness; the homecoming, Homer's *nostos*.[11]

One of these structural aspects of the genre which Chatwin uses, and which is particularly important to In Patagonia is the 'quest'. Borm has identified the relationship between the archetypal quest and the structure of In Patagonia, and has noted Chatwin's ironized use of the trope of the quest when searching for the mylodon.[12] Despite the

irony, the quest is a functional part of the structure of In Patagonia, and frames the narrative: this will be discussed in detail in Section Two of this chapter (see also endnote 48 of this chapter). Chatwin uses a similar technique in The Songlines and Utz,[13] with more or less irony depending upon the subject. The narrator's quest for information in The Songlines is qualified by the statement that he knows he is not "going to get to the heart of the matter" (S, p.14) and the quest for Utz's porcelains is ended by the supposition that they have been destroyed. Although all of Chatwin's work features a form of frame narrative, it is notable that these three draw from the generic conventions of the quest for their form.[14]

Chatwin's quest may be identified as similar to the one which is structurally important, but nonetheless ironized, in Robert Byron's Road to Oxiana. In that text, the tower of Qabus serves as a goal, but Byron subverts the convention, eclipsing the importance of the arrival by the next escapade, which is to enter the forbidden shrine using burnt cork as a disguise. The attainment of the quest is therefore not permitted to provide a climax or resolution to the travel which it has engendered. Chatwin's quest for the mylodon skin serves a similar function in In Patagonia. Although his discovery of the mylodon turds is placed near the end of the text, and thereby resolves a quest which has been set up in the opening section, the humour and bathos denies this moment the significance which it might have in genuine quest narrative. Nicholas Shakespeare identifies another important way in which Chatwin follows Byron's example, and that is in the presentation of the text as though a hurried record of travel. Although Chatwin does not follow the convention of presenting his text as a diary, as Byron had done, he nonetheless presents a series of short entries which allow him to move quickly from one subject to another. Although this gives to both texts the impression of verisimilitude, it actually indicates that a high degree of artifice and construction has gone into the final version of the text. Fussell makes the following comment about The Road to Oxiana: "It is an artfully constructed quest myth in the form of an apparently spontaneous travel diary".[15] The same is certainly true of In Patagonia. Chatwin had learnt from Byron a technique which

Fussell describes Byron learning only with the writing of <u>The Road to Oxiana</u>: "He had now mastered the art of the travel book. He had now learned to make essayistic points seem to emerge empirically from material data intimately experienced".[16]   Nicholas Shakespeare makes the same comparison between the two, and pays specific attention to the body of knowledge which Chatwin took with him to Patagonia.[17]   As one of the conventions of the travel genre already noted is the retreading of physical or literary footsteps, this attempt to place <u>In Patagonia</u> in relation to other travel writing will also consider Chatwin's use of other texts in the account of his own travels.

Chatwin's texts frequently reference previous travellers, and their textual representations of the same terrain. Chatwin, perhaps more intensively than other travel writers, makes use of this technique, but never concentrates solely on the journey, or text of a single predecessor. Instead, he tends to use several in parallel, creating a more diverse background for his own travel than, for example, is figured by Nicholas Rankin in <u>Dead Man's Chest: Travels After Robert Louis Stevenson</u>.[18]   This text seeks to follow only one heavily textualized inspiration, and restricts the engagement with the terrain to a combination of first-hand representation and an account of its relationship with Stevenson's life and work.

Pfister notes the quotation of other literary texts as a trope of travel writing, and his judgement of the reasons for their inclusion is one I share:

> Though travel-writing is often sustained by the ethos and aesthetics of "autopsy", i.e. the immediacy of eye-witness reporting that would rule out, or at least minimize, the interference of other texts between the travelling observer and his object, it has, at the same time, always used sources, appealed to authorities to substantiate its own observations or, conversely, quoted the texts of previous travellers to differentiate its own perceptions and set them off as fresh and unique.[19]

Pfister has identified the strategies at work in the use of other texts in travel writing, especially in his final point, which is particularly relevant to Chatwin. The reading of In Patagonia offered in the second section of this chapter will take Pfister's comments as a starting point, and will also re-examine the specific points about that text made by David C. Estes. Estes considers the relationship which Chatwin sets up between the meta-textual materials in In Patagonia, and suggests that for Chatwin, Patagonia is as much a 'textualized' as a geographical terrain. He argues that Chatwin's writing offers a narrative of literary texts, and that engagement with the text must involve a 'reading' of literary texts, and the effect which they have on the representation of Chatwin's narrative, as well as of a representation of travel:

> Chatwin's method is to revise Patagonia as a literary text by alluding to, quoting, and extensively summarising a wide variety of previous writings, all the while that the organizing narrative of his own journey progresses. Out of this multi-vocal text a new Patagonia emerges.[20]

Estes argues for the totality of Chatwin's extensive quoting to be read as a "critique of culture", an ironized examination of colonial involvement. The second section of this chapter will question this assessment, and will argue that Chatwin's textual performance does not really create a "multi-vocal text". Although I do not disagree with Estes assessment of Chatwin's "intertextual" technique, my reading of the text takes account of the other textual strategies at work, and reveals a carefully 'monovocal' structure which makes a 'reading' of Patagonia as proscriptive selection rather than ironized cultural critique.

It is perhaps the performance behind this careful structuring which marks a departure for Chatwin from other conventions of the genre. Although the points above suggest a common set of practices upon which travel writing draws, and involves Chatwin in the appropriation of at least some of them, my reading of In Patagonia suggests that the innovations which Chatwin makes serve a careful textual strategy that, as the third section

of this chapter will argue, continues throughout his oeuvre. The rest of this section will consider the aspects of Chatwin's work, especially in In Patagonia, which articulate these strategies. The first is related to the use of other earlier travellers, of travel in the footsteps of others, and of the use of their texts in a revised representation of the same terrain and the culture which inhabits it. As already argued, this is a frequently used technique in travel writing.[21] However, in other travel writing the use of textual sources is secondary to the narrative of travel that it accompanies. Meta-textual commentary of this kind is used to provide a commentary on the travel that is being undertaken. In Chatwin's work, however, the description of terrain and travel more often seems to be the means by which to introduce the meta-textual material than the other way around. This privileging of other texts is made more noticeable by the fact that not all the texts quoted by Chatwin are directly related to a specific location. The relationship between geographical representation and textual representation is more tenuous in Chatwin's work than in other travel writing, which, as in Pfister's description, privileges the first-hand, eye-witness account. If it is the case that Chatwin's travel-account is simply the backdrop for the more complex project of textual juxtapositions, then the arguments about the critique of empire which Estes presents as one of the key engagements of the text has to be repositioned. I would argue that Chatwin's use of other texts is not only to do with a critique of empire, but also with a subjective collage of the collision of representations of Patagonia. The second section of this chapter will discuss the ways in which Chatwin's performance as traveller and his textual borrowings support each other in this project.

An example of the difference between Chatwin's use of texts and that of more conventional travel writing can be given by introducing a comparable text: Ronald Wright's Time Among the Maya.[22] In this complex text, Ronald Wright combines an account of his own travels in South America with an explanation of the Mayan calendar. Following the convention under consideration here, Ronald Wright refers to a range of earlier texts on related subjects. In his quotations, the reader finds examples of both

strategies identified by Pfister. Wright's allusion to <u>Time and the Highland Maya</u> is used to corroborate the authenticity of his experience, and to identify the aspects of the subjects he addresses as being those addressed by previous authorities:

> At breakfast I read more of *Time and the Highland Maya*, a superb study that reveals not only the sophistication and importance of modern Maya attitudes to time, but at a stroke confounds anyone who doubts that the modern Maya are truly the heirs of their ancient culture. [23]

In this use of text, Ronald Wright reinforces the project of his own text, which is, at least in part, to draw the links between the ancient Maya civilization and the current cultural practice of the modern Mayan people. The link between the semi-mythical past and the modern is supported by the text to which Ronald Wright refers, and is therefore alluded to in a self-justifying gesture.

A second use of earlier texts can be seen in one example, from many in Ronald Wright's work, of his rereading of historical and political situations. Ronald Wright demonstrates, I would argue, a sustained attempt to offer a critique of colonialism, and to synthesize this critique with his own travel experiences. Critique of colonialism includes a critique of the texts of colonialism, therefore, and Ronald Wright is keen to establish the veracity of his own interpretation by writing against earlier accounts:

> Carrera has been much maligned. Stephens described him as "with honest impulses, perhaps, but ignorant, fanatic, sanguinary, and the slave of violent passions, wielding absolutely the physical force of the country, and that force entertaining a natural hatred to the whites." Aldous Huxley, in *Beyond the Mexique bay*, called him an "Indian chieftain" with an "army of savage Indians under his command." Carrera was in fact a Ladino of mixed blood and culture, born in a Guatemala city slum. Like the half-breed anywhere he was caught in an identity crisis. [24]

Ronald Wright goes on to offer an interpretation of the problems involved with conflicting colonial identities, demonstrating his own understanding of the situation, and its history, by correcting the unenlightened views of the writers whom he quotes. In Section Two of this chapter I will compare the meta-textual and structural aspects of In Patagonia, with Paul Theroux's The Old Patagonian Express,[25] and will demonstrate that Chatwin does read against the grain of earlier, sometimes colonial, texts. Despite this, it is Time Among the Maya that I read as a post-colonial text, which is more consistently engaged with the relationship between contemporary social and political circumstances and the colonial regimes of previous centuries. Different textual strategies are at work in In Patagonia than the ones that inform both of Wright's uses of the meta-textual quoted here.

One of the features of the criticism of travel writing is a list of genres on which this 'sub-genre' draws. Kowalewski's list is representative, and particularly useful here, as his focus is on late-twentieth-century travel writing: "Travel-writing borrows freely from the memoir, journalism, letters, guidebooks, confessional narrative, and most important, fiction".[26] Another of these features is the attempt to place individual works within a separate category which side-steps the problem of generic definition for travel writing as a whole. It is interesting to note, in relation to criticism of Chatwin's work, that Pfister considers In Patagonia as an example of post-modern writing,[27] whilst Palmer, having illustrated the unconventional nature of In Patagonia as travel writing, accords the "post-modern" classification to The Viceroy of Ouidah.[28] Pfister agrees with Kowalewski and others in his assessment of the problematized nature of the genre: " ... the hybrid and polymorphous genre of the travelogue, oscillating between factual report and fiction, mediating between the Self and the Other, and combining description, narration and reflection, is notoriously difficult to define".[29]

Pfister does, however, make the perceptive point that, although he is discussing In Patagonia alone, he fixes it as a text within a literary context, and therefore discusses its post-modern-ness with reference to other travel writing:

> ... this postmodernized version of the adventurer-traveller places *In Patagonia* in a British tradition of travel writing that runs from the turn of the century to our present situation in a tradition that is more readily circumscribed by names - Norman Douglas, Robert Byron, Patrick Lee-Fermor [sic] - than pinpointed in a precise definition. [30]

This is also part of Palmer's critical practice, and he makes a different contextualization by considering Chatwin's generically difficult In Patagonia in the light of other precedents, not solely taken from the genre of travel writing: Lorenz, Bridges, Mandelstam and Byron. The comparisons which this chapter makes between Chatwin's work and a selection of travel-writing is not intended to demonstrate that his work is necessarily completely different from all other travel writing, but to argue that the genre of travel writing implied by the criticism also quoted here does not involve discussion of all the concerns and strategies in Chatwin's work. The comparisons, therefore, demonstrate ways in which certain texts do conform to the generic expectations that such criticism sets up. The difference between Chatwin's work and these texts of travel writing serves to illustrate the ways in which Chatwin diverges from these norms, and the extent to which criticism which focuses on such issues of genre fails to account for the complexity and innovations in Chatwin's writing.

A further vital consideration to be made explicit in relation to Chatwin's work is the issue of its relationship with works of fiction. This question has been problematized by several commentators on the genre of travel writing. It is, as the quote from Henderson, below, makes clear, impossible to verify the level of accuracy or fictionalizing in travel accounts, whatever the readership's expectations might be. I would argue that this expectation is therefore frequently unfulfilled, but that the readership is rarely aware

whether it is unfulfilled or not.[31] In <u>Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Novel</u>, Percy Adams gives a good starting point for comparison between travel writing and fiction:

> ... the concentration on a protagonist; the concern with a set of ideas and themes; an exemplar theory of history (vice and virtue must both be shown in the protagonists and other characters); the use of a chronological order to give a life story, with the narrator's selection, suppression, ordering and digressions; and the picture of a society.[32]

These generic points problematize the status of travel writing vis-à-vis fiction. Henderson claims that "the value of travelers' accounts lies in the opportunity travelers have for first-hand observation".[33] Although she questions the value of this retelling, Henderson reprises the consideration of the eye-witness account. Pfister observes the paralleling of the eye-witness account with the meta-textual; Henderson poses a more pragmatic question, noting that: "they have great license to write what they please, since readers can hardly check up on them ... ".[34] If this is the case, then what 'value' does the "first-hand observation" have? These two comments reveal the often unspoken dilemma of the critic of travel writing: how to use the supposed veracity of the account as a key trope of the genre, or grounds for criticism, whilst simultaneously acknowledging that the text, and therefore the representation of what occurs during the travels is entirely at the discretion of the writer? This is not to deny the fundamental importance of the travel experience as inspiration for the textual account, nor of the representation of travel as organizing principle for the narrative. It is simply to argue that the shifting relationship between actual experience and experience as it is depicted in the text is impossible to pin down. Tacit realization of this lies in the insistence of many commentators on the genre (Rice, Kowalewski and others) that travel writing borrows, perhaps most persistently, from the genre of fiction. This borrowing does not simply apply to the techniques of metaphor and simile, but should also refer quite simply to the fact that even if travel writers are not making it up, they might as well be, as the representation of travel and

travel encounters (and therefore of other places, people and cultures) is, in its textual form, entirely controlled by the writer. Pfister is aware of this too: "Situated between fiction and factual prose, it can unsettle our belief in this conventional opposition ... ".[35]

As with other authors of travel writing, Chatwin gives no indication of the elements of the text which are fictional, and indeed gives no indication of the extent to which a text has been constructed after the event of travelling. This problematized practice of travel writers, and the problematized status of the texts which they produce leads to such comments as the following, by R.H. Wright: "It is necessary to identify what sort of generic form Chatwin employed, was it fiction or non-fiction?"[36] Wright focuses on the question of why Chatwin chose fictional texts as a means of presenting ideas which are from the domain of non-fiction. I am suggesting that the reason for this is that in some way all Chatwin's work is fiction. All writing is constructed and manipulated by its author, and this deliberate shaping in travel writing is of course of greater influence than the initial experience of travel, which is subject to the writer's depiction. It is perhaps a feature of travel narrative, whether written or oral, that exaggeration and fabrication are common strategies. Jean-Didier Urbain has claimed that all travellers, whether tourists or ethnographers, are to a certain extent imposters and story-tellers:

> Qui, de retour des vacances ou de mission, n'a voulu en effet, par
> hante or par vanté, tromper son monde en exagérant certains aspects
> de son voyage, en en taisant d'autres, ou même en en inventant afin de
> cacher un essentiel non-dit?[37]

Although Urbain's comments are not specifically about Chatwin, the relationship between travel and fiction is one which Urbain explores with insight, and his comments are interesting in the light of Chatwin's practice of fictionalizing narratives of travel. Urbain considers travel narrative to be typified by "excès ou défaut d'informations, ou encore par un subtil melange des deux".[38] My thesis, especially in the first two chapters, will consider this 'subtle mix' in Chatwin's writing.

In Chatwin's case, the argument is specifically concerned with the ways in which he identifies himself and his characters rather than with whether the encounters depicted actually took place, and if so, where. In this study of Chatwin's work there is no place for guessing about the relative 'truth' of the account. Once it is accepted that Chatwin's work, perhaps more than other writing informed by travel, draws on fiction (and that in fact the majority of his works are avowedly fictional) then it is more illuminating to consider what is actually depicted in those works. Warner G. Rice makes the comment that: "Many prose fictions ... are built upon the plan of a journey, domestic or foreign, and here again the influence of travel literature is apparent ... ".[39] If a fictional journey can take the form of travel writing, and travel writing is an unstable genre which incorporates elements of fiction, then to what end should there be an attempt to separate the two modes? I would like, in my reading of Chatwin's work, in which the experience of travel is obviously important, to question this division. The insistence on travel writing's *borrowing* seems to me to establish a hierarchy of genres, with fiction somehow in possession of, for example, literary technique. Although I would not deny that useful comparisons may be made between travel writing and other genres with which it shares textual strategies, I prefer to insist on the *sharedness* of this relationship. It is the case that there exist certain recognisable literary techniques and strategies, upon which writing from all genres draws. The thrust of my work is to engage with this writing, without my reading being dominated by the relationship between Chatwin's work and writing in a range of other genres.[40]

Another of the tropes of travel writing is the presence of the first-person narrator. Apart from On the Black Hill and The Viceroy of Ouidah,[41] Chatwin's book-length texts, as well as the large part of his shorter pieces, all feature a first-person narrator. The identity of the narrator is a textual performance which carries the narrative, as well as providing a sense of the agent behind the travel being represented. The lists of genres, mentioned above, from which travel writing 'borrows', include biography, which is of course

another genre that is open to the fictionalization of its subject matter. The same kind of editing, selection and subjective manipulation, as well as more sustained fictionalization are possible in biography. The presence of the narrator, and the narrator's impact upon the representation of the travel, is of critical importance to the text. My thesis argues that criticism of travel writing needs to develop an awareness that, as the 'truth' of any travel-text is problematized, the characteristics, words and actions of its narrator must be considered as they would in a fictional narrative. Kowalewski makes this point well: "The reliance upon narrative voice in this genre remains crucial because more than its episodic 'plot' or momentary characterizations, what shapes a travel book's imaginative texture is its narrative intelligence".[42] This is a perceptive comment. The acknowledgement of the fictional processes at work in travel writing is made by Kowalewski through the use of terms such as "plot", "characterizations" and "imaginative". The paramount importance of the "narrative intelligence" is what I am also arguing here, and the section that follows will demonstrate how useful Kowalewski's comment is to an understanding of In Patagonia in terms of its status as fiction, and the implications which that has for the identity of the narrator. Kowalewski goes on to argue that: " ... questions about the role of the narrator ... remain central to this genre. Who speaks in a travel book, and why should we listen to him?"[43] Pfister concurs with this in relation to Chatwin: "He is a pose rather than a subject; his is a brilliant self-stylization rather than the self-reflective depth and emotional richness of subjectivity".[44] The narrator, therefore, is a construct in a way which is not recognised by simplistic readings of travel writing, which equate the narrator with the author, and assume that figure to be a 'true' representation of a person. Urbain has also made this point about travel narrative: "N'y-a-t-il aucune fraude dans nos temoinages? Et sommes-nous la encore personnes ou personnages?"[45] The narrator of the travel narrative is, in Urbain's analysis, prone to fictionalization of the self, as much as of events. I contend that this is certainly the case with Chatwin, and this will inform my readings of his work, particularly in Chapters Two and Five.

The fictional status of characters in travel writing is also signalled by Kowalewski. If the narrative and the figure of the narrator are constructs, inseparable from those of a fictional text, then the same is true for the characters. This is demonstrably the case in The Songlines,[46] and the reader should be alerted to the fact that this is also true of In Patagonia: the second section of this chapter will make clear, for example, the extent to which "Uncle Charley Milward", ostensibly behind Chatwin's motive for undertaking the journey, is a fictionalized construct. In comparison with characters encountered and depicted by other travel writers, such as Paul Theroux, Chatwin's characters appear to be invested with a more complex identity. Although in part it is indicative of the cultural location in which they are situated, Chatwin frequently seems to imply that these characters display a level of self-identification, often problematized by that location, which his brief description can only suggest. Whether or not the characters depicted by other travel writers are fictionalized constructs which serve to reinforce the writer's judgements about a place, the characterizations which are made often suggest that the totality of the character can be and has been represented by the depiction given. Individuals are made representative of their location in a way which draws more heavily on stereotyping and stock characters than Chatwin's work seems to do.[47] The strategy of implying that there is an unspoken complexity to character is a technique which Chatwin uses in depicting characters both from In Patagonia and from texts which are more explicitly fictional, like Amos in On The Black Hill. This is not the blunt essentialism of the national stereotype, but the suggestion that the author has understood something fundamental about the individual. Hence again a fictionalizing technique differentiates Chatwin's work from other work in the genre. Identity formation, and the processes which inform the Chatwin oeuvre represent creative acts on Chatwin's part, as well as an interaction between the travel on which these narratives are based, and the construction of the 'plot' and 'characters' which are articulated through them.

As with the analyses made in the subsequent chapters of this thesis, the following sections of this chapter will discuss the formation of identity of both narrators and

characters in Chatwin's texts, and consider the relationships between these constructs and the socio-cultural milieux in which they are depicted. The other chapters of this thesis demonstrate the relevance of interdisciplinary contexts to Chatwin's work, but maintain the focus on processes of identity formation. A clearer indication of what Chatwin's work achieves in these terms illustrates that his work is best read outside the bounds of generic considerations. A reading which considers Chatwin's work in terms of genre, and even in comparison with a wide range of literary texts, will inevitably end by noting the problematic nature of this contextualization. Since Chatwin's work draws on different genres to various degrees and, as Henderson notes, there is no way of demarcating the fact and fiction involved, then a strategy must be developed for reading Chatwin's work which can deal with it as a unified oeuvre. The subsequent chapters of this thesis will undertake that contextualization by considering the process of identity formation which this chapter identifies as a concern in Chatwin's work that cannot fully be understood in terms of literary context. I am not arguing that Chatwin's work is completely different from all other writing that features travel to this extent, and that all such contextualization is therefore mistaken. I *am* arguing, however, that given the problematization of genre-based criticism which arises from Chatwin's work, it is important to look at the Chatwin oeuvre as a whole, in terms of its own concerns.

Section Two: Narrative Innovation and Identity Formation in *In Patagonia*

As considered in the first section of this chapter, In Patagonia is structured according to one of the tropes of travel writing; the quest. Ostensibly, Chatwin's search for the skin of the mylodon, to which he introduces the reader in the first section of the book, is the object of the quest: "Never in my life have I wanted anything as much as I wanted that piece of skin"(IP, p.6). The journey upon which the narrative is based is the journey to fulfil the quest. The object of Chatwin's quest is not completely discrete from the other episodes and encounters which the text includes; the source of the original piece of skin, Uncle Charley Milward, becomes a character in the text (tall, silent and strong, with black mutton-chop whiskers) as do other members of his family. Milward's accounts of his own earlier quest form part of Chatwin's narrative, thereby establishing Chatwin's meta-textual practice. The consideration of the skin's origins, which precedes the culmination of Chatwin's quest, is consistent with the historical, anthropological and social accounts which are referenced in relation to other subjects throughout the text. The quest therefore not only affects the structure of the text in an ironized way, as discussed in the previous section, but also introduces textual strategies which Chatwin will use consistently in In Patagonia. Chatwin's meta-textual technique leads to detours from the quest, rather than setting up the quest as the driving force behind the encounters described in the narrative.[48] At the start of the narrative, the goal moves from brontosaurus or mammoth to skeleton in museum, through display cabinet to garbage. Chatwin presents the object of his quest as being not only elusive in location but also in definition. The rest of this section will consider, using the specific example of In Patagonia, the ways in which Chatwin's work departs from the conventions of travel writing considered in the first section, and will suggest that questions of identity, both of narrator and character, are affected by the structural and textual innovations made by the author.

Chatwin is innovative, as argued in Section One, in his use of other texts. Apart from the examples of Byron and Ronald Wright, whose uses of other texts demonstrate the

generic norms identified by Pfister, another book in which the use of other texts is comparable with Chatwin's is Paul Theroux's The Old Patagonian Express. Theroux and Chatwin collaborated on a talk for the Royal Geographical Society, which was published as Patagonia Revisited.[49] Several critics have drawn attention to the fact that Theroux, as much as Chatwin, is concerned with quoting from other texts, and in Patagonia Revisited, Chatwin admits as much, whilst also acknowledging the differences between his travel and that of Theroux:

> Paul and I went to Patagonia for very different reasons. But if we are travellers at all, we are literary travellers. A literary reference or connection is as likely to excite us as much as a rare animal or plant. (PR, p.7)

This comparison is not explicit about the different uses which the two writers have for literary references. Patagonia Revisited elides the differences by taking from the two narratives what would have been meta-textual material, and presenting it without the context in which it first appeared. It is worth examining the role which this material played in the two texts which inspired the collaboration. Estes notes that "In The Old Patagonian Express, Theroux gives a strict accounting of every book with which he passes time on the trains from Boston, all the way to Esquel, Patagonia".[50] Theroux is not interested in writing against colonial history, or even in having his opinions confirmed by the authority of earlier texts, however. The references to other texts in Theroux's work are to literary texts, or to texts which allow him to consider the nature of travel writing itself, and to find support for his own theories on that subject. The first mention of other texts comes at the start of the narrative:

> ... the convention is to telescope travel-writing, to start - as so many novels - in the middle of things, to beach the reader in a bizarre place, without having first guided him there. 'The white ants had made a meal of my hammock,' the book might begin; or 'Down there, the Patagonian valley deepened to grey rock, wearing its eons' stripes and

split by floods.' Or, to choose actual first sentences from three books within arms' reach ... [51]

It is not made clear whether the examples subsequently quoted by Theroux have anything to do with the journey upon which the narrative is embarked, but it is clear that they are only at hand after the event, when the narrative is being constructed.[52] Theroux is also explicitly disparaging about the link between travel writing and fiction, claiming that the techniques of the novel should not be the techniques of travel writing. He is, therefore, neither looking for support from, nor writing against, the pronouncements of earlier texts on the location to which he is travelling, as I have shown to be Ronald Wright's practice. It remains the case, however, that his texts of fiction, such as The Mosquito Coast,[53] are nonetheless informed by the experience of travel, and often include representations of it: "Theroux seems to need the stimulation of travel, the glimpse of an alien life, in order to construct a fictional world".[54]

Another aspect of Theroux's reading is that the texts have value because they are canonical (he mentions texts by Faulkner and Boswell). Theroux depicts himself coping with the rigours of travel by retreating to texts whose subject matter has nothing to do with Patagonia or its trains:

> For two days no liquor would be sold: all the bars would be shut ...
> no taxis or buses would be allowed to leave the city ... You will have
> to wait, the man said. And while I waited I tried to think why I had
> come to Barranquilla. I drank soda-water and five-cent cups of
> coffee. I started Boswell's *Life of Johnson* under a palm tree in the
> hotel garden.[55]

For Theroux in The Old Patagonian Express, the meta-textual is an escape from the experience of travel. Despite this or perhaps because of it, he rarely quotes from his reading, preferring to give the impression of his civilized methods of coping with difficulty.

Theroux's approach to the representation of travel is different from Chatwin's, and this comparison helps to illuminate some of the innovation which Chatwin introduces to the genre. At the start of the Old Patagonian Express Theroux passes judgement on travel writing and its conventions, and concludes that:

> Travel is a vanishing act, a solitary trip down a pinched line of geography to oblivion ... But a travel book is the opposite, the loner bouncing back bigger than life to tell the story of his experiment with space. It is the simplest sort of narrative; and explanation which is its own excuse for the gathering up and going. It is motion given order by its repletion in words ... [56]

For Theroux, travel is linear. He travels down a 'pinched line', and he travels alone. The apparent simplicity of this linear movement and the subsequent return is echoed in his formulation of the narrative which will present this travel; both the travel and the writing will therefore be ordered by this principle. The narrative conforms with this, and his journey is as linear as the terrain permits, starting in his home town of Medford, Massachusetts, and following train lines across North America and down South America by way of Bogota and Veracruz. His chapter headings suggest to the reader the terrain to be covered, for example "The Autoferro to Guyaquil", perhaps deliberately destabilizing the reading experience with the sub-textual assumption that the reader is familiar with the Autoferro, and with the location of Guyaquil.

Theroux's journey shares with earlier travel narratives the trope that he is journeying to the end of the line; the limit of the knowable:

> I studied my maps and there appeared to be a continuous track from my house in Medford to the great plateau of Patagonia in Southern Argentina. There in the town of Esquel, one ran out of railways.[57]

This could be posited as a late-twentieth-century version of earlier narratives of exploration and colonial travel. It shares with these earlier accounts the desire to travel as far as is possible, to penetrate deep into the unknown. In Theroux's writing of this trope, however, the limit of penetration is the limit of rail transport; there is no question of continuing on foot.

Mary Louise Pratt discusses travel writing's representation of terrain as having density of meaning, and Chatwin's technique in In Patagonia is, I would argue, a good example of this. Theroux, however, finds scarcity of meaning in the Patagonian desert: "There was this, what I saw; and, though beyond it were mountains and glaciers and albatrosses and Indians, there was nothing here to speak of, nothing to delay me further".[58] This is a travel writer's echo of the colonial project which sought only value and profit in the landscape which it invaded. As soon as Theroux perceives that the railway has ended, the meaning goes out of the terrain. He is unwilling to go further, despite having raised expectations of reaching 'the end of the line.' It may be the case that there is nothing left for him to exploit aesthetically; no more material which fits the form and concerns of his narrative. The conventions which Theroux displays here contrast with Chatwin's strategies of representation and his use of other texts.

Perhaps more so than Theroux, Chatwin is aware of travelling in the footsteps, or at least crossing and recrossing the traces, of previous travellers in Patagonia. This is less evident in Patagonia Revisited, to which Theroux introduces material not present in The Old Patagonian Express, such as quotations from Darwin's Voyage of the Beagle (PR, p.19). The conceit of Theroux's itinerary in The Old Patagonian Express is that he is simply travelling in a straight line from his home. Chatwin does conceive of a geographical relationship between home and destination, but it is not the itinerary of earlier travellers which dictates his own route through the landscape. Instead, the terrain is allowed to suggest the links between his own travel and that, for example, of Darwin or Hudson. Theroux's reading serves another purpose, as his route cannot be decided by

the paths of other travellers.   His mention of other texts is therefore a matter of self-representation, inspired by the strategies by which he writes himself into the text. Chatwin's use of other texts is as careful, but serves a purpose which is more fundamental to the construction of the whole narrative.   There are moments when it seems obvious that he has manipulated events and conversations in order to divulge some textual detail:

> "Are you here because of Darwin, or to see us?" Bill asked.
> "To see you. But Darwin?"
> "He was here. You can see the Sierra Ventana, showing up now,
> far left. Darwin went up it on his way to Buenos Aires ... " (IP,
> p.12)

Chatwin's contribution here is brief, but it is clearly *his* knowledge of Darwin which is being presented. The mention of Darwin in this casual encounter prepares for a more detailed reference, which explicitly compares Darwin's impressions with Chatwin's own, in the next-but-one section.[59] This is typical of Chatwin's strategy throughout this and his other work.

A further example of footsteps being retraced can be seen in the history of Charley Milward (who gradually changes from "my grandmother's cousin", "Charley Milward the Sailor", to "my cousin", "Captain Charley Milward") as the narrative develops.   The sections which deal with Milward in most detail (IP, pp.71-78; 80-84) coincide with Chatwin's arrival at the tip of South America, and almost immediately precede Chatwin's attempt to find the Mylodon cave. These two thematic concerns are linked by the motive behind the quest, and Chatwin is keen to establish, at this point, that his path crosses that of Milward, to whom he accords a great deal of space in the text. The location of the documents that he quotes, and the origins of the stories that he adapts for this section, however, are to be found in the house of his cousin Monica, in Lima, almost three thousand miles from Punta Arenas and the cave at Last Hope Sound.[60]   Again this

reveals the difference between Theroux's mention of texts and Chatwin's. Chatwin does not mention the provenance of his information about Milward. The positioning of this material is not related to the start of his trip, when he first read it, but to his arrival in Punta Arena. Again the physical location, subject of a few brief sections in the narrative, is merely an organizing principle for the use of meta-textual material. As has been observed in this section, the same relationship between geographical location and meta-textual references does not apply to Theroux's practice.

Like Theroux, Chatwin also mentions texts which have no direct connection with the terrain through which he is travelling. Unlike Theroux, Chatwin uses these references to draw some relationship between place and text. Chatwin's exegesis of The Tempest is an example of this technique. When Theroux tries to establish a similar relationship, he can only do so in order to pass judgement on the locations of his travel:

> And when I grew tired of suspicious-looking youths who approached me ... and depressed by the beggars and gamins, I turned to Boswell for cheer. It was in Bogota, one grey afternoon that I read the following passage: "Where a great proportion of the people are suffered to languish in helpless misery, that country must be ill-policed and wretchedly-governed ... [61]

This is the limit of Theroux's social comment, and his most imaginative attempt to relate text to place. It concurs with his generally negative comments about the places through which he passes, but also suggests a colonial tendency to judge according to principles imported from a culture which is considered superior by the writer. Chatwin's use of other texts again differs. Making his own text problematic in generic terms, Chatwin's literary quoting is not restricted to travel writing. His development of the argument about The Tempest, and Magellan's voyages is interwoven, again provoked by the terrain through which he is passing, and again concentrating the reader more on the author's textual performance in handling these diverse resources than on the descriptions of travel:

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> The question is: did Shakespeare know the book that triggered off
> the events at St. Julian?
>
> I believe he did. Both monsters were half human. The Grand
> Patagon was "engendered by a beast in the woods"; Caliban "a
> poisonous slave got by the devil himself." Both learned a foreign
> language ... (IP, p.93)

Chatwin goes further, however, into linguistics, anthropology and other fields, in a practice which he will finally extend in The Songlines. Even in these cases, the relationship between meta-textual material and narrative is manipulated by him with a more performative intent than the clumsy use of a similar strategy by Theroux. In relation to the framework of globalization theory which Chapter Three of my thesis employs, it is instructive to point out at this early stage, that Chatwin's use of meta-textual materials which are not specifically related to the geographical location through which he is travelling, is an example of globalizing practice. The bringing together of things formerly held apart, either by physical distance or by conceptual boundaries (between disciplines, for example) is a process typical of globalization. It is also typical of Chatwin's writing, which relates diverse texts, locations and cultures to one another.

Chatwin's practice also differs from Ronald Wright's (see Section One) in that Chatwin is not concerned with offering sustained commentary about a single culture or aspect of its history. There are many examples of travel writing which makes, for example, post-colonial critique its focus, for example, Patrick Marnham's So Far From God.[62] Chatwin, I would argue, is too intent on his own performance to allow such a concern to dominate the narrative. Although the sections dealing with the Yaghan Indians relay the inevitable sense that they have been cruelly treated by colonialism, this is far from being Chatwin's focus. It is tangential to the quest and is accorded no more importance than the stories of Butch Cassidy and his gang which are certainly not concerned with commentary on colonialism. In fact the only explicit condemnation of colonialism, as practised by the Salesian Fathers on Dawson Island, comes from Charley Milward's notes:

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> That was the meanest trick I ever saw on those Indians, to find their canoe useless ... But to allow the work till the canoe was provisioned and hauled down the beach, struck me as the very height of cruelty. (IP, p.167)

The reader must be aware that destruction of a single canoe cannot be said to be the "meanest trick" that the Yaghan and other ethnic groups ever suffered at the hands of the colonists. Chatwin's own discussion of the Yaghan language (another performative moment which is informed by material from outside the immediate narrative) suggests that the cruelty of the colonists scaled greater heights, but there is no explicit comment from Chatwin:

> Grandpa Felipe was born in the Anglican mission, and was probably related to Jemmy Button. As a boy he watched his people die. He watched all of his children die, except one daughter, and his wife die. (IP, p.126)

Again the reason for this cruelty is put in the reported speech of another character, and is not enlarged upon by Chatwin. More space in the text is assigned to an account of the Yaghan language and its dictionary. As is also the case in The Songlines, however, the linguistic abilities of an ethnic group are used to differentiate them from the savages perceived by colonial ideology. Another similarity between these two texts is that it is a character of colonial descent, not a member of an Aboriginal community, who articulates this differentiation, making it a subject of pseudo-academic interest rather than a discourse of empowerment, in Chatwin's depiction. In In Patagonia, it is Charley Milward's notes which supply the anecdote. In The Songlines, Arkady performs the same function: the Aboriginal culture is mediated to the Western tourist through a product of the colonization of Australia. Despite the mention of the colonial history of South America in In Patagonia, therefore, there is no explicit attempt to account for or pass judgement on colonial practice. I disagree, therefore, with the following reading of In Patagonia by

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David Estes: " ... he [Chatwin] recognizes his own ironic entanglement in imperial behaviours and values, making the book a narrative of personal growth as well as a critique of culture".[63] That Chatwin sees the narrative as expressing personal growth is put into question by Chatwin's self-description, late in the narrative as "a sterile wanderer" (IP, p.133). Estes fails to give evidence of Chatwin's acknowledgement of his own involvement with imperialism, and I would argue that exactly that recognition is absent from a text whose construction focuses the narrative squarely on the performance of the narrator, both as traveller and as organizer of meta-textual material. Finally, in analysis of the sum of meta-textual material, it cannot be said that Chatwin's examination of imperialism is sustained, or that it motivates either his travel, or the direction of the narrative. As has already been established in this chapter, Chatwin's practice is to allow geographical location to give rise to carefully quoted sources from beyond the immediate narrative of travel. Despite this practice, there is no engagement with a single issue, and even the object of the quest is finally described as "ridiculous" (IP, 182).[64]

Chatwin's positioning within the narrative, therefore, is never made explicit, although his organization of some of the incidents is suggestive of a position. For different reasons I agree with Estes that Chatwin is bound up with issues of colonialism: his early account of seeing Patagonia as "the safest place on Earth" (IP, p.7) is reliant on the view, shared by Theroux in this case, of South America as the 'end of the line'.[65] Having side-lined Patagonia as a space which is not politically contested by global powers, Chatwin's account can deal with revolution, religion and extermination as isolated incidents peculiar to the place and time in which they exist. The arrangement of texts in his work supports this, serving as a buffer between the reality and the reader, and placing problematized subjects at another remove. Again, I would argue, this serves to foreground the performance of the narrator who makes the narrative of travel and the meta-textual material subservient to his own version of Patagonia, which would be more accurately described as "Self In Patagonia". Estes goes some way to identifying this outcome of Chatwin's strategies: "The multiplicity of texts Chatwin sets alongside each other forces

an act of engaged reading that is analogous to his own act as a traveller of making sense out of immediate experience".[66] A modification of this would be that Chatwin's reading of meta-textual material precedes that of the reader of In Patagonia, and that in creating a non-linear gloss of many texts which matches his non-linear travel account Chatwin's own reading is an engaged one. The most important point to question here, however, is the motivation behind Chatwin's 'act of reading'. The answer, I would argue, lies in problematizing the "immediate experience" which Estes sees as being privileged in the text; the eye-witness account which both Pfister and Henderson acknowledge as unreliable. In my reading of this text, the experience of travel is anything but 'immediate'.

Estes's judgement, quoted in Section One of this chapter, that In Patagonia is a "multi-vocal text" is therefore also problematic. It is not so much the case that Chatwin's is an organizing narrative. The quotation from Clapp (see endnote 48) makes it clear that the organization of the text is something which Chatwin controlled very carefully, and that the account of "immediate travel" which it presents is a construct upon which accounts of earlier travel and texts which relate to Chatwin's wider interests are superimposed. The importance of Chatwin's triple role as character within the travel account, narrator of the secondary material and organizer of the text's subject matter and construction elevates him beyond the importance accorded to any single concern or meta-textual material.[67] In important ways, therefore, In Patagonia is a mono-vocal text whose veracity is not so much questionable as irrelevant. In answer to Kowalewski's shrewd question "Who speaks in a travel book, and why should we listen to him?", it is Chatwin who speaks, despite frequent appearances to the contrary, as demonstrated by the quote that is used to introduce Darwin to the narrative. The mono-vocal quality of this text means there is no-one else to listen to.[68]

In this text, therefore, the division between fact and fiction is incapable of categorizing the narrative. To complicate R. H. Wright's question, the form of the book is non-

fiction. The content is not necessarily fiction, but it is impossible to make categorical judgements about the text within the fact/fiction dynamic because its strategies and construction, as discussed in this section, do not present any evidence about its nature. As Pfister observes, the Chatwin who appears within the texts is a "brilliant self-stylization".[69] Chatwin the organiser of texts, however, allows the "interference of texts between the travelling observer and his object".[70] As a result "situated between fiction and factual prose, it can unsettle our belief in this conventional opposition".[71] This complication of the eye-witness account, which is so destabilized by organizing strategies and meta-textual material, means that, more than is the case with other texts which have been classified as travel writing, In Patagonia cannot be fully understand through comparison with other travel writing and its techniques, as they tell the reader little about the dynamics of the work. This is why Pfister's reading of the book in another light, that of postmodernism, is useful, and marks an important critical departure. Although I do not wish to impose a postmodern reading on the Chatwin oeuvre, the principle of not considering his work exclusively in relation to travel writing is one which I am actively demonstrating in this thesis.

The performative aspects of his textual strategies, which foreground the different roles played by Chatwin within and without the text, and the absence of the generic dividing line between fact and fiction mean that Chatwin's identity becomes problematized. I would argue, however, that the text is better interrogated along the lines of the narrator's and the characters' identity than through questions of genre and verisimilitude. Chatwin establishes several levels of identity in the text, through his description of travel, interaction with other characters and through his handling of other textual references. Initially, he establishes the narrator as English, and as having been exposed to Cold War fears of global nuclear war. This bleak picture, which introduces the relevance of Patagonia to the life of the narrator, is complemented by the account of Charley Milward the sailor. Although the narrator debunks the family myth ("This version was less romantic but had the merit of being true" (IP, p.6)), he nonetheless quotes the romantic

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version, so that his apocalyptic fears are intertwined with accounts of Charley Milward and the narrator's great-aunt who "Lived on Capri at the time of Maxim Gorky and painted Capriot boys naked" (IP, p.7). At this point, in the first section of the book, the narrator not only introduces the object of the quest and the location of Patagonia as a "far corner of the earth", but also the narrator as single-minded and resourceful with a literary bent. The narrator's identity introduced here plays a consistently important role in the rest of the text.

As has already been observed, Chatwin uses descriptions of conversations to introduce meta-textual concerns such as Darwin's travels. In addition, as in The Songlines, he uses these conversations to establish the narrator's identity in relation to the inhabitants of In Patagonia. An early example of this comes in the fourth section, when the narrator is introduced to Anne-Marie, the shy farmer's-wife, and her son Nicky. Chatwin mentions that "Half-way back to the house, Nicky asked if he could hold the visitor's hand". This coy reference to himself in the third person is reinforced by Anne-Marie's response: "I can't think what you've done to Nicky ... Usually he hates visitors" (IP, p.15). The narrator is established as being likeable, and there is a suggestion that the effect remarked upon by Anne-Marie is actually the effect which he has had on herself. She has been introduced as a character who does not like visitors, but she is nonetheless affected by his charm. The narrator impresses the reader indirectly through exchanges with other characters, such as the one with Mrs. Powell, in which he fills in a piece of knowledge:

> Their grandfather came from Caernarvon, but she couldn't say where
> that was. Caernarvon wasn't marked on her map of Wales ... I
> pointed out where Caernarvon should be. She had always wanted to
> know" (IP, p.26).

This seems unlikely, especially given the preponderance of other families of Welsh origin in the area. If she had "always wanted to know", then it would not have taken much

effort to find out. A touch of romanticizing here enables Chatwin to demonstrate his own knowledge, and perhaps to establish himself as the bringer rather than the receiver of knowledge in Patagonia. In keeping with the textual practice considered above, the placing of this exchange is not without motivation, but is a precursor to other exchanges in which Chatwin's knowledge is privileged in the text. It is also indicative of the fact that he uses Patagonia as a site upon which to superimpose his own knowledge, rather than as a site of knowledge which he can obtain.

The subsequent sections bear this out: Chatwin's meeting with the self-styled Prince of Auracania and Patagonia takes place on the Faubourg Poissoniere in Paris, thereby introducing a narrative concerning Patagonia through Chatwin's own research before arriving; the sections also establish the traveller, before he arrives at his destination, as a man of learning, in whom others place their confidence. These attributes are confirmed throughout the text, culminating in the episode recounting Señor Macías's suicide. Chatwin seems to have free access to all the people involved with the dead man, and is told of details that had previously been confidential. As Macías's daughter says when learning the extent to which someone has confided in Chatwin: "How could she have told you that?" (IP, p.172). The identity of the narrator as a man whom people trust is therefore vindicated by the narrative. As in The Songlines, Chatwin's acceptance by people whose own store of knowledge will be used to complement his own is written as if there had been no negotiation, and as if the relationships which are depicted took place as described. A similar technique is in place in relation to Chatwin's accounts of travel, which figure him in a positive light, and which also allow him to make reference to the textual knowledge for which encounter with any particular piece of terrain can provide the pretext.

Chatwin's use of travel as a means of establishing ethnographic authority will be addressed in Chapter Two; here I am concerned with the ways in which it affects Chatwin's identity as a character within the text, and the relationship between travel and

the careful organization of material from outside the immediate experiences described in the travel account. An example of this is the trek which the narrator describes in the wilderness, during which he falls in the river. The trek is foregrounded by mention of Lucas Bridges, whose work is mentioned several times during the text. In Section 65 of <u>In Patagonia,</u> Bridges's autobiography is referred to, and the section detours to Antarctica, the North Pole and La Rochelle before concentrating on the specific description made by Bridges of the route that the narrator follows in the next section. This part of the travel is the most dangerous, and is also contextualized by Clarita Goodall's comments "You could break a leg ... Or get lost and we'd have to send a search party ... " (<u>IP</u>, p.131). The narrator does get into difficulties, but the carefully inter-related nature of the text is revealed by his mention of "Lucas Bridges's old sheep pens now rotting away" (<u>IP</u>, p.132). The identity of the narrator as traveller is therefore prefigured by his being influenced by other texts. This serves the double purpose of denying any random attribution of his travels, and of establishing a parallel between the narrator and his predecessor, Bridges. A more obvious inter-relating of travel account and text can be seen when the narrator attempts to pass off the heavily textualized history of the mylodon as a conversation with an old man, Eberhard: "Over dinner he talked about his grandfather, and we pieced the story together" (<u>IP</u>, p.175). Again the suggestion is that the narrator is trusted, informed, and knowledgeable enough to be on equal terms with a member of a family that plays an important role in the text. Once again, however, this strategy of reinforcing the narrator as a sympathetic character is one of the pretexts for using other textual material.

The extent to which the narrator is a textual construct within the narrative is of course also true of the characters, whether described at first-hand, or reconstructed from meta-textual material. The development of Charley Milward as a presence in the text is a particularly instructive example of this, as it relates not only to the direct experience of travel as depicted in the text, but also to the use of other textual material. Chatwin read Milward's letters and diaries at the start of his journey through South America, but, as noted at the

start of this section, does not put them to use until the narrative reaches sites which the narrator's travel has in common with the Milward material. At this point, Milward develops as a character, as Chatwin intersperses accounts of Milward's travel with narration from immediate experience of his own travel. The narrative is punctuated by emotions attributed to Charley as to a character in fiction: "Charley sulked ... "; "Charley hated ... ", and also features reported speech written in the present tense, as if recorded at the time of the events described: "I am working for the insurers and they will pay me" (IP, p.153). There is no obvious marker in tone between events which happened to Chatwin, and the reconstructed events from Milward's notebooks.

Charley behaves like a fictional character, his life reduced to a series of important incidents from which his personality can be extrapolated. The same processes take place in relation to other historical figures who appear in the narrative. Parker and Longabaugh, the outlaws, develop as characters, affecting not only the narrator's impressions of the landscape, but also being used as a means by which to join in the conversations that he reports in the text. Belying the reportage style and unelaborate prose of the travel narrative, these episodes are treated with small touches of drama: Elza Lay, for example, is not serving time in prison, but "languishing in the pen" (IP, p.44). The story of the outlaws weaves in and out of sections 24-33, gradually increasing in detail, ending in conjecture. During its development, the narration has moved through conversations with other characters, and the wildness of Las Pampas and its inhabitants has been juxtaposed with these earlier characters. Despite the fact that Chatwin's dramatic reconstruction of their adventures, certainly an episode which features "momentary characterizations" and adds "imaginative texture",[72] is presented as reportage, it is in fact embedded in Chatwin's desire to construct a narrative which can be related to the terrain. I would argue that Chatwin's characterizations, not only of people whom he claims to have met, but also of such historical figures as these, is more sustained and imaginative than the brief encounters of the typical travel narrative. Even when more conventional works feature lengthy characterizations, for example of a guide,

it is because that reflects the circumstance of travel, not because this enables the inter-related significance of character and landscape.

All of these techniques apply to the descriptions of characters represented during the course of the travel account. They are frequently introduced as part of an ongoing textual concern with a theme initiated by the mention of another text, or by knowledge which precedes the narrator's travels. They also have emotions and motivations attributed to them, and I would argue that this is evidence of Chatwin's characterization of them. An example of this is the depiction of Sonny's relationship with his family: "They chattered on and Sonny sipped his whisky. He wanted the peon back. You could tell from what he did not say that he wanted the peon back" (IP, p.16). It could be argued that Chatwin's act of reading the characters encountered here is an engaged reading, related to his 'reading' of the textualized terrain of Patagonia. On the other hand, these examples all support my answer to the question "who speaks in a travel book?": once again it is the narrator who is speaking, and it is his imaginative response to these characters, which can only be said to involve processes of fictionalization. It is of course not the case that "you could tell" but that Chatwin would like the reader to believe that the narrator could tell. In either case, the reader does not know what Sonny did or did not say; that is the point of my argument that these are depictions by Chatwin, not direct interventions in the text by the characters themselves. The characters, despite what the reportage style would suggest, do not speak, but their identities are carefully constructed in relation to situation, terrain and social circumstance, so that they fit into the Patagonia which Chatwin is depicting. Additions to reported speech place in question the veracity of the reported speech, and make it clear that "momentary characterizations" are taking place as much with the characters in the text as with the other elements, and that they are most usefully read as fictionalized characters in a fictionalized narrative.

Glaser's remark that Theroux would "need the stimulation of travel, the glimpse of an alien life, in order to construct a fictional world",[73] is interesting in comparison with

Chatwin's work.   It might be said of Chatwin's practice that it involves the fictionalization of the real world. For Jean-Didier Urbain, the study of fact and fiction in Chatwin's work is to miss the point, for it is:

> ... une prose qui ne se réclame plus de l'ordre du constat. Pourquoi alors lui prêter une ambition qu'elle n'a plus et la fixer aux termes d'un contrat de lecture périmé? ... Ce n'est pas *du* réel mais d'*un* réel qu'il s'agit: celui qu'un regard dessine.[74]

I am not necessarily in agreement with Urbain that this is the case for all contemporary travel writing, some of which, as I have shown in this chapter, wishes to be taken as realist. I am arguing, however, that the fact and fiction debate is a limited tool for understanding Chatwin's writing. I therefore follow Urbain's argument that In Patagonia is best understood as a mix of wish and observation; fantasy and documentation.[75] It is a fictionalized account of travel, whose techniques set the precedent for the rest of the Chatwin oeuvre.

There is no clear boundary, as Glaser's comment implies for Theroux, between the travel writing and fiction in Chatwin's oeuvre, which shows innovations and departures from even the examples and precedents that critical writing has identified as constituting a genre. In Patagonia is an example of a text which has been hailed as great travel writing,[76] but which actually features a narrator and characters who are as carefully constructed as the material that is quoted from other texts. A literary study therefore, which compares Chatwin's work with other travel writing, can only deal with limited aspects of the work. This section has demonstrated the limits of that approach. The following section will offer readings of The Songlines and On the Black Hill that continue to look at Chatwin's work in the light of criticism which has dealt with it solely in its relationship with other travel writing. The section will suggest that these texts can also be discussed in the light of the fictionalization which takes place in them, and which also have implications for the identity of the narrator and other characters. My close

readings will again demonstrate the departure of Chatwin's narratives from the conventions of travel writing, but will also argue that there are consistent techniques and strategies at work in his oeuvre.

Section Three: Narrative Innovation and Identity Formation in *The Songlines* and *On the Black Hill*

This section will expand the discussion of genre into readings of The Songlines and On the Black Hill. It will suggest that, despite the possible comparisons between In Patagonia and other texts of travel writing, the rest of Chatwin's oeuvre tends to develop in ways that emphasise the departures from travel writing identified in the previous sections. The Songlines has been considered as a successful piece of travel writing, both in literary and commercial terms. This section will argue that it is more closely aligned with Chatwin's other texts, however, and displays concerns which are common to his work, rather than convention of travel writing. On the Black Hill is not a text of travel, and is remarkable for the lack of displacement, either by author or characters, which takes place throughout the course of the narrative. Instead of concentrating on the problematized subject of categorization, I would like to argue that these texts, like Chatwin's others, is concerned with processes of identity formation. This section contributes to my reading of the Chatwin oeuvre which refuses to categorize according to literary genre or meta-textual reference, but instead considers the texts in relation to one another.

The Songlines uses textual sources in a way that is comparable with In Patagonia. As argued in the second section of this chapter, Chatwin's use of textual and other sources in In Patagonia inverted the generic norm for the use of other texts. Chatwin uses brief descriptions of place to introduce themes which were almost wholly taken from sources beyond the immediate experience of travel, and whose own geographical location was distant from the site of travel. The Songlines returns to this technique and uses Chatwin's narrative of Australian travel as the catalyst for a debate of human cultural practice which draws on a range of texts that bear no relation to the immediate travel experience. Examples come from Chatwin's mention of African cultures: "The bushmen, who walk immense distances across the Kalahari, have no idea of the soul's survival in

another world ... " (S, p.256), within a few pages of Indian cultures: "It has been said of the Kadars, a hunting tribe of southern India, that they were strangers to violence or displays of virility ... " (S, p.246) .

As the third and fourth chapters of this thesis will argue, Chatwin uses the narrative of The Songlines to depict processes which he believes have global implications, rather than being situated in sole reference to the Australian outback. For the purposes of this chapter, it is instructive to note the similarities between Chatwin's meta-textual practice in In Patagonia and The Songlines. In parallel with In Patagonia, The Songlines begins with childhood memories which incite the author to travel. There is also a concern with other writers. Shakespeare is mentioned almost immediately, as are Walt Whitman and Ernest Thompson. In Alice Springs Chatwin pays an early visit to a bookshop, and is engaged in discussion about the Songlines: "Rilke ... had a similar intuition" (S, p.13). It is not until the journey which the narrative describes has begun, however, that the use of meta-textual material is clearly seen. A pause gives Chatwin the occasion to mention the anthropologist Strehlow, and Chatwin's technique here also coincides with Fussell's comment on Byron quoted in the first section of this chapter, as he presents the fruits of prior research in a way which belies the careful linking of immediate experience and other material.   The slippage between narrative and the introduction of another subject is handled as if it were due to a casual occurrence. In fact the text is more carefully constructed than that, and the mention which Chatwin makes of Strehlow prepares the ground for the expansion of these thematic concerns later in the "Notebooks" section of the text: "Outside it was so hot and muggy that I went back to my room, switched on the air-conditioner, and spent most of the day reading Strehlow's *Songs of Central Australia*" (S, p.76).

It is easy to contrast this articulation between narrative and text with that made by Theroux, also quoted in the first section of this chapter. Whilst Theroux finds an opportunity to make mention of Boswell, and therefore to establish literary credentials,

Chatwin's mention of Strehlow introduces a set of ideas which are key to the rest of the text. That this mention also establishes a kind of authority for Chatwin is undoubtedly the case (see Chapter Two for discussion of this) but it also represents a different textual practice even than the one employed by Wright in Time Among the Maya. Chatwin is not using Strehlow to support his own ideas, or to contradict them. The use of Strehlow as a textual reference is more closely related to the overriding concerns of the text as a whole. In this function, Strehlow is comparable with Thomas Bridges, whom Chatwin quotes in In Patagonia, in that he establishes some of the specific concerns which Chatwin's text will be addressing, regardless of the relevance to the immediate narrative of his travel experience. Thomas Bridges's work with Yaghan Indians is introduced - "The young Thomas Bridges had the ear and patience to sit with an Indian called Georges Okkoko and master the language ... " (IP, p.128) - for similar reasons that Strehlow's work is described: " ... he returned to 'his people' and, for over thirty years, patiently recorded in notebooks, on tape and on film the songs and ceremonies ... " (S, p.77). Both examples introduce aspects of aboriginal culture which allow Chatwin to demonstrate his own understanding of it, and to discuss a subject which is only tangentially related to the journey that the narrative is describing.

The Songlines does of course employ a wider range of sources than In Patagonia, despite the diversity of the latter text's references. "The Notebooks" make use of hundreds of quotes from a wide range of disciplines, cultures and eras. The fact remains that both texts employ references which are not specific to the terrain that is part of the journey. In The Songlines this is taken to an abstract degree, in which the relationship between the meta-textual references is the defining aspect of the text, rather than the relationship between the references and an immediate experience of travel which prompts them. In this, Chatwin's use of the meta-textual, albeit one which is common to travel writing, departs even further from the generic relationship between representation of travel and other references. Instead of specific locations prompting specific textual references (itself already an inversion of the usual practice) the narrative as a whole is now posited as a

basis on which a related, but nonetheless discrete thesis about nomadism is based. The importance of the narrative in relation to the meta-textual is in this case as much a structural one as a thematic one. In the course of the narrative of travel, this is exemplified by Chatwin's excuse of having been drinking to offer a version, in poetic but comprehensible form, of the Aboriginal dreamtime: "I was not drunk - yet - but had not been so nearly drunk in ages. I got out a yellow pad and began to write" (S, p.79). This is followed by the section which starts "In the Beginning the Earth was an infinite and murky plain ... " (S, p.80). The drink is of course a facilitating strategy, hinted at by the control of "so nearly drunk" instead of "nearly so drunk." The section also suggests the author as god in a rewriting of Christian creation myth, which subverts the Christian resonance of the opening through an interpretation of Aboriginal culture.

In addition, the level of authorial control, already suggested by the parallel with Byron's carefully constructed Road to Oxiana and by the comparison with the painstakingly edited organization of In Patagonia, prevents this text, too, from becoming Estes's "multi-vocal text". Chatwin's presentation of self, of the Aborigines and of his other sources of information within the narrative are equally carefully filtered through his determination to focus the narrative on the single aspect of the songlines. As his thesis expands to nomadism in general, the same is true of the "notebook" sections. Despite the diversity of voices represented in these sections, the selection of quotes, even from the relatively unstructured notebook chrestomathy, produces a resolutely mono-vocal text, as does the creation myth quoted above, in which the origins of Australian Aboriginal culture and belief are depicted for their widest non-Aboriginal audience by Bruce on brandy.

The suppression of the narrative, or of its importance to the success of the wider project of the work, has caused comment from several critics, who have questioned the status of The Songlines as a work of fiction, because (in a typical comment from R.H. Wright): "it lacked important fictional components".[77] These comments seem to be based on narrow definitions of fiction, with little coherent reasoning. The lack of interior monologue, for

example is quoted by Wright as a criterion for excluding Chatwin's work from the genre of fiction. I would argue that any attempt to categorize work along such lines is bound to be unable to understand generic innovation, in the same way that the more narrow definitions of travel writing are also frustrated by Chatwin's (and others') problematization of genre. It is also the case that judgement based on these definitions risks identifying only what differentiates Chatwin's work from other, equally narrowly defined bodies of work, rather than understanding it as an oeuvre with its own range of concerns and consistent techniques, as this thesis attempts to do. It seems extraordinary that Chatwin's performance in constructing the relationship between narrative and meta-textual material, and as narrator, have led to a belief that the "Bruce" of the narrative is inseparable from the "Chatwin" of authorship, and that the text cannot therefore be one of fiction. It is certainly more instructive to think of Chatwin's narratorial performance here in terms of Pfister's description as "a pose rather than a subject; a brilliant self-stylization ... ".[78]

As carefully constructed as the relationship between travel and meta-textual material is the voice of the narrator who presents both. Chapter Two of this thesis will concentrate on authorial voice, and the parallels with ethnography which can be drawn as far as 'Bruce' the narrator is concerned. The identity of the narrator of The Songlines is suggested by the upper middle-class English upbringing, and reinforced by the reference to texts of literature and from other fields. Another aspect, less cerebral and more physically active, is suggested by the adventures in the outback, which offset the intellectualizing of the 'notebooks' sections: "For myself, I rigged up a 'snakeproof' groundsheet to sleep on, tying each corner to a bush, so its edges were a foot from the ground. Then I began to cook supper" (S, p.116). Again, the construction of this identity will be considered at length in Chapter Two, but it is worth noting here that the importance of the identity construction of the narrator, both in The Songlines and in In Patagonia, is related to the importance of the construction of narrative and meta-textual material. In the cases in which authors of travel writing appear as characters in their texts[79] rather than as absent

presences,[80] it is not a conventional feature of travel writing to establish authorial control over this level of meta-textual material, whilst at the same time presenting the narrator as a person of action, having sustained relationships with other characters in the text.

Finally, this section will consider the range of arguments with which this chapter is concerned, in relation to On the Black Hill. For more obvious reasons, than those discussed in relation to The Songlines and In Patagonia, On the Black Hill departs from the tropes of travel writing. It does not, however, depart from the techniques and concerns that typify Chatwin's work. Once again the concern with textual sources is present, although sublimated by the narrative which it supports. Although in this text the depiction of travel is not used to suggest meta-textual material to the same extent as in In Patagonia, his biographers have made it clear, as did Chatwin himself, that an enormous amount of research lies behind the novel, and is used not only to give details of life from throughout the twentieth century, but also as a source of narrative incident:

> In the public library at Hereford he went through bound volumes of the *Hereford Times* stretching back to the First World War. He scooped up incidental details for his novel from the Situations Vacant columns ... [81]

As much as his research on Patagonia was only unified by the structure of the text in which he placed it, this research is also made relevant by the narrative in which it occurs. In this sense, as much as in Patagonia, Chatwin is giving a revised version of Wales; giving an account of it as a literary text.[82] Again the manipulation of this material, as well as the reconstruction of character identity from a range of different observed individuals unites disparate sources in a carefully controlled narrative. Extensive comparison with other literary genres is possible here, for example in Andrew Palmer's reading of this text as historical narrative. Palmer links On the Black Hill with aspects of foucauldian genealogy, and describes the use of multiple voices in the text as coinciding with Linda Hutcheon's use of the term 'parodic'.[83] His extensive discussion of authorial identity

and control is reserved, however, for a reading of Utz, a text I examine in Chapters Four and Five.

Aspects of authorial identity are important to both In Patagonia and The Songlines. In On the Black Hill, a different kind of identity is constructed. Chatwin's presence is beneath the surface of the novel. It is Nicholas Shakespeare who best identifies the relationship between Chatwin and the Welsh border country which he was describing. He quotes Elizabeth Chatwin as saying that it was in this region that Chatwin did not consider himself to be in exile.[84] Although my thesis is not primarily concerned with biographical aspects of the relationship between Chatwin and his subject matter, it is interesting to note that this is the only one of Chatwin's book-length texts which does not feature a character or narrator who can be closely identified with the author. Despite being in a region which he knew well, Chatwin writes himself out of the story. The lack of narrative voice does not prevent the novel from fulfilling one of Percy Adams's criteria for the overlap between fiction and travel writing: " ... the use of a chronological order to give a life story, with the narrator's selection, suppression, ordering and digressions; and the picture of a society",[85] but having established that there are these aspects of the novel's construction which are identifiably a part of Chatwin's practice, it is more useful to consider the aspect of identity formation with which the rest of the thesis will be concerned, than to look for links with a genre which, as this chapter has shown, does not supply comparative material for all the processes at work in Chatwin's oeuvre.

On the Black Hill is clearly not a text of travel writing, and does not feature the narrative performance which is the focus of much comment on travel writing as a genre.[86] The construction of identity which Chatwin portrays is consistent, however, with that depicted in those of his texts which describe travel. A comparison of the Welsh identity in Patagonia and the Black Hill reveal similar strategies. An example is attendance at chapel, which makes individuals part of a community, and seems to fortify their resistance to being subsumed by a South American hybrid culture: "The Welsh sang John

Wesley's hymns and the sad songs of God's promise to Cymry, the high-pitched trebles and sopranos, and the old men growling at the back" (IP, p.30). Amos Jones seeks solace in Chapel at exactly the moment when he is most entrenched in his war with a neighbouring farmer, and insists on his wife and children accompanying him. Chatwin describes a remarkably similar scene: " ... Mrs. Reuben Jones pounded out the hymns of William Williams on the wheezy harmonium ... " (BH, p.84). Another striking aspect which the two depictions have in common is the importance of framed prints which fix some aspect of cultural life and its associated values. In In Patagonia Chatwin describes the house of "Old Mrs. Davies" which contains a Welsh dresser: "On either side of the dresser were tinted photographs of her husband's parents, who came out from Ffestiniog. They had always hung there and they'd hang there when she'd gone" (IP, p.29). This clinging to images of the past is duplicated by the Jones twins' refusal to change images of their mother, and their difficulty in accommodating new pictures into the pantheon above the dresser: "For a whole week, the twins bickered and juggled and lifted uncles and cousins off hooks that had been theirs for sixty years." (BH, p.241). The subjects of these images are separated from their owners by time, distance or both. They nonetheless have an important function, as do the rituals of behaviour which link them with an identity which they believe to be theirs.

These attachments are continued despite a poor understanding of their initial significance, as in the twins' reading of their mother's scrapbook as a sacred text despite their lack of understanding of the pictures inside it. Its association with an identity which they are trying to preserve is sufficient to make a significant object. The same is true of such objects mentioned in In Patagonia as the tea towel discussed in the first section of this chapter, and 'The Scotsman' with his failed attempt to grow a symbol of allegiance to a cultural identity: "Curled in the bottom of the cage lay the dried-up skeleton of a thistle" (IP, p.67). Julian Cowley has identified the same trope as important to In Patagonia:

By means of this plant, an emblematic fragment, he had sought to constitute a coherent homeland, rooted and immutable, drawing sustenance from metonymic indices spoken by his mother - gulls, herring boats, heather, peat. This is the dream of the settler, the exile aggressively protective of self-definition by means of a highly stylized representation of cultural identity.[87]

I agree with Cowley's reading of the characters which populate this narrative as being concerned with issues of identity formation, for example through symbolic possessions. It is not in the scope of his article to extend this reading to all of Chatwin's work, however. These symbolic aspects will be examined in Chapters Three, Four and Five of my thesis. In the literary context of this chapter it is important to note that these processes of identity formation which cross generic boundaries in Chatwin's work are a more useful way of understanding his oeuvre as the expression of a consistent set of thematic concerns.

This chapter has demonstrated that critical work which has identified conventions of the genre of travel writing can be used to offer a reading of certain texts of Chatwin's work but that aspects even of the work which is based on a narrative of travel show a marked departure from the tropes of travel writing identified in Section One. It is obviously the case that texts of fiction like On the Black Hill cannot be understood in the light of critical work which focuses on depictions of travel. Although literary comparisons of a different kind are possible in the case of this work, the engagement with Chatwin's oeuvre at a level of genre fails to identify the concerns which allow a unified reading of his work. Whilst Palmer, Pfister and Estes, for example, have made useful comments in relation to individual texts by Chatwin, the concern of genre, whether that of travel writing in the example of this chapter, or of other fictional or non-fictional narrative, cannot deal with the work of an author whose work, as the example of this chapter has showed, is marked by departures from genre as much as by a determination to deal with a set of concerns which are important to him. The following chapters of my thesis will demonstrate this

argument, and will suggest comparative material which offers the possibility of a reading of the whole Chatwin oeuvre.

Endnotes to Chapter One

[1] The following theses have all, in different ways, established literary contexts for Chatwin's work. Andrew Palmer, "Chatwin: A Critical Study". (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: University of Sussex, 1991); Jan Borm, "Le Récit de Voyage Britannique Contemporain: Essai sur le Renouveau d'un Genre". (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: Paris: Université de Paris - Dénis Diderôt, 1997); Matthew Graves, Depaysement et Ressourcement dans l'Oeuvre de Bruce Chatwin". (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: Université Paris - Sorbonne, 1992). Although this chapter will reference some of this work, it will be more concerned with establishing the concerns of the current thesis.

[2] Bruce Chatwin, The Songlines (London: Jonathan Cape, 1987). Further references will be given in the text, preceded by the abbreviation S.

[3] Bruce Chatwin, On the Black Hill (London: Picador, 1983). Further references will be given in the text, preceded by the abbreviation BH.

[4] Jacinda Matos, "Old Journeys Revisited: Aspects of Postwar English Travel Writing", in Michael Kowalewski, ed., Temperamental Journeys (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1992), p.216.

[5] This has led, for example, to the 'extreme travel' genre identified by Graham Huggan in his paper "Extreme Travel Writing", at the conference "Seuils et Traverses", Brest, France, July 2000.

[6] Philip Dodd, "The Views of Travellers: Travel Writing in the 1930s" in Philip Dodd, ed., The Art of Travel (London: Frank Cass, 1982), p.127.

[7] Bruce Chatwin, In Patagonia [1977] (London: Picador, 1979). Further references will be given in the text, preceded by the abbreviation IP.

[8] Despite Chatwin's strategies for stabilising his depictions of other cultures, the influence of his cultural background on these depictions should be borne in mind. This thesis will engage with the issue at greater length in Chapter Five. It is my intention to relate the specifics of Chatwin's writing with frameworks that relate to cultural processes. The cultural and the biographic will therefore be linked in my analysis.

[9] An example of this is Lévi-Strauss's reference to Rondon in <u>Tristes Tropiques</u> (London: Cape, 1972) and the subsequent reference to Lévi-Strauss by Jacques Meunier in <u>Le Chant du Silbaco</u> (Paris: Phebus, 1992). Each writer refers to the previous one as having been privileged to have seen the unspoilt Amazon, with ethnic communities thriving and indigenous cultural practices observable by the outsider. Both pieces of writing could be related to James Clifford's work on "Salvage Ethnography" (James Clifford, <u>The Predicament of Culture</u> (London: Harvard University Press, 1988), p.114). Although the Amazon tribes are not necessarily depicted as a pastoral ideal, the point here is that they are definitely ill-equipped to cope with encroaching modernity.

[10] Colin Thubron, "Travel Writing Today: Its Rise and its Dilemma" in <u>Essays by Divers Hands: Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature no. 44</u> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p.168.

[11] Manfred Pfister, "Bruce Chatwin and the Postmodernization of the Travelogue", <u>Literature, Interpretation, Theory</u> 7, 3-4, (1996), 255.

[12] Jan Borm, "Le Récit de Voyage Britannique Contemporain", p.319.

[13] Bruce Chatwin, <u>Utz</u> (London: Picador, 1989). Further references will be given in the text, preceded by the abbreviation <u>U</u>.

[14] Whether Chatwin uses a chronological sequence of events as an organizing principle of his work is more questionable. It is possible to construct a sequence from <u>In Patagonia</u> which implies a chronology, but it is equally possible that disruption of physical linear progress also signals disruption of the chronology of the journey as it is presented in the narrative. Although <u>On the Black Hill</u> is based on a clear chronology, it is not that of a journey undertaken by the narrator. <u>The Songlines</u> again distorts the chronology of travel through enforced immobility that introduces a series of non-chronological flashbacks. The trope of the homecoming, on the other hand, is one which Chatwin never uses in relation to himself, but does relate as part of the relationship between individual, travel and place for characters such as Utz, Lewis Jones and, in negated form, Francisco da Silva.

[15] Paul Fussell, <u>Abroad: British Literary travelling Between the Wars</u> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp.95-6.

[16] Fussell, <u>Abroad</u>, p.96

[17] Nicholas Shakespeare, Bruce Chatwin (London: Harvill, 1999), p.306. The knowledge to which Shakespeare refers is that acquired during his employment at Sotheby's, and the five years of research for the "Nomadic Alternative" book.

[18] Nicholas Rankin, Dead Man's Chest: Travels After Robert Louis Stevenson (London: Faber and Faber, 1987). Many examples of this aspect of the genre exist. Those which are perhaps closest to Chatwin's practice are those which follow the footsteps of a literary subject, such as Charles Nicholls's Somebody Else: Arthur Rimbaud in Africa 1880-91 (London: Vintage, 1998). Chatwin rarely follows in the footsteps of his subjects, but prefers to draw on their texts. This more oblique acknowledgement allows him to control the itinerary in a way which is denied to Rankin and Nicholls, whilst at the same time making use of the pronouncements of a range of authors. See Section Two of this chapter for a more sustained discussion of Chatwin's "textualized terrain" in In Patagonia.

[19] Pfister, "Postmodernization", 259.

[20] David C. Estes, "Travelling in textualized Terrain", New Orleans Review 18, 2 (1991), 68.

[21] This is also the case for much ethnographic writing: Pfister's account of the uses of meta-textual material could equally be applied to this genre. See Chapter Two for an extended account of textual practice in ethnography and the way in which Chatwin's textual performance relates to this.

[22] Ronald Wright, Time Among the Maya (London: Abacus, 1997).

[23] Ronald Wright, Time Among the Maya, p.215.

[24] Ronald Wright, Time Among the Maya, p.70.

[25] Paul Theroux, The Old Patagonian Express 1979 (Harmondsworth: London, 1980).

[26] Kowalewski "Introduction" in Kowalewski, ed. Temperamental Journeys, p.7. Further consideration of Kowalewski's use of the term 'borrowing' is taken up later in this section.

[27] Pfister, "Postmodernization", 255.

[28] Andrew Palmer, "Chatwin: A Critical Study", Chapter Two.

[29] Pfister, "Postmodernization", 255.

[30] Pfister, "Postmodernization", 264.

[31] One of the appeals frequently made to the reader in relation to travel writing is the fact of its close relation to the reality of the location of the travel. This assessment equates, at least in part, the value of a text with the (perceived) veracity of its account. This can be seen in excerpts from the back cover of a sample of texts, one of which "... brings back to any who have seen these countries every scene with the colour of real life" (Wilfred Thesiger, Arabian Sands, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982). Note here the appeal to authority and the cultural capital of having experience of the same location. Another is: "A travel book which tells us more about this strange, sometimes terrible region and its people than a library of more pretentious works" (Colin Thubron, Behind the Wall, London: Penguin, 1988). In this boast, the quality of the writer is as observer (and the implicit quality of the book) is that he relates with ethnographic accuracy the reality of place. Finally, Vikram Seth's From Heaven Lake (London: Abacus, 1984) was claimed to be "a worthy successor to the accounts of the Victorian explorers ..." It would only be kind to Seth to assume that the publisher is making a reference to the supposedly objective nature of the previous accounts, rather than to their crimes against indigenous populations and cultures in the name of science.

[32] Percy G. Adams, Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Novel (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1983), p.163.

[33] Heather Henderson, "The Travel Writer and the Text: 'My Giant Goes With Me Wherever I Go'" in Kowalewski, ed., p.231.

[34] Henderson, "The Travel Writer and the Text", p.240.

[35] Pfister, "Postmodernization", 265.

[36] R.H. Wright, "Literature by Foot: Travel-writing and Reportage by novelists Graham Swift, Colin Thubron, Bruce Chatwin, V.S. Naipaul and Poet James Fenton". (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: University of Oxford, 1985), p.135.

[37] Jean-Didier Urbain, Secrets de Voyage: Menteurs, imposteurs et autres voyageurs invisibles, (Paris: Editions Payot et Rivages, 1998), p.13. "Who, returning from holiday or a foreign mission has not in effect wanted, through shame or through vanity, to trick his audience by exaggerating certain aspects of

his travel, by keeping quiet about others, or even by inventing in order to hide an unspoken essence?" All translations of Urbain's work are my own.

[38] Urbain, Secrets de Voyage, p.13. "excess or lack of information, or even more by a subtle mix of the two."

[39] Warner G. Rice, "Introduction", in Literature as a Mode of Travel (New York: The New York Public Library, 1963), p.8.

[40] A feature of the criticism of travel writing has been to look at texts in relation to other genres, or in relation to a historicized, geographically locatable reality. In other literary studies it would not be counted unusual to make a study of a writer's work in order to identify the consistent concerns and techniques employed by that writer. As in the case of this thesis, study may be informed by comparison with texts, from other genres but with related concerns, without necessarily intending to 'place' the work under consideration in a system of genres.

[41] Bruce Chatwin, The Viceroy of Ouidah (London: Picador, 1982). Further references will be given in the text, preceded by the abbreviation V.

[42] Kowalewski, Temperamental Journeys, p.8.

[43] Kowalewski, Temperamental Journeys, p.13.

[44] Pfister, "Postmodernization", 263.

[45] Urbain, Secrets de Voyages, p.14. "Is there no fraud in our witness-accounts? And are we still people there, or characters?"

[46] Marie-Anne Clabe has demonstrated that several of the sites of narrative mentioned in The Songlines are fictional, constructed from features of several locations and a plausible-sounding name. Marie-Anne-Clabe, "L'Éspace dans The Songlines: Lieux Australiens Revisités", Cahiers Forell 4 (November 1994), 131-144. In his biography of Chatwin, Nicholas Shakespeare also demonstrates that characters in In Patagonia are constructs, as are the characters of Rolf, Marian and Arkady in The Songlines. Having problematized the criticism which has dealt with it as travel writing (and therefore as non-fiction), the third section of this chapter will give further consideration to processes of fictionalization in The Songlines. Consequently, I refer to the text as a novel throughout the thesis.

[47] An example comes from The Old Patagonian Express. Theroux describes a Texan thus: "Texan pride, an amiable but tenacious vulgarity, was the grotesquely fat man wearing his ten-gallon hat in the Silver Dollar Saloon in downtown Fort Worth…" (Theroux, Old Patagonian, p.44). As I will show in Chapter Two, Chatwin is also guilty of this essentializing from time to time. Usually, however, his brief characterizations are intended to suggest a level of complexity, albeit one that he has comprehended, whilst Theroux's depictions suggest that the superficial is all there is to understand.

[48] Susannah Clapp underlines the deliberate nature of Chatwin's innovations of the quest structure: "The book, of course, was always to be made up of byways; it was meant to slope off, to jump backwards and forwards in time, to slip from description to speculation, from history to evocation" (Susannah Clapp, With Chatwin (London: Jonathan Cape, 1997), p.30). Hence, once the quest motif has been established, Chatwin's intention was not to stick to it in narrative. It provided a frame, and motivation, but not an exclusive subject matter.

[49] Bruce Chatwin and Paul Theroux, Patagonia Revisited (Lymington, Hants: The Spartan Press, 1985). Further references will be give parenthetically in the text, preceded by the abbreviation PR.

[50] Estes, "Textualised Terrain", 76.

[51] Theroux, The Old Patagonian Express, p.11.

[52] In fact the third is a quotation from the final page of Theroux's own text. Theroux uses his own signing-off as an example of a bad introduction to a travel account. Presumably this is intended as a playful gesture.

[53] Paul Theroux, The Mosquito Coast (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982).

[54] Elton Glaser, "Paul Theroux and the Poetry of Departures", in Kowalewski, ed., p.154. Theroux's work which is ostensibly fiction is invariably informed by travel. An American based in London, he is already the subject of geographical displacement, but travel as a theme is even more fundamental to his fiction. Contrasting examples include The Mosquito Coast (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982) which is less concerned with the processes of travel than the motivation behind it, and My Secret History (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1979), which blends autobiography, fiction and travel in a series of accounts situated in a range of different locations. In both cases, the link between travel and fiction is clear, hence Glaser's comment. That Theroux seems not to recognise the close relationship between his fiction and his travel

writing seems almost perverse: even if he is unwilling to admit the processes of fiction in travel writing, it is hard to ignore the concern with travel in his works of fiction.

[55] Theroux, The Old Patagonian Express, p.249.

[56] Theroux, The Old Patagonian Express, p.11.

[57] Theroux, The Old Patagonian Express, p.14.

[58] Theroux, The Old Patagonian Express, pp.429-30.

[59] This prefigures the introduction of Konrad Lorenz, followed by a discussion of his work, in The Songlines. The strategy of using a casual encounter to establish the relevance of an meta-textual reference is almost the same. For discussion of this relation of material which is not directly related to the site of travel, see Chapter Two, Section Three, which considers the establishment of ethnographic authority in In Patagonia and The Songlines.

[60] "He flew first to Lima, in order to talk to Milward's daughter. Monica Barnett was a former journalist who had started to put together Milward's sea stories with the idea of publication. She was reluctant to turn Bruce loose on her father's papers, among them a 258-page journal of his life at sea." Shakespeare, Bruce Chatwin, p.287.

[61] Theroux, Old Patagonian, p.267.

[62] Patrick Marnham, So Far From God (London: Penguin, 1986).

[63] Estes, "Textualised Terrain", 68.

[64] "N'etait-il pas derisoire de chercher un viel objet, de partir au bout du monde, pour trouver un morceau de peau qui ne pourrait que remplacer celui d'une enfance perdue? En dernier lieu, si l'on se rappelle l'opposition de Chatwin a l'acte de collectionner au cas où cela devient une obsession excessive, ne peut-on pas considérer cette phrase comme celle d'un être qui se moque de sa propre obsession?" Borm, "Le Récit de Voyage Contemporain Britannique ... ", p.319. ("Was it not derisory to search for an old object, to leave for the end of the world, to find a piece of skin which could only replace that of a lost childhood? Lastly, if one calls to mind Chatwin's opposition to the act of collecting in case it becomes an excessive obsession, can one not consider this phrase as that of someone who is mocking his own obsession?") I also agree with Borm's analysis of Chatwin as a character within the text, and that this use of the ironized

quest contributes to the image of the narrator who constructs and deconstructs himself at the time (p.318). All translations from Borm's thesis are my own.

[65] Or, as the title of Lucas Bridges's book put it, in a phrase which sums up the European view of Patagonia, The Uttermost Part of the Earth. (The edition quoted in Chatwin's text is: London, 1948).

[66] Estes, "Textualized Terrain", 76.

[67] Despite the relationship between the narrator and Charley Milward, despite the amount of family history which is apparently divulged at the start and towards the end of the narrative, and despite the first person narrative which involves many names, both from other texts, and from direct exchange with the narrator, the name 'Chatwin' does not appear in the text of In Patagonia. Although the reader is invited to make assumptions about the identity of the narrator, and the veracity of his account, the text does nothing to confirm either.

[68] I will return to this argument in Chapter Two, in relation to the staging of quotes, which again allows the narrator control over the materials which go into the text, subordinating them to the narratorial project.

[69] Pfister, "Postmodernization", 263.

[70] Pfister, "Postmodernization, 259.

[71] Pfister, "Postmodernization", 265.

[72] Kowalewski, Temperamental Journeys, p.7.

[73] Glaser, "Departures", p.154.

[74] Jean-Didier Urbain, "Chatwin, le guide déroutant", Libération: Livres 4th May 2000, 3. "a prose which no longer claims for itself the order of the stated fact. Why then lend it an ambition which it no longer has, and fix it in terms of an outdated contract of readership? It is not a question of *the* real, but of *a* real: that which the gaze paints." All translations from Urbain's article are my own.

[75] Urbain, "Chatwin, le Guide déroutant", 2.

[76] Malcolm Deas pronounced it "that most enviable achievement: a minor classic". Malcolm Deas, "The Sands of the Deep South", <u>Times Literary Supplement</u> 9th December 1977, 1444. Deas's reaction is typical of the response to <u>In Patagonia</u>.

[77] R.H. Wright, <u>Literature by Foot</u>, p.136.

[78] Pfister, "Postmodernization", 263.

[79] Paul Theroux might be an example of the travel writer whose presence as a character is a feature of the text. Hence his near-sexual adventures in <u>Riding the Iron Rooster</u>, and the eventual overlap between travel and fiction, still with Theroux identifiable as thinly-veiled a character, in <u>My Secret History: A Novel</u>.

[80] An example of this might be Colin Thubron, who has stated that: "I think when I'm actually travelling I make an effort almost consciously to subsume my own opinions or personality in the attempt to understand how another culture is working and that has the effect, I think, of making me rather opaque in the books very often, as if I'm not there almost." "Interview with Colin Thubron by Susan Bassnett" <u>Studies in Travel Writing</u> 3 (1999), 148.

[81] Clapp, <u>With Chatwin</u>, p.186.

[82] Clapp is particularly good on the literary parallels and other sources which contextualize <u>On the Black Hill</u>. Her chapter "Twins" explains the links between actual people and events which Chatwin experienced, and the more historical research which he undertook. She is insistent that the novel was as much inspired by these 'incidental' findings as by Chatwin's own exploration of the region. This view supports my argument that although the meta-textual material is not on the surface of the narrative, it is nevertheless a feature of the presentation of individual encounters in <u>On the Black Hill</u>.

[83] Palmer's third chapter "Fiction and Historical Discourse" is concerned not only with theorizing Chatwin's approach but with comparing it with other texts. Palmer advisedly marks the difference between this text and, for example, others of Chatwin's narratives which are based on travel, and which problematize the dividing line between fact and fiction. Unfortunately this prevents him from making extensive comment about the continuities *between* texts by Chatwin.

[84] Shakespeare, <u>Chatwin</u>, p.23.

[85] Adams, <u>Travel Literature,</u> p.163.

[86] Several of the critics quoted in the first section of this chapter deal with the importance of narrative voice in travel writing. Kowalewski, for example, argues that narrative voice "remains crucial" to the genre.

[87] Julian Cowley, "'Pataphysical Patagonia: Bruce Chatwin's Distinctively Interrogative Somewhere", <u>Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction</u> 37, 4 (1996), 304.

Chapter Two: Ethnographic Authority and Identity

Section One: Realist and Reflective Ethnography

Having proposed in the previous chapter that a contextualization of Chatwin's work requires more than comparison with travel writing, this chapter, informed by a reading of reflective ethnography,[1] will examine another set of textual conventions which are instructive in relation to genre. The chapter will consider the links between Chatwin's work and aspects of twentieth-century ethnographic writing; it will therefore provide the first of a range of interdisciplinary contextualizations of Chatwin's work, and will function as overlap between the textual concerns of the first chapter and the socio-cultural analyses of the following ones. The chapter will first examine the textual in relation to Chatwin's work, and will then introduce the question of identity formation which is a focus throughout the thesis. The debate around reflective ethnography will provide the grounds for a reading of Chatwin's own textual strategies, and the ways in which these inform his identity as author and narrator in the texts.

This chapter will demonstrate that Chatwin's work has much in common with the realist mode of ethnography, but also that in departing from the conventions of travel writing, Chatwin writes in a mode which can be compared with reflective forms of ethnography too. Although some of these strategies have been employed by other writers from outside the discipline of anthropology, my approach here is consistent with that of the other chapters of this thesis, as I argue that Chatwin's concern with identity formation, both of subjects and author, is consistent in his work. His work also displays a range of textual strategies borrowed from ethnography, which attempt to persuade the reader of his uniqueness, both as character and as authoritative writer. The use of critical and reflective ethnography as background in this chapter illustrates this. The first section will offer a synthesis of aspects of work by James Clifford and George Marcus, amongst others, on

some developments that have taken place in ethnographic writing. Particular attention will be paid to the role of the author as fieldworker in the ethnographic text. In order to ground the theoretical aspects of the first section, and to indicate the focus for later close readings, some mention will be made of all the texts to be considered in the second section of the chapter. This is also consistent with the structure of the subsequent chapters.

In order to examine a range of concerns which arise in this consideration of the relationship between ethnographer, text and subject, the second section of this chapter will not only offer a reading of The Viceroy of Ouidah, but also of "A Coup" (which appeared in What Am I Doing Here), "Milk" and "On Location. Gone to Ghana." (from Anatomy of Restlessness) and "The Road to Ouidah" (from Photographs and Notebooks).[2] All five texts result from Chatwin's research into the Da Silva family which he intended for use in The Viceroy of Ouidah. The second section will thus consider a complex textual process. All of the texts under consideration were inspired by the same experiences of travel, and the different textual forms in which they appear will serve as illustrations of different aspects of the textual processes involved in "writing up" fieldwork discussed in the first section. The relationships between these texts, and the ways in which they situate author, subject and reader make them particularly interesting in the context of the debates outlined in the first section. The second section will therefore offer a reading of The Viceroy of Ouidah that is also informed by comparison with the other texts as well as by the survey of ethnographic practice undertaken in the first section. Particular attention will be paid to the frame narrative, and its positioning between ethnographic writing and fiction.

The third section will extend this reading to The Songlines and In Patagonia. The first of these has been discussed elsewhere in relation to comparable ethnographic texts,[3] although without providing the sustained reading of the narrative and

structure in relation to reflective ethnography which this chapter offers. The reading of In Patagonia will return in some measure to the generic innovations identified in the previous chapter, but will be informed by aspects of reflective ethnography rather than comparison with other travel writing.

Several commentators have identified a development in ethnographic writing, and its relationship with anthropological fieldwork, from the origins of the discipline to the end of the twentieth century. It is not the aim of this section to rehearse the development of twentieth century ethnography, but simply to highlight some of the textual elements of that development insofar as they are pertinent to my reading of Chatwin's textual strategies.[4] James Clifford and George Marcus in particular have focused on the increasing levels of authorial presence and awareness of subjectivity which have been paralleled by an increasing willingness to experiment with form in ethnography. Hence the practice of writing up fieldwork has been questioned and relationship between the author of the written text and the text itself has been foregrounded.

The area of anthropological writing which has most frequently been compared with the genre of travel writing is the realist ethnography. Since much realist ethnography preceded the reflective ethnographic practice which has characterised texts in the latter half of this century, I intend to deal first with this sub-genre. Realist ethnography might be distinguished from reflective ethnographies in that the realist ethnography does little or no theorizing about the nature of the representations which it is making, and, similarly, is not explicit about the textual strategies which place the anthropologist in the text and situate the fieldworker in relation to their subject. Traditionally, the realist ethnography was concerned with giving an 'objective' view of the host culture, and took for granted the difference between non-developed, non-literate cultures, and the civilization from whence the

anthropologist came.[5] The realist ethnography, as discussed by Marcus and Cushman, was based on the presentation of work done in the field:

> From the very beginnings of the realist ethnography, some direct indication of fieldwork conditions and experiences was crucial to establishing overall authority of anthropological texts as a sort of covering legitimacy under which specific arguments and claims of evidence could be made.[6]

This establishment of authority is much the same process as is used in travel writing, in which the traveller must have a unique set of experiences to relate as a result of the travel which the narrator has undertaken. This continues in Chatwin's fiction, in which a privileged point of view, already evident in "The Road to Ouidah", develops into a narrative voice in the finished work. In relation to ethnographic work, Marcus and Cushman note that this experience was bolstered by the inclusion of maps and drawings, which are intended to demonstrate the extent of the writer's experience as much as for information.[7] This is a practice which continues in contemporary popular travel writing.[8] The attempt was made, therefore, to encourage a view of the ethnographic text as scientific study, in which the presentation of data was privileged. Vincent Crapanzo notes the importance of the ethnographer's "presence at the events described, his perceptual ability, his 'disinterested' perspective, his objectivity and his sincerity". As far as the representation of the fieldwork was concerned, Crapanzo concludes that: "In all three cases, the ethnographer's place in his text was purely rhetorical".[9] The second and third sections of this chapter will discuss the differing extents to which Chatwin is present in the narratives that result from his 'fieldwork', and the different kinds of textual authority he wields as a result.

It was also necessary for ethnographers to establish that their texts were generically different from other texts. According to Marcus and Cushman, the use of jargon words in an attempt to represent objective reality marked the ethnographic text as

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being different from the travel account. In addition to this, the ethnographer would typically introduce the figure of the traveller in order to demonstrate the gap in knowledge between the amateur and the professional. In Pratt's observation:

> In almost every ethnography, dull-looking figures called "mere travellers" or "casual observers" show up from time to time only to have their superficial perceptions either corrected or corroborated by the serious scientist.[10]

In Clifford's new conceptions of travel which he discusses in Routes, he breaks down the distinction between the anthropological research trip and the personal travel experience. In addition he questions the conventional view of the relationship between travel writing and ethnography, stating that it is only the nineteenth-century definition of the genres of travel-writing and ethnography which marks recent innovations as experimental.[11] Chatwin is aware of this boundary, and tries to exploit the hierarchical relationship between the two genres, depicting characters in "The Road to Ouidah" and throughout What Am I Doing Here who serve, through their own ignorance of a culture or identity, to reinforce the authority which Chatwin, the traveller/fieldworker, can exert over his subject and therefore over his text.[12]

The realist ethnography, therefore, makes assumptions about its subject matter, and about its own ability to represent the subject in textual form. The identity of individuals, and especially groups, is seen as being fixed, and therefore the fixed depiction is seen as realistic. As Clifford points out, this mode of textual representation is based on a fallacy:

> 'Cultures' do not hold still for their portraits. Attempts to make them do so always involve simplification and exclusion, selection of a temporal focus, the construction of a particular

self-other relationship and the imposition or negation of a power relationship.[13]

In this mode of representation, the obvious use of literary devices was deemed to be an abandonment of objectivity; such techniques were "metaphorical and allegorical, composed on inventions rather than observed facts."[14] Mead, who championed the participant-observer model, nonetheless used such descriptive techniques. As Derek Freeman has shown, this coincided with the fictitious description which she gave of Samoan society. Freeman demonstrates how the use of a consistent range of adjectives and the careful structuring of Mead's work reinforced the inaccurate analysis she made: " ... the leitmotif of her depiction being the notion of *ease* ... Her beguiling vignette begins at dawn as lovers slip home from trysts ... "[15] In a comment which illustrates Clifford and Marcus's analysis of the expectations of the genre at this period, Freeman states that this description was considered too literary for the monograph in which it was originally going to be published. The second section of this chapter will examine Chatwin's own attempt to move between the authority of the fieldworker writing ethnography, and the literary devices involved in the fictionalizing process, for example in the case of "Milk", a short story based on his notebooks.

A development in ethnographic writing which is also interesting in relation to Chatwin's work was the move towards reflective and experimental modes in textual representations of fieldwork. This was a consequence of a reconsideration of the relationships, outlined above between ethnographer, subject and text as figured by realist ethnography:

> By the late sixties the romantic mythology of fieldwork rapport
> had begun to dissolve publicly. Since then a growing reflexivity
> in ethnographic thought and practice has deepened the
> recognition of its ironic structure, its reliance on improvised,
> historically contingent fictions.[16]

It is undoubtedly the case that the romantic mythology of the travel writer has endured, and that recognition of 'improvised, historically contingent fictions' has not become a convention of travel writing as it has of ethnography. The texts under consideration in the rest of this chapter show different degrees of awareness, and of self-positioning within the narrative. This is one of the textual aspects which has traditionally separated ethnography from travel account, but which tended to blur with the advent of experiment in ethnographic writing:

> Experimentation with point of view has long been one of the key
> elements distinguishing fictional from non-fictional modes of
> writing. In addition, early anthropologists were highly sensitive
> to the existence of a close predecessor and contemporary parallel
> to the contemporary ethnography - the travel account.[17]

Experimentation began to occur within the field of ethnography, echoing, as Clifford and Marcus point out, early departures by Leiris and Lévi-Strauss.[18] The implication of this experimentation was to cast into doubt the objectivity and validity of the previous 'realist' ethnography.[19] As Marcus and Cushman point out, "these experiments stand as a de facto critique of all those other contemporary ethnographies which do not incorporate a reflection on their own production as a vital component of the analyses they offer."[20] Reflection on the fieldwork and the textual strategy of the resulting account have become a commonplace aspect of the contemporary ethnography. As the following sections will argue, Chatwin's work varies in its adoption of this reflection. It is self-reflexivity which ostensibly divides the realist ethnography from its later manifestation. Travel writing, already compared with the realist method, has perhaps been less experimental in reflecting on the textual processes involved in representing fieldwork. Chatwin is an interesting example, relying on traditional means of establishing authority and identity within the text, (especially in the reportage featured in What Am I Doing

<u>Here</u>) but nonetheless displaying a willingness to experiment with form (as in <u>In</u> <u>Patagonia</u>, <u>The Songlines</u> and <u>The Viceroy of Ouidah</u>.)

Pratt has identified similar texts in the experimental mode of ethnography, which cross generic boundaries and therefore frustrate the kind of reading invited by earlier realist ethnography. For Pratt this produces:

> ... an infuriatingly ambiguous book which may or may not be "true" and is and is not ethnography, is and is not autobiography, does and does not claim professional and academic authority, and is and is not based on fieldwork and so on.[21]

This is reminiscent, in varying degrees, of the convergence of 'fieldwork account' and fictionalization at work in Chatwin's three "Ouidah" texts. The findings of an ethnography which openly signals itself as fictionalized are taken less seriously, but the travel account or travel novel with pretensions to be ethnography demands to be taken more seriously than the openly fictionalized traveller's tale,[22] hence the convergence of textual strategy in Chatwin's work. There are limitations imposed upon the nature of representations made in ethnographic texts, and Clifford argues that the ethnographic text contains fictions anyway, in the sense that the condensation and simplification of dialogue between ethnographer and subject is manipulated in the text. He concludes that "ethnographies are fictions both of another cultural reality and of their own mode of production."[23] A sophisticated reading of other travel writing, and particularly of Chatwin's experimental work in the genre, is forced to the same conclusion. These discussions are of course related to the fact and fiction debate considered in the previous chapter. Like the genre-related criticism of travel writing, ethnography has insisted on the divide between texts which are imaginative, and those which report objectively. My point here is that as Clifford has argued, the divide is not a simple one to draw. As far

as Chatwin is concerned, this means that although all his work displays elements of the "is and is not" of the innovative writing described by Pratt, it also displays many of the strategies of traditional ethnography in its attempt to find an authoritative voice.

A related development in experimental ethnography is the writing of what has been coined as "messy texts";[24] the open-ended, highly reflective versions of fieldwork accounts, which direct the reader's attention as much towards the textual strategies of the account as to the possibility of representing another culture in this form. In this mode of ethnographic representation there can be no definitive conclusions, and the text does not try to situate itself in the context of previous representations of the same subject. The hermeneutic of the realist tradition is therefore abandoned in favour of a text which expresses its own subjectivity. In the final section of this chapter, The Songlines is considered as a "messy text", not only in its form, but in the implications that this has for the depictions of characters in the narrative which frames the more "messy" notebook sections of the novel.[25]

Despite this reflexivity and experiment, and despite the articulation of textual artifice and its acknowledgement in these open-ended experimental forms, a criticism of the reflective ethnography might be that the author still remains at the centre of the text. The reflexivity involved, as Marcus complains, seems to be "'a thing in itself' either with an endpoint in the ethnographer's self-knowledge or at least with its relationship to the self-representation of objective knowledge in conventional ethnographic writing unexamined".[26] It is certainly the case that in Chatwin's texts, the moments of self-reflexivity, or acknowledgement of the author as fieldworker do not detract from the unarticulated textual strategies which nonetheless maintain the author's authority, and therefore the power relation between the subject and their textual representation. Both in ethnography, as well as Chatwin's work, therefore, elements of experiment remain embedded in

assumptions about the nature of the text which lie behind realist ethnography and non-reflective travel writing.

The aspect of this chapter which is concerned with text and genre will thus deal with the relationship between the expectations and textual norms of the different modes of ethnographic writing discussed here, and the ways in they which are mirrored in Chatwin's texts. An overarching concern of the thesis, however, is that of identity formation. It is possible to extend the comparison between the rhetoric of ethnography and Chatwin's work, insofar as it informs a reading of the ways in which Chatwin establishes textual authority, and therefore legitimizes a range of aspects of the depiction. These include the author's 'right' to undertake fieldwork and the veracity of his account and the conclusions which he draws from it. Despite his experimentation with genre, and the fictional nature of his work, this establishment of authorial identity carries the same unspoken implications for the relationship between author and text, as well as for the identity formation of the characters as they are depicted in the narrative, as it does in ethnographic texts.

Chatwin's work, as is the case with ethnography, establishes the authority of the author through the relation of experiences that presume a readership which has not had the same experiences. Even in the case of fictionalized accounts, as the next section will argue in the case of The Viceroy of Ouidah, authority comes from the direct experience which the text then mediates. Several commentators have made this point about ethnography:

> In fact what gives the ethnographer authority and the text a
> pervasive sense of concrete reality is the writer's claim to
> represent a world as only one who has known it firsthand can,
> which thus forges an intimate link between ethnographic writing
> and fieldwork.[27]

The same link is evidently made in the genre of travel writing, and, I am arguing, extends into fictionalized accounts of that experience. In the case of The Viceroy of Ouidah and The Songlines, a further strategy, linked with this one, is at work. Webster has described it as follows:

> Insofar as authority is established ... cultural strangeness, geographical remoteness or difficulty of access, and the futility of replication may be accepted implicitly as credentials rather than deterrents to credibility.[28]

The travel account which surrounds the events described in "A Coup" is of this type, and the implication for the text of The Viceroy of Ouidah is that the difficulty of access to contemporary Benin means that the text could only have been written from a privileged position of experience.[29] Chatwin's relationship with the Aborigines in The Songlines carries the same implication. The "deep" fieldwork involved suggests the difficulty that another traveller might have in obtaining the same access to information that Chatwin achieves. In In Patagonia, a similar strategy is supported by physically difficult travel towards the end of the narrative. This strategy is repeated in all the texts with which the next section is concerned.

Chatwin's experiences as a traveller also make him part of an identifiable social group whose accounts have dominated both travel writing and ethnography. Clifford identifies this group thus: "The long history of travel that includes the spatial practices of "fieldwork" is predominantly Western-dominated, strongly male and upper middle class."[30] This identification is interesting in two ways. Firstly it explicitly relates the notion of travel with fieldwork. The traditional distinction between the professional practice of the ethnographer on location and the amateur traveller who is just passing through is removed. My argument is that while Chatwin shares many of the attributes of the amateur traveller who does not engage in "deep" fieldwork, he nonetheless bases the textual account of his travel on a range of research which compares with the

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anthropological practice of travelling in order to gain material for the ethnographic text. "The Road to Ouidah" is an example of this, whilst "A Coup" articulates the link between the research trip, during which the nature of the knowledge researched is controlled by the researcher, and the travel experience in which the interest arises from problematized encounters which are beyond the control of the individual traveller.

Secondly Clifford's observation coincides closely with the type of traveller and author which Chatwin is. Comments on skin colour, food, drink and behaviour mark him as white, Western and upper-middle class. In "The Road to Ouidah" this seems to be more or less unconscious; the nature of the text perhaps decreases the need for the author to establish and re-establish his own identity within the text. "A Coup", by contrast, is packed with references which not only establish the author as perceptive and intelligent (a strategy found in earlier, "realist" ethnographies, but also present in later "reflective" ones) and as a man of culture, educated and with refined tastes, whose company is appreciated by other (French) men of similar tastes. The implications of this scene for the nature of Chatwin's masculinity and sexuality, as discussed by Shakespeare,[31] are an interesting subversion of the stereotype which Chatwin is trying to establish as his own identity. Nonetheless, it is established both by implication, as a result of the nature of his experiences, and explicitly in the way in which his background informs his response to them.

In a previous work, Clifford had already commented on the importance of certain of the characteristics discussed above. The readership of the travel text, as much as the ethnography, must have faith in the author's understanding of the 'other' cultural context or immediate situation in which their travel/fieldwork places them: "Experiential authenticity is based on a feel for the foreign context, a kind of accumulated savvy and the sense of the style of the people or place."[32] Chatwin devotes a lot of energy to establishing his 'experiential authenticity'; making it clear that the has the experience and 'savvy' to understand, and therefore reliably give an

account of, travel in an 'other' place. The first two of the texts to be considered in the next section display strategies for establishing this kind of 'savvy', and the section will argue that this informs the confident depiction of culture and customs which frames the narrative of The Viceroy of Ouidah. Exactly the same kind of self-presentation is in evidence in In Patagonia and The Songlines, in which the way Chatwin relates to the 'other' is seen as experiential authenticity, resulting from vast experience of travel, as well as an innate ability to comprehend and communicate the other culture. The process is of course cumulative; the more the author can present himself as possessing these attributes, the further his identity is established in the textual account of his experiences.

In the depiction of subject matter as discussed in the first half of this section, therefore, the author is not only involved in a relationship between subject and text, but uses this process to establish personal authority and identity: "By the manner of conforming to ethnographic rhetoric, an author establishes his/her generalised authority and knowledge as an integral dimension, pervading the text ... ".[33] Rhetoric contributes to the control of other textual elements, including material by which the text promotes the identity of the author. Frequently linked with the opinions which other characters express about the author, quotation of direct speech is used in support not just of the subject which the text is examining, but also of the authorial identity which is being established: "quotations are always staged by the quoter and tend to serve merely as examples or confirming testimonies."[34] This is particularly the case with regard to Chatwin's depiction of Land Rights workers and Aboriginals in The Songlines, but is also the case in In Patagonia and "A Coup".

This section has briefly identified a range of textual strategies which establish ethnographic authority and the identity of the author as reliable and knowledgeable. Although persuasive and pervasive, these strategies do not detract from the fact that accounts of fieldwork are "staged" fictions which are organized and articulated to suit

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the requirements of the author. It is my argument that many strategies, identified across a broad range of ethnographic texts, can be identified in Chatwin's work, and that the ways in which he establishes the authority of his account are comparable with those of some ethnography, both realist and reflective. In consequence, Chatwin's establishment of authorial identity within his texts is also comparable with the establishment of identity by ethnographers, particularly, although not exclusively, in the realist mode. The following section will engage with work by Clifford, Marcus and the other commentators quoted above, in an analysis of the ways in which these strategies operate in a specific set of texts from the Chatwin oeuvre. In doing so, the chapter will provide a textual comparison which is not based on the genre of travel writing, whilst focusing on the theme of identity formation. It therefore extends my examination of Chatwin's work beyond the other literary comparisons of the previous chapter.

Section Two: Ethnographic Authority and Identity Formation in Chatwin's "Ouidah" Texts

In the section which follows, a reading will be given of several pieces of Chatwin's work, which demonstrates the processes by which the travel experience combined with research is developed in its textual forms. Using the aspects from reflective ethnography discussed in the first section of this chapter, the reading will identify techniques and trends in Chatwin's work which ally it with some forms of ethnographic writing. It will analyse several different depictions of the same experience, demonstrating how the 'fieldwork' of travel is used in texts which are to a varying degree 'fictions'. In examining the relationship between travel and text, the section will make use of Nicholas Shakespeare's account of Chatwin's travel in Benin (previously Dahomey) but will concentrate on the ethnographic debates outlined in the previous section. Particular attention will be paid to the processes by which Chatwin makes his experience the touchstone of the text, and in doing so establishes as his own 'ethnographic authority' his identity as traveller and writer. The section will argue that there is a development in Chatwin's use of the same material in non-fiction (notebooks) and fiction ("Milk", The Viceroy of Ouidah) but that the dividing line between fact and fiction in individual texts is blurred, so that what purports to be objective account is in fact a carefully manipulated narrative. Concluding remarks of this section will attempt to assess how far the overlap between ethnographic writing and fiction actually serves to establish Chatwin's identity. This argument will be pursued in the final section of this chapter, which discusses The Songlines and In Patagonia.

Chatwin made at least two visits to Dahomey, before and after its change of name to The People's Republic of Benin. In Photographs and Notebooks, a section of Chatwin's journal, written on the earlier trip, is reproduced. It is dated January and February 1971, and describes Chatwin's journey from Niger to Cotonou on the

Dahomey coast. Elements of this trip are used in the short story "Milk" which first appeared in *London Magazine* in 1977, and was anthologized as a short story in Anatomy of Restlessness. Descriptions of the landscape are also a probable influence on the description of the landscapes of the Dahomey interior in The Viceroy of Ouidah. In 1976, Chatwin returned to travel and research for the book, then intended as a biography of Felix de Souza, which became The Viceroy of Ouidah (Felix de Souza became Francisco Da Silva). During this trip, Chatwin experienced the events described in "A Coup". The novel The Viceroy of Ouidah was published in 1980. "A Coup" first appeared in *Granta 10* and was anthologized in What Am I Doing Here (1989). Chatwin's final travel in relation to this material was made several years later, when he was already seriously ill with AIDS. Again the trip resulted in writing, a piece called "On location. Gone to Ghana. The making of Werner Herzog's Cobra Verde" which appeared in *Interview* in 1988 and was also anthologized in What Am I Doing Here. The generic boundaries involved cross between private journal, short story, novel and travel writing. The inspiration for all this came from Chatwin's intention to do fieldwork as a basis for writing: it is worth noting that none of the texts apart from the original journal (of which I only have access to the brief sections reproduced in Photographs and Notebooks) actually constitute conventional travel writing. The novel and short story are not written in the first person, and "A Coup" and "Werner Herzog in Ghana" are concerned with a brief stay, during which (either because of illness or incarceration) the writer is almost completely immobile.

Although the pattern of activity in relation to all these pieces conforms to the model of fieldwork, note-taking, and then departure to 'write-up', it can hardly be said that the periods involved signify 'deep fieldwork'. A period of a few months at a time does not compare with the one or two years of the participant-observer model recommended by Mead or Malinowski, especially as the range of Chatwin's observations here is not focused on a single object of study, as would be the case

with ethnographic fieldwork.[35] Nor, however, does it compare with the 'passing through' nature of travellers' descriptions. A contrast is possible with Theroux, for example, (see previous chapter) on whose journeys the destination and the covering of distance are the dynamics behind the narrative which follows, in linear form, the same linear journey. It is in Chatwin's notebooks that the reader finds most detailed observations about travel. Chatwin notes, albeit in shorthand, the hotels and landscapes through which he passes:

> Arrived as dawn was breaking and could see the amazing outline of the mosque's minaret, bristling with wooden spires like the vertebra of some defunct fauna. Agadès in the morning light. Another world, the world of the desert. Golden sun hitting the ragged red mud walls, magpies around the mosque and the awful blue of the sky. ("RO", p.72)

At this point there is no attempt to record in methodical fashion. Chatwin's travel has no immediate purpose and there is no definite textual form in mind for this material. Despite the fact that he was researching for the project of the de Souza biography, this material is noted as a matter of course, and has no specific place in a specific narrative. The journal is characterised by Chatwin's relating the surroundings to himself, rather than any project: "I happen to like lands that are sucked dry. They suit me. We complement each other" ("RO", p.68); "Don't admire this culture very much. Pure asceticism of the desert appeals to my arid sense far more" ("RO", p.66). The fact of his lack of inspiration is also acknowledged: "Have been in Africa for a month only and it seems an age. Nothing particular to record ... " ("RO", p.74). Although it might be argued that Chatwin is positioning himself in relation to the landscape, he seems to be doing so in a desultory fashion. This text reflects a complex mix of tones that might be described as a combination of the realist and the reflective. Chatwin is aware of his own presence in the text, and reports on his own well (or ill) being. The text has no obvious focus beyond the uncontrolled occurrences of foreign travel. There is no

attempt to render whole conversations, and the depictions seem to follow a spontaneous muse. They depart, therefore, from the sort of notes upon which an anthropologist might hope to base a realist ethnography. Remarks about the political or economic situation are not grounded in actual occurrences, whilst the descriptions both of surroundings and people remain determinedly subjective, even sensual. This contrasts with the examples from the finished text of In Patagonia, in which, as I argued in the previous chapter, the description of the terrain gives rise to the consideration of other aspects of place: colonial legacy or other historical material, for example. In the notebook, the writer seems to be reflectively aware of the relationship between himself and text, and the control of the material is, naturally, less studied.

On the other hand, the comments do contain judgements which make individual people and places representative of trends or essential characteristics: "These capitals of Africa are quite formless ... African smile slow, stupid, full of good nature" ("RO", p.66); "The smell of Africa" ("RO", p.67). This is quite typical of the judgements to be found in the non-reflective ethnography.[36] It is also the case that Chatwin establishes the authenticity of the experience he describes by relying on the tropes of "Geographical remoteness or difficulty of access ... ".[37] He is forced to travel by truck, and at one point heads an entry *"en marche* (Have lost all track of date)" ("RO", p.73). Physical discomfort is noted: "The trots. Shat in my sleeping bag. Horrible dawn" ("RO", p.72); "Nerve in upper thigh pinching. Hotter than ever before" ("RO", p.73). The tone remains impressionistic however; there are large gaps in the journal,[38] and ambiguities which are not a feature of the realist ethnography: "Then taken by a charming self-deprecating Martiniquais who wore a bright scarlet shirt ... " ("RO", p.67). There is no indication of the sense in which 'taken' is intended. Chatwin spends the night with the man, and later returns "Slept in the Martiniquais' house in a proper bed this time, not on the floor" ("RO", p.74). No reason is given for this change, and the placing of the self in the text,

already whimsical, becomes obtuse, unexplained. The journal is in no sense a Malinowskian admission of personal involvements hidden in a previous text; even the notebook account is not explicit. But nor is it a realist text, for the same reason that the relationships between subject, in this case the Martiniquais, and author are not stated.

This ambiguity is furthered by Chatwin's first published textual representation of this journey. In "Milk", a young American experiences his first sexual encounter, with a black prostitute whilst staying in a hotel in Africa. The people inhabiting the location of the story are the Peuls and the Hausas, as in the journal extracts. The young man buys milk in a calabash from a roadside stand. The journal describes a similar scene: "The booths - one a reddish contraption of flattened tin cans and wood painted maroon. Scrawled across it in white painted lettering *lait frais et lait caille* ... " ("RO", p.67). The journal also notes that: "The Hausas have scarifications like cat-whiskers" ("RO", p.67). In "Milk" the character Jeb sees " ... the Hausa men, their faces scarred like cat whiskers ... " ("M", p.37). The unusual "cat" instead of "cat's" in both cases reinforces the suggestion that the latter is a direct quotation from the former. The journal states: "Arrived here in the dark and dined in a ... restaurant called *Le Lotus Bleu*" ("RO", p.67). In "Milk": "They reached the town late in the afternoon and stopped outside a bar called Le Lotus Bleu" ("M", p.38). Chatwin buys a whiskey in a bar whose clients are singing a song about the landlady: "Quand on vient à Tahoua/ Viens/ Voir Annie/ Et son whisky/ Annie et/ son whisky - repeated and repeated" ("RO", p.69). In "Milk", Jeb goes to a bar in which "The men sang a song with a refrain ending 'Annie et son whisky!'" ("M", p.41). There are other points of comparison. In the sexual encounter, Jeb is accused of being a pederast, and loses his self-confidence as he is forced to drink whisky. Chatwin's wavering moods and his obvious attraction to the African men he meets make him a candidate as the model for this character.[39]

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Whether or not this is the case, "Milk" is certainly a combination of direct quotes from the journal and invented narrative.[40] Chatwin abandons any pretence that he is reporting objectively; the lack of the first person signals a departure from journal into fiction. The quotations, however, are of course "staged by the quoter" and both these texts are "fictions both of another cultural reality and of their own mode of production."[41] There is certainly an explicit abandonment of subjectivity in the short story, which, as other examples in this and the next section will argue, is rare in Chatwin's work. There is also, however, the sense that Chatwin expects his readership to accept and understand the author's authority over his subject matter. The weight of detail in the descriptions and the extent of the information given, for example about the Hausas and the Peuls, is intended to establish in the mind of the reader the idea that experience and knowledge, albeit at the remove created by fictionalization, play a significant part in the depiction taking place. Although the fictional nature of the story is signalled more clearly than in "A Coup" or The Songlines (not least through the use of the third person), the ethnographer's authority which the journals establish still informs the depictions of Dahomey made in the text of "Milk".[42] I would argue that even for the reader who has no access to the other texts under discussion here, the description of place, culture and population carry the impression of knowledge and, therefore, authority.

In these examples, Chatwin's writing is of the kind described by Pratt as "infuriatingly ambiguous",[43] and this is even more the case in the production of "A Coup". Nicholas Shakespeare gives an account of the events surrounding Chatwin's arrest, and himself compares Chatwin's subsequent oral and written descriptions. I am more concerned with textual strategies through which Chatwin establishes his own authority and identity in the published account. In "A Coup" he stages quotes to strong effect, especially those of amateur travellers, contrasting them with his own display of the ethnographer's " ... feel for the foreign context, a kind of accumulated savvy ... ".[44] He also reinforces the identity which Clifford

discusses: that of the Western middle-class male. In my reading of the piece, this identity is another way of establishing authority within the narrative, and Chatwin attempts to present his depiction of the events in a realist tone, giving no indication of the 'constructed' nature of the text, or displaying any reflexivity about his own position as both main character and writer.

The first descriptions of events in the piece are impressionistic, although rendered in a tone which makes them sound like methodical observations. Thus Chatwin sets the scene:

> It was a grey and windless dawn, and the grey Atlantic rollers broke in long even lines along the beach. The palms above the tidemark shivered in a current of cooler air that blew in off the breakers. Out at sea - beyond the surf - there were several black fishing canoes. ("C", p.15)

The description is simple but carries several authorial strategies. The reader is left with the understanding that Chatwin recognizes a fishing canoe when he sees one, and therefore that he has more than a passing knowledge of this culture. On the other hand, there is no indication as yet of the location of the action. The description of a seascape is non-specific. This remains the case until Chatwin is in conversation with his captor later in the piece, at which point it is revealed that the location is in Benin, and that Chatwin has visited before. This reinforces the reader's belief that Chatwin has had access to such difficult places previously, and has an understanding of his surroundings which is unique to him. Chatwin shows the soldier, who is not calm, telling Chatwin, who is calm, to remain calm.

The piece therefore employs a range of depictions in order to further certain impressions on the part of the reader. One the one hand Chatwin employs a fast-paced, impressionistic style to give an idea of the speed at which events moved:

We ran, bumped into other running figures, and ran on. A man shouted "Mercenary!" and lunged for my shoulder. I ducked and we dodged down a sidestreet. A boy in a red shirt beckoned me into a bar. It was dark inside. People were clustered round a radio. Then the bartender screamed (wildly, in African) at me. And suddenly I was out again on the dusty red street, shielding my head with my arms, pushed and pummelled against the corrugated building by four hard acridly sweating men until the gendarmes came to fetch me in a jeep. ("C", p.17)

The short sentences carry the pace, but also give the impression that Chatwin is above the chaos: he is quick enough (mentally and physically) to 'duck' an attacker, and his plight arouses sympathy amongst the inhabitants of a bar. On the other hand 'African' is not a language, and Chatwin must know this, yet almost immediately afterwards he is engaged in convincing the reader of his cosmopolitan credentials, and describing in non-emotive terms the conversation with his captor:

"I came here as a tourist."

"You are English?"

"Yes."

"But you speak an excellent French"

"Passable," I said.

"With a Parisian accent , I should have said."

"I have lived in Paris"

"I, also, have visited Paris. A wonderful city."

("C", p.18)

Chatwin attempts to disarm the officer with his identity as a tourist; for the reader, the text has already established that identity as being more than tourist. The harmlessness implied by this tag belies the agility, expertise and control which

Chatwin has already demonstrated in the text. It is a remarkable stroke of luck for Chatwin that the officer recognises a Parisian accent, allowing the author to contrast his own "I have lived in Paris" with his inquisitor's "I ... have *visited* Paris". Further authority of an ethnographic nature is established at points in the text when Chatwin explains references for the reader, reinforcing "the writer's claim to represent a world as only one who has known it firsthand can".[45] Hence the following explanation: "The colonel laid his jowls on his hands and sighed, 'The Sombas! The Sombas!' The Sombas came from the far north-west of the country. They filed their teeth to points and once, not so long ago, were cannibals" ("C", p.19). The description of the colonel's jowls, an example of poetic license, is in contrast to the ethnographic authority which the subsequent explanation carries. The combination of '*far* north-west' and the implication of cannibalism serve to remind the reader that only the author who has engaged in fieldwork of a potentially dangerous nature would be capable of such erudition.[46] Chatwin later attempts to reinforce this impression with a paragraph about his preferred African landscapes: "The Africa I loved was the long undulating savannah country to the North" ("C", p.25). Again the reader is presented with information about Africa which pretends to be the judgement of an experienced fieldworker. The casual tone of this statement again reinforces the impression of long experience.

Textual strategies which establish authority in the same ways as have been identified in the first section of this chapter therefore complement the literary devices which are also used in this piece. The examples given above are typical of "A Coup", which later contrasts Chatwin with an amateur in order to establish the identity of the true fieldworker:

> The Frenchman was a water-engineer. He worked upcountry,
> on Artesian wells, and had come down to the capital on leave.
> He was a short muscular man, tending to paunch, with cropped
> grey hair and a web of white laugh-lines over his leathery

cheeks. He had dressed himself *en mercenaire*, in fake python-skin camouflage, to shoot a few game-birds in the forest on the outskirts of town. ("C", p.21)

Chatwin is in sufficiently good health to withstand the rigours of the ordeal, and clever enough to comprehend the line of least resistance to the interrogators. In the face of death, he indulges in dry humour with the Frenchman and later, upon escape, celebrates with champagne. The figure of the gentleman adventurer seems to be suggested here, but the whole piece is supported by the sense, established almost immediately, that because of his unique knowledge, gained through difficult fieldwork, Chatwin's text has an unquestionable authority. As with the fieldworker, "his presence at the events described, his perceptual ability, his disinterested perspective, his objectivity and his sincerity ... "[47] are all demonstrated, although Chatwin's place in this text is not purely rhetorical, as Crapanzo argues is the case for the ethnographer. Chatwin is present as a character as well as an ethnographic presence in the piece, but the textual strategies through which he establishes his authority enable him to make this depiction without compromising the ethnographic authority which lend credibility to writing which is highly "staged". This credibility is called into question, however, by the manipulation of details from "A Coup" which frame the narrative of The Viceroy of Ouidah, as this section will now argue.

The close of "A Coup" finds Chatwin in a conversation during which he admits that he is researching for a novel about the slave-trade. Although his original intention was to write a biography, and although the main narrative of the novel takes place during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the events of "A Coup" are used to frame the twentieth-century part of the narrative, and to place the Da Silva family in a contemporary political context. This shift of focus, largely at the end of the novel, complements the economic and political debate at the start of the novel between the members of the family who hope to recover a lost fortune. The frame also suggests

the futility of the efforts of the family members to maintain their own sense of identity.

This section of the narrative is clearly based on Chatwin's experiences during the coup in Benin, and demonstrates how the writer, whilst maintaining his own authority as source of 'authentic' information, 'stages' quotes in order to serve the purposes of the text. These developments mirror those identified earlier in this section, between "The Road to Ouidah" and "Milk". Throughout the novel, the cultural background of Dahomey in previous centuries, as well as the framing narrative which is set in the twentieth century, is based on Chatwin's experience in Dahomey. In addition, the story of Da Silva and the present-day members of his family is based on the research which Chatwin undertook both in Dahomey and Brazil.

As in "A Coup", therefore, the text consists of quotations from individuals and from the host culture which are staged by Chatwin in support of the narrative. In addition, the impressionistic depiction of landscape and surroundings is combined with these cultural quotes to form a complex textual whole. The same strategies of authorial identity are not present in the text, as there is no first-person narrative, but the deployment of the different textual elements is comparable.[48] Chatwin combines the "fieldwork" with the fiction without any indication of a change of mode. This is a technique which he was to repeat in Utz and The Songlines. The reader is therefore led between the two modes in a text which gives no "sense of its own emergence as a text"[49] and therefore no sense of its own reflexivity. Although this is not ethnographic writing in the accepted realist mode, it is not reflective about the relationship between the author and the subject which the text presents either.

The novel opens with the Da Silva family marking the annual celebration of the birth of their ancestor, Dom Francisco Da Silva. Shakespeare reveals the extent to which

Chatwin based this event on a real celebration by the de Souza family.[50] Here, however, instead of presenting the material in the observational mode of "The Road to Ouidah", a similar process takes place to the one already identified in "Milk". The surroundings, characters and other cultural material are appropriated and structured in order to introduce the novel's first key character, Mama Wéwé. Since there is no (published) ur-text for this section of the novel, there can be no direct comparison between texts. It is clear, however, that Chatwin structures the material in a highly artificial way. This is comparable with Sala 'Ilua: A Samoan Mystery, in which Bradd Shore introduces a murder in a Samoan community in order to extend an analysis of the political and social hierarchies of that community.[51] Although the murder did not take place at the start of his fieldwork, Shore nonetheless uses it as an opening, in narrative form, for his ethnography. Although the rest of the text conforms to ethnographic convention, it is clear that the chronology of the material has been altered for purely representational reasons. At no point, of course, does Chatwin divert from the fictionalized narrative in an attempt to present cultural reality, but the material which is based on fieldwork is equally "staged" and the veracity of the descriptions is not intended to be questioned, despite the complex structure of the work.

Elements of the ethnography identified in the first section of this chapter are therefore present. The use of jargon words, here relating to Dahomian culture, abounds: "Yogovan", "Alafin" and "ago". In my opinion, Chatwin's style is sometimes weighed down by the need to establish authority, comparable with that of the ethnographer, through the use of esoteric words. These words, when combined with the impressionistic descriptive passages give the novel its idiosyncratic style:

> Their skin cracked in the harmattan: then the rains came and
> tambourined on their caladiums and splashed dados of red mud
> up the walls of their houses. (V, p.14)

Again this is a means of confusing the distinction between the fictional and non-fictional. The reader has no doubt that these terms are genuine, and the result of some experience of the culture being described. Chatwin can "claim to represent a world as only one who has known it firsthand can",[52] but is thus forging a link, in the words of Fisher and Marcus, between 'fieldwork' and fiction rather than using fieldwork to inform an ethnographic text. Previous commentators have either praised or criticized The Viceroy of Ouidah for this use of language. Karl Miller is sarcastic about the lists of references to Brazilian cuisine: "This is the jewelled prose of the English upper-class traveller, carried to the threshold of burlesque".[53] He nonetheless states that "The Chatwin lexicon is large and Dahomey enlarged it", thereby acknowledging the ethnographic authority which Chatwin's fieldwork clearly lends to the text. John Hemming, whose comments are more enthusiastic, also states: "Almost every page contains marvellously concise observations by someone who has travelled in these remote places"; "The strength of the novel lies in its wealth of detail"; "He notices every custom or ritual ... ".[54] Both commentators therefore have absolute faith in Chatwin's cultural knowledge, which he has obtained, they pronounce, by extensive travel ("deep fieldwork") in exotic places ("difficulty of access").

Chatwin's ethnographic authority, and his identity as an upper middle-class male from a Western society, are therefore of paramount importance in the novel. Final evidence of the relation between The Viceroy of Ouidah and "A Coup" shows how closely Chatwin's accounts of the same experience match (perhaps taken from the same notebook). In "A Coup" Chatwin describes the office in which he is held:

> The President's picture hung aslant on a bright blue wall, and
> beside it were a broken guitar and a stuffed civet cat, nailed in
> mockery of the Crucifixion, with its tail and hindlegs together,
> and its forelegs splayed apart. ("C", p.28)

The political events which frame the narrative of <u>The Viceroy of Ouidah</u> feature a colonel, closely resembling the colonel encountered by Chatwin in "A Coup". In the final scene of the novel he is in his office:

> Fixed to the wall were a pair of handcuffs and a broken guitar. There was also a stuffed civet cat, nailed in mockery of the Crucifixion, with its hind legs and tail together and its forelegs stretched apart.
>   Above the desk hung the scarified face of the President.
> (<u>V</u>, p.126)

The changes in these two texts are inexplicable, but they demonstrate the use by Chatwin of the same material, gained during "fieldwork", in two different texts.[55] The description is "staged" as the narrative requires, and demonstrates no sense of its own emergence as a text; the use of this material by Chatwin does not reflect the situation in which it was observed. In the case of the novel, the participant-observer has been removed from the text, and the reader of <u>The Viceroy of Ouidah</u>, whilst respecting the authority of Chatwin's voice, is nonetheless ignorant of the relationship between the author (narrator of "A Coup") and the events described, which are placed only in the context of the other fictionalized stagings of quotes from other research or fieldwork.

Another comparison across texts again leads the reader to question the nature of this textual authority, and again demonstrates the means by which Chatwin establishes textual authority at the expense of any attempt to give an accurate account. In <u>The Viceroy of Ouidah</u>, Chatwin describes the shrine to Dom Francisco, attended to by Aya Adelina:

> From time to time she would remove the white cloth covering a
> rusty iron object resembling an umbrella, clotted with blood and
> feathers, and stuck into the floor.
>
> This was an *Asin*, the Dahomean Altar of the Dead. (<u>V</u>,
> p.21)

Chatwin later wrote a piece describing the filming of the novel by Werner Herzog (the film was titled <u>Cobra Verde</u>). Anthologized as "Werner Herzog in Ghana", the piece describes, with the same authority that characterizes the texts discussed elsewhere in the section, Herzog's recreation of Dahomean culture for the film:

> ... the king of Dahomey ... is carried from his palace in a litter.
> His courtiers surround him, yelling their heads off. Most of
> them hold the *asin,* which are animal-headed standards covered
> in gold leaf. ("OL", p.140)

Surely these texts reveal that Chatwin's desire to establish ethnographic authority (and to distance himself from the chaos and superficiality of the film-set) is more important than the anthropological accuracy of the text. In a fictionalized account, this is perhaps to be expected, but it is revealing of his technique to have this example of Chatwin's different explanations of 'jargon' from another culture. The authority which this 'staged' knowledge lends to the text is more important to Chatwin than the veracity of the account that he gives.

This section has demonstrated that, across a range of texts, Chatwin's textual strategies for establishing his own authority and identity have much in common with similar aspects of ethnographic writing. The characteristics of conventional ethnographic rhetoric, identified in the first section of this chapter, can be traced through these texts as Chatwin uses the authority which fieldwork brings to the written texts, and selects cultural quotations not only to serve the narrative or structure of his work, but also to impart a sense of his own expertise. The link

between Chatwin's fieldwork and his written oeuvre is similar to the link between anthropological fieldwork and ethnographic writing, despite the fact that Chatwin works in a different (although overlapping) genre. As ethnography has tried to escape the shadow of the travel account, Chatwin's texts, largely in non-reflective mode, have attempted to draw on the textual strategies through which ethnographic texts establish the identity of their authors.

The following section will offer a reading of work by Chatwin which is more experimental in its reflexivity about the relationship between author, subject and text. Although Chatwin does not demonstrate the kinds of reflexivity about participant-observer research as are to be found in recent ethnographies, the presence of the first person, and an explicit account of the personal investment in the outcome of the travel marks these texts as slightly different in mode from those examined in this section. Section Three will argue, nonetheless, that the same staging of quotes, and the same textual strategies for establishing authority are also present in these more reflective texts.

Section Three: Ethnographic Authority and Identity Formation in *In Patagonia* and *The Songlines*

The reading of The Viceroy of Ouidah and related texts in the previous section demonstrated that Chatwin derives authority in the text through strategies which have much in common with those employed by ethnographers, particularly in the realist mode of representation. It also explored the close links in Chatwin's work between different texts, and between fieldwork and textual representation. The following section will extend this argument to the two texts under consideration here, but will also identify in them strategies which the first section of this chapter called reflective ethnography. The readings offered here will examine the ways in which In Patagonia and The Songlines display reflective positioning or experimental narrative structures, yet still rely on the more conventional strategies of ethnographic authority discussed in the previous two sections of this chapter.

If "some direct indication of fieldwork conditions and experiences" is "crucial" to legitimizing the ethnographic account,[56] then In Patagonia certainly fulfils the criteria. Alone of Chatwin's work, this text details a lengthy period of single-handed travel in sometimes difficult circumstances. Along with The Songlines, this is the only direct account of "fieldwork" to appear in a book-length text by Chatwin. Having established the premise for the travel, Chatwin's progress through Patagonia is at least obliquely presented as an experience of "fieldwork" with several objectives. In the same way, however, the text declares itself as experimental in structure (see previous chapter) and approaches the description of fieldwork experience only inasmuch as it functions as a foundation for the other concerns of the book. Ethnographic authority of the kind identified in the first section of this chapter is therefore used to support a kind of text which is far from being an ethnographic representation of the "fieldwork".

Chatwin bolsters his ethnographic authority through suggestions that he can converse with the population in Spanish,[57] and that he is possessed of the "feel for the foreign context" which Clifford observes in corresponding ethnography.[58] The early sections of the book also feature a tourist who is found dead in the river. Automatically a contrast is set up between "tourist" and Chatwin, whose own depiction of his dangerous trek towards the end of the account is written in a matter-of-fact tone, and thus reinforces the idea that the writer is capable of undertaking journeys in search of material of which the reader or the tourist would be incapable.[59] His survival in the face of danger establishes him as a capable fieldworker; his physical endurance lending authority to his representation of his travels. At one point, Chatwin quotes from what he claims is the notebook of the journey, which serves to reinforce the impression of hardships endured:

> Next day hotter and windier than before. The hot blasts knocked
> you back, sucked at your legs, pressed on your shoulders. The
> road beginning and ending in a grey mirage. You'd see a dust devil
> behind and, though you knew now never to hope for a truck, you
> thought it was a truck. (IP, p.74)

This is a precursor of Chatwin's use of the notebooks in The Songlines, and makes explicit the links, which Chatwin does not acknowledge, between the notebooks, "Milk", "A Coup" and The Viceroy of Ouidah that I discussed in the previous section of this chapter. Meta-textual reference reinforces the idea that the text is based on direct experience and that it represents a level of understanding on the part of the "fieldworker" which lends authority to his textual representations of travel.

The experiential tone of these sections is contrasted with the sections which are clearly based on research. In Patagonia demonstrates the writer's ability to handle a range of themes in the same text, and to write about them with sufficient erudition to convince his readership.[60] His erudition underlines the authority which physical

travel, in the undertaking of fieldwork, brings to the text. No matter what the subject under discussion, Chatwin is capable of understanding and comment: on subjects including geology, history, politics and other topics, Chatwin also demonstrates appreciation and comprehension of others' expertise. The reader is therefore given the impression that Chatwin knew his material before he made his visit to the location; this mimics exactly the process of preparation for anthropological fieldwork. Chatwin's narrative depicts him being able to draw on prior knowledge when confronted with aspects of Patagonian history or zoology. In fact, the structure of the book is highly artificial, and the quotes are equally as "staged" as those made in ethnographic texts.[61] The transition from fieldwork account to work based on research is never signalled, however, and this departs from the formal ethnographic tradition of acknowledging sources. Although it is obvious, for example, that the account of the self-styled King of Araucania (IP, pp.18-23) is the result of reading around the subject, there is no indication of how the author acquired this knowledge. The bibliography is limited, and is certainly not complete, which is not the case in ethnographic texts, and is less and less the case with travel writing that wishes to be taken seriously. As these readings demonstrate, it is in the body of the text, rather than its periphery, that Chatwin establishes ethnographic authority. Although other travel writers do this to some extent, the effort made by Chatwin to present his own expertise and ability to handle a range of diverse texts, applying them to subject-matter thrown up during the course of the journey, is unusual. There seems to be a conscious effort to engage with intellectual rather than aesthetic concerns, and to establish the implications of the scene rather than to offer an appreciation of the immediate, sensory experience.

The combination of fieldwork experience, research and quotation is therefore complex, although no textual indication is given of the author's awareness of this complexity. As the previous chapter argues, the structure of the text, amongst other aspects, marks a departure from the conventions of travel writing. Despite the

strategies which Chatwin's authorship shares with ethnography, the structure also departs from ethnographic convention. The lack of linear progression, either in the physical travel or the narrative, noted in the previous chapter, means that no consistent approach or subject-matter can be perceived. This extends to the point that the stated intention of the trip, based on the discoveries of Uncle Charley Milward, is called into question. The return to this theme at the close of the narrative merely serves to emphasize that it is a structural tool rather than an important subject. I would argue that the narrator's mocking of his own quest at the close of the narrative, as commented upon by Jan Borm,[62] illustrates the lack of importance of this theme, except as a frame for the construction of the narrative: "I had accomplished the object of this ridiculous journey" (IP, p.182). The idea that Chatwin has some degree of emotional involvement in the quest is undermined by its absence from the rest of the narrative, and by the tone of this final mention of the quest at the end of the journey.

In addition, the seemingly learned accounts of historical or political events are given with Chatwin's comments included. Again, the slippage between research and poetic license is never signalled in the text, and the authority which the quoted material lends to the account carries with it Chatwin's own interventions. Examples of this can be seen in the description of Soto:

> People in the South can still remember the lanky, red-headed Gallician, with the down scarcely off his cheek, and the squinting blue eyes that go with Celtic vagueness and fanaticism.
> (IP, p.95)

The suggestion that Chatwin's description of Soto is made from first-hand evidence supports the sense that the writer has access to knowledge that is beyond the scope of the sedentary historian. The descriptive tone of "lanky, red-haired" is therefore ascribed to the "People in the South". In a similar essentialism the following

phrase, which explains "squinting blue eyes" as being a mark of "Celtic vagueness and fanaticism", actually denotes a change in voice, as this can only be the narrator's judgement on the character, not only of Soto, but of the Celts. It is passed off as if it were objective fact, as is the description that precedes it.

The textual authority which the "fieldwork" establishes therefore makes a claim for Chatwin's subjective comments to be read without question, and the tone of description, which does not change depending on its source, thus transforms the text into a homogeneous authoritative account. At this point and at other points throughout the text, Chatwin abandons the 'realist' mode, under cover of the authority which these textual strategies have brought, and gives descriptions which might be described as "metaphorical and allegorical, composed on inventions rather than observed facts."[63] An example is the description of Punta Arenas:

> From the tower room I looked out over the city: at the white
> spire of St. James's Church; at metal houses painted the colour
> of a Slav handkerchief; at bank buildings and warehouses by the
> docks. The sun slunk in from the west and caught the scarlet
> bow of the car ferry. (IP, p.139)

The blurring of the line between fieldwork and poetic representation, like the lack of indication of when a move is made between quoted fact and invention is supported by Chatwin's authority in the text. This of course mirrors the technique which is used in The Viceroy of Ouidah, in which Chatwin establishes authority through the use of jargon words and reference to esoteric cultural practice, yet also employs literary devices: "His clothes were coated with a bloom of dust" (V, p.58); " ... a lovely mulatta, who would run her fingers through the stiff waves as if peeling the outer leaves off a cabbage" (V, p.60).

The departure from the conventions of travel writing noted in the previous chapter is to some extent replaced by Chatwin's reliance on the textual strategies of ethnography. The establishment of the identity of the fieldworker, which lends Chatwin the authority to combine the direct experience of travel with the (unacknowledged) quotations provides the text with its structure as well as its tone. The text cannot be read as ethnography: Chatwin does not take the trouble to define a single area of enquiry, nor does he offer a sustained exploration of any one concern. The sense of narrative which the travel sections establish supports the other quotations, but the two do not address the same themes to the extent that ethnography draws on previous fieldwork to test its own findings. In Patagonia displays the same concern with establishing authority and identity as did the texts considered in the previous section of this chapter.

Ethnographic textual strategies lend Chatwin authority, but In Patagonia is too varied in its subject matter, and too guarded about its own construction to be read in the same vein as realist ethnography. It is possible that the structure and the lack of conventional unity of purpose between fieldwork and textual research suggest a reflexivity about the processes through which the text is written. If the narrative is read as a personal attempt to recount the adventures of Charley Milward, and to undertake fieldwork to explore the locations of his adventures, then the diversions from this theme, written into the text as a direct account of the direction in which research and travel led the fieldworker, could be indicative of reflective ethnography. It would be in keeping with reflective ethnography, perhaps, to admit that the subject of research was shifting, and as much a product of random travel encounters as the result of sustained fieldwork with an unchanging focus. The narrator seems to allow Patagonia to distract him from the Mylodon quest and the Milward story, as if the structure of the narrative was a reflective account of events which divert from the original aim of the journey.[64] The presentation of a diverse range of concerns in this form allies the text with the "messy, many-'sidedness'"

which Marcus argues is the mark of experimental ethnography.[65] However, the unarticulated processes of textual authority and the lack of acknowledged manipulation by the author are in contrast with texts of this kind. The experimental structure of the text does not reflect a desire to engage with critical forms of analysis. In addition, although it is innovative in the field of travel writing, it fails to signal its own reflexivity, as contemporary ethnography might, through "a sense of its own emergence as a text."[66] The constructedness of the narrative, as this section has argued, supports Chatwin's attempt to establish the authority and identity of the writer and to control his material, not to propose, as in the case of reflective ethnography, "its contingent openness as to the boundaries of the object of study."[67]

A text which signals a greater "sense of its own emergence as a text" is The Songlines. As with In Patagonia, this text is obviously a complex structure of related themes. The similarities in the relationship between "fieldwork" and representation are more apparent in these two texts than in the more explicitly fictional work, such as On the Black Hill. The narrator/fieldworker is present in both narratives, and the role played by description of travel is reduced in order for the narrative to become an organizational framework for the presentation of other subjects. Although the use of the notebooks in In Patagonia is a precedent for the same meta-textual material in The Songlines, it is in the latter that these quotations take on a greater importance. In The Songlines, the notebook quotations replace the quotations from academic research which provide the starting point of so many of the narrative diversions in In Patagonia. The premise of the "fieldwork" is a desire to approach the problem first-hand:

> My reason for coming to Australia was to try to learn for myself,
> and not from other men's books, what a Songline was - and
> how it worked. Obviously I was not going to get to the heart of
> the matter, nor would I want to. (S, p.14)

In this way, Chatwin gains more control over the relationship between this text and others. Not content with quoting from other authorities, he now quotes from his own precedent texts: the notebooks. Although some of the content of the notebooks may also be the result of Chatwin's reading, the source from which they are quoted affects the reader's view of their provenance. Hence these quotations seem to have been appropriated by Chatwin, and to be more closely related to the other physical experiences also recounted from the notebooks than they do to their original sources: the other texts from which Chatwin has taken them. The quotes, therefore, whether from notebooks, or in dialogue, are as 'staged' as any others. Brian Johnson has argued as much, stating that "The Songlines can often appear formally polyphonic without seriously compromising its author's intentions."[68] Once again, this denies the presence of the 'multi-vocal' text described by Estes, discussed in Chapter One.

As with all the texts discussed in this chapter, The Songlines establishes authority in a way that relates closely to the authority of the realist ethnography discussed in Section One. Andrew Palmer, although concentrating on the figure of the 'wanderer' in his reading of The Songlines, comments that Chatwin makes the point forcefully in this text that authority can only reside in the figure of the writer.[69] The account of Chatwin's travel in Australia features less of the single-handed adventure and possible hardship either of the Benin trip or the Patagonian journey, but nonetheless features access to places, cultures and information which require prolonged travel and "fieldwork". The same "credentials" of "cultural strangeness, geographical remoteness or difficulty of access" that Webster sees in ethnographic writing establish credibility across all these texts. I would argue that the particular structure and high degree of reference to other texts in Chatwin's work also fulfils Webster's final criterion: "the futility of replication."[70] Even if another writer were

to undertake the same journey, they would not have the same resources, or be able to produce the same text, as Chatwin.

The narrator's authority is reinforced by the relationship which he establishes with several important characters in the text. As in In Patagonia, characters who usually reserve admiration or information respond to Chatwin in positive ways. O'Hanlon wishes him to stay longer and the narrator is the first person to whom the racist policeman reveals the title of his novel. Most importantly, Father Flynn is impressed by his understanding:

> Flynn turned to face me.
> "You know what our people call the white man?" He asked.
> "Meat", I suggested.
> "And you know what they call a welfare cheque?"
> "Also meat."
> "Bring a chair", he said. "I want to talk to you." (S, p.62)

It is impressed upon the reader that 'Bruce' is liked and trusted. In addition, he handles the habits (kangaroo hunting, sleeping in the outback) and vocabulary (the "eskie", for example) with expertise, explaining to the reader as though the narrator himself were already knowledgeable. He shows "savvy" and a "feel" for the context, demonstrating his intuitive understanding later in the same conversation:

> "What this boils down to", I said, hesitantly, "is something quite similar to birdsong. Birds also sing their territorial boundaries."
> Arkady, who had been listening with his forehead on his kneecaps, looked up and shot me a glance, "I was wondering when you'd rumble to that one." (S, p.66)

'Bruce' therefore passes intellectual tests as well as physical ones, and is keen to convey to the reader his acceptance by the other characters. Despite the "suggested"

and "hesitantly" which hint at modesty, these exchanges establish, at the start of the narrative, the ethnographic authority which will carry the later discourse on Aboriginal and other cultural meanings; discourse which is much less grounded in research than in speculation and Chatwin's creatively written account.

Despite these similarities between In Patagonia, and The Songlines, and the fact that in both texts the fieldwork and meta-textual references establish the authority of the writer, The Songlines has key differences in its relationship with ethnographic authority. The use of the notebooks as exterior to the immediate travel experience is signalled quite clearly in the text. The slippage between fieldwork experience and the inclusion of prior research which passes without comment in In Patagonia is here articulated in more self-conscious ways. In the first text, the suggestion is that the inclusion of information from other sources is inspired by the route of the journey; the narrative therefore follows the journey, and experiential data is supplemented by other documentation, where it is relevant to the concerns which the travel uncovers.[71] In The Songlines, the theme of nomadism is considered to be sufficiently close to the concerns of the journey to support the bulk of notebook extracts which approach this concern. The distance between the travel experience and the other material is therefore made explicit by Chatwin when introducing the section on Konrad Lorenz:

> ... my thoughts kept returning to the man in blue. He reminded
> me of someone. I had the memory of another man miming an
> almost identical story, with the same kind of animal gestures ...
> > Then I had it.
> > "Lorenz!" (S, p.120)

The experience of watching the Lizard performance during his "fieldwork" in Australia inspired, it is claimed, a memory of Konrad Lorenz. The next section of The Songlines then discusses Lorenz, and the strategy of linking the two in this

way conceals the geographical distance and the difference in subject matter between the Lizard story and Lorenz's work on animal behaviour. This somewhat clumsy introduction of new material is echoed by the inclusion of the notebook section later in the text. 'Bruce' states that he fears the 'malaise' of settlement (S, p.180) and this encourages him to reopen the notebooks. He then allies the theory which he is about to propose with "the Great Teachers" (S, p.181) thereby identifying himself as one of that number. He then, as with the section just quoted, makes an explicit link between his fieldwork experience, and the material which he is about to quote:

> My two most recent notebooks were crammed with jottings taken in South Africa, where I had examined, at first hand, certain evidence on the origin of our species. What I learned there - together with what I now knew about the Songlines - seemed to confirm the conjecture I had toyed with for so long ...
> (S, p.181)

The next page is headed "From the Notebooks". In this justification for the inclusion of material, Chatwin emphasizes the coincidence of subject matter in both the notebooks and the current text, and establishes again the authority of the fieldworker ("first hand") as well as the immediacy of the experience ("My two most recent notebooks"). The link between this information and the current fieldwork is made explicit, and finally his own "savvy" is confirmed, as the fieldwork supports a long-term hunch. This textual strategy enables Chatwin to reinforce his narrative of travel with quotes from other sources, yet to avoid reliance on "other men's books". Finally, the title "From *the* Notebooks" (as opposed to *my* notebooks) creates formal distance, setting these up as a valuable, if not unquestionable source of information. They have the authority of the external text but also carry the important traces of fieldwork, and so relate to the account of "fieldwork" in the Outback.[72]

Although the structure of the text marks this as Chatwin's most experimental work, it is nonetheless articulated through a range of literary devices. The narrator's drunken attempt to describe the "Dreamtime" requires that the reader accept a degree of poetic license:

> ... far away, lived the Sky-dwellers: youthfully indifferent beings, human in form but with the feet of emus, their golden hair glittering like spiders' webs in the sunset, ageless and unageing, having existed forever in their green, well-watered Paradise beyond the Western clouds. (S, p.80)

The tone of this piece, *In the Beginning*, contrasts with the short, direct sentences of Chatwin's other passages. Here, he departs from the matter-of-fact statements about culture, and sets up a vision of creation. Other parts of the text, including narrative and notebook, will support this vision. The use of literary device to describe the travel experience also continues: "The valley in between was covered in a continuous thicket of mulga trees, leafless at this season, silver-grey like a blanket of low-lying mist" (S, p.126). Although the more sustained departures from the conventional "fieldwork" report are signalled, as they are not in other texts, these descriptions made in the course of the narrative are never acknowledged as being different from the more detailed accounts of cultural practice. Indeed, as Morphy notes, the term "Songlines" is itself a literary device, used by Chatwin as a convenient and evocative translation of a complex system in aboriginal culture; though this is never acknowledged.[73] As has been noted in relation to other texts, therefore, a combination of textual strategies establishes authorial control for Chatwin.

It might be argued that The Songlines displays a more reflective approach to the presentation of "fieldwork", refusing to pretend, as does In Patagonia, that there is no difference between the "fieldwork" report and the academic research which make up both texts. Despite the similarities in the ways in which the two texts establish

the ethnographic authority of the writer, The Songlines suggests "a sense of its own emergence as a text" in the examples quoted above. It also engages with questioning the "boundaries of the object of study", and seems to be "suspicious of the ability of encompassing paradigms to ask the right questions, let alone provide answers about the variety of local responses ... ".[74] The narrator proposes answers to roughly-defined questions, which evolve as his response to them evolves. The answers accept that they cannot be definitive, rather suggestive ("obviously I was not going to get to the heart of the matter"), and adopt a 'collagist' approach to achieving the meta-narrative objectives of the text. It can be seen from the placing of different elements of the text that this is a far more reflective practice than the one that transformed notebooks into finished narrative in The Viceroy of Ouidah and "Milk".

This also appears to be the opinion of Howard Morphy, who refuses to treat The Songlines as serious anthropology, but is nonetheless prepared to read it as reflective:

> ... I did not feel that Chatwin could be justly accused of pushing something as coherent as a theory. He may have been looking for a theory, but what he sets up is a resource for speculating about the human condition which centres on the theme of nomadism. The exercise is a metaphysical one, rather than a pseudo-scientific one, and as a reflexive springboard nomadism is no worse than any others that could have been chosen. [75]

Chatwin himself apologizes for the lack of coherence in his theory; but pushes it nonetheless. In my reading of the novel, the notebook sections are not intended as "reflexive springboard" but as a compilation of knowledge through research and experience, which impresses the reader with the authority of the writer. The "authenticity" of the account, which Morphy considers later in his review, is clearly *not* the grounds upon which the text is judged, as he claims it should be. Morphy accepts that The Songlines is a work of "documentary fiction", yet still gives an

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evaluation of it on the grounds of its authenticity. If Chatwin's textual strategies succeed, then the reader will be convinced that his account is authentic. Elsewhere, Morphy seems to recognize at least something of this aspect of Chatwin's work: "Chatwin's overall quest has something of the nineteenth-century anthropologist's agenda about it, in that he seeks out the Australian Aborigines in order to discover something about the essential nature of man ... ".[76] There is still no indication that Morphy is aware of the textual strategies which more closely ally Chatwin's work with early ethnography, however. Morphy develops a generous viewpoint of the text, challenging anthropologists to write a better one. He fails to recognise, however, the textual strategies, so similar to those of realist ethnography, which actually control the "springboard", causing the reader to make a leap of faith after the author, because of the accumulation of authority that these strategies bring.

Despite this apparent "openness", therefore, The Songlines remains implicated in the strategies of ethnographic authority which this chapter has identified in relation to other works in the Chatwin oeuvre. The reflective possibilities of the structure, and acknowledged "messiness" of the questions and answers which the text provides do not displace the privileged position of the author within the text. The reliance on Chatwin's own notebooks actually increases the extent to which the text is an articulation of his experience, not only in Australia, but in the course of other travel as well. The account therefore never departs from positioning Chatwin and his gaze at the centre of the text, and the relationship between the text and the author is still used to establish and stabilize the identity which Chatwin wishes to project. In this sense, the text remains closed, refusing to articulate the experience of any other character, or to be reflective about the distance between the "fieldworker" writer and the Aboriginal culture which provides the dynamic for the narrative.

This chapter has demonstrated, therefore, that Chatwin's work features a range of strategies for establishing the authority of the writer over the subject matter. Not

least of these is a kind of ethnographic authority which has much in common with the textual strategies which commentators such as Clifford and Marcus have identified as being typical of writing in the realist mode of ethnography. The similarity between "fieldwork" and travel, and the travel account and ethnography perhaps makes this inevitable, but I would argue that Chatwin, more than most travel writers, makes use of these strategies. He thus establishes himself in the mind of the reader as having undertaken difficult journeys in search of inaccessible information, and as having a range of other knowledge which allows him to write with authority about the subject of his texts. Despite the ostensible similarities between his work and realist ethnography, and despite the generic innovation identified in the previous chapter of this thesis, this chapter has also demonstrated that Chatwin's work lacks the reflective quality which the same commentators have identified in ethnographic work which is contemporary with Chatwin's writing. Chatwin remains a central figure in his texts, which present "fieldwork" as fact, and which fail to articulate to the reader the fact that much of the material has been selected by Chatwin from other texts. The range of resources which makes up Chatwin's texts develops a sense of authority which is close to traditional ethnography in its privileging of the viewpoint and the abilities of the "fieldworker"/writer. This is equally true of the fictional <u>The Viceroy of Ouidah</u> as it is of the notebooks, and of the longer texts which are based on them.

Endnotes to Chapter Two

[1] A range of terms have been used for this theoretical writing, as Crick describes: "Many labels exist which try to capture seminal aspects of those diverse trends which make up contemporary anthropological sensibility ... There are some family resemblances here, but scarcely definite criteria for distinguishing one from the other" Malcolm Crick, 'Tracing the Anthropological Self: Quizzical Reflections on Field-Work, Tourism and the Ludic", Social Analysis 17 (August 1985), 71. Throughout this thesis, the term 'reflective ethnography' is used to refer to writing which considers the nature of ethnography and its assumptions, rather than ethnographic studies with a single focus; this term is chosen as being appropriate to the process of comparison at work in this thesis. It should be noted that although it refers to self-positioning and awareness of processes, the 'reflective' of this chapter is not the same as the 'reflexive' of Chapter Four. Both refer to quite specific phenomena in their own field.

[2] Bruce Chatwin, The Viceroy of Ouidah (London: Picador, 1982); What Am I Doing Here (London: Picador, 1990); Anatomy of Restlessness Jan Borm and Matthew Graves, eds. (London: Jonathan Cape, 1996); Photographs and Notebooks (London: Picador, 1996). Subsequent references to these texts will be given parethetically in the text, preceded by the abbreviations V; W; A and PN, respectively. The short pieces, published in these texts and discussed in this chapter, will also be given parenthetically as "C" ("A Coup"); "M" ("Milk"); "OL" ("On Location") and "RO" (The Road to Ouidah).

[3] Howard Morphy, "Proximity and Distance; Representations of Aboriginal Society in the Writings of Bill Harney and Bruce Chatwin", in Jeremy MacClancy and Chris McDonaugh, eds., Popularizing Anthropology (London: Routledge, 1996), pp.157-179.

[4] Given my intention to concentrate on a contextualization of Chatwin's work, there is no room to give examples or lengthy quotations from ethnographic works to illustrate the developments discussed in this section. Where appropriate, endnotes will give references to texts which display the techniques or concerns identified by the theoretical work from which this section chiefly proceeds.

[5] Clifford identifies Margaret Mead's Coming Of Age in Samoa as an example of the "participant-observer" tradition which produces this kind of ethnography. James Clifford, The Predicament of

Culture: Twentieth Century Ethnography, Literature and Art (London: Harvard University Press, 1988), p.31.

[6] George Marcus and Dick Cushman, "Ethnographies as Texts", Annual Review of Anthropology II, (1982) 33.

[7] Marcus and Cushman, "Ethnographies as Texts", 34.

[8] In too many examples to name. A random sample might be the two travel accounts presently lying on my desk: Dervla Murphy's The Ukimwi Road: from Kenya to Zimbabwe (London: Flamingo, 1994) and Ronald Wright's Time Among the Maya (London: Abacus, 1997). Both include route maps and location maps, and I would argue that this trend, although a record of the traveller's route, is also a strategy by which to bolster the experiential authority of the account.

[9] Vincent Crapanzano, "Hermes' Dilemma: The Masking of Subversion in Ethnographic Description", in James Clifford and George Marcus, eds., Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography (London: University of California Press, 1986), p.53.

[10] Mary Louise Pratt, "Fieldwork in Common Places", in Clifford and Marcus, eds., Writing Culture, p.27.

[11] James Clifford, Routes (London: Harvard University Press, 1997), p.66.

[12] Apart from the examples to be considered in detail in the following section, other characters who perform this function for Chatwin are the racist policeman in The Songlines, and the Chinese businessman in "Until My Blood is Pure" (What Am I Doing Here pp.42-48).

[13] Clifford and Marcus, "Introduction: Partial Truths", in Writing Culture, p.10.

[14] Clifford and Marcus, "Introduction: Partial Truths", Writing Culture, p.5.

[15] Derek Freeman, Margaret Mead and Samoa (London: Harvard University Press, 1983), p.84.

[16] Clifford, Predicament of Culture, p.80.

[17] Marcus and Cushman, "Ethnographies as Texts", 31-2.

[18] Clifford and Marcus, "Introduction: Partial Truths", p.13. Early examples of experimentation in the genre had been "kept marginal"; Leiris's l'Afrique Fantome (1934) and Lévi-Strauss's Tristes Tropiques (1955) are cited by Clifford and Marcus as influential in this development.

[19] Apart from the implied criticism of the textual strategies of the realist mode, reflective ethnography has become sceptical about the claims made on behalf of the ethnographic project as a whole. In a reference to global processes which will be picked up in the following chapter, Marcus makes this observation: " ... social thought in the years since [the sixties] has grown more suspicious of the ability of encompassing paradigms to ask the right questions, let alone provide answers about the variety of local responses to the operation of global systems which are not understood as certainly as they were once thought to be ... " George Marcus, Anthropology as Cultural Critique (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1986), p.9.

[20] Crapanzano, "Hermes' Dilemma", p.61.

[21] Mary Louise Pratt, "Fieldwork in Common Places", p.30. Pratt is here referring to Florinda Donner's Shabono: A True Adventure in the Remote and Magical Heart of the South American Jungle. Other examples might include Carlos Castaneda's The Teachings of Don Juan (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968).

[22] See Chapter One, endnote 31 of this thesis, for examples of travel writing whose claims to depict a reality align them with the claims of the realist school of ethnography. These texts, such as Thesiger's Arabian Sands (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964) seem to demand respect for the thorough-going nature of their research, and for the writer's involvement with the subject of the text.

[23] Clifford, Predicament of Culture, p.81.

[24] George Marcus, "What Comes (Just) After 'Post'?", in Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds., The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues (London: Sage, 1999). Marcus discusses the experimental nature of recent ethnographic writing, and points to the form of that writing as being an indication of its position in relation to previous forms: "The mark of experimental, critical work is its resistance to this too easy assimilation of the phenomenon of interest by given analytic ready-made concepts. Such resistance is manifested in a work's messy, many-'sitedness', its contingent openness as to the boundaries of the object of study (which emerge

in the space of the work, whose connections by juxtaposition are themselves *the* argument) ... "
p.390.

[25] Despite my willingness to see the innovation which Chatwin introduces in the travel writing genre and the reflective ethnography, I nonetheless disagree with one aspect of Graham Huggan's work on Hugh Brody and Bruce Chatwin. Huggan claims that " ... Brody and Chatwin are both concerned to undermine the misconceived authority of traditional ethnography." Graham Huggan, "Maps, Dreams, and the Presentation of Ethnographic Narrative: Hugh Brody's *Maps and Dreams* and Bruce Chatwin's *The Songlines*" Ariel: A Review of English Literature 22:1 (January 1991), 67. My argument here is that despite the innovation, Chatwin relies on the authority of traditional ethnography in much of his work, and employs the same strategies as those employed by traditional ethnographers in establishing authority. Although The Songlines might be said to represent a more reflective departure from this mode, this only applies to form, structure and the boundaries of the subject, rather than the strategies employed by the author in maintaining his privileged position of authority in the text. See Section Three of this chapter for discussion of both the use of the 'messy text' and traditional ethnographic authority in The Songlines.

[26] George Marcus, "Rhetoric and the Ethnographic Genre in Anthropological Research", Current Anthropology 21, 4 (August 1980), 509.

[27] George Marcus, Anthropology as Cultural Critique, p.29.

[28] Steven Webster, "Dialogue and Fiction in Ethnography", Dialectical Anthropology 7, 2 (1982), 108.

[29] This is also true of the historical research which Chatwin undertook whilst in Benin. Although this is hinted at in "A Coup", it is not mentioned in the finished text of The Viceroy of Ouidah. Shakespeare writes at length about the process, and it is one which serves to emphasize the difficulty of access to information, thereby (albeit after the event) reinforcing Chatwin's authority over the text. See Nicholas Shakespeare, "Kicked by Amazon" in Chatwin (London: Harvill, 1999), p.319.

[30] Clifford, Routes, p.66.

[31] Nicholas Shakespeare's account of Chatwin's experiences in Benin will feature as part of the contextualizing material in the second section. Shakespeare comments on the homo-erotic nature of Chatwin's experience, and questions how far Chatwin's various (textual and non-textual)

accounts are related to veracity or desire. Shakespeare discusses this episode in the light of a homosexual rape fantasy which he believes Chatwin harboured. The humiliation and semi-nakedness of the male prisoners together thus take on a masochistic aspect which Chatwin's depiction of the coup does not have (Shakespeare, Chatwin, pp.326-333).

[32] Clifford, Routes, p. 35.

[33] Marcus, "Rhetoric and the Ethnographic Genre", 509.

[34] Clifford, Predicament of Culture, p.50.

[35] Apart from suggesting the figure of the amateur explorer, this approach also chimes with Chatwin as dilettante, as do his brief stay with the Bedouin, his attempt to study archaeology, and his approach to the songlines. It is typical of his work and research that his knowledge, although presented as authoritative, can be misleading; hence to the statements about the *Asin* discussed later in this section.

[36] A few observed examples are made to stand in as universal fact, as for example in Mead's work: " ... one girl's life was so much like another's, in an uncomplex uniform culture like Samoa." Margaret Mead, Coming of Age in Samoa [1928] (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), p.16.

[37] Webster, "Dialogue and Fiction", 108.

[38] This reading is inevitably based on the only excerpts which are available to the public; the nature of the editing process undertaken by Wyndham and King is not made explicit in the text. I can only assume that the excerpts printed are published without entries having been removed.

[39] There are several examples of this kind of repetition in the Chatwin oeuvre. Another example comes from a piece of reportage on the Volga, published in the Observer in 1984, and reprinted in What Am I Doing Here: "I followed a lame old woman into the Pantheon [in Volgograd]. Her down-at-heel shoes had been split at the toes to relieve the pressure on her bunions" (W, p.189). This can be compared with the description of Marta, first published in 1988, arriving at the Church of St. Sigismund, in Prague: "She pushed the door open ... and almost fell onto the slushy cobbles. To relieve the pressure of her bunions, the sides of her shoes were split open" Bruce Chatwin, Utz (London: Pan Books, 1989), p.9. Chatwin takes the identity of the observed woman and transfers her to Prague where she maintains the same relationship with her environment and the setting in which she is depicted.

[40] The hidden relationship between the writer and the narrator of fiction which is informed by the writer's experience of travel is also a feature of Paul Theroux's My Secret History (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1989). As yet, no unedited notebooks by Theroux have been published which allow the kind of comparison I am making here. The difference between the two writers is that Chatwin's writing engaged with the fictionalizing process from his very first work, In Patagonia, as the first chapter of this thesis demonstrates. Theroux has, at least ostensibly, tried to keep fiction and travel writing separate for longer. He refers to My Secret History as a novel, although it is clearly autobiographical, and features much work based on travel. Whether or not his claims that his travel writing is completely distinct from his fiction up to that point are to be believed, it is worth noting that despite the frequent comparisons between Theroux and Chatwin, and despite the idea that he requires travel as stimulation for his fiction writing, Theroux took a great deal longer to engage explicitly with fiction and travel writing in the same text.

[41] Clifford, Predicament of Culture, p.81.

[42] Another transformation taking place here, it could be argued, concerns the private and public aspects of Chatwin's life. One of the major changes between the two texts is the one which removes the suggestion of homosexual encounter and replaces it with an unmistakably heterosexual one. Obviously Chatwin has no intention of revealing the nature of the original text, and this suggests that there is a clear difference in Chatwin's mind between material which increases his stock of knowledge to be used in later texts, and private record, for example of sexual encounters, although both are initially recorded in the same notebooks.

[43] Pratt, "Fieldwork", p.30.

[44] Clifford, Routes, p.35.

[45] Marcus, Anthropology as Cultural Critique, p.29.

[46] Although it could also be argued that this description smacks of something read and paraphrased. In either case, research or experience, the intent is the same: to establish ethnographic authority over the relevant aspects of the narrative.

[47] Crapanzano, "Hermes' Dilemma", p.53.

[48] For comment on experimentation with point of view see Marcus and Cushman, "Ethnographies as Texts", 31. In comparison with ethnographic texts, this marks The Viceroy of Ouidah as a deliberately fictional text. On the other hand, the sensitivity to this technique felt by early anthropologists was in part due to the possible comparison with the travel account. As I have established, The Viceroy of Ouidah does not fall within this genre either. The third person narrative simply allows Chatwin to stage "quotes" from his "fieldwork" in a mode which serves the tone, and particularly the structure, of the novel.

[49] Marcus, "Rhetoric and the Ethnographic Genre", 509.

[50] Shakespeare, Chatwin, pp.321-7. Shakespeare gives a good account of the actual celebrations, and the family history which formed the basis for the novel. My concern is only with the way in which Chatwin's material on this subject is combined with other textual elements.

[51] Bradd Shore, Sala 'Ilua: A Samoan Mystery (Guildford, Surrey: Columbia University Press, 1982). Despite the innovative opening of the ethnography, Shore hastens back to conventional form, reinforcing ethnographic authority through copious lists of tables and illustrations.

[52] Marcus, Anthropology as Cultural Critique, p.29.

[53] Karl Miller, Doubles: Studies in Literary History: A Critical Study (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), p.405.

[54] John Hemming, "A Trader from the Badlands", Times Literary Supplement December 5th 1980, 1390.

[55] This repetition, with its changes of detail, has also been noted by R.H. Wright, "Literature by Foot: Travel writing and reportage by Novelists Swift, Thubron, Chatwin, Naipaul and Poet James Fenton". (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: Oxford University, 1995). Wright merely notes that this is an example of the use of reportage in fiction, but does not comment on the weight of authority which this strategy brings to a text which, although fiction, draws on fieldwork for its depictions.

[56] Marcus and Cushman, "Ethnographies as Texts", 33.

[57] According to Nicholas Shakespeare, the fact that Chatwin did not speak a word of Spanish caused annoyance to several of the people whose hospitality he expected. Shakespeare, Chatwin p.296.

[58] Clifford, <u>Routes</u> p.35.

[59] Apart from the division between traveller and ethnographer noted in the first section of this chapter, the division between traveller and tourist is one which has exercized critics of both travel-writing and commentators on the phenomenon of tourism. Dean MacCannell's piece on "Staged Authenticity" (<u>American Journal of Sociology</u>, 79 (1973), 589-603) includes consideration of this divide, and many travel writers, of whom Paul Theroux and Eric Newby are examples have attempted to distance themselves from the tourist who may unfortunately be visiting the same location. In the case of both conceptual divisions, it seems that the person giving the account uses their own perception of the division in order to differentiate themselves from those whom they regard as having less understanding of the place or culture, and to ally themselves with previous figures who are acknowledged to have had an understanding, and thereby to establish their own authority to give the account.

[60] Bruce Chatwin, <u>In Patagonia</u> (London: Picador, 1979). Subsequent references will parenthetically in the text preceded by the abbreviation IP.

[61] Clifford, <u>Routes</u>, p. 50.

[62] Jan Borm "Le Récit de Voyage Contemporain Britannique: Essai sur le Renouveau d'un Genre". (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: Université Paris - Denis Diderot, 1997), p.319. See also Chapter One, endnote 64.

[63] Clifford and Marcus, <u>Writing Culture</u>, p.5.

[64] In contrast, his actual textual practice is more studied, as revealed by Clapp, in her chapter "Editing <u>In Patagonia</u>" (see Chapter One, endnote 48 of this thesis). My point here is also supported by Nicholas Shakespeare's comment on the parallels between Chatwin's composition of narrative and Robert Byron's (see page Chapter One, page 6, above).

[65] Marcus, "What Comes (Just) After Post?", p.390.

[66] Marcus, "Rhetoric and the Ethnographic Genre", 590.

[67] Marcus, "What Comes (Just) After Post?", p.390.

[68] Brian Johnson, "In a Savage Hand: Allegories of Writing in Lévi-Strauss and Chatwin", <u>Henry Street</u> 6, 2 (Fall 1997), 20.

[69] Andrew Palmer, "Bruce Chatwin: A Critical Study". (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: University of Sussex, 1991). Palmer's fourth chapter, "A Figure of the Wanderer" discusses <u>The Songlines</u> in relation to textual authority. I agree with his conclusion that Chatwin's depiction of Australia has to be read in the light of the fact that no discourse is absolute or unquestionably factual.

[70] Webster, "Dialogue and Fiction", p.108.

[71] See Chapter One for a sustained consideration of the relationship between linear travel and linear narrative in travel writing. My remarks here are concerned with Chatwin's articulation of his own identity and authority, but the relationship between travel experience and other material certainly contributes to the non-linearity of the narrative of <u>The Songlines</u>.

[72] It is possible to read all Chatwin's encounters in the narrative of <u>The Songlines</u> as quotes that are consistent with the quoting which Clifford observes in ethnographic writing. Chatwin's conversations with Arkady and Father Flynn, are examples from this text which "serve merely as examples or confirming testimonies" (Clifford, <u>Predicament</u>, p. 50). Chatwin's thesis in <u>The Songlines</u> therefore has 'confirming testimonies' both within the narrative and from the notebook material.

[73] Morphy, "Proximity and Distance", p.175.

[74] Marcus, <u>Anthropology as Cultural Critique</u>, p.9.

[75] Howard Morphy, "Behind the Songlines", <u>Anthropology Today</u> 4, 5 (1988), 19.

[76] Morphy, "Proximity and Distance", p.173.

Chapter Three: Globalization and Identity Formation

Section One: Cultural Aspects of Globalization Theory

The previous chapters demonstrated, amongst other things, that textual representation of reality is a problematic project, and that this has implications for a critical reading of Chatwin's work. This chapter will examine another set of texts which has much in common with Chatwin's writing, and which can, in the dialectic of a comparative reading, be used to draw out some of the issues in Chatwin's writing that this thesis has identified as being important. In this chapter I will consider the convergence of concerns and depictions made both in Chatwin's work and by texts of globalization theory. Globalization theory is particularly interesting as it is concerned with movement, both physical and symbolic; with the meetings of cultures; and with the response of individuals and communities to having the conceptual distances between them broken down. This rough description of globalization will become more sophisticated in the course of the first section of this chapter. Whereas the two previous chapters have concentrated on strategies of writing, this and the following chapter will attend to what is being depicted. Questions of identity will, as already established, provide a focus for the close readings, and will once again demonstrate that the nature of identity formation is a concern which Chatwin addresses in a sustained manner throughout his work.

The first section carries the caveat, implicit throughout the thesis, that it is not a comprehensive review of all the literature on the subject at hand. The intent is to provide a context for a reading of identity formation in Chatwin's work, by establishing which aspects of globalization theory are comparable with the depictions made by Chatwin. Even in the four years since the start of research for this thesis, the amount of work on globalization, academic and otherwise, has proliferated, contributing immeasurably to a subject which was already contentious.[1] The first section of this chapter will therefore be selective. As globalization is a term with contested meanings and applications, it is

sensible that the thesis focuses on aspects of the debate which are most relevant to Chatwin's depiction of identity formation; where instructive, acknowledgement will be made of opposing views to the ones under discussion. This level of selectivity could initially be seen as self-serving; the route to an unproblematic reading. It is not my intention, however, to claim that certain texts of globalization theory are more correct than others in their representations of reality. This would be to make a similar mistake as the devotee of the realist ethnography, who might insist that a seemingly objective depiction of reality is superior to an openly subjective one. As I have demonstrated in relation to Chatwin, it is not the aim of this thesis to hold the real world up as a measuring stick against his depictions, but to understand the processes of depiction and the concerns at work within them. I have selected texts of globalization theory for their relevance and usefulness to the debate under consideration. Texts of globalization are based on interpreting processes which are occurring, and attempt to understand them within a comprehensive framework. This attempt has been criticized,[2] and it is important to bear in mind that texts of globalization theory are merely another form of textual representation. In this chapter I will consider two different sorts of textual representations in order to compare them and to understand how a specific set of concerns, at work in the theoretical, is also at work in the literary narrative.[3]

This section will address related aspects of cultural globalization. As Tomlinson has affirmed: "Both globalization and culture are concepts of the highest order of generality, and notoriously contested in their meanings."[4] I am not concerned with attempting definitions, which would invariably demand so much space as to form a diversion. It should be taken into account, however, that certain of the authors of globalization theory to be quoted in this chapter hold different views on the meaning of such generalities. Where possible, some acknowledgement of this will be made. Otherwise, as is the practice throughout this thesis, my concern will be to indicate the usefulness of the issues discussed to the analysis of Chatwin's work which follows. In consequence, my synthesis of cultural aspects of globalization makes use of the 'narrative' quality of these

processes as an organizing principle for a coherent account, which also relates to the narrative of <u>On the Black Hill</u>,[5] to be considered in the next section.[6]

Malcolm Waters's survey covers many of the aspects of globalization theory that are of interest to this thesis. I will consider details of specific work on these aspects in relation to works with a narrower cultural globalization focus, but use Waters to introduce some of the key concepts. Waters deals with the spread of globalization as appearing in three areas: the economy, the polity, and culture.[7] These three aspects overlap to a certain extent, but as globalization is seen as being led by Western capitalism, and the values which are inherent to it, much of globalization theory has dealt with the economy and the polity. The standardization of the cultural values is associated, for example in the work of Piertese, with the spread of Western capitalism which accompanies it.[8] What has been referred to as the 'McDonaldization'[9] of the world is seen as being the result of the late twentieth-century acceleration of the spread of western capitalism, communications and media made possible by rapid technological advances. Inevitably these processes of Western capitalism carry with them cultural values which are recognized, if not accepted, world-wide. The question of acceptance will also be addressed in this section, in the discussion of the local versus global conflict.

Despite the importance of trade and technology, therefore, there is an emphasis on culture. Culture is seen by Waters as an area which has not only the tendency to be affected by globalizing processes, but as an arena which itself is a globalizing force. He argues that culture is symbolic, and that cultural exchange occurs more easily across geographical boundaries than does capital-based exchange, as symbolic exchange does not demand the local circumstances of production and commerce which trade does. The spread of media communications, for example, and the globalizing processes which they tend towards, are not necessarily reliant on the success of globalized trade relations or the supply and demand dynamics of capitalist growth.[10] Although they are implicated in capitalist expansion, the means of production do not have to be geographically located in

the place where the symbols are received in order for cultural globalization to take place. Waters therefore acknowledges the importance of culture in the globalization process:

> While it is clearly not the case that culture, as an arena differentiated from economy and politics, has ever been totally globalized, it has nevertheless shown a greater tendency towards globalization than either of the other two arenas.[11]

It is clearly impossible to disconnect the influence and manifestations of any one arena from the others, as is made clear in the analysis of globalization offered by both Giddens and Robertson. Giddens, as the title of his work indicates, sees globalization as a "radicalized and universalized" consequence of accelerating processes of modernity.[12] For the purposes of this thesis, I consider the most useful synthesis of globalization history to be one that bears in mind the commercial activities that had globalizing tendencies that began in the era of maritime expansion in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[13] The period which I consider to be the first to demonstrate the feature of acceleration, which is characteristic of globalization, would be the second half of the nineteenth century, partly as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution.[14] The reading of On the Black Hill, Utz and The Songlines in this chapter and in Chapter Four will illustrate my position on the connections between modernity and globalization as, in practice, I tend to give credence to Giddens's view of a causal relationship between the two. Despite a period of hiatus caused by the First World War, it is the last one hundred and fifty years which have seen globalization in its recognizable form. Happily for this thesis, that period is also roughly the period depicted in the narrative of On the Black Hill.

There are complex processes at work, however, in this spread of Western capitalist culture. Not only is there disagreement over the specificity of globalization to the twentieth century, or even to modernity, in addition, the relativist position on globalization argues that it is not a homogenizing process, but one which compels

individuals and individual cultures to consider their identity and cultural practice, not in isolation, or in a local context, but in the context of global interaction and the global flow of capital and cultural values.[15]   The emphasis here is on a move away from geographically defined cultures and processes. The issue is therefore not simply one of Western capitalist expansion, although many analyses concentrate on the strongly globalizing desires of that trend. Tomlinson has addressed this issue in "Placing and Displacing the West", in which he insists on deterritorialization, not Westernization as the key feature of globalization.[16] Waters sums up the increasing speed at which commerce and culture are transmitted on a global scale with this prognosis:

> ... territoriality will disappear as an organizing principle for social and cultural life, it will be a society without borders and spatial boundaries. In a globalized world we will be unable to predict social practices and preferences on the grounds of geographical location.[17]

For Featherstone, globalization is a universalizing influence which has encouraged global inclusivity in the processes of modernization; its flows of meaning and cultural juxtapositions increasing the likelihood of involvement in modernization. One of the reasons for the flows of meaning that are important to globalization theory is that both these definitions, of extension and compression, entail a new conceptualizing of the importance of geographic location on the relationships between identities and cultural practices. As Waters's summary of these positions makes clear, globalization tends to reduce the importance of geographical definitions:

> We can therefore define globalization as a social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding.[18]

This statement links Waters's view of globalization with the deterritorialization which Giddens discusses. Deterritorialization is certainly an aspect of globalization that can be

seen in global concerns which involve local communities regardless of their location. Ecology is a recent example, and the two World Wars are examples which occur in On the Black Hill. However, there is resistance on the part of the local individuals and communities to processes which remove the immediate link between identity and location or territory. Deterritorialization does not take place without at least some attempt at negotiation from the local; the free flow of meanings which deterritorialization heralds is not necessarily welcome.

The idea that processes of globalization supersede geographical boundaries is very important, as is the relativist position in regard to this. Waters outlines the argument that a local culture will attain a level of reflexive consciousness about its position in a global context. This will be a consequence of a globalizing bombardment of products and information from beyond the (previously geographically defined) limits within which local identity used to be formed. Anthony Giddens's claims about the relationship between the global and the local are important to the contrasts between the two which my reading of On the Black Hill will draw out. For Giddens, the move away from cultural definition through geographical location is a result of 'Shifting relations of the local and global".[19] The local is as important as the global, for it is in local cultural identity that resistance to globalizing processes occurs. The local can also have an important influence on those processes, and Giddens envisions, therefore, a dialogic process between traditional cultural identity and new globalized forms of identity and cultural values. Dialogue is denied, he argues, not only when tradition is overwhelmed by globalized values and cultural practice, but also when tradition is maintained without justification.[20]

Featherstone sees the local as being opposed to the global, and is more specific than Giddens in defining the local and its characteristics; he also pays attention to the role of the local in defining itself in opposition to homogenizing flows of cultural meaning with which it is brought into juxtaposition:

A local culture may have a common set of work and kinship relationships that reinforce the practical everyday lived culture which is sedimented into taken-for-granted knowledge and beliefs. Yet the articulation of these beliefs and sense of the particularity of the local place will tend to become sharpened and more well-defined when the locality becomes locked into power struggles and domination contests with its neighbours.[21]

Here Featherstone defines the processes which constitute local identity; not only in terms of global networks, but also in terms of lived experience. For the purposes of this thesis, it is important to recognize, in the narratives which reflect these processes at work, the value systems which actually maintain the local cultural identity. This definition of the local and its reaction to globalizing influences is useful when considering specific instances of the juxtaposition of the local and the global, as in the narrative of On the Black Hill. It is useful to have an analysis of lived experience in the local to oppose the preponderance of theory which posits globalization as a system of world-theory. The reading of the impact of globalization in any cultural moment must take into account the specificity of the local upon which it is impacting. As is made clear by the debate around the inception of globalization, it is not a theory which succeeds in avoiding a chronological axis of theorizing. In addition, although the processes of globalization are frequently not reliant on spatiality for their effect, the narrative aspect of the process makes it inevitable that the effects are felt in a (certain) place at a (specific) time. My reading of Chatwin's narrative will demonstrate the necessity of paying attention to the circumstances of globalization in its effects.

All aspects of the local involve a meaning of 'belonging'. I propose that the individual's sense of belonging, their local community's recognition of that belonging, and the same recognition by individuals from outside that particular version of the local are all a vital part of 'belonging'. This will become clear in relation to On the Black Hill, for example as Amos instils a sense of belonging to one faith into Mary, who eventually feels that she 'belongs' in Chapel, and is recognized as a member of that community both by Welsh

Chapel-goers and English church-goers. Goran Therborn gives an account of how cultural belonging occurs:

> Cultural belonging involves three features primarily. Belonging to a culture means having a certain identity, differentiated from the rest of the world, mastering a particular cognitive and symbolic code, and having internalised a set of values and norms.[22]

Implied in this definition of cultural belonging are the issues of awareness, the exchange of symbolic meanings, and the importance of defining individual and local cultural identity in opposition to the values of other cultural identities, whether local or globalized. These specific features of cultural belonging, therefore, develop the arguments of Robertson, Giddens and Featherstone in a way which allows analysis of cultural practice and specific examples of cultural affiliation; in the case of the current thesis those which occur in the literary narrative. As in Featherstone's comment on the local, the wider context of globalized networks and flows of meaning, and the general opposition between local and global are here expanded upon by a definition of how cultural belonging occurs, and what actual practices are involved.

Marshall McLuhan's influential work in the 1960s provided another of the key concepts of globalization theory. McLuhan argues that awareness of the changes taking place is one of the characteristics of globalization. McLuhan proposed the notion of a 'global village', brought about by the spread of media and communications technology. In War and Peace in the Global Village McLuhan states that "Today, electronics and automation make mandatory that everybody adjust to the vast global environment as if it were his little home town."[23] McLuhan is also an interesting direct link with Chatwin's work. There is evidence in Anatomy of Restlessness of Chatwin's knowledge of McLuhan's work, and Chatwin obviously considered global culture, for example in his writing on nomadism, in terms of the global village. His work also displays a tendency to juxtapose individual local cultures with the global: both The Songlines and Utz are examples of

this.[24] Chatwin agrees with McLuhan's predictions about the importance of the new communications media and their effects. He adds, however, that the results are likely to be "less than comfortable", and points out the response of ethnic groups, who react to globalization: "But this new Internationalism has activated a new Parochialism. Separatism is rampant. Minorities feel threatened; small exclusive groups splinter off."[25] My reading of Chatwin's work in this context does not rely on him having been aware of all the work quoted here, but this proves nonetheless that he had explicitly engaged with the beginning of theoretical work which attempted to understand the world which he was depicting.

McLuhan's idea was not just that of the global village, but that the importance of this lay in people's awareness of it. Robertson insists on the importance of the spread of the consciousness of the global. For him, globalization produces a holistic vision of humanity, in which individuals and individual cultures are aware of the effect of events and trends on a world-wide scale of analysis; events and trends are no longer simply of localized importance. This awareness contrasts with the centre-margin relationship emphasized in theories of postmodernity, as it denies geographically defined cultural hegemonies and notions of cultural hierarchy. The argument is perhaps idealized, arguing through the deterritorialization thesis the lessening role of what actually continue to be hegemonic cultural power-relations. It also sees globalization as rapidly eroding not only current centre-margin relationships, but also the legacy of those relationships. It is nonetheless worth holding onto the aspects of this theorizing which promote a holistic *reading* of globalizing processes, as it is in this light that they are best understood. Further emphasis on the increased awareness of the individual is to be found in Jonathan Friedman's work on globalization. For Friedman, the process requires the individual to be aware of the global nature of the influences which bear on individual identity, and on the cultural identity which makes the individual part of the local:

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The essential character of globalization resides here in the consciousness of the global, that is individual consciousness of the global situation; specifically that the world is an arena in which we all participate.[26]

'Awareness' is also behind Giddens's ideas about time-space distanciation:

The conceptual framework of time-space distanciation directs our attention to the complex relations between local involvements (circumstances of co-presence) and interaction across distance (the connections of presence and absence). In the modern era, the level of time-space distanciation is much higher than in any previous period, and relations between local and distant social forms and events become correspondingly "stretched". Globalization refers essentially to that stretching process, in so far as the modes of connection between different social contexts or regions become networked across the earth's surface as a whole.[27]

Giddens again draws attention to the declining importance of geographical location in his point about networks. It is important to note that this can be seen as a process which is led at least as much by Western capitalism as by the influence of mass media and human communication, but for the purposes of this thesis, the idea of networks also refers to "local and personal contexts of social experience".[28] This passage from The Consequences of Modernity also illustrates the fundamental disagreement between Giddens and Robertson about the origins of modernity.

For Giddens, the involvement of the local discussed earlier in this section leads to a dynamic relationship between the homogenizing capital and media-led global pressure which acts on local traditional cultural identity:

Globalization leads ... to an insistence on diversity, a search to recover lost local traditions, and an emphasis on local cultural identity - seen as a renewal of local nationalisms and ethnicities.[29]

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For Giddens therefore, fundamentalisms and nationalisms can be included in a reading of the local-global dialogue of globalization. They respond to those processes which Piertese noted as standardizing. They are also an extreme version of the response which Giddens identifies as "a search to recover ... local traditions", and form part of the networks of action at a distance which characterize globalization: the globalizing pressure which acts on distant local cultures gives rise to a corresponding strengthening of those local cultures. In reacting with or against these networks of globalizing process, the local cultures and identities form an active part of the globalized network. In Giddens's conception of globalization, it is reflected in a proactive response, not simply an awareness:

> globalization can be defined as the intensification of world-wide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away, *and vice-versa.*[30]

Giddens, then, is concerned with the local response to the global, and although he deals at length with the ramifications of the globalization process in the polity and the economy, specifically in relation to division of labour, he is also concerned with the relationship between the individual and their economic, social and cultural contexts.

Like Giddens, Friedman sees the individual as being capable of action which will register on the globalized network of interaction between distant processes. He also comments on the global-local dialogue suggested by Giddens. Expanding on this idea, Friedman differentiates between 'strong' and 'weak' globalization, and defines them by the extent to which they have an effect on the local. This is also the point made in relation to Featherstone's work, that the extent and intensity of the globalizing influence on local culture varies, as does the range of symbolic affiliations which the negotiation of that influence involves.

Weak globalization can be assimilated by the local culture, and does not fundamentally change the structure of its identity. Exposure to globalizing processes does not, in this case, disempower locally recognized value systems and traditions. In terms of Giddens's argument, this is the globalization which brings local traditions into question. Although it requires a response from the local culture, its influence does not change that culture beyond recognition. Despite the local culture being forced to interact with the global network, fundamental cultural identity and practice remain unchanged.

Strong globalization is the influence which fundamentally changes the identity of the local culture which it acts upon. This is an influence which is as often media-led as it is capital-led, and which makes a permanent change, if not in the fabric of cultural identity, then in the way in which individuals perceive of their position within the global context. I would argue that there is no exact line between 'weak' and 'strong' globalization, but that the interest in the distinction lies as much in its ability to distinguish different degrees of local response to globalizing influence, as in its analysis of different sorts of globalization. In either case, the distinction also emphasizes Robertson's point that self-awareness of position in the global arena is raised by processes of globalization. For the purposes of the current thesis, the differentiation between weak and strong globalization is a useful one in considering these processes when depicted in literary narrative, as for example the influence of different globalizing trends over a period of time on the Jones's farm, from the use of foreign labour to the start of the Common Agricultural Policy, can be analysed. The relationship between local culture and globalizing pressure can be better understood in the light of a conceptual distinction between these different pressures.

It remains to consider the consequences of globalization, and particularly its implications for the local identity formation with which the thesis is concerned. In Undoing Culture Featherstone discusses the cultural implications of globalization, and, like Giddens,

recognizes the increased intensity of cultural flows.[31] Featherstone proposes two different images of culture which are involved in processes of globalization:

> The first image entails the extension outwards of a particular culture to its limit, the globe. Heterogenous cultures become incorporated and integrated into a dominant culture which eventually covers the whole world. The second image points to the compression of cultures. Things formerly held apart are now brought into contact and juxtaposition.[32]

The cultures which are dominant, or globalizing, are here seen in ways which are comparable to the standardizing global cultures which Piertese notes. Again there is the idea of a globalizing influence, and a local identity which is subsumed by it.

Featherstone states that a feature of globalization is the expectation of clash and conflict.[33] This expectation, which leads to the power struggles discussed above, is the vital interaction of local and global in terms of actual response of the local cultural identity to globalizing influence. As Giddens suggested, the process calls into question traditional cultural values and modes of identity formation. In Featherstone's view, the actual circumstances of this questioning are occasioned by the clash and conflict which is inherent in the juxtaposition of local and global cultural processes.

In consequence of this conflict, Featherstone examines the ways in which the local culture can maintain its identity in the face of pressure from the influence of cultural globalization. Important in this analysis is the ability to adapt the processes of cultural identity without becoming completely dominated by hegemonic and homogenizing globalization forces:

> It is the capacity to shift the frame, and move between varying range of foci, the capacity to handle a range of symbolic material out of

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which various identities can be formed and reformed in various situations which is relevant in the contemporary global situation.[34]

This reference to symbolic material is a return to the point that I identified in Waters's survey, that cultural exchange is more easily made across geographical boundaries than is capital-led exchange. The formation of individual identity is, then, made in reference not just to traditional cultural practice, but also in relation to a new, globalized, range of possibilities. These new processes of identity are not specific to geographical location, and are made possible by the flow of meaning across geographical-cultural boundaries. The exchange of cultural symbols is therefore not necessarily a cultural domination of local by global cultural values, but an added range of possibilities from which the individual can formulate a sense of belonging which is neither dependent solely on the past nor the globalizing present. Hence Featherstone refers to the "resourcefulness of various groups to create new symbolic modes of affiliation and belonging ... "[35]

1 am interested, therefore, in the narrative sense which these processes have in Featherstone's formulation of them. I would argue that there is a progression, which features a growing pressure from the global, as networks and flows of meaning become more universalized, and that growing pressure fosters a growing awareness of the global. This awareness eventually leads to a new negotiation of traditional cultural practice and values to form new modes of identity which acknowledge both the local and the global. These processes are not instantaneous, nor do they occur in all local cultures with the same intensity or impact. The negotiation of globalizing processes by individuals and local cultures varies depending on the level to which tradition is embedded, and the intensity of the globalizing pressure.

In relation to Chatwin's work, the globalization debate becomes particularly illuminating. Chatwin displays an interest in the narrative of ongoing processes of modernization, from the early modern period depicted in The Viceroy of Ouidah to the examination of the clash of local cultures in In Patagonia. In addition, as this section has made clear, Chatwin was

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aware of processes which I am identifying here as globalization, and engaged with McLuhan's work on their origins and possible consequences. It is Chatwin's depiction of the processes of globalization and the local responses to them which the rest of the chapter will consider: <u>On the Black Hill</u> is an example of a narrative which considers the effects of globalization on a small community over the course of the last one hundred and fifty years. The values and practices of a small local culture are subjected to increasingly intense processes of globalization, and are forced into a long negotiation with global changes which affect them, whilst still maintaining the sense of cultural belonging which differentiates them from the rest of the world. The section which follows, therefore, is an extended reading of this text which employs the vocabulary and concepts of cultural globalization dealt with in this section.

Section Two: Versions of Global and Local in *On the Black Hill*

This section will illustrate the application of globalization theory to literary narrative, and will demonstrate that the vocabulary and concepts of globalization theory can become particularly meaningful when used in the consideration of a text depicting the same processes. As Giddens argues, globalization can be seen as a consequence of modernity and has therefore accelerated as processes of modernity have accelerated.[36] Giddens's analysis and my own position emphasize the narrative aspect of globalization which I have also identified in Featherstone's work,[37] marking it as a process which develops and which has an internal logic of development. There is thus a sense of narrative, encouraging a view of globalization that privileges the historicity of the process, and considers the temporal aspect of its development as well as the spatial. In this context, Chatwin's On the Black Hill can be read through the dynamic of globalization as a developing process, consequential of and contemporaneous with accelerating modernity. The narrative of On the Black Hill spans the twentieth century and depicts the effects of increasing modernization, in the form of globalizing cultural and economic pressure, on a small local community. There are several levels of community to be considered, but all are subject to the process of resistance to, negotiation, and resolution with globalization.

Especially given the chronological frame, from the 1870s to the 1980s, in which the narrative is set, the context of globalization is particularly useful in understanding the dynamic of friction between local and global which drives the Jones twins' attempts to maintain their localized identity and cultural practices. The narrative aspect of the processes of cultural globalization discussed in the first section of this chapter inform the concerns and narrative development of the novel. According to the characteristics of local identity considered in Section One of this chapter, it is possible to define several levels of local community depicted in the novel. Working with Featherstone's definition of the local as being in opposition to the global allows a reading which can vary the range of

this definition depending on the nature of the globalizing pressure which is affecting the local. Each degree of local identity is affected by processes which can be defined as global, and reacts in ways which typify a local response to globalization.

The larger framework for the beginning of the narrative, both in terms of the temporal and the spatial, is the height of British imperial power at the end of the nineteenth century. The characters in On the Black Hill display a lack of awareness of the global context of the empire of which they are a part. As established in the first section of this chapter, this is the period after which I consider the acceleration of processes associated with true globalization to have begun. The local Welsh community displays a lack of awareness which is typical of a pre-globalization local position, indicated by their perceptions of India and the Holy Land: "India was too far, too big and too confused to appeal to the Welshmen's imagination" (BH, p.33). Later in the narrative, Lewis has some idea of his position in relation to the world powers, but still does not perceive of events at a distance affecting *him*::

> He would pester visitors for opinions on "them savages in Africky";
> for news of Siberia, Salonika or Sri Lanka; and when someone spoke
> of President Carter's failure to rescue the Teheran hostages, he folded
> his arms and said decisively, 'Him should'a gone to get' em through
> Odessa.' (BH, p.13)

Despite the outdated map which Lewis uses, his image of the world is formed by exposure to an increased amount of news media, and by an interest in what was the 'outside world' but which now appears to be getting closer. Despite this, however, he still has the same lack of perception about the relationship between these distant places and events and his local community as he did during the two World Wars. This is a long way from the global village posited by McLuhan, some forty years after Lewis's 'Bartholomew Map' of 1925 was printed. Not only is there no conception of the influence of the global context on the immediate locality, but the advanced media and

communication technologies which make the global village possible are not yet in place. An aspect of the spatial comes into play here. The Jones's farm is so isolated that it does not become part of the network of flows of meaning and capital which is establishing itself during this period. At least for the early part of the novel, geographical location is still an influence of the level of globalizing pressure felt by the characters.

For many of the characters in the novel therefore, the idea of Welsh identity is more important than the idea of being part of the Empire, or of the global. The Welsh-English border is a direct source of 'clash and conflict', an issue which Chatwin foregrounds by placing 'The Vision' directly on the border. The twins are therefore aware of this division, and are encouraged to define themselves as Welsh. Their grandfather gives them a sense of Welsh heritage, and Benjamin perceives the English side of the border as the source of evil: " ... he believed, seriously, that the Road to Hell was the road to Hereford, whereas the Road to Heaven led up to the Radnor Hills" (BH, p.90).

At various points in the novel, this identity comes under attack from English influence. During the war, and at the auction of local land, the Welsh community reacts angrily against a perceived threat to Welsh identity:

> "You Englishmen! You think you've had troubles enough in Ireland.
> I can tell you, there's a room full of Welshmen to make trouble
> enough right here." (BH, p. 141)

The tenant farmers resent interference from the government into land which is theirs through cultural practice if not in fact. The farms and their tenancy form part of the "everyday lived culture which is sedimented into taken-for-granted knowledge and beliefs."[38] This is illustrated by the question "Shall I not die in the farm I was born in?" (BH, p.140), and the auctioneer acknowledges the root of the anger, equating English domination of Wales with that of Ireland, when he says: "This is not the time or place to discuss imperial questions" (BH, p.141). The processes at work are globalizing ones,

as the territoriality and identity formulation which depend on spatial positioning become harder to maintain. The kind of concession made to First World War conscripts who wish to join a Welsh regiment is not made later in the century to the Welsh landowners who are threatened with the loss of territory through English involvement.

The example of this clash which has most immediate influence on the twins is the clash between their Welsh father and English mother. Amos defines himself through his attachment to the land, the Welsh community and chapel, and feels threatened by the education and greater awareness displayed by his wife: "for her, Carmel Tabor, Hebron and Galilee were as real as, say, Rhulen or Glascwm, or Llhanfihangel-nant-Melan" (BH, p.33). For Amos, the English are "from off" and his mistrust typifies a local response to a cultural identity which has not been solely formed in relation to the Welsh community and environment.

The Welsh-English divide which focuses local identity on the geographical constraints of the border can also be seen in the divide between rural and urban. Formulating the rural community as local and the urban communities of Rhulen and Hereford as being more globalized and globalizing again reveals the same processes at work. The urban is of necessity concerned with flows of capital through commerce and positions itself in relation to a larger global context. There is therefore cultural and economic exchange between the rural and the urban, but this exchange is seen with mistrust by the farming community. The local farmers, however, are forced to sell their goods at market, making the physical step towards the site of globalizing influences, and becoming involved in networks of capital exchange. This is not the start of the exchange of agricultural produce for capital, but it is the point at which the networks involved cease to be comprehended even by a wide definition of the local. More and more, the relationship between production and capital will be one that responds to global, rather than regional occurrences. The rural is also the site of newspaper production, and the media interface between the local and global activity. Fairs, parades and markets are

concentrated in Rhulen or Hereford, along with the postal service, lawyers and banks. There is conflict between the modernizing interests of these global-oriented institutions and the need for the local identity to remain stable and unchanging.

On a more closely defined level than these communities, the Jones family at the Vision forms a local community with an identity that is formulated through territoriality and a "common set of work and kinship relations".[39] This level of community is smaller than the ethnic local identities posited in globalization theory, but the family is nonetheless active in defining its identity along lines which are recognizable as the local response to global pressure. The exclusion of anyone who is not part of the immediate family, and the fierce defence of both ritual behaviour and land ownership are exaggerated in the case of conflict with globalizing influences. Amos resents the presence of neighbours, who are perceived as a threat to the territorial integrity of the farm. He is concerned with the authority of maps, and with constructing and maintaining hedges and walls: "Four men were sent to construct a wall between the two farms, and a police constable went to Craig-y-Fedw, warning the Watkinses not to touch a stone of it" (BH, p.74).

It is the twins' exclusive community of two which dominates the novel, and the frame of the narrative concentrates largely on their lives. Again the size of this 'community' does not immediately suggest the ethnic identities which globalization theory has posited as the local. As in the case of the Jones family as a community, however, the identity formation, cultural practice and outlook of the twins in relation to the outside world is that of local response to the global. The strength of this identity is emphasized by the fact that the young boys have their own language and refuse to be parted from each other. Even as adults, they are rarely apart, and they seem to lose their sense of self when they travel beyond the farm. Later in the novel they construct their cultural identity around the rituals of farm life, and around the memory of their mother. Unwilling to submit to the globalizing pressure of the urban, the twins avoid going to town (which is also the site of lower moral values) even on the occasion of the sale of the farm at

auction. They cannot understand the relationship between themselves and events in the outside world; Lewis's exclusive interest in plane crashes is limited to a fascination with the exotic, as with India and 'Africky'. Until their 80th birthday flight forces the situation to change, the interest in aviation lies in its distance from their lives. The 'cognitive and symbolic code'[40] which they have mastered excludes influence from the outside world, and affirms in each an identity and role which define them against the increasingly globalized practices of the wider community.

Some of this behaviour, as has been suggested by Karl Miller, is a psychological aspect of identical twins,[41] and it is certainly the case that Chatwin was fascinated with the idea of identical twins.[42] I would argue, however, that there is also a case to be made for the focusing of the twins' identity being furthered by friction between their everyday existence and the changing nature of the global pressures which threaten it. As in the case of Amos, their father, the twins' sense of identity becomes "more well-defined when locked in power struggles ... ".[43] This process gives rise to the sense, which increases throughout the novel, that the twins' dependence on their rituals and symbolic material, through which they are faithful to the past and to each other, increases simultaneously with the pressure from the globalizing forces of standardization, capital flow and hybrid cultural practices.[44] Thus the course of their lives sees an increase in pressure from forces which are recognizable as global ones, and the narrative of the novel maps the narrative sense in which the forces of globalization accelerate and impact on the local identity which the twins put so much effort into establishing. I would also argue that the twins' narrow sense of community offers an unusual paradigm of local opposed to global. As the narrative develops, it is a range of globalizing tendencies, rather than emotional ties such as marriage which tend to dominate their situation. Although their relationship raises questions about their sexuality, and deals with some sexual encounter, in my reading the novel is not a narrative of 'growing up', but of confrontation with a rapidly globalizing environment.

A range of cultural, political and economic globalizing trends affects the local identities outlined above. The narrative depicts the nature and effects of this global pressure on the wider Welsh community, but increasingly focuses on the twins as the site of negotiation between local identity and globalizing pressure. At the levels of Welsh and rural identity, the development of the capitalist economy affects all the farmers, and is perceived of as coming from the English side of the border. Factors such as the need to export Hereford cattle and the need to plough fields for the war effort divide the community, as does the war itself. The rural community falls apart in the wake of the First World War, suffering from the loss of the dead and wounded, and from the reconfiguration of relationships, for example between employees and army superiors.

The war is a direct example of the 'interaction across distance' which Giddens discusses.[45] The actual fighting of the war occurs far from the Welsh borders, but this is one of the great moments of globalizing process: geographical location does not define the relationship between local community and global action, but the war also provides an example of the way in which processes of globalization make the local more aware of its position in relation to the rest of the world. The twins show more ignorance than most of the implications of these processes, but the war marks a point beyond which there can be no illusion that the remote geographical location of the site of the local will henceforth imply exclusion from events on a global scale. The change in reaction can be seen in the case of Amos, who initially cannot conceive of the war having a direct effect on their community, although he automatically associates it with English influence:

> On the 7th of August 1914, Amos Jones and his sons were scything thistles when a man called over the hedge that the Germans had marched into Belgium, and rejected England's ultimatum. A recruiting office, he said, had opened in the Town Hall. About twenty local lads had joined.
> 'More fool them,' Amos shrugged, and glared downhill into Herefordshire. (BH, p.90)

The explicit opinion that local people should not get involved is indicative of the nature of the local and its definition against global influence. When Amos realizes the toll that the war is taking, and the risk to his family, he joins the Rechabites, and resists the pro-war propaganda emanating from across the border. Even the authorities in charge of recruitment are aware of the strong local identity and antipathy to being forced into interaction with forces beyond their community, and so encourage locals to join the Welsh Borderers. The war increases flows of meaning, and a new set of values is instilled by an awareness of the relationship of the individual to events on a global scale. Hence the local community is divided, between pro and anti-war opinion; between those who served at the front and those who stay at home. The new modes of affiliation and belonging which the war has brought as a globalizing influence are reflected in the violent treatment of the twins by people who would previously have shared a similar local or regional identity. These characters are aware of their position in relation to other non-geographically defined communities to which they belong. Conscription has a direct effect on the community, which learns of the global importance of victory from the judgement, in Chatwin's ironic phrase, that "The World was Safe for Democracy" (BH, p.109).

Chatwin depicts other globalizing processes as impacting more immediately on the twins than on the whole community. Although the war is a single event that has a great impact, he is more concerned with processes that accelerate throughout the course of the narrative. As the twentieth century evolves, the twins make further attempts to isolate themselves from the influence of the global. Their isolation is more marked because it occurs during the period, as Robertson has classified it, in which globalization is increasing.[46] Particularly after the death of their mother, they fall into habits that tie them to the farm, and isolate them from the rest of the world. They view outsiders such as the Lamberts with suspicion, and Benjamin counts it as treachery on the part of his brother that Lewis be seduced by Joy Lambert. Not only is the exclusivity of their local identity threatened by outsiders, but Joy is English, and has adopted values and cultural practices

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which are at odds with the twins', and which Benjamin cannot assimilate into the cultural material and ritual from which his identity is formed. She represents the same threat to the twins as Mary did to Amos and Old Hannah; she is 'from off.' These outsiders, however, become more numerous, and have an increasing impact as the narrative progresses, forming an aspect of the globalization process which affects the twins.

Characters such as Manfred, Lotte, Theo, Mrs. Redpath and Kevin are aware of the relationship between the twins' existence and that of the outside world. Ironically it is the twins' isolation, and their resistance to globalization which is appealing to their visitors, who are themselves engaged in a "search to recover ... lost local traditions"[47] in the latter half of the twentieth century.[48] The newcomers are in possession of knowledge which is not dependent on their belonging to a specific geographical location; the contrast between the twins and many of the other characters is that while the twins have ventured no further than sites of local interest (by bicycle)[49] the others have travelled, in many cases on a global scale. Through their influence the twins are introduced to characters who speak different languages, characters with non-Christian religions; characters with a globalized world view, and values which are not necessarily the same as the twins'.[50] The combined influence of these characters is as a globalizing influence on the life of the twins, who are encouraged to travel beyond the farm, and are obliged to consider themselves once more part of a wider community than is encompassed by their own local identity.

Visitors to the farm are aware of the fiscal value of objects which to the twins are simply part of the symbolic code by which they identify themselves. The antiques dealer who cheats them out of their mother's writing chest is another example of a character from beyond the local who operates according to globalized values of the capitalist system.[51] The intrusion of these values into the twins' world is an aspect of the global impacting on the local. Their belongings are totems of the internalized set of values, the symbolic code by which they form their identity. Their appreciation of them comes into conflict with the

different capital values ascribed to the same material in a globalized system. The sale of the writing chest represents the flow of financial capital between different physical locations, but for the twins, the loss is to their own everyday lived culture, through their failure to articulate it in the context of conflicting values and practices.

In the case of the twins' local identity, the direct influence of other characters is more important as a globalizing pressure on their local identity than the globalized media and communications networks which theorists have identified as accelerating in the course of the twentieth century. Lewis continues to scan the newspapers for details of plane crashes (itself an ironic comment on the relationship between the twins and modernizing technology) but reports of the Battle of Britain, instead of increasing his awareness of the scale of the war, are simply deemed to be beyond the capacity of his scrapbook. Lewis is interested in plane crashes as isolated exotica, not because they teach him about the changing nature of the global environment.

The narrative focus on the twins' life provides a subject on which these various processes of globalization can act. Although the novel is not explicitly concerned with globalization for its own sake, Chatwin's concern with these processes is clear. He establishes the credentials and factors of the local identity at several levels, and then identifies the globalizing processes that threaten this identity. It is known that Chatwin used local newspapers as research for the novel,[52] and this plays a part in the episodic construction of the narrative. This structure, which emphasizes individual events and their effects, also has the effect of presenting the reader with a succession of influences, which I am identifying as the pressure of globalization, and examining their impact on this range of local identities.

This section has so far considered, in the terms of the globalization theory discussed in section one, definitions of the local and the global pressure that acts upon it. What follows is a consideration of interaction between the local and the global, and the

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possibilities for the resolution of "clash and conflict" between local identities and global process. As the processes of globalization have a narrative sense, and Chatwin's novel follows a strictly chronological structure, there is a development to the local reaction to global pressure. This can be characterized as resistance, negotiation and resolution. The local initially attempts to distance itself from the global, but is eventually forced to accept its position in relation to the global context, and to interact with the 'action at distance' which is affecting it.

The resistance to government interference with the sale of land is an example of the attempt to resist the pressures of the capital-led developing global system; the end of resistance in reluctant acceptance is also typical of the process which is experienced at all levels of local community in the novel. The experience of those who resist First World War conscription is another example of the same process; eventually the consequences of events far distant from the Welsh rural community have a profound effect on their lives. The same is true of the Jones family's response to the Common Agricultural Policy, which affects the way they must farm their land and spend their income. It is the sense of inevitability, partly supported by the structure of Chatwin's narrative, but dictated by the accelerating forces of globalization throughout the century that dominates the depiction of these attempts at resistance.

At the level of local community formed by the Jones family and the twins themselves, other attempts at resistance can be seen. Benjamin buys land in order to extend the physical boundaries of their territory; not only will he not accept interference from, for example, the Ministry of Agriculture, but he has failed to realize that the nature of the changes taking place renders his territoriality impotent:

> She and Benjamin bought land with a passion, as if with each new
> acre they could push back the frontier of the hostile world. But extra
> land meant extra work; and when Lewis suggested replacing the
> horses with a tractor, they gasped.

> "A tractor?" said Benjamin. "You must be cracked." (BH,
> p.173)

The advance of technology is still seen as alien, even when it is of possible use. The extra land is not of economic significance for Benjamin and his mother, but is an ongoing attempt to bolster their sense of identity and place by expansion of the location of that identity.

This resistance is of course futile, and the influence of globalization is more insidious than that. The twins attempt to ignore the Second World War, again failing to accept that events at a distance have any significance for them:

> And when, one November night, Benjamin saw a red glow on the horizon and the sky lit up with incendiary flares - it was the Coventry raid - he said. "And a good job t'isn't we!" - and went back to bed.
> Lewis thought of joining the home guard but Benjamin dissuaded him from doing so. (BH, p.183)

They are forced to confront the effects of the war at a local level in a way in which the First World War did not affect them: Manfred, a German prisoner of war is assigned to work on the farm. The twins are unsure of the relationship between themselves and the German, and it forces them to consider as local someone who does not initially share their local identity; hence the ramifications of global warfare come home to Lewis and Benjamin. For them, the Hiroshima bombing is a terrible event, but Manfred only conceives of its importance as a factor in ending the war.[53] Manfred himself displays a remarkable ability to adapt his identity to the cultural practices of the local community in which he finds himself, and he stays in Wales after the end of the war. Chatwin is careful to establish that he has had a troubled background in Germany (and therefore, I would argue, has not developed a local identity that is determined by place) and also that he has travelled, in the army, to Africa. This contrast with the twins' experience of being part of a close community and staying within its spatial boundary is an example of the ongoing

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process of globalization, the impact of which gradually increases as the narrative develops along the course of the twentieth century. As a consequence of (partly enforced) travel, Manfred's view of Africa is different from the one held by Lewis of "them savages" (BH, p.13) in which he still persists decades later.

The event which demands that the twins negotiate a new formation of their local identity is the introduction into the narrative of their extended family. The globalized set of values displayed by Mrs. Redpath and her son Kevin has been prefigured by the antiques dealer, but these values now demand a more permanent change in the twins' cultural practice and everyday lived experience. They display little resistance to the intrusion, their experience of family relations being one which has previously established and supported their narrow self-definition and which has been permanently located in 'The Vision'. As the relationship develops, however, it becomes clear that the symbolic material which supports this identity does not have the same importance for Mrs. Redpath and her son:

> She sold the piano to pay for a washing machine, the four-poster for a new bedroom suite. She redecorated the kitchen in yellow, shoved the family photos into the attic, and replaced them with a picture of Princess Anne on a show-jumper. Most of Mary's linen went to a bring and buy sale. (BH, p.248)

The clash of values which causes this represents the failure of the twins to negotiate a reformation of their identity out of the new range of values and material which is presented to them. Ironically, Lewis dies in a tractor accident, having continued to live and work in much the same way until the end. Following this, the only way in which Benjamin can find resolution of the changed situation is to spend time at his brother's grave. The physical space of their local community has been usurped, and Benjamin's cultural identity is rendered ineffective by the pressure from the outside world. He still seems unable to relate events on a global scale to his own situation, whereas the characters who introduce a new set of values position themselves in relation to a global,

rather than local, context: "when Kevin moved his wife and baby into 'The Vision', he would stare straight through them as if they were strangers" (BH,p.248).

Initial resistance, by Amos Jones, the twins and their mother, fails to protect the local identity of the family from globalizing, capital and culture-led influence. The twins' negotiation of this increasing pressure is so strongly rooted in their existing everyday practices and the ritualization of the past, that it fails to find a compromise between the local and the global. The resolution which the end of the narrative suggests is not a happy one for the twins, as the accelerating change of values and practice at the end of the twentieth century sweeps over their identity and destroys the physical and symbolic materials around which it is constructed. The impression is given, by the end of the narrative, that all survivors from the rural community which is local to 'The Vision' are in a similar situation; immobilized, incapable of reforming their long-established local identities, or of giving them relevance in the face of modernization.[54]

The narrative of On the Black Hill, therefore, maps the narrative sense of globalization theory, which also concentrates on the twentieth century as a period of intense acceleration of globalizing processes. The vocabulary and structures of globalization can be employed to offer a reading of a text in which the relationship between local identity and global trends is so obviously to the fore. The contextualization of this narrative through concepts of globalization exposes the key concern of relating local cultural practice to a global context, which, I would argue, is present throughout Chatwin's work, as will be addressed elsewhere in the thesis.

Section Three: Globalization in *Utz*, and *The Songlines* as a Globalizing Text

Chatwin addresses other formulations of the local/global dynamic in his work. Given the same definitions of the local, the global, and the relationship between the two as were used in relation to On the Black Hill, it is possible to read his other novels as examinations of the dialectic of local and global in different cultural contexts. In this section I will demonstrate Chatwin's continued interest in these issues, identifying aspects of Utz and The Songlines which oppose a range of different local identities against a range of pressures from the global. Once again, it is Chatwin who is responsible for the construction of these local identities in his texts, however they may be based on the experience of travel, or on other research. My reading of these texts in the framework of globalization theory, however, draws on the similarities between the globalizing processes, and their influence on the local, identified in the theoretical works, and the same processes depicted by Chatwin. Formulations of the local, of which specific examples are depicted rather than theorized in Chatwin's work, also parallel the formulation of the local in texts of globalization theory. It is my aim in this section to demonstrate that an engagement with these concerns is consistent in Chatwin's work, and that the fact of his examples being constructs in a fictional text does not negate the relevance of this approach to his oeuvre.

In Utz, Chatwin depicts a local community which has elements in common with the Jones twins' community in On the Black Hill. Utz and Marta live in isolation, and their identity becomes "more well-defined"[55] through opposition to political and cultural globalizing pressures. The cultural belonging to this community does not lie in a physical location or work routine, however. The territoriality of local identity in this case is defined by the collection of Meissen porcelain which Utz has in his apartment. It is in relation to this collection that the "cognitive and symbolic code"[56] which forms their local identity is understood. The integrity of this identity rests in the collection remaining

intact. In parallel with <u>On the Black Hill</u>, a small local community is left behind by the rest of the immediate society who neither understand nor participate in the everyday lived culture which informs their local identity. In contrast with the context of globalizing capitalism, <u>Utz</u> is set in cold war Prague, and it is the advance of Soviet domination of former Czechoslovakia that threatens Utz's identity. In the political context of <u>Utz</u>, the rest of the population has ostensibly been dominated by the strong globalization of a political regime, which has become the reference point for their identity, replacing smaller ethnic local identities. In terms of my reading, however, the Communist invasion takes place in relation to a world network of nation-states. The fact of Communism's resistance to Western capitalism does not mean that the spatial location which it dominates is not affected by action at a distance and the acceleration of globalization. As the Cold war develops, it is more and more the case that all nations are caught up in a network of meanings, some contested, but all relating one to the other. The actions of the Communist regime therefore take place in a context of global action and reaction, and decisions are taken in awareness of this context. Utz lives in a situation in which his geographical location is important (it will become less so) but also in which the impact of globalization, mediated through a regime that is part of an accelerating process of interconnectedness, affects him.[57] Utz resists this globalization. Just as the Jones family dismisses events beyond their immediate territory, Utz rejects the globalizing political situation in favour of the porcelain which grounds his local identity. The narrator realizes that:

> ... for him, this world of little figures was the real world. And
> that, compared to them, the Gestapo, the Secret Police and other
> hooligans were creatures of tinsel. (<u>U</u>, p.114)

This is a slightly more extreme denial of the outside world than that attempted by the Joneses, but is nonetheless an affirmation of closely-defined local identity. The Jones twins' withdrawal from modernity in <u>On the Black Hill</u> is not the same as Utz's fierce response to the Communist regime. Whereas the twins attempt to negotiate a situation which maintains the status quo with little engagement, Utz argues, places himself in

temporary exile, then destroys. Utz's response to the globalizing pressure differs from that of the Jones twins because the nature of the formation of his local identity, the nature of the globalizing influence and the threat it poses are also different. In addition, his relationship with the collection and the values which it represents and his painful awareness of the global context problematize his identity and his relationship with both local and global contexts.

Formulations of the local, therefore, have something in common with the close, immediate local community of On the Black Hill. The globalizing pressures here, however, derive not from financial exigencies but from the political sphere. The money which Utz expends does not make him fit in with the processes at work, as does the tractor buying by the Jones twins. Significantly, he is a member of the minor aristocracy, and therefore particularly symbolic of the traditional formulations of local identity which are based on territoriality and long-established value-systems. He is aware that his background forms part of his identity, and defines him against the globalized context of his everyday lived experiences. He relies on his maid to bolster these values:

> She understood, by instinct, why he insisted on the details: the sauce
> in a sauceboat; the starching of shirt-cuffs; the Sèvres coffee cups on
> Sunday ... The minor acts of style to demonstrate that he had not
> given in. (U, p.84)

This identity is cemented by the possession of the collection of Meissen porcelain, which is more important to Utz than the political context of his (or the collection's) physical location:

> Politically, Utz was neutral. There was a timid side to his character
> that would tolerate any ideology as long as it left him in peace. There
> was a stubborn side which refused to be bullied. He detested
> violence, yet welcomed the cataclysms that flung fresh works of art
> onto the market. (U, p.21)[58]

Confined to a small apartment, it is the collection rather than real territoriality which provides Utz with his identity. In retreat from accelerating modernity, his withdrawal ensures the continuation of the same identity and symbolic values, despite the dangers of the Second World War, and the threats from the communist regime. These form the global which pressures Utz; unlike the Jones twins, however, he is aware of the global context in which he is acting. Because of the need to protect the collection, and perhaps because he is portrayed as an intellectual, Utz actively negotiates his relationship with the global. He continues to collect and to involve himself in globalizing art and financial markets, and also directly confronts representatives of the globalizing political regimes which threaten his identity; when told that his pieces rightfully belong to "the People", he responds "By what right? ... The right of theft I suppose" (U, p.57). Utz certainly does not identify himself with the community identity which the Communists try to impose on Czechoslovakia, identifying himself with a smaller, self-constructed formulation of the local.

Also unlike the Jones twins, Utz actively attempts to escape by leaving the collection in Prague, and going to France. Although he contemplates staying there, he is unable to leave the collection and finds himself unsuited to life beyond the identity which he has formulated. He consults an atlas, as does Lewis Jones: " ... he had bought a pocket atlas of the world; and, leafing through its pages, he tried to imagine the country he would like to live in" (U, p.81). Utz's conception of the global and the possibility of movement on a global scale, contrasts with Lewis's limited comprehension of the world from an outdated atlas of Empire. Utz is therefore forced into a situation of uneasy negotiation between his collection and his freedom. Freedom of physical movement (contrasted with the stifling confines of the flat in Prague) does not re-formulate his identity. Instead, a global context for his life only serves to make him aware that he is without genuine identity outside the definition provided by the collection. His initial attempts to resolve the global/local conflict between ownership of the collection and globalizing political pressure are not

effective: "Before leaving, he would make a resolution never, ever to return - while at the same time making arrangements for his return" (U, p.88).[59]

Utz is driven to anger by the political regime, "to say nothing of the boredom, verging on fury, that came from living those months with lifeless porcelain" (U, p.88). Resolution of the conflict which he experiences comes from his relationship with Marta, however, rather than the porcelain. Utz eventually realizes that the source of his rootedness in Prague is Marta; "He was desperately homesick, yet hadn't given a thought for the porcelains. He could only think of Marta, alone in the apartment" (U, p.82). The narrator of Utz pieces together a narrative which depicts Utz and Marta destroying the porcelain in order to be free of it. They marry, and the narrator later finds Marta living in the country after Utz's death. She confirms that she was his wife. Eventually, therefore, the affirmation of their exclusive relationship provides Utz with the permanent sense of identity which he requires.[60] In my reading of this development, Utz accepts that he has failed to maintain the integrity of the porcelain collection which his identity as collector demands. Unable to continue to maintain his collection as a spatial or metaphorical territory, Utz is forced to renegotiate his identity. The move is as unpredictable as the social practices which Malcolm Waters predicts would be typical of social practices in a globalizing context.[61] After attempting to embed himself in his construction of the local, Utz "forms and reforms" his identity to cope with the demands of the situation. Mike Featherstone's prediction of this ability of the individual to change the focus of the sources of identity formation are here demonstrated by Utz shortly before his death. Utz's movements throughout the novel, followed by his marriage, parallel the twins' final replacement of territoriality and tradition with an extended definition of the local, although perhaps somewhat more successfully than Chatwin's depiction of the Welsh characters allows in On the Black Hill.

Chatwin, therefore, is again depicting the struggle to maintain coherent cultural identity in the face of pressure from globalization. In both On the Black Hill and Utz, he appears to

criticize the short-sighted attempts to block out the global from the local, and suggests instead a more positive negotiation of the modernizing processes which drive the narrative. There is some degree of ambiguity about Chatwin's position; he appears to sympathize with the beleaguered local identity, but also to recognize that awareness and response to the global must rely on human interaction and agency rather than a dependence on the material or the traditional.[62] His depiction of the globalization process coincides with Friedman's contention that "the essential character of globalization ... is that the world is an arena in which we all participate".[63]

Yet another position on the dynamic of local and global can be seen in The Songlines, in which the aboriginal cultural identity is forced into confrontation with the globalizing communications and capital networks of white Australia. In this case, however, the constructions of local are somewhat different, as is the role of the text itself. In The Songlines, a different aspect of territoriality defines the local. Here, the local is not bounded by spatial location, but is defined by a cultural heritage of song and ritual which relates the whole country to its inhabitants and their relationship with it. The narrator is engaged in "a search to recover [for the text] local traditions"[64] which contrast with the global. In the first half of the novel, through conversation with both aboriginal and non-aboriginal sources, he establishes for the reader the nature of this cultural heritage:

> 'So a dreaming is a clan emblem? A badge to distinguish "us" from
> "them"? "Our country" from "their country"?'
> 'Much more than that" he said. (S, p.15)

This is a different kind of territoriality from the confining local space occupied by the Jones twins and Utz and Marta. Again in contrast with On the Black Hill and Utz, the local community which Chatwin depicts is not a small one, but is formed by the Aborigines as a whole. In common with the previous two examples, however, the depiction of the local conforms to the idea of "mastering a particular cognitive code, and having internalized a set of values and norms", as Therborn discusses it in his work.[65]

The mastering of the code here is more formal, embedded in rites of manhood, but the local still implies a shared set of beliefs and the common knowledge of everyday experience.

> The ceremony takes place in secret, at a Dreaming site far from the
> eyes of strangers. Afterwards, at a seminar made unforgettable by
> pain, the sacred couplets are dimmed into the heads of the initiates ...
> (S, p.159)

It is perhaps the seeming coherence of this extended cultural identity, especially in the form of the songlines themselves, which makes the threat to, and destruction of local identity such a lamentable process.[66] As pointed out in Chapter Two, Chatwin admits that not only will he never get to the heart of the songlines, but also that he would not want to (S, p.14). In fact his interest in them serves a wider purpose. Instead of depicting the local culture as a specific isolated example whose identity contrasts with the global, Chatwin's use of this example is intended to offer an alternative practice. The function of the local culture in this text is concerned with offering a response to globalizing cultures. This depiction therefore differs from the description of relationship between the global and the local as it affects the life-narratives of Utz or the Jones twins. Perhaps because it has this extra function in the narrative, Chatwin's construction of aboriginal culture as a local identity is more obviously reliant on meta-textual material: for example in his account of the Dreamtime (S, pp.81-3). The constructedness of this conception of the local is exemplified by this theorizing:

> I have a vision of the Songlines stretching across the continents and
> ages; that wherever men have trodden they have left a trail of song (of
> which we may, now and then, catch an echo); and that these trails
> must reach back, in time and space ... (S, p.314)

This is a globalized vision of the aboriginal culture which Chatwin is positing as local. Unlike the local environments of Wales or Czechoslovakia which are clearly identifiable,

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(although peopled by fictional characters) this depiction makes a fundamental displacement, making greater demands on the willing suspension of disbelief. Hence my argument that this local is more explicitly a construct based on the imagination ('a vision') than the local of previous examples.

Within the narrative, Chatwin is less concerned with how the local confers identity on the individual than with the relationship between the aboriginal culture as the local in negotiation with the globalizing, western-influenced modernization. In this novel, the conflict is focused on the new railway line and the implications which this holds for the aboriginal identity. Apart from the obvious expansion of communications and global travel, joining local with the rest of the globe, the novel sees the railway as a medium for what Giddens has described as "the intensification of world-wide social relations."[67] It is apt therefore that the railway, a symbol of globalized communications, should be the cause of conflict with the local. Within the local/global dialectic, the railway serves as a useful contrast with the traditional trackways, or songlines, in which Chatwin is so interested. The globalization process is again media, capital and communications-led, but the local identity is defined by a contrasting system of communication across distances. This post-colonial context fuels the impression that Chatwin gives of the fragmentation of local aboriginal identity by processes of modernization.

In this novel, the processes of negotiation are, of necessity, wider-reaching and more complex. They involve interaction across the cultural divide, and the co-operation of key figures from both the local and global. Chatwin's narrative follows Arkady's attempt to accommodate the new railway line by mapping the Aboriginal sacred sites, and making sure they are not destroyed. Through this process, the global becomes aware of the local, simultaneously with the local's negotiation and acceptance of global pressure. Despite an ambiguous response to this project, even from members of the aboriginal community, Chatwin is positive about a kind of attempted resolution which respects the position of the local within a consciousness which is highly globalized. Another example

of this negotiation can be seen in the description of the aboriginal artist Winston's conversation with the white art dealer from Sydney. Mrs. Houston's awareness of the local culture relates to the value which she places on aboriginal art, in the context of the globalized art market. A process of globalization takes place when Winston, demonstrating new awareness of his place within the globalized arena, demands more money for his paintings. Mrs. Houston cannot understand the change in this local perception of their relationship, until Winston demands: "Well, why are you asking seven fuckin' thousand dollars for one of my paintings in one of your exhibitions in Adelaide?" (S, p.291). This is another positive example of how a raised level of global consciousness can lead to a sense of agency for the local culture in the global context. In The Songlines, the specific parameters and characteristics of the local are different from the previous examples, because the novel is concerned with the local as a set of cultural practices constructed in textual form by the author, rather than the specific negotiations with the global made by a small group of individuals. The vocabulary and concepts of the globalization debate are nonetheless useful in articulating the localizing and globalizing processes at work in the novel.

There is another sense in which the globalization debate is useful in this case, however. In this novel, more so than in the previous examples, Chatwin is performing some globalizing function of his own, and the text becomes a reflection of a globalized awareness which attempts to place a myriad of local cultures and their defining practices within a global framework. This is already indicated by the structure of the text, which relates disparate examples of cultural practice through simple textual strategies, as in the chapter that ends " ... that was not the memory I was looking for. Then I had it. "Lorenz!" (S, p.120), in order that the next chapter can start "The afternoon I met Konrad Lorenz ... " (S, p.121). This structure continues and the linkages become more frequent and more eclectic as Chatwin begins to quote from his notebooks. What transpires is that he is attempting a globalized view of the history of world communications and cultural practice. In effect this is an attempt to explain through some

fundamental trope of human behaviour, the ways in which different ethnic groups have established their own local identity. The case of the aboriginal songline becomes a single example on which to base the narrative. Chatwin displays an immensely globalized consciousness as he attempts to link cultural practices across the spatial and temporal; placing specific examples of the local into a globally structured paradigm. Both the notebooks and the songlines are examples of cultural arenas of symbolic exchange, both offering a set of codes and values to internalize in order to make sense of them.

It is obviously the case that Chatwin's juxtaposition of anthropology, history and traveller's memoir does not conform to description of the globalizing agencies proposed, for example, by Waters; although it does perform some of their functions.[68] For Chatwin, globalization as a product of modernization is, in this case, only one aspect of the process. There is a fundamental way in which Chatwin's construct attempts to position the world as 'global village' in which cultural practice is intelligible through its conforming to preoccupations that are universal. A local identity formation therefore fits into a global pattern of identities that are recognizably formulated in similar ways. In this sense, the text itself is globalizing in its "capacity to handle a range of symbolic material"[69] and its intent to create "complex relations between local involvements ... and interaction across distance."[70] As a globalizing network in comparison with the conventional forces of globalization, Chatwin's propositions are weak, but they have the interesting quality of suggesting a transcendence of national identity. This is perhaps ironic from an author who signally failed to escape the image of the English middle-class male, and indeed deliberately cultivated it. Chatwin's own character aside, however, the globalizing project of texts such as The Songlines could be seen as a compromise between the extreme territoriality of fundamentalism which is provoked by global threat, and the complete deterritorialization which, at its logical extreme, seems to deny any link between identity and spatial positioning.

Another implication for this textual contribution to the globalization debate is that the author must himself be seen as a globalizing presence in the context about which he writes. Chatwin's travels in Australia, however well-intentioned, place him in the role of mediator of cultural capital between the local aboriginal and the globalized West; in this case the readership of travel writing. Chatwin relates the local to the global, and is able to communicate to large numbers of people his description of aboriginal culture. The title of the book *The* Songlines suggests some definitive, verifiable account of cultural practice. In fact the text is a complex fictionalized construct which is carefully manipulated by Chatwin to depict certain aspects of the aboriginal culture, and to link them with other histories and cultures across time and space. The role of the author, in engaging in this manipulation, is a globalizing one, and is at a remove from the activities of the traveller/narrator, whose interventions in one specific time and place the reader receives in the narrative. The author is responsible for a globalizing process which links distant localities in a network, across which cultural values and identity-forming practice are supposed to flow. Hence it is an example of "the extension of a particular culture to its limit, the globe".[71] It could be argued that Chatwin is describing his own songline: a synthesis of travel, experience and the values which they articulate. It could also be said that he is 'singing' the songline of globalizing Western culture in its encounter with local cultures. In this songline the reader recognizes the western culture which is familiar to Chatwin's largely Western audience. The perceptive reader might also recognize, in the Aborigines' response, the processes by which they form their own versions of local identity: the attachment to certain value systems and the understanding of symbolic codes. Chatwin's project of offering a unified image of cultural practices is one in which "heterogeneous cultures become incorporated and integrated into a dominant culture which eventually covers the whole world."[72] It is not of course, the dominant force of Western capital and mediated globalization: Chatwin's suggestions are definitely weak globalization, as affirmed above. This simplistic view of the implications of his texts must not presume to replace the actual circumstances of globalization with the imaginative paradigm offered by Chatwin. The idea is a provocative one, however, and is worth

considering as a textual response by Chatwin to the globalizing culture which he encountered during travel, and about which he was obviously anxious.

Integration of local and global in the example which I am arguing occurs at textual level rather than in the polity or economy, and the frame of the globalization debate must be shifted slightly in order that the theories of globalization advanced in Section One of this chapter be applied to a purely textual construct. It is the case however, that apart from Chatwin's depiction of various processes of local/global conflict in a range of contexts in his work, there is also a sense that The Songlines, and its author, actually participate in processes of globalization. Although all these texts, as commercial products, engage in the economy of a globalizing trade network, it is not the case that, as in On the Black Hill and Utz, the narrative is simply locating globalization as a process of the modernizing world that the novel depicts. In the case of The Songlines, the global consciousness of the author gives him agency in processes that are typical of cultural globalization, such as the commercialization of aspects of a local culture through one or more forms of global commerce and communication. The text therefore contributes to those processes.

In this chapter I have related some of the ideas and vocabulary of the globalization debate to Chatwin's depiction of local identities and the global pressures which affect them. I have suggested that Chatwin's work is importantly preoccupied with the relationship between the local and the global inasmuch as they relate to questions of individual and cultural identity. It is perhaps in the nature of writing, such as Chatwin's, about small isolated, often distant cultures, that the local with which the author engages is at once in conflict with the Western modernizing processes of which the author is a part. In relation to The Songlines I have suggested that Chatwin goes further than depicting globalization, and that his text actively participates in processes of cultural globalization. It might also be argued that the processes of negotiation and resolution for which I argued earlier in this chapter are here achieved by the author, rather than the characters. Chatwin's attempt to resolve the dynamic is to present the songline, and nomadism generally, as a solution.

Unlike the specific local resolutions to be found in <u>Utz</u> and <u>On the Black Hill</u>, <u>The Songlines</u> offers a global response, supposedly applicable not only to the threatened local identities depicted in the narrative but to its readership as well. What is clear from this is that Chatwin is highly aware of the global arena in which he and the local which he depicts are acting. The next chapter will consider another aspect of this awareness, specifically in relation to modernizing processes; that of reflexive modernity. The frame of modernity is important, not just to the settings, events and characters in Chatwin's work, but to the nature of his depiction of them as well; this is the case in the context of reflexive modernity as it is in the case of globalization.

Endnotes to Chapter Three

[1] At the time of writing, the on-line bookseller Amazon offers over six hundred titles which include the word 'globalization'.

[2] Anne Game, "Travel", International Sociology 13,1 (March 1988), 41-57. Game attempts to substitute the trope of travel for the trope of globalization, but I do not find her intervention useful to my analysis. Whilst criticizing the narrowness of globalization, she actually applies a limited definition of 'travel' which is constructed of generalizations and metaphor. Her criticism of globalization is a response to its " … totalizing abstractions and attempts to identify the source of change … and construct all-inclusive classificatory systems" (42). My approach to globalization circumvents this criticism by focusing on specific depictions of the impact of the global on the local. In fact my proposition of globalization as a context for reading certain literary texts is not a suggestion that globalization be seen as "*the* dynamic" (Game, 42), but that it can be seen as *a* dynamic in narratives which depict these processes, especially during a period of accelerated globalization.

[3] I am encouraged in this aspect of the thesis by the following words written by John Tomlinson on the subject of addressing the cultural aspects of globalization: "We are pretty much bound to lose *some* of the complexity of globalization in any feasible account of it, but it doesn't follow that an account of one dimension - one way of slicing into globalization - has to be a one-dimensional account", John Tomlinson, Globalization and Culture (Cambridge: Polity Press 1999), p.17. I recognize that my reading of different approaches to globalization theory is only one way of 'slicing into' it, but remain convinced that the synthesis of several viewpoints on a carefully delineated range of subjects, and the inter-disciplinary readings which follow, guard against my account being one-dimensional.

[4] Tomlinson, Globalization and Culture, p.1.

[5] Bruce Chatwin, On the Black Hill, (London; Picador, 1983). Subsequent references will be given parenthetically in the text, preceded by the abbreviation BH.

[6] As my use of it will make clear, the narrative quality of globalization is something which is particularly a focus of Mike Featherstone's work (see Featherstone, Undoing Culture, London: Sage, 1995.)

[7] Malcolm Waters, Globalization (London: Routledge, 1995).

[8] Jan Nederveen Piertese, "Globalization as Hybridization", in Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash and Roland Robertson, eds., Global Modernities (London: Sage, 1995).

[9] This term was coined by George Ritzer in his article "The McDonaldization Thesis: Is expansion Inevitable?", (International Sociology 11,3 (September 1996) 291-308). It has since been taken up by other commentators including Piertese, in "Globalization as Hybridization" (p.45), as well as by popular commentators. The presence of McDonalds has come to be seen as an indicator of globalization and its advance, and the locations of McDonalds to belong, therefore, to a globalized world. A recent comment was that the NATO bombing of Serbia was the first time that two countries with McDonalds had gone to war (BBC Radio, commentator unknown). The implication of this comment seemed to be surprise that two countries whose geographical distance had been broken down by the cultural flows of globalization should be involved in combat. This is perhaps a blow to the deterritorialization argument of globalization theory (see this section, below) given the fierce nationalism of, for example, the Serbs.

[10] I agree with John Tomlinson's criticism of Waters on this point: it is not necessarily the case that this argument about symbolic exchange proves the primacy of cultural over economic or political globalization (Tomlinson, Globalization and Culture, p.23). However, my reading of texts of globalization theory, and of Chatwin's work, is concerned with symbolic or tokenized exchanges, and with the cultural sphere more generally, and I feel able to focus on this aspect of globalization without insisting, as Waters does, that it is the most globalized sphere.

[11] Waters, Globalization, p.125.

[12] Anthony Giddens, The Consequences of Modernity (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), p.156.

[13] The dating of the beginning of globalization is one of the most contested issues in the field. Differing suggestions range from 500,000 years ago (the migration of homo erectus from Africa) to 30 years ago (the emergence of transnational corporations and a global economy). See Fred Riggs, "Globalization key Concepts", http//:www2.hawaii.edu/fredr/glocon.htm
This also reflects the interdisciplinary attention which theories of globalization have attracted, given this example from an anthropological viewpoint.

[14] Roland Robertson, Globalization (London: Sage, 1992). Robertson identifies several periods of globalization, and concentrates his analysis on the moment of acceleration of the phenomenon, starting around 1870 (pp.57-60).

[15] An example of this position is to be found in Roland Robertson's work. Robertson takes the view that increased globalization leads to increased awareness of one's own culture and identity, a response which I argue is identifiable in On The Black Hill.

[16] John Tomlinson, "Placing and Displacing the West", European Journal of Development Research 8, 2 (1996), 22-35.

[17] Waters, Globalization, p.3.

[18] Waters, Globalization, p.3.

[19] Anthony Giddens, Modernity and Self-Identity (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), p.89.

[20] Giddens, Modernity and Self-Identity, p.5.

[21] Featherstone, Undoing Culture, p.110.

[22] Goran Therborn, "Routes to and Through Modernity", in Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash and Roland Robertson eds., Global Modernities (London: Sage, 1995), p.128.

[23] Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore, War and Peace in the Global Village (New York, Bantam Books, 1968), pp.11-12.

[24] Bruce Chatwin, The Songlines (London: Cape, 1989); Utz (London: Pan Books, 1989). Subsequent refernces will be given parenthetically in the text, preceded by the abbreviation S and U respectively.

[25] Bruce Chatwin, "Letter to Tom Maschler", in Jan Borm and Matthew Graves, eds., Anatomy of Restlessness (London: Jonathan Cape, 1996), p.84. Subsequent references will be given parenthetically in the text, preceded by the abbreviation "TM".

[26] Jonathan Friedman, "Global System, Globalization and the Parameters of Modernity", in Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash and Roland Robertson, eds., Global Modernities (London: Sage, 1995), p.70.

[27] Giddens, The Consequences of Modernity, p.64.

[28] Giddens, Modernity and Self-Identity, p.89.

[29] Giddens, <u>Modernity and Self-Identity,</u> p.81.

[30] Giddens, <u>The Consequences of Modernity,</u> p.64. My italics.

[31] Featherstone, <u>Undoing Culture,</u> p. 90.

[32] Featherstone, <u>Undoing Culture,</u> p. 6.

[33] This analysis of the consequences of globalization is not unique to Featherstone's work, but is also addressed by Robertson and Giddens. As it is Featherstone's work which is under consideration for the moment, however, I intend to focus on his account of clash and conflict, its causes and effects.

[34] Featherstone, <u>Undoing Culture,</u> p.110.

[35] Featherstone, <u>Undoing Culture,</u> p.110

[36] Giddens, <u>The Consequences of Modernity,</u> pp.63-65.

[37] See the first section of this chapter.

[38] Featherstone, <u>Undoing Culture,</u> p.110.

[39] Featherstone, <u>Undoing Culture,</u> p.110.

[40] Therborn, "Routes to/Through Modernity", p.128.

[41] Karl Miller, <u>Doubles: Studies in Literary History: A Critical Study</u> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).

[42] Susannah Clapp has described Chatwin's research into the nature of twins in <u>With Chatwin</u> (London: Jonathan Cape, 1997), pp.197-8.

[43] Featherstone, <u>Undoing Culture,</u> p.110.

[44] Piertese gives a useful account of the hybridizing influence of globalization in "Globalization as Hybridization", pp.62-3. Based on the ideas of Rome and Schelling, his work considers the way in which

globalization encourages new cultural practices through the recombination of forms which had not formerly been possible. An example from <u>On the Black Hill</u> might be Theo's life as a Buddhist in a tent in Wales.

[45] Giddens, <u>Consequences of Modernity,</u> p.64. Giddens discusses this interaction as the connection of presence and absence, and claims that "Local happenings are shaped by events happening many miles away". This comment describes exactly what happens to the twins and the local community of the Black Hill in this instance.

[46] Robertson, <u>Globalization,</u> p.59.

[47] Giddens, <u>Modernity and Self-Identity,</u> p.81.

[48] There is also a link here with the salvage ethnography identified in Chapter Two, and more closely with the spread of tourism which is also a feature of globalization. There is an element of nostalgia for the 'unspoilt' in this ironic turn, as the twins' farm becomes attractive to outsiders who are seeking to escape the effects of globalization which they, with varying degrees of intent, introduce to The Vision. The Vision to some extent becomes commodified as a site of nostalgia.

[49] In contrast with the globalizing powers of the aeroplane in <u>On the Black Hill,</u> and the railway line in <u>The Songlines</u> (see Section Three of this chapter).

[50] Chatwin is clearly ambivalent about the effects of globalized capitalism, sympathizing with the twins, for example, in the loss of their mother's belongings. He nonetheless presents Theo the tent, a nomad figure, as wise, full of understanding, and a valuable addition to the community. The contrast between the nomadic and the sedentary: "the journey as exile, the retreat from history", is a focus for Graves. "Depaysement et Ressourcement dans L'Oeuvre de Bruce Chatwin". (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: Université de Paris - Sorbonne, 1992), p.1. The contrast between ownership and movement will be considered at length in the final chapter of this thesis.

[51] The character is also perhaps an ironic attack on Chatwin himself, in comment on his early years at Sotheby's. Given Chatwin's lack of a tendency to self-criticize, it may equally well be a veiled sketch of one of the characters from that era who led him to the decision to leave.

[52] Another process described by Clapp, <u>With Chatwin,</u> p.186. See also Chapter One, endnote 48, of this thesis.

[53] Perhaps unsurprisingly, Robertson notes, in his classification of the different periods of globalization, the Hiroshima bombing and the Holocaust as examples of events with a globalizing effect (Robertson, Globalization, p.59).

[54] Again, the issue of nostalgia is relevant. Chatwin seems to be making it a part of his representation of the changes which affect The Vision. Like the visitors mentioned in endnote 48 of this chapter, Chatwin is writing in nostalgic mode of a lost world, from whose contrast with the globalizing world he can profit by writing about it.

[55] Featherstone, Undoing Culture, p.110.

[56] Therborn, "Routes to/through Modernity", p.128. The collection of porcelain is a particularly good example of a symbolic code, which is not reliant on spatial positioning for individuals to understand it, but on a globalized set of values. Waters's argument that symbolic exchange is the more easily globalized and Tomlinson's questioning of that statement are both answered here: the international dealing in Meissen which the narrative unfolds relies on the capacity of the individual both to intervene in world finance (international bank accounts, money equivalencies) and to have internalized the personal and cultural values invested in the Meissen which is also being exchanged.

[57] In his classification of the periods of globalization, Robertson posits the period in which Utz is set as "Struggle for Hegemony" followed by "Uncertainty" (Robertson, Globalization, p.59). I am not aware of any work which concentrates on the relationship between the Communist powers and globalization, but my reading of the situation here, and its development as Utz moves between East and West, demonstrates that the flows of meaning and affiliations with which he is forced to engage are globalizing ones.

[58] In a more sophisticated analysis of Utz's position, it is hard to allow the description 'politically neutral'. His criticism of the Communist regime reveals a belief in capitalist exchange of goods for money, and in the right of the individual to buy and sell, as well as own, whatever material possessions they wish. I would argue that one of the reasons for which Utz, and others of Chatwin's characters are uncommitted to a conventional political stance is that so many of them (including Chatwin himself) are attached to a set of values or beliefs which, at least superficially, transcends the more explicitly political positions which are possible. A family farm, a collection of porcelain or an inherited songline give more definition to the identity of a character, it is implied, than political affiliation would.

[59] The fifth chapter of this thesis will offer a sustained reading of Utz in the context of the relationship between ownership and movement. In the context of globalization, both can be read as part of the attempt to negotiate and resolve the confrontation with globalizing pressures. As Chapter Five will

show, Utz's response also reflects the fact that the ownership/movement dynamic is particularly important in Chatwin's work.

[60] The fifth chapter of this thesis will also offer a more sustained analysis of the psychological aspects of the self-identification with a collection, and the role which this plays in other human relationships. This chapter is of course more concerned to read this as Utz's ability to 'shift the frame', and to master new modes of affiliation and belonging when the symbolic values provided by the porcelain collection prove incapable of resisting the accelerating changes which confront him.

[61] Waters, Globalization, p.3.

[62] This parallels the ambiguity demonstrated in Chapter Five of this thesis, which discusses Chatwin's depiction of collectors and nomads. Sympathy for both sides of the debate, as is the case with the collector and the nomad, seems to be present in Chatwin's work, and this may reflect a deep personal ambivalence in the writer who seemed successful in negotiating his identity in a global situation, but perhaps did so at the expense of a local sense of self. He clearly did not define himself according to a fixed spatial position, and mastered a range of symbolic codes. On the other hand, his profession, class and sexuality problematized the self-identity which he was able to sustain in a globalized world of the media attention associated with celebrity..

[63] Friedman, "Global System, Globalization and the Parameters of Modernity", p.70.

[64] Anthony Giddens, Beyond Left and Right (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), p.81.

[65] Therborn, "Routes to/through Modernity", p.128.

[66] This depiction of the local is arguably a more textual construct in The Songlines than in the previous examples discussed in this chapter. Chapter Two of this thesis has already considered the techniques through which Chatwin constructs an authoritative picture of the local environment in The Songlines, and it is worth repeating that the Australian outback in the narrative is an imaginative one. Nonetheless, it functions as one half of the global/local dynamic.

[67] Giddens, The Consequences of Modernity, p.84.

[68] "The industrialization of the mass media has carried with it the globalization of culture." Waters, Globalization, p.52. I am here arguing that Chatwin's novel is performing something of the globalizing function which Waters suggests more specifically is often the role of electronic mass media.

[69] Featherstone, <u>Undoing Culture</u>, p.110.

[70] Giddens, <u>Consequences of Modernity</u>, p.64.

[71] Featherstone, <u>Undoing Culture</u>, p.6.

[72] Featherstone, <u>Undoing Culture</u>, p.6.

Chapter 4: Reflexive Modernization and Reflexive Identity

Section One: Theories of Reflexive Modernization

> 'Grandfather's Country' became the song of the Out-Station Movement. Its theme was eternal, 'Go west, young man! Go west!' Away from the cities and government camps. Away from drink, glue, hash, smack, gaol. Out! Back to the desert from which grandfather was hounded. The refrain, 'Mobs of people ... Mobs of people ...', had a slightly liturgical tone, like 'Bread of Heaven ... Bread of Heaven ...' - and drove the audiences wild. At the Alice Rock Festival, where they played it, ancient Aboriginal greybeards were seen skittering and bopping with the kids.[1]

Chatwin's account of the success of this Australian group, made up of musicians of aboriginal descent as well as whites, raises questions about the nature of the relationship between tradition and modernity, community and individual identity. Rock music is a form highly dependent on mass communication structures, and expert systems of technology. Despite it being embedded in these modernized structures, however, 'Grandfather's Country' is a song that encourages a distancing from the cultural and political effects of modernity. This chapter will contextualize the processes at work in this excerpt, and in the rest of the novel, and will employ aspects of reflexive modernization theory to answer questions about identity, agency, and the construction of community in an era of radicalized modernity.[2] As in the case of the previous two chapters, the first section will concentrate on the theoretical context and on outlining concepts and vocabulary that are important in relation to the literary texts. The second section will offer a close reading of The Songlines. The third section will consider Utz, then some of the shorter pieces anthologized in What Am I Doing Here.[3]

As with Chapter Three, Section One, it is not the purpose of this section to offer an exhaustive survey of work on an area of social theory. Instead, I intend to outline areas

of theory that I believe illuminate the processes being depicted in Chatwin's narrative. Because reflexive modernization is an area about which there is still much debate, I will be making use not only of texts on the subject, but also of the range of critical response which it has provoked. The aim is to synthesize aspects of the debate which are specifically relevant here. Debate around reflexive modernization arose out of work by Anthony Giddens and Ulrich Beck, which was taken up by Scott Lash, and led to the collaborative publication of Reflexive Modernization - Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order.[4] In this, and in other work that has responded to it, reflexive modernization is figured as a 'radicalization' of modernization (see endnote two). Beck posits reflexive modernization as following a period of 'simple' modernization, by which he implies an industrial age. As modernity continues, he argues, it begins to destabilize its own structures, and reflexive change happens surreptitiously; for Beck, reflexivity is less a question of agency, and more to do with institutions, whether political or financial organisations, becoming destabilized by the results of their own radicalization, i.e. the increase in consumer power, and in the range and accessibility of expert systems through expanding information technology. This section will deal with the ways in which reflexive modernization leads to individualization, and the implications that this has for agency in identity formation. The section will finally suggest ways in which reflexive modernization, particularly aesthetic reflexivity, can inform a reading of a literary text. The juxtaposition of these two sets of texts, of reflexive modernization and of Chatwin's work, will be based on the concerns which both address. My reading of Chatwin's work in this comparison will deal not only with the world which his, and the theoretical texts, depict, but also the strategies of depiction employed in his narratives which coincide with aspects of aesthetic reflexivity. My use of this theory responds to the depictions made in Chatwin's work, and the focus of the reading will therefore be on Giddens's work on tradition and Lash's work on community. Critical response to their work by Piet Strydom, Nick Ellison and Jeffrey Alexander will also be considered.

In work by all these theorists, key themes are the increased agency enjoyed by individuals, communities, and institutions, and the possibility for reflection on the processes of modernity. This leads to a pro-active process of identity formation, which is not necessarily concerned with tradition, but with contingent communities made possible by advanced communications technology and expert systems. As in the case of globalization, the implication is that individuals and groups gain a growing awareness of their position in relation to the rest of the world. In consequence, they can make choices about their response to the condition of this radicalized modernity, which no longer represents a linear route of all-encompassing capitalism and a belief in progress through modernization.

Reflexive modernization theory is closely linked with globalization theory in that it refers to a highly modernized world, in which mass communications and expert knowledge systems make possible identity formation which is not spatially contingent.[5] Instead of figuring the clash between the local and the global, however, reflexive modernization theory concentrates on the way in which individuals, and individual communities, identify themselves. It argues that individuals create their own 'reflexive biographies' instead of inheriting identity from the socio-economic context into which they are born. Communities, by the same token, are not constructed around geographical location or the rules of tradition. Instead, the structure of modernity, at once constraining and enabling, allows agents to identify themselves with groups whose ethnic or political groups may be dissimilar to their own. Reflexive modernization deals less with a globalizing cultural pressure than with a new level of agency for the individual: "Individualization and globalization are in fact two sides of the same process of reflexive modernization".[6]

Theorists of reflexive modernization argue that modernity, having replaced a society in which tradition constituted the organizing structures, has provided new institutions and new structures around which identity and community are organized.[7] The project of modernity, as envisioned by thought which dates from the Enlightenment, was involved

with a trajectory of development, in which growth of industrial capitalism was seen as generating 'progress'. In consequence of the intensification of this growth that the late-twentieth century has witnessed, modernity comes to be undermined by its own success. Awareness of the instability and mutability of knowledge has been identified by Giddens as creating a disturbance in the faith in knowledge held by what Beck terms 'simple' modernity. The idea of disturbance is linked with Beck's work, which points out that the progress of modernity has resulted in incalculable risks, from ecological damage to global warfare.[8] In contrast with the meta-narrative of modernity, which held with ideas of progress and achievement, events such as global warming cause individuals to question the benefits and assumptions of the processes which brought them about. Modernity is therefore destabilized: "knowledge of the world contributes to its unstable or mutable character".[9] Individuals and communities are less likely to invest belief in the overarching project of modernity, and more likely to search for other possible modes of belonging, and thus of positioning themselves in relation to the world. The institutions of modernity, political or economic, are threatened by this reflexive awareness of the contingency of much of what modernity held to be true: " ... the reflexivity of modernity actually undermines the certainty of knowledge, even in the core domains of natural science".[10] My reading of The Songlines will foreground Chatwin's depictions of the Aborigines in a position of reflexive awareness, reconstituting identity in negotiation with the institutions of modernity such as travel and communications networks.

Beck's and Giddens's work tends to concentrate on the implications of reflexive modernization at the institutional level. The radicalization of modernization identified by Beck destabilizes the institutions and project of modernity, leading to a change in the role of politics and a rise in the importance of sub-politics. He describes "the continuity of reflexive modernization processes, where in the face of increased or hazardous productive forces the sub-politics has taken over the leading role from politics of shaping society".[11] This is perhaps to under-estimate the role of the political, in the form of conventional modern political institutions; it could be argued that along with capitalist industry, these

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institutions still have a large role to play in shaping the identity and everyday experience of communities and individuals. The high profile of pressure groups and voluntary campaigns is now a significant aspect of many people's lives, and affects decisions taken by large political bodies. What is interesting in relation to my examination of Chatwin's work is the implication that communities and individuals are empowered by the reflexiveness of 'late' modernity. The growing role of sub-politics in the organizations of social and cultural groups, and the identity formation of their members, is a result of increased agency in this domain.

Reflexive agency, as far as Beck and Giddens are concerned, is a direct result of, not a parallel to, processes of radicalized modernization. Had the modernity project not reached these levels, the circumstances of reflexivity brought about by risk and by the awareness that knowledge is contingent would not have been possible. For Beck, the disintegration of certainties in industrial society leads to "the compulsion to find and invent new certainties for oneself".[12] In reflexive modernity, individuals are able to reflect on the structures within which they act, and to turn to sub-politics, rather than the institutional politics of capitalist modernity, for identity and agency. Lash acknowledges this in his critique of Beck and Giddens, and their concentration on reflexivity at the institutional level; he identifies " ... an inordinate emphasis on institutions and experts to the exclusion of the increasingly important extra-institutional dimension to everyday life and cultural politics".[13] As far as my argument is concerned, it is this extra-institutional dimension which is important, but it is equally important to bear in mind that the sub-politics of everyday life are enacted in reflexive awareness of and response to their relation with the institutions of 'simple' modernity.[14] The implications of this positioning will be illustrated by the examination of reflexive community and individual identity formation in the context of reflexive modernization that follows.

Community is an important theme in reflexive modernity. As Giddens points out, " ... social practices are constantly examined and reformed in the light of incoming information

about those very practices, thus constitutively altering their character".[15] This changing character is a facet of reflexive modernity; the basis for previous social practices and organization are brought into question by the radicalization of modernity, as modernization itself destabilized previous traditional societies. Community is organized differently, and responds to different circumstances. A new kind of citizenship, involved with agency and choice, is implied by this work; one which is not dictated to or constrained by the institutions discussed above. Giddens's position in relation to community is dominated by his understanding of exclusion and inclusion: "the relation between tradition and identity always make the categories of friend and stranger sharp and distinct".[16] These categories are instructive in my consideration of Chatwin's work, but it has been correctly perceived that Lash's re-appraisal of this position leads to a different emphasis in the relation between individual and community:

> Lash criticises Beck and Giddens for their utilitarian understanding of the relation between actor and environment. In contrast with the self-other dichotomy posited in their writings, he insists that actors relate to the abstract systems of late-modernity in a manner that is decisively mediated by their relation to communities.[17]

It is a perceived weakness of Lash's work that the individual can only operate via the mediation of community, which Strydom identifies as being a normative process.[18] This criticism notwithstanding, it is important to illustrate the importance of community in this context. I agree with Alexander's positing of a complex but vital link between individual agency and community: " ... citizenship needs to be understood as an integral component of a reflexive process in which social agents are confronted by a rapidly changing economic social and political environment in a manner which prompts a constant questioning of forms of solidarity and identity".[19] Identity here refers not only to individual identity formation, but communal identity, and is bound up with the dialogic relationship between the two. In reflexive modernity, individuals gain an aspect of self-identity by belonging to certain communities, but they are not traditional communities that

prescribe identity, as do the political institutions of 'simple' modernity. Instead, they are more likely to appear in the domain of sub-politics, as communities from which the individual takes some aspects of identity formation through deliberate self-affiliation:

> Far-reaching changes associated with globalization have created conditions in which would-be citizens have to engage with new forms of inclusion and exclusion in the context of the endemic contingency which increasingly characterises social and political relationships. 'Reflexivity' as the idea is used here refers to the general process, driven by social, economic and political change by which social actors, confronted with the erosion, or transformation, of established patterns of belonging, readjust existing notions of rights or membership to new conceptions of identity, solidarity and the institutional foci of redress.[20]

The readjusted notion of rights and membership to which Ellison refers is related to Giddens's notions of friend and stranger, but holds new criteria for belonging, which are non-traditional. Even more importantly, Ellison makes the link between the readjusted notion of rights and membership, and the processes that are producing the change. Again the link with globalization can be seen in the mechanics of change which produce a new level of reflexive citizenship. In the context of my work, both the processes that lead to this reflexivity and the nature of reflexive community, as opposed to more traditional modes of belonging, are significant to the reading of The Songlines that follows.

Giddens and Lash differ slightly in their vision of a range of communities, and their relationships. Lash has been criticized for work which "refers to community without considering the implication entailed by communities in the plural and the problems raised by their interrelations and interdependencies".[21] My position in relation to Chatwin's work is closer to Giddens's: these interrelations and interdependencies are important to my consideration of Chatwin, and the boundaries between communities must be considered to be reflexive, along with the values that define them. If reflexive modernization leads to an awareness of the institutions and implications of modernity,

then the new processes of identity and community must demonstrate a reflexivity about their own limits, and processes of exclusion. New modes of inclusion do not imply that the members of a community are incapable of awareness of the criteria which mark the boundaries between their own and other communities. Indeed, the opposite should be the case. New communities which are created in response to processes of radicalized modernity must surely demonstrate a reflexive awareness of their relationship to other newly-constructed forms of identity and the communities which they imply.[22] This is in fact suggested by the model which Strydom sees Lash using, which involves a macro level (information and communication structures) a meso-level (shared communal meanings in the sense of shared universes of meaning) and 'reflexive affinity groups' (primary and small group semantics).[23] I would argue that the relationship between the different levels of this model implies dialogue not only within community, but also between communities at the macro level. If this were not the case, there would be no place for the expanding importance of information and communication structures. It is via these structures, which can take a range of forms, that communities establish and negotiate their interrelations. In the context of the present study, it is more instructive to concentrate on Beck's statement that these are modernity's "new and fertile grounds; interrelationships and cross-boundary communications".[24]

The importance of reflexive community is driven by a new possibility for individual agency: "modernization involves not just structural change, but a changing relationship between social structures and social agents. When modernization reaches a certain level agents tend to become more individualized, that is, decreasingly contained by structures … ".[25] This aspect of reflexive modernization is particularly prevalent in Beck's and Giddens's work. Giddens has been criticized for the fact that the level to which his work theorizes individualization leads to an overestimation of agency,[26] and this is a valid criticism, although Giddens's ideas about 'self-actualization' and 'life-politics' serve as a reflexive foil for the non-reflexive politics and identity offered by 'simple' modernity. In terms of the adherence of individuals to new forms of community as outlined above, there

is a dialogic relationship between individual and community. If these new communities allow new forms of self-identity, they can nevertheless not function without the agency at the level of the individual being sufficient to permit a turning away from prescribed forms of community, towards new modes of belonging. Reflexive modernization does not simply point to the possibility of new structures, but to the possibility of the individual having access to them; in this sense, agency is certainly an aspect of reflexive modernization:

> ... this newly gained reflexivity is deeply-connected to meaning making, and that critical action depends on a continued relation to relatively non-contingent supra-individual cultural forms. In contemporary societies, these cultural forms are more separated from ascriptive positions, whether moral, institutional or geographic, than ever before. It is this separation that makes the structures of cultural logics and emotional effects more accessible, the construction of syncretic meanings more possible, and the options for different kinds of social actions more widely available.[27]

For Lash, again, individual agency is figured in different terms. It is not my intention to trace the ontological grounding of his argument; it is however, useful to consider his notion of the aesthetic. Again he has been criticized, not least because this notion appears to return to consumer capitalism.[28] It is important for the development of my position on reflexive modernization as a whole that aesthetic reflexivity be taken into account. Lash claims that agency involves aesthetic reflexivity, in the sense that desire and taste have a role to play in deciding an individual's affiliation to any community. The example of internet communities devoted to a style of music is one in which the aesthetic plays a part. In many of these cases, members look for affiliations beyond the geographical boundaries of their community not only because there are small numbers of people with the same tastes, but also because they are in active opposition to the aesthetic dominating taste decisions in a spatially defined community. The touring activities of the rock band in The Songlines are testimony to this dispersed community. The aesthetic choices of these

'virtual' communities therefore reflect a reflexive knowledge about the aesthetic that is part of their own and other communities in the way that they transgress traditional community boundaries..

The difference between aesthetic desire and responsibility towards the community is interesting in relation to Chatwin's work. Questions of mediation, whether of individual experience via the community, or of the representation of communal or individual agency arise in The Songlines in relation to Aboriginal art, as well as to Chatwin's own writing. In this context, the aesthetic refers to aspects of individual consumer choice, self-identity and self-expression, as well as to relationship with an aesthetic community. These choices are made from an ever-increasing range of possible positions and consumable products, whether material or otherwise, which mediate between the world and the chosen identity of the individual social actor. As a reflexive project, this again points to the freeing of the agent from structures which previously dictated a version of the world, and the place of the individual within it. In reflexive modernity, the individual is able not only to be reflexive about self and community, but also to make aesthetic choices based on taste, or a desire to experience the world in a certain way. The links with cultural production are obvious, and the following sections will illuminate the ways in which Chatwin's texts engage with aesthetic reflexivity as it is figured here.

The immediate relationship between the individual social actor and aesthetic reflexivity lies in that individual's ability to construct their own biography; demonstrating reflexive awareness of self, community and wider structures: "aesthetic ... reflexivity is rooted not in self-monitoring, but in self-interpretation".[29] Thus the link is made between aesthetic reflexivity and the individual; Lash implies that there is a process of interpretation involved in reflexively negotiating the relationship between self and the structures and circumstances of 'late' modernity. There are possibilities, therefore, in this enabling version of modernity, for the individual to make choices and direct the narrative of their life without being constrained by the roles and positions which tradition, or 'simple'

modernity, assigned. These possibilities are related to the individualization considered above, as well as being a response to changing forms of modernity: "Individualization means first the disembedding, and, second, the re-embedding of industrial society ways of life by new ones, in which the individuals must produce, stage and cobble together their biographies themselves".[30] Again reflexive modernization provokes a move away from a fixed identity, however constituted, and considers identity as mutable, and as involving a sense of narrative. Not only are individuals able to construct their own identity, but they are also able to change and adapt that identity in relation to changing relationships with aspects of modernity:

> ... everyone is in some sense aware of the reflexive constitution of modern social activity and the implications it has for her or his life. Self-identity for us forms a *trajectory* across the different institutional settings of modernity over the *duree* of ... 'the life-cycle'. Each of us not only has but *lives* a biography reflexively organised in terms of flows of social and psychological information about possible ways of life.[31]

This statement draws the links between individual response to the circumstances of modernity and the possibility for changing identity across a period of time. With reference to the 'social' and 'psychological', Giddens also draws attention to the combination of external influence with personal interpretation; this latter is linked, I would argue, with Lash's conception of the 'aesthetic' in that it relates to personal desire or taste, and to the influence of this on how the individual chooses to mediate the relationship between self and world.

Lash and Friedman go further in their figuring of the possibilities of reflexive identity, they discuss a "time/space of choice, in which agents previously structured by tradition are now free to choose from 'symbolic repertoires', free to try on masks, to try on identities".[32] This is important to my reading of Chatwin's work, as it relates not only to the Aborigines, but to Chatwin's own life. Beck has identified the importance of the role

of education in these processes,[33] but the statement is relevant to the concerns of this chapter as it relates to the aboriginal characters that Chatwin depicts in <u>The Songlines</u>. It is relevant to Chatwin both as traveller, and as authorial voice in <u>The Songlines</u>. This is also true of a range of texts, taken from <u>What Am I DoingHere,</u> to be considered in the final section of this chapter.

The idea of reflexive biography suggests the idea of narrative, and it is in relation to a form of narrative that this section now turns. Reflexive biography refers not to a written text, but to a process of mediation and agency. If they are biographies, however, they are open to a process of critical reading. Mediation of the world, through community, aesthetic choices, and a range of interconnected actions, decides the ongoing identity formation of the individual. In creating an identity with which to confront their position in relation to the world, each individual mediates their experience of the world for the other individuals that form part of their immediate community. As argued earlier in this section, that community is not necessarily geographically located, and may be dependent on information technology, or some other mediatory structure. Nonetheless, these reflexive biographies represent the telos of a reflexive agent, in the same way that a text is the teleological project of its author. Reflexive modernization theory has commented on the role of reflexive texts as mediating the relationship between subject and modernity: "Writing expands the level of time-space distanciation, and creates a perspective of past, present and future in which the reflexive appropriation of knowledge can be set off from designated tradition".[34] Lash and Friedman have also identified aspects of writing reflexive modernity. An obvious context for this is in ethnography, hence Marcus's comment in "Past, Present and Emergent Identities" that "while one explores the changing identity processes, the identity of one's own concepts changes".[35] As Chapter Two makes clear, this can also be applied to Chatwin's work, in that the relationship between identity of the subject, and the author of a text, whether ethnographic or fictional, affects the presentation of the processes at work. This is certainly true in Chatwin's case. In

relation to textual structure, Lash and Friedman comment on the nature of texts that begin to deal reflexively with their subject:

> ... contemporary works are interesting for their mere acknowledgement or recognition of alternative possibilities for developing their projects, aside from the ones that they actually pursue. These acknowledgements are usually to be found in the reflexive 'spaces' ... in footnotes, anecdotal asides, prefaces, appendices, epilogues and the like.[36]

In the section that follows, I argue that Chatwin's texts, in particular The Songlines can be read as creating these reflexive spaces. My articulation of theories of reflexive modernity, and my reading of Chatwin's texts is informed by Ulrich Beck's statement that "modernization is becoming reflexive; it is becoming its own theme".[37] In sections Two and Three of this chapter, I intend to demonstrate the ways in which Chatwin depicts such processes of modernization, and their consequences for reflexive community, individualization, reflexive biography, and the implication for reflexive texts. As in the excerpt quoted at the start of this section, Chatwin is concerned with processes of reflexive identity-formation, made possible by the radicalization of modernity. The text which depicts these processes is itself reflexive in its willingness to construct a narrative from diverse sources, and to juxtapose traditional contexts with a reflexive sensibility. Like the rock song of Aboriginal biography, "Grandfather's Country", The Songlines is a site of textual experiment which comments on, and is enabled by, processes of reflexive modernization.

Section Two: Reflexive Modernization in *The Songlines*

In the light of the synthesis of aspects of reflexive modernization identified in the previous section, this section will offer a reading of the ways in which processes of reflexive modernization can be seen at work in <u>The Songlines</u>. The section will follow, in its concerns, the organization of the preceding one; dealing first with questions of structure, then with community, individualization, biography, and finally with the question of aesthetic reflexivity. It is important to note here that the reading will offer two different levels of analysis. The first assumes the novel to be a realization of a teleological project on the part of the author, and considers the structures, communities and individuals portrayed within it. In this case, the section argues that Chatwin is consciously depicting a world in which processes of reflexive modernization, explicitly or not, play an important role. The second mode of analysis is concerned with looking at the novel in the context of cultural production in late-modernity. It argues that the novel and its readership display characteristics of reflexivity. This aspect of my reading picks up the reading made at the end of the previous chapter (Chapter Three, Section Three: Globalization in <u>Utz</u>, and <u>The Songlines</u> as Globalizing Text). It is linked with the question of 'aesthetic reflexivity' and therefore occurs towards the end of this section.

In order to demonstrate the progression that this reading follows, I now return to the excerpt quoted at the start of the previous section. In the excerpt from the song "Grandfather's Country", the structures of modernity are embodied by the institutions outside which a certain community wishes to place itself: government rule, in its predominantly urban context, and its manifestations which include the police and settlement camps. These structures can be associated with the project of industrial modernization and capitalist consumerism. They are related to the expansion of railways, industry and urban development. They also involve subjects of modernity in education, and give them access to communication technology. They imply not only the possibility of receiving information, but also of acquiring the ability to communicate with others in new ways: "the educated person incorporates reflexive knowledge of the conditions and

prospects of modernity, and in this way becomes an agent of reflexive modernization".[38] As Beck argues, then, reflexive modernization arises from the structures and processes of modernization itself, "which are blind and deaf to (their) own effects and threats".[39] The access to education which Graham has as an urban white, and the exposure to the urban experience which the Aboriginal band members have had, leads not only to the articulation of their criticism of modernization, but directly provides the materials for the articulation of that criticism. 'Simple' modernization, was about control, as a consequence of laying down clear boundaries and lines of exclusion and interaction between groups at all levels. Graham's band, however, is identifiable as a consequence of modernization in its 'radicalized' form, which provokes reflexive response from those implicated in its structures. It is also as a direct result of expert systems and communications technology that the necessary musical equipment is available to the individual consumer, even a consumer with limited economic resources.[40] Thus the success of the modernization project makes available the tools for its own undermining; its structures are enabling as well as constraining.

The issue of reflexive community is also important here. Graham has turned his back on the community offered by his career as a teacher, amongst other whites engaged in the same Western culture-led process. Instead he has identified himself with Aboriginal youth, and articulates a message which is in opposition to the modernization project. He advocates a return to the rural, a reclamation of the land (and hence the identity) which has previously been lost ("from which Grandfather was hounded"). This change of response to the structures within which he has previously been involved arises from his awareness of their effects: "The educational programme, he said, was systematically trying to destroy Aboriginal culture and to rope them into the market system ... " (S, p.158). His response reveals that his community is confirmed by the audience; whether encouraged to a new conception of the relationship between themselves and modernization by the song, or simply expressing support for an opinion which they already held, the audience now represents a community which is not (at least exclusively)

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ethnically defined, nor contingent upon geographical location: "mobs of people ... ". The touring activity points to the ability of the group's message to cross a number of geographical as well as conceptual borderlines, previously patrolled by the structures of modernity which give identity according to, for example, race, culture, class or occupation. In fact the group is exploiting the new possibilities of reflexive modernization; operating in the zone of "new and fertile grounds; interrelationships and cross-boundary communication".[41]

The nature of this community is that it consists of individuals who have some level of reflexive agency. The Aboriginal members of the group have made the choice to identify themselves with the cultural forms of Western modernity. 'Mick', who " ... could 'do' Bob Marley, Hendrix or Zappa" (S, p.156), is identifying himself not with the place ascribed to him as an Aboriginal in a white dominated society, but as an individual whose access to Western culture has allowed to him to select the aspects of that culture from which he creates his identity. He has thus also abandoned aspects of Aboriginal culture: although still undergoing initiation, he expresses his identity and politics through a medium which, in its marketed form, is Western. The same process, to a certain extent, has been undergone by the audience, whose access to Western culture has primed them to be able to relate their own identities to this message, presented through this medium.

Both Mick and Graham, therefore, create their own biographies from materials which are taken from modernity, but which also reflect a discarding of the identities that modernity ascribes. Graham chooses to go through token initiation rites, whilst Mick takes rock music as a form of self-expression. The significance of the tokenism lies in Graham's acceptance that his semi-membership of an Aboriginal community is not the defining point of his identity. As a reflexive social actor, he negotiates a range of sites of possible identity formation. Both decisions necessitate personal agency, and imply an awareness of the ability to choose not only community, but to construct a life-narrative from a range

of possibilities offered by the processes of modernization (education, employment, and consumerism).

The song, finally, represents an aesthetic mediation of the processes discussed above. The band members actively express their reflexive position in relation to the processes of modernization which have so far informed their knowledge and identities. They are engaged with the self-interpretation that Lash argues is a vital part of reflexivity's aesthetic dimension.[42] The appeal to an audience through rock music denotes a recognition that it is a form through which an identity and a position can be expressed. The song itself forms part of reflexive biography, its meanings shared by a reflexive community. Questions of taste and self-interpretation are important in the case of both musicians and audience. An important part of this possibility is its representation of self through an aesthetic medium. The song therefore expresses the self-interpretation of the musicians, but also calls on the taste of an audience for this reflexive positioning in relation to modernization, expressed in this form.

Throughout The Songlines, reflexive moments are developed across a range of circumstances. The structures of modernity are often only present by implication, but two of them, the railroad and the school, are vital to Chatwin's examination of the inter-relation between the modernized, Westernized white Australia, and the Aboriginal community which it threatens.[43] The novel's characters who might be characterized as reflexive in their self-positioning are often those who have had experience of the education system and other structures. The narrator Bruce is frequently surprised to find evidence of educated reading habits, and expert knowledge amongst people choosing to distance themselves from urban modernity. One such character is Red, whose favourite book is Spinoza's Ethics, another is Rolf, whose caravan is full of "literary journals; journals of literature in translation, dossiers, files, card indexes ... " (S, p.164). The most revealing of these examples are Arkady and Titus. Arkady's life has involved confrontation between major political ideologies of capitalism and communism, and he

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has made the decision to mediate between the Aboriginals and modernization. The structures of modernization which have provoked his disenchantment with the project of modernity have nonetheless provided him with the tools with which to "cobble together"[44] his biography:

> Neither of Arkady's parents had ever read a book in English. He delighted them by winning a first class honours degree, in history and philosophy, at Adelaide University. He made them sad when he went to work as a school-teacher, on an Aboriginal settlement in Walbiri country to the North of Alice Springs.
>
> He liked the Aboriginals ... and their artful ways of dealing with the white man. (S, p.2)

The community into which Arkady is born, and the education which he receives both stimulate a reflexivity which leads him to identify with a community outside his own, and, in Giddens's phrase, to "form a *trajectory* across the different institutional settings of modernity".[45]

Titus has also received a Western education, and dips at will into different aspects of learning but remains located in the bush: "He learned to speak fluent English and German. He learned calculus. He mastered all kinds of mechanical skills ... " (S, p.175). The importance in terms of reflexivity is in relation to Titus's use of this knowledge:

> Twice a year, in June and again in November, he would get out his double-breasted suit, board the train for Adelaide, and spend a few weeks catching up with modern life. In the Public Library he would read back-numbers of *Scientific American*. One year he took a course in petrochemical technology.
>
> The 'other' Titus was the ultra conservative song-man who lived, half-naked ... who spoke six or seven Aboriginal languages and was famous, up and down the Western Desert, for his judgements on tribal law. (S, p.176)

The experiences of both characters have given them the information and the knowledge for "critical action" which engages with cultural forms which are "separated from ascriptive positions, whether institutional moral or geographic".[46]   As in the case of Graham's abandonment of the school, Beck's argument that the structures of modernity undermine themselves can be seen at work in these characters.   None is in favour of the reckless linear advance of modernization, but all have been equipped by the structures of modernization to be reflexive about it.[47]

The institution of law is depicted in a similar way to education. There are non-reflexive lawyers, and there are lawyers whose knowledge, not only of law, but also of wider consequences of modernization leads to a reflexive position in relation to their vision of the clash of Aboriginal and white legal affairs.   Arkady, for example, is aware of the difficulties posed by the involvement of Aboriginals in a court case:

> "Aboriginal witnesses", he said, "are not always easy to handle.   They
> refuse, for example, to hear the dead man called by name."
> "You mean they wouldn't testify?"
> "It makes the case for the prosecution difficult." (S, p.104)

There is a range of possible positions on this mediation. Within the novel, Arkady is posited as a reflexive character, whose attitude to the law is comparable to his attitude to education. His access to expert-knowledge systems has made him aware of their limitations. The lawyer Hughie also seems to turn away from the prescribed role which the law would otherwise suggest: "being lost in Australia gives you a lovely feeling of security" (S, p.52).   In reflexive modernization, structures such as the law no longer provide security.   As for many of the characters in the novel, this leads to "the compulsion to find and invent new certainties for oneself".[48]

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The mediation between Aboriginal and Australian law is an uneasy one throughout the novel. Chatwin's depiction develops a negative stance towards characters such as Kidder, who use it as a tool to place themselves in a position of exclusive power; for example through his insistence on the de-programming of knowledge. In my view, the narrator's position on this is that knowledge must be used in reflexive ways: "Knowledge is knowledge ... it's not that easy to dispose of" (S, p.47). The narrator's suggestion that "he would have made a good policeman" also criticizes Kidder's non-reflexive stance in relation to structures of modern, Western law.[49] In a final judgement, Kidder is associated with his helicopter, a particularly unsubtle representation of the advance of modernization. The narrator's judgement, "air lout", expresses a criticism which is less to do with Kidder's means of transport (the narrator is happy to fly in a helicopter later in the novel) and more to do with his unreflexive stance on the relationship between Aboriginal law and the modernized Australia which has infringed upon it.

Like the helicopter, the railroad is another representation of modernization. Symbolizing the linear advance of 'progress', the route of the railway is continually deviated by the non-modernized belief system of the Aboriginals. Again the access to education, and the mediation provided by reflexive individuals allows a reflexive position to develop. Instead of being the subjects of an irreversible process, the Aboriginals are empowered by their negotiation of the relationship between traditional identity and the structures of modernization, of which the railway is an embodiment. The spaghetti-like structure of the dreaming tracks seems to provide an eloquent contrast with the functional linearity of the railway, and, in this reflexive mode of action by the Aboriginals, can actually influence that linearity, adapting it to the values of a non-modernized community.

This relationship contrasts with the dramatic interventions of previous, non-reflexive agents described in The Songlines, such as Sir Anthony Eden, whose atomic bomb caused devastation to Aboriginal tribes who could not read the English danger signs (S, p.93). The suggestions of reflexive modernization that Chatwin depicts as responses to

the railway differ from, for example, Hanlon's opposition to the bomb, a response that is mediated through his communist sympathies. In the context of the novel, communism can be seen as a non-reflexive response; a seeking of identity and structure in another system which denies agency and whose processes are solely self-serving. Both communism and capitalist modernization can be seen as non-reflexive structures. The characters in this novel, teachers, lawyers and musicians, demonstrate the reflexive possibilities for the relationship between identity and those structures.

With its depiction of the cultural clash of black Aboriginal Australia and white Westernized Australia, The Songlines is very much concerned with questions of community. Some of these communities are the communities of modernized urban Australia. They extend into the rural, where the whites also attempt to maintain a sense of community, and are contrasted with the Aboriginal communities which pre-date modernization, and are traditional in the sense which Giddens identifies.[50] Another proposed community, which is the telos of Chatwin's work, is the nomadic world-wide community which the notebook sections of the novel attempt to create. My concern here is to examine the response that these communities make to the context of radicalized modernization, and the way in which the formation of the identity of those communities is itself reflexive.

As already implied in my discussion of Arkady, the Land Rights movement is inherently reflexive. The activists recognize the role which modernization, from the era of colonization to the recent history of enforced Westernization of blacks, has played in setting up the oppositions with which they are involved. They are involved in the "questioning and negotiation of forms of solidarity and identity".[51] The activists themselves form a small reflexive community, but they can only be seen as such in contrast with the non-reflexive community made up by the majority of whites whom the narrator meets in the course of the narrative. The policeman with the idea for a novel called "Body Bag" about a 'dead coon' (S, p.135), is an example of these whites who

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have undertaken education in the white Australian context, but who remain constrained, rather than enabled, by the processes of law and education which have formed their identity.

The activists, I would argue, form a community that is capable of mediating, in a reflexive manner, between the non-reflexive white community and the traditional Aboriginal communities. Access to the structures of education and communication have enabled this group to be aware of the problematized relationship between these two communities, and to reflect on their own role within the modernizing process represented by white urban Australia. It is notable that characters like Father Flynn and Arkady are in some sense marginalized in the terms of modernized society, because of their background or childhood. It is these characters, who have been in some sense externalized from the modernizing Western context, who demonstrate a reflexivity about the structures and processes of modernity, and its effects on the traditional Aboriginal communities. The non-reflexive characters, such as the policeman, demonstrate no such awareness.

The Aboriginal communities present a different aspect of the negotiation between community and modernity. Even more than the activists, they are conscious of issues of inclusion and exclusion: "the relationship between tradition and identity always makes the categories of friend and stranger ... sharp and distinct".[52] The importance which Kidder, and then Mick and Graham attach to initiation rites, and the secrecy surrounding Aboriginal customs and beliefs serve to remind the reader that Chatwin is dealing with something exclusive and exotic. According to Clapp and Shakespeare, Chatwin failed to get close to the Aborigines themselves, and relied instead on exploiting information which was given to him in good faith by Kath Strehlow, and other ethnographers and activists: "In the Songlines he was desperately trying to go to the centre. It was the most important thing for him, and he realized halfway through that he wasn't going to be able to do it. He was excluded".[53] The fact of this failure, although it is glossed out of the text, serves to illustrate that Aboriginal community is not only exclusive as it is depicted in the text,

but actually guards carefully against its knowledge being spread outside the initiated. This secrecy is at least in part a reaction to the modernizing processes that have had such a disastrous affect on the Aborigines. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, a threat to the identity of the local community can lead to a strengthening of the rituals and traditions which define that community.[54] In the case of its relationship with modernization, the Aboriginal culture is certainly reflexive. In this sense it can be seen to be responding to processes and structures of modernization, without itself having passed through the stages of modernity described by Beck. Aboriginal culture has not experienced its own 'early', 'simple' or 'late' modernity. Western modernization has gone through those phases in urban Australia, however, and this has had an effect on the Aboriginal communities. Depleted by violence as well as anti-Aboriginal policy, the communities that Chatwin depicts have an ambivalent attitude to modernity. Hence the reluctant but nonetheless collaborative response to the railway by the Aboriginals who benefit from Arkady's mediation between their community and the modernizers.

As opposed to the community of the rock group, or the community of the activists, Aboriginal community is not chosen from a range of possible identities by its members. Unlike the typical community of reflexive modernity, this community is largely defined by place and circumstance of birth. Chatwin describes the processes by which the child, almost immediately after conception, is assigned a totem identity, a territory, and the songs which go with them. He also describes the usually destructive consequences of an outsider attempting to join the community, either through force or initiation. Consequently, the reflexive practice of this community is different from the reflexivity that I have identified in Arkady and his colleagues. I would argue that it is still a reflexive response to a set of criteria as outlined by Beck and Giddens,[55] but that it is a reflexivity inspired less by active involvement in the processes of modernity, and more its consequences being forced upon the community. In the face of the radicalizing modernity, ever-increasing in its range and effects, the Aboriginal community as described by Chatwin does not display isolationism or ignorance.[56] Instead, in a range of

interventions, they select those effects that they perceive as being to their advantage, and attempt to mediate the limitation of modernization effects that threaten their identity. They request vehicles and technological equipment, collaborate on a Pintupi dictionary, and work with Arkady in protecting their dreaming sites from destruction by the railway. These interventions are remarkably similar to those of a reflexive community that is more profoundly involved in modernization as the basis for its existence. The Aboriginals, whilst remaining committed to the traditional parameters and activities of their community, can nonetheless be observed in this novel reacting to modernization in a way which suggests a profound understanding of its processes, as well as a willingness to engage with those aspects that continue or even reinforce their own sense of community identity.

All the communities discussed above are contingent upon the individuals who form them having the agency to do so. In the case of the Aboriginal communities, this is less the case, although the kind of community depicted in "Grandfather's Country" suggests a need for a conscious decision on the part of individuals to ally their own identity with the projected identity of a 'traditional' community; a return to the past. The colonial policy of disbanding Aboriginal tribes and forcing them through a colonial process of white-led education and deterritorialization is one linked with Western ideas of linear modernizing progress. The effect of these policies was to deny the kind of identity which the communities that Chatwin depicts are attempting to reformulate. For the whites subscribing to the possible identity which this offers, a degree of agency is necessary if they are to join in abandoning the modernizing project of their own cultural background. This willingness suggests a reflexive stance; the ability to act upon it confirms that reflexive modernization is at work in this case.

More specific examples of individual agency in a reflexive mode are to be seen in the case of the Land Rights activists. Having all been educated, in some form, by a white education system with its modernizing agenda, they have received ideas of modernity as a fundamental tenet of their upbringing, and have been exposed to late-modern structures

and processes to an extent that it has enabled and encouraged an individual response of a reflexive nature. They conform to Giddens's view of the "creative and resourceful social actor".[57] They have constructed a role and a set of affiliations which are not entirely dependent upon the context of modernization, although certainly informed by it. Arkady reacts against his father's experience of communist and capitalist modernity, Father Flynn responds to a colonial education and the activities of the church by re-aligning his sense of identity with the politics of land rights, rather than educational or religious evangelism. Both Wendy and Rolf display the same level of agency in their decision to "maroon themselves at Cullen" (S, p.165). There is definitely the sense here that social agents are "becoming more individualized ... decreasingly constrained by structures".[58] The novel clearly depicts in a positive light those individuals who are capable of this kind of reflexivity about their position in relation to modernization. Without denying the attention which is paid to the idea of reflexive communities, Chatwin seems equally willing to celebrate individual examples of reflexivity: perhaps relating them to his own experience of transnational and homosexual identity formation.

In the case of Wendy and Rolf, and in the case of Father Flynn, Joshua and Winston there is also a sense that they are engaged with trying on "masks and identities".[59] All have made decisions which affect their position, both in relation to the communities to which they belong, but also in the wider context of the modernizing world. Possible religious or cultural affiliations are negotiated and chosen in the light of characters' experience of other identities and communities; these negotiations all take place in the context of radicalized modernity, and the impact which modernization has on the possibilities for individual agency. All of these characters have previously been identified in different ways. Wendy and Rolf were city dwellers who have considerable formal education between them, as well as experience of communication structures in the media. They adhere to certain aspects of their life within these structures, such as keeping the local store, but also have made a conscious decision to alter the prescribed narratives of their lives. Their position implies not only the possibilities for reflexivity, but also the agency

to construct their life-narrative: Rolf's experience "gave him so rabid a hatred for the press, press-lords and the media in general that, when his girlfriend Wendy suggested they maroon themselves at Cullen, he agreed on one condition: he'd have as much time as he liked to read" (S, p.165). Father Flynn has acquired education and knowledge systems partly by default of being born into a certain community and partly through the education that the structures of modernity have made possible. He has demonstrated the same ability to reflect upon the structures within which he is implicated, and to construct a life narrative from the possibilities on offer. Although the Catholic church is not itself a product of modernity, I would argue that it is certainly an agent of processes that are related to the progress of modernity. Catholic education is one form of indoctrination not only into the church, but into the idea of Western modernization as a context for progress. Father Flynn's decision to negotiate between Westernized modernity and the Aboriginal community again speaks of reflexive thought and action, and the desire to build a life narrative:

> Before moving into her (Goldie's) apartment, Flynn wrote a letter, in faultless Latin, requesting Holy Father to release him from his vows.
> The couple moved to Alice Springs and were active in Aboriginal politics. (S, p.60)

Joshua represents an example of a more complex negotiation of modernization. Although an Aboriginal, and a part of traditional community, he mediates aspects of this identity for a wider audience; an audience created by the communication systems, whose desire to experience other forms of community and identity is itself created by the radicalization of modernization. Joshua has travelled beyond the territorial limits of his community and has adapted his cultural identity to accommodate new experience:

> ... this was a Qantas dreaming. Joshua had once flown into London. The 'maze' was London Airport: the Arrival gate, Health, Immigration, Customs, and then the ride into the city on the Underground ... (S, p.173)

Joshua relates these experiences to his own identity, and therefore mediates not only Aboriginal aesthetic identity to outsiders, but also, in creating dreamings of these experiences, Western modernization to his own community.

Finally Winston, the Aboriginal artist, also mediates the Aboriginal culture in a way that is valued by modernized culture, but he is aware of that value. Having demonstrated the ability to produce paintings that appeal to the Western buyer, he then demonstrates an even greater level of understanding of the modernizing forces that demand his art. His demand for more money represents a reflexivity about the structures of commerce in which he is involved, as well as the agency to negotiate his own place in the structure:

> Mrs. Houston nearly fell off her stool. "Six thousand dollars! You have to be joking!"
> "Well, why are you asking seven fuckin' thousand dollars for one of my paintings in your fuckin' exhibition in Adelaide?" (S, p.291)

Winston demonstrates not only knowledge of the value and the systems of the art world, which he has not inherited as a member of the Aboriginal community, but also a reflexivity in relating the values of the modernized world to his own identity.

This is also an example of aesthetic reflexivity at work, in the sense in which the aesthetic is useful to a reading of the novel as a whole. In producing his paintings, Winston aesthetically mediates his community's experience of the world to the wider community of the modernized world. In doing so, as argued above, he demonstrates an understanding of the values and signs of his own culture, but of the culture of Western capitalism as well. This use of the aesthetic (and the relationship between the aesthetic and consumerism which Ellison notes[60]) is linked with Chatwin's aesthetic project in the novel, as it mediates between cultures though mimesis, and appeals to an aesthetic consuming audience. The importance of the aesthetic in relation to reflexive

modernization, as outlined in the previous section, lies in the way in which individuals can choose to mediate their experience of the world. This implies not only the choices (consumer choices among them) by which the world is mediated for the individual, but also the way in which the individual (or reflexive community of individuals) chooses to mediate that experience to others, whether members of the same community or 'strangers'.

Chatwin's attempt to link the Aboriginal culture with wider aspects of human existence, and thereby to critique contemporary Western cultural practice, is inevitably partly a reflexive one. Chatwin is aware of the modernized structures that determine human activity: structures of family, community, education, commerce and communication. In fact his critique of radicalized modernity is based on his own experience in the art world and the media, both arenas in which the value of aesthetic mediations of the particular lies in its consumer value in the global market. Appropriately, Chatwin's novel benefited from an audience which was created by the radicalization of modernity; a readership which had the opportunity to travel, which was aware of mass communication structure and sufficiently reflexive about the modernized context of their lives to sympathize with Chatwin's message in The Songlines. It is not my intention to offer sustained analysis of Chatwin's readership. It is nonetheless instructive to this reading of Chatwin's own reflexive aesthetic to consider it as one not only influenced by the radicalized modernity in which it was produced, but also which speaks to an audience that was capable of the same reflexivity, or at least aware of its possibilities, as is demonstrated by the characters discussed above. I would argue that mediation itself can create a community, whose reflexive identity is defined by its consuming of a certain cultural product. In my reading of the success of The Songlines, this is certainly the case. The readership of the novel becomes a community that Chatwin addresses as though he is the holder of expert knowledge which will inform that community's identity.

Chatwin's novel coincides with the line of Lash's definition of the aesthetic in relation to reflexive modernization, that it critiques the universal through the particular, rather than vice-versa which is the case in the context of Giddens's and Beck's cognitive reflexivity. I draw on Lash's work as important to my reading of The Songlines, particularly in my consideration of the nature of Chatwin's aesthetic project in the novel, and the novel as a cultural product. Throughout the novel Chatwin depicts a range of characters employing a range of means (rock music, ritual, art) to mediate their experience of the world. They are involved in self-interpretation, in an aesthetic sense, in the way that Lash describes it: "aesthetic judgement involves ... the imagination and intuition".[61]

The narrator, Bruce, is also mediating experience for a readership. In doing so, he tries on various masks and identifies himself with several communities. Chatwin is thus writing a form of reflexive biography, in the sense that his life narrative, informed by choices made from within modernized structures, has led him to Australia in search of information from a specific (non-modernized) system of knowledge. The text itself represents a written form of that narrative, and therefore suggests reflexive biography in its literal sense. The writing also involves imagination and intuition, of course, and can therefore be read as aesthetic mediation of narrative, as well as reflexive self-interpretation.

The form of the text also suggests reflexive practice. Chatwin presents his depiction of the particular, the Aboriginal culture, and the idea of the songline, within the context of the late twentieth century. The clash between tradition (reflexively mediated) and modernization is the dynamic that drives the narrative of 'Bruce's' exploration of this 'particular'. It is therefore comparable with On the Black Hill,[62] the narrative of which is driven by the clash between the traditional 'local' and the modernizing 'global'.[63] In this case, however, there is a reflexive narrator, and the implied critique of the universal, which the previous novel does not carry, is brought to the narrative through the "From the Notebooks" sections. It is in this 'reflexive space' that Chatwin pursues other

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possibilities for his argument.[64] The aesthetic move made in The Songlines, therefore, is that "the reflexive appropriation of knowledge can be set off from designated tradition" in the way in which Giddens argues.[65] Regardless of Chatwin's success or failure in convincing the reader with his thesis in relation to nomadism, the text displays the characteristics of reflexivity, and draws on both the author's and the readers' experience of late-modernity in its mediation of the songlines. I would argue that the text depicts a range of examples of reflexive modernization, in the agency of individuals and communities, and that in its structure and positioning in relation to the modernizing world, it is a reflexive text which reveals Chatwin's project of aesthetically mediating his own narrative in a way which is highly conscious of the structures of modernity that inform it.

Section Three: Reflexive Modernization and Identity in *Utz* and *What Am I Doing Here*

In this section, I will demonstrate how the different aspects of reflexive modernization can be used to contextualize others of Chatwin's novels. Utz deals with a period of the twentieth century which is comparable with the range of On the Black Hill; instead of beginning in the nineteenth century, however, the first-person narrative reaches only as far back as the period between the two World Wars. A reading of Utz in the light of reflexive modernization theory is particularly interesting because Utz provides useful contrasts with The Songlines: not only does the time-scale of Utz predate that depicted in The Songlines, but the setting also has implications for the depiction of structural, communal, individual and aesthetic reflexivity. The setting of Eastern Europe in the years leading up to the Second World War, the Soviet occupation of Prague and the Cold War years provides a contrast with the late-twentieth-century capitalism at work in the setting of The Songlines. In this case my reading of the novel focuses on individual agency and aesthetic reflexivity, and argues that a different version of radicalized modernity provokes comparably reflexive responses. In addition, several short pieces from What Am I Doing Here will be considered, in demonstration of the ways in which the reflexivity of other individuals in circumstances of radicalized modernity can be identified not only in Chatwin's longer work, but also in his journalistic work. The readings offered in this section make clear the extent to which theories of reflexive modernization, particularly the aesthetic formulations of those ideas, are relevant to Chatwin's work. The depictions made in Utz are distant from those in The Songlines in their political and cultural settings. My reading of the two thus establishes that reflexive modernization is a useful tool with which to identify consistent concerns throughout Chatwin's work. Apart from that, Utz offers examples of reflexive identity formation that The Songlines does not. The differences between the communist regime in Prague and the post-colonial moment in Australia provoke different responses from the characters whom Chatwin depicts struggling to create and maintain reflexive biographies

for themselves. The paralleling of the concerns identified in Chatwin's work and those of reflexive modernization theory will be extended in this section to consider short examples from Chatwin's posthumously published writing, which also shows the same concerns as those in the longer works.

My reading follows the same schemata as the previous two sections, dealing with structural, communal, individual and aesthetic reflexivity, in that order. The theories of reflexive modernization employed in this chapter have been assumed to refer to the period of late-capitalist modernization at the end of the twentieth century. In this section I argue that they are, in some senses, also applicable to the context of communist rule in the way in which they understand the reflexive relationship between individual and structure.[66] Even this non-capitalist context still figures many of the same kinds of relationships: "modernization involves not just structural change, but a changing relationship between social structures and social agents".[67] I would argue that this is equally applicable to the individuals constrained by the structures of Cold War politics, and that the level of intervention by the system into the traditional communities and individual identities constitutes "the erosion, or transformation of established patterns of belonging" which force citizens to "readjust existing notions of rights and membership ... ".[68] In fact Ellison's comments on the formation of identity in the context of reflexive modernization are closely applicable to the novel: " ... citizenship needs to be understood as an integral component of a reflexive process in which social agents are confronted by a rapidly changing economic, social and political environment in a manner which prompts a constant questioning and renegotiation of forms of solidarity and identity".[69] Renegotiation has implications for the reflexive biography which Beck has identified as an aspect of reflexive modernization; the section will return to consider those implications in relation to individualization. On the other hand, the situation in which many of the characters find themselves in the novel illustrates the balance between reflexivity which results from structures and the 'reflexivity losers' whose life-narratives are more constrained than enabled by the circumstance of their relationship with the structure. My

reading of Utz, therefore, necessarily re-situates some of the terms of reflexive modernization theory, but nonetheless identifies the same processes at work in Chatwin's depiction of the East European context as in his depiction of late-twentieth-century Australia.

The structures at work in Utz are the same as those at work in capitalist modernity, in that they operate in the arenas of politics, economics, education and law; they simultaneously constrain and enable. The ideology of communist politics is more explicit, and has a more direct control over individual and community identity than laissez-faire liberal capitalism. The constraints, as depicted not only in relation to Utz, but also in relation to academics, religious believers and workers in cultural domains such as the museum are physical and practical ones as well as conceptual ones. It is not simply the case that Utz struggles to keep his collection, but that many citizens are denied the ability to define themselves through a profession or reflexive community affiliations (such as the international 'virtual' communities which typify contemporary cultural practice[70]). There is less agency than, for example, is allowed to the travelling narrators of both Utz and The Songlines, whose occupations are self-defined and self-defining, and who cross borders with little (ostensible) difficulty. The reflexive enablement seen in Utz derives from the extreme levels of manipulation and surveillance by the state. In response to this, some characters, such as Utz and the ostracized intellectuals are forced into an awareness of the divide between self-definition and the linear modernity in which they are being placed. Initially, however, the novel gives an account of the state's attempts to control many of the traditional processes that provide identity, and these provide the setting: "In order to divert the people's attention from retrograde Christian rituals, the authorities had decreed that all baptisms, weddings and funerals must be over by 8.30" (U, p.8).

The state controls the means by which individuals identify themselves, and therefore replaces agency with the consequences of constraining structures. Any attempt to move

outside these structures leads to the state applying an identity to the individual, rather than the individual being able to select from a range of possibilities:

> It was almost impossible for ordinary citizens not to fall into one or other of the categories - bourgeois nationalist, traitor to the party, cosmopolitan, Zionist, black-marketeer - that would send them to prison or worse. (S, p.133)

It is interesting to note the range of possibilities, available to the reflexive characters of The Songlines, which are denied here. Not only is disagreement with party policy punishable, but the list acknowledges the other possibilities which would otherwise be available: the 'cosmopolitanism' denies the ability to forge community across boundaries, and to produce a non-geographically contingent identity. The 'Zionist' denies traditional communities and identity groups into which the individual may be born. A variety of these possibilities is implied by the radicalization of modernization fundamental to reflexive modernization theory. The constraining structures in this case have to acknowledge the existence of these possibilities in denying their validity. It is from some of these possibilities that Utz creates his own sense of identity.

Utz's formal education pre-dates the structures of communism, and is largely ignored by the character, who prefers to immerse himself in the subject of Meissen porcelain. It is this self-taught expertise which later grants him the ability to diverge from pre-ordained roles which the state outlines for citizens. Indirectly, it also gives him a perspective through which to view the events and restrictions brought about by communism and the Russian invasion. The structure of communism operates in comparable ways to the structure of capitalism in their provision of a set of principles and expectations that define citizenship and its obligations. Perhaps there is less possibility for reflexive agency, as few characters actually take an active stance in the way that he does.[71] Chatwin seems to suggest that this version of modernity provokes a reaction similar to that given by Mick and Graham in their songs. The knowledge of context and the awareness of place within

structure inevitably hinder the structure itself: "The Soviet education system, I felt, had worked all too well: having created, on a colossal scale, a generation of highly intelligent, highly literate young people, who were more or less immune to the totalitarian message" (S, p.118).

The point of view of narrator is consistent with the point of view expressed in a letter written by Chatwin from Prague quoted by Nicholas Shakespeare: "Some of the younger generation might be communist but would not dream of owning up to the fact".[72] The younger generation, I would argue, are displaying reflexivity about the system that complements the individual response which Utz makes to this problem of imposed identity and values. Utz's semi-aristocratic background clashes with the values that the system demands, yet having this experience helps him to reflect on the structures in which he is caught. He is therefore able to go beyond it in creating his collection, the ownership of which gives him the ability to negotiate his own relationship with the constraining structures of the communist state. As Shakespeare notes, "Bruce's hero is someone who tries to accommodate an oppressive and hateful regime by retreating into a child's world of possessions."[73] This does not allow enough significance, I would argue, for the reflexive nature of this reaction. In negotiating for the right to keep the collection, Utz is empowered by the knowledge that he gains from witnessing successive regimes, and from formulating a sense of identity in opposition to the modernity to which the structures of communism give rise.[74] Later in the novel, Utz's travel to the West and his clash with Western structures of capitalist modernity will provoke a greater level of reflexivity about himself and the importance of the collection to his identity. In both circumstances, of capitalism or communism, the structures are limiting but lead to a reflexive position.

Due to the constraining and homogenizing nature of the structures being depicted in this novel, there are fewer examples than in The Songlines of reflexive community.[75] Eventually, Utz and Marta forge a common identity that functions in opposition to

prescribed communities. Their marriage and subsequent destruction of the porcelain suggests a community that is reflexive of the structures in which it operates, but which also denies the potency of other (state-imposed) organising principles. This is already suggested by Marta's compliance with Utz in concealing conversations from Communist bugs, a move which goes some way to making the "categories of friend and stranger sharp and distinct."[76] A more interesting example is that of the intellectuals who take menial jobs in order to be free to reflect on their work. Their community functions as such in that they share an awareness of their situation, and congregate for social activities. This means that they are not simply a number of individuals in isolation, but that they have chosen to make themselves part of a community. As in the case of communities discussed in The Songlines, they are reflexive in that they are not contingent on "ascriptive positions, whether institutional, moral or geographic ... ".[77] Such is the case of Ludvik and his associates: "many of his friends were writers, or poets or out-of-work actors. They met on Saturdays to drink in a village near the dump" (U, p147). They have chosen to place themselves outside the identities offered by the state structure: "He and his friends preferred not to embroil themselves in white-collar squabbles: manual labour was better for the mind" (U, p.148).[78] This position parallels, although in a different context, the example of Mick and Graham in The Songlines and again points to a reflexive response to modernization, in which "options for different sorts of social actions [are] more widely available".[79] These options are available despite the structures that insist on certain modes of community and resist others; in both cases they are a response to extreme formations of modernity.

In contrast with the limited range of reflexive communities present in the novel, there is much emphasis on possibilities for individual agency. Chatwin establishes Utz's character, background and education, and suggests that the context in which he finds himself provokes a need to "find and invent new certainties"[80] for himself; this he does through his collection.[81] Again, the individualization depicted in the novel is, I would argue, one that comes about as a response to a kind of radicalization. The trials of the

years leading up to the Cold War do not prepare Utz for the impingement on his life which the communist regime brings. His response to their interference, and to their insistence that his collection belongs to 'the people' is not one of rebellion, but a form of submission. The way in which Chatwin depicts this submission, however, gives it all the characteristics of individual agency, in the same way that Ludvik and his colleagues submit in a manner which is informed by reflexive awareness. Hence Utz chooses to return to the collection, despite the circumstances which have begun to alienate him from it. Although he escapes from his surroundings into the world of his porcelain, he decides to stay in the apartment, and to return to Prague from each visit abroad. The decisions are taken in the full knowledge that this implies an engagement with the radicalized modernity that dictates the structures of his life and identity. Life without the collection, despite the difficult circumstances of this engagement, is life without identity: "He went to the races and was bored. He was bored at a concert ... He was desperately bored by the 'Spectacle' at the Grand Theatre du Casino" (U, p.71).

Utz therefore actively returns to forge an identity in the face of this modernity. He is driven to do so by the sense that he is obliged to make something of his life in these circumstances, and that escape does not in itself fulfil that obligation. His response is therefore a direct consequence of, yet also enabled by the besieged position in which he finds himself. It is also not the response of most of the population, who perhaps do not have his reflexive capacity; perhaps they are Lash's 'reflexivity losers' whose financial circumstances and background render them constrained by this version of modernity. For most, escape with their possessions is desirable: "the idea that any normal person might prefer home to exile seemed excessively perverse" (U, pp. 89-90).

In this respect, Utz turns the processes of radicalization to his own benefit, feeding his own identity on the consequences of the chaos of modernity:

He detested violence, yet welcomed the cataclysms that flung fresh
works of art onto the market. "Wars, pogroms and revolutions," he used
to say, "offer excellent opportunities for the collector."

The stock market crash had been one such opportunity.
Kristellnacht was another. (U, p.21)

These and other events represent part of the "disintegration of certainties of industrial
society", and Utz's response throughout the novel is typical of the individualization
figured in reflexive modernization theory, as he "finds and invents new certainties" for
himself.

As far as individualization is concerned, therefore, the maintenance of his collection, and
his subsequent marriage to Marta represent a response to the range of possibilities that the
late-twentieth century demands and provokes. Utz can be seen as a figure out of place,
through his background, sensibilities and lifestyle. He can also be seen, however, as
someone who is mediating his life, "cobbling together his own biography."[82] His
response to threats from the authorities and offers from dealers is reinforced by his
marriage, and the eventual destruction of the collection (if we are to follow the narrator's
hypothesis[83]). All these actions are consistent with Giddens's theorising of the response
of the individual to radicalized modernity. I would argue that Utz can be seen as an
example of an individual who "not only 'has' but *lives* a biography reflexively organized
in terms of flows of social and psychological information about possible ways of life".[84]

Utz actively makes decisions which lead to him controlling his own 'biography',
demonstrating awareness of the context in which the decisions are being made. Utz's
trajectory across this period of communist rule is an intensely personal one, involving his
negotiation of the flows of social information and their sources. In my reading of the
novel, Chatwin's depiction of Utz is careful to establish the level of individual agency
which is a feature of his decisions:

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Thus, when others were bent on smuggling out of Czechoslovakia, in diplomatic bags or a foreign friends suitcase, any article of value they could lay their hands on ... Utz embarked on the opposite course. (U, p.95)

Utz's trajectory crosses physical boundaries, and the trajectory of other individuals in this individualizing environment. It also leads to a biography that mirrors that of some of the historical characters which he discusses with the narrator; in response to the circumstances of his existence, Utz creates a reflexive biography for himself.

In relation to theories of reflexive modernization, it is interesting that Utz's decision, and the aspect of life around which he chooses to construct an identity, is a collection of objets d'art. In this sense, his life and identity are mediated through the aesthetic. I would argue that this is a different form of aesthetic reflexivity than that, for example demonstrated by Chatwin as the narrator of The Songlines, but may instead be comparable with the Aboriginal artist Winston's response to the encroachment of modernity on his traditional existence. Utz differs from Winston in that he is a buyer, rather than a seller of art, but the similarity lies in the fact that both mediate their experience of life through the aesthetic. Utz's collection is an aesthetic production that articulates his retreat from the destruction and impositions of the version of modernity which surrounds him. In the same way, Winston is responding to the demands of modernity by producing paintings. As discussed in the previous section, he is also reflexively mediating his life (reflexively 'trying on the mask' of painter) through an aesthetic form which gives him identity in the modernized context in which he lives. In doing so he makes an intervention in the structure of modernity which dictates the commerce of the art world.

Utz, therefore, could be seen as another illustration of Strydom's argument that "aesthetic individualism in this sense tends to be the handmaiden of consumer capitalism."[85] It is of course ironic that Utz's position as a porcelain millionaire takes place in a political context that frowns upon personal possessions. The example of Utz's collection nonetheless

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accords with Lash's original conception of the role of the aesthetic in relation to reflexivity, rooted as it is in "self-monitoring".[86] Throughout the novel, there is a sense that Utz is monitoring not only the modernization that affects his position, but also his own position as a subject of the modernized context. In the context of this reading of Chatwin's work, it is therefore instructive to note the role played by the aesthetic in the individualized response to radicalized modernity which he depicts in this novel. Like the characters from The Songlines, Utz is a fictionalized construct, based on Chatwin's experiences of travel in Eastern Europe and on oral second-hand accounts. The point is that the reaction of Utz and other characters in the novel to their environment is clearly consistent with Chatwin's handling of characters in the Australian setting of the previous novel. Reflexive modernization theory is a means by which to understand the relationship between individual and community identity and the modernizing processes that impinge on their lives. The strength of this particular example of reflexive agency and aesthetic reflexivity is exactly that it shows the extent to which the themes under consideration in the theoretical work are ongoing ones in Chatwin's work.[87]

A final comparison between this text, and its relationship with reflexive modernization, may be made with examples of shorter pieces taken from What Am I Doing Here. Although there is no consistent organizing principle behind this posthumous collection, it is still possible to identify similar individuals demonstrating reflexive agency in relation to rapidly modernizing political, social and cultural structures. An example of this might be Donald Evans, whose exposure to the culture of the 1960's led him to paint miniature watercolours in the form of postage stamps. The stamps both engage with and retreat from the modern world; they are, in the terms of reflexive modernization, an aesthetic mediation of life in order to create certainty, bolster personal identity, and to situate the self in relation to the world. As in the case of the previous novels discussed, this aesthetic reflexivity is a response to a particular moment in accelerating modernity; after marijuana, yoga, and New York abstract painting, the stamp collection is the structure in which Evans places himself. As such, it is informed by the world that he inhabits, but also

provides the means of retreat from its constraints. Evans's work is a result of the environment which makes "the construction of syncretic meanings more possible"[88] and also has the developing characteristics of reflexive biography in its element of choosing from a range of possible representations:

> ... Donald Evans used the same sable brush a Grumbacher no.2, to paint a limpid, luminous world - a kind of Baudelairean *pays de Cocagne* - that would, nevertheless mirror his own life and the life of his times. The result is a painted autobiographical novel of forty-two chapters ... ("DE", p.263)

Given the range of pieces in this collection, there are also examples of non-reflexive action, some related to the cultural arena, some political. George Costakis's collection leads Chatwin to consider the effect of Soviet art, and its role as supporting the constraining structures of the state: "People were led before Repin's painting *The Barge-haulers on the Volga* in the Tretyakov gallery in Moscow, and converted to Revolution by its message against injustice" ("GC", p.159). The audience of this painting does not have the reflexive possibilities available to Utz; in terms of reflexive modernization theory, this is because the radicalization of this form of modernity has not yet reached a point at which it undermines its own structures, and at which its subjects become enabled by the reflexivity which radicalized conditions of modernity provoke.

In "The Very Sad Story of Salah Bougrine", Chatwin sees, in France in 1974, the constraining nature of the institution of government, refusing to recognize the radicalized nature of the modernity for which they are legislating. The response to the death of an Algerian is non-reflexive: " ... the Ministry of the Interior published a graph to show that the number of North African deaths was nothing unusual for the time of year" ("SB", p.245). The Algerians construct communities in France which are reflexive about the constraining nature of the modernity in which they are placed. A shanty-town bar is named "Shangri-La", they select aspects of the culture which inform their own position,

or with which they identify, yet maintain other, more traditional links in a reflexive community. This displaced community is no longer contingent on geographical location. It is a parallel of the reflexive agency of the Aboriginals in The Songlines, who make decisions about which aspects of modernity to adopt, and which to abandon; decisions which are themselves informed by the technology and communications systems of radicalized modernity. In both cases, the contrast between reflexive individuals and communities and the non-reflexive structures of government is one which informs Chatwin's work, and which provides him with the materials to examine the ways in which individuals and communities establish identity in a range of modernized contexts.

In conclusion, my readings of these texts demonstrate that in all of them a range of aspects can be identified as corresponding to the processes which theories of reflexive modernization attempt to understand and articulate. My readings of Utz and The Songlines demonstrate that, despite the different settings and versions of radicalized modernity at work here, it is nonetheless possible to argue that individuals and communities in Chatwin's texts do respond in the ways suggested in the theoretical work. This is not to say that Chatwin was aware of the theory (inevitably, as most of the work on reflexive modernization has appeared since his death) but he was nonetheless depicting the years, during which those processes were taking place. Given that his consistent choice of subject matter is the clash between the traditional and the modernizing, and that the characters which feature in his novels often have a strong sense of their individuality, it is certainly the case that reflexive modernization theory allows an analysis of this engagement in his work. These theories allow a reading of the texts that focuses on the processes of identity formation and argues that those processes respond to the circumstances of reflexive modernization which is described by Lash, Beck and Giddens. In particular, aesthetic reflexivity is demonstrated in the relationship between Australian Aboriginals and their culture, and then in more focused ways in relation to Utz. Identification of this permits a critical reading which develops the links between Chatwin's technique of frequently associating characters with some form of artistic

production, and his strategy of making characters responsive to cultural and political modernization. The environments inhabited by Chatwin's characters, and the pressures and possibilities brought about by the increasing levels of modernization are clearly based on observed situations during travel and research. This chapter and the previous one have demonstrated that, regardless of the relationship between Chatwin's and other literary texts, it is possible to produce an interdisciplinary reading of his work. My reading does not ignore the importance of travel in the Chatwin oeuvre, but also considers the underlying themes that contribute to his characterizations and narrative.

Endnotes to Chapter Four

[1] Bruce Chatwin, <u>The Songlines</u> (London: Picador, 1997), p.156. Further references will be given parenthetically in the text, preceded by the abbreviation <u>S</u>.

[2] As discussed in the previous chapter, this is Giddens's phrase which refers to the circumstances of modernity having become intensified and their effects increased. Anthony Giddens, <u>The Consequences of Modernity</u> (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), p.151. As in the case of globalization theory, the term carries the implication of further interference in individual life by processes such as global capitalism and the existence of a network of institutions such as governments and communications providers. It also implies the radicalization of the place of the individual in relation to those institutions, suggesting a new capacity for response and self-identity. I am not concerned with engaging with theorists in debating the cause and effect relationship between these aspects of modernity. Instead, I concentrate on the phenomena which indicate that such processes are in place, and relate them to the depictions made by Chatwin. The concern of the thesis is, after all, to offer readings of Chatwin's work. As with the case of globalization theory, my synthesis of theory here is a functional one, intended to inform those readings.

[3] Bruce Chatwin, <u>Utz</u> (London: Pan Books, 1989) and <u>What Am I Doing Here</u> (London: Picador, 1990); Subsequent references to Utz will be given parenthetically in the text, preceded by the abbreviation <u>U</u>. References to the anthologized pieces will also be given parenthetically, preceded by the abbreviations "DE" ("Donald Evans", pp.263-270); "GC" ("George Costakis: The Story of an Art Collector in the Soviet Union", pp.153-169) and "SB" ("The Very Sad Story of Salah Bougrine", pp.241-262).

[4] Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens and Scott Lash, <u>Reflexive Modernization - Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order</u> (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994).

[5] The most frequently cited example of the systems in question is the Internet. The Internet makes possible modes of 'belonging', for example to communities based on the appreciation of a particular type of music, lifestyle or even religion, which would not be possible in the immediate geographical location of the individual. Telephone communication and satellite television are also examples of communications systems that allow a sense of affiliation which disregards nationality, social or political circumstance (censorship and economic deprivation notwithstanding).

[6] Beck, "Towards a Theory of Reflexive Modernization", <u>Reflexive Modernization</u>, p.14.

[7] As the previous chapter demonstrated, the negotiation between modernity and tradition is a difficult and contested one. The fact of 'radicalized' (Giddens) or 'accelerated' modernity (Robertson) does not mean that the appeal to tradition for identity and structure is completely abandoned. As the last chapter demonstrated, tradition is frequently called upon in opposition to modernization which threatens established forms of identity. It should be borne in mind, however, that tradition is itself a construct which is called upon to sustain certainties and relationships with other identities. As such, the repositioning of modernity and its effects is merely the replacement of one means of constructing identity with another. Both the previous chapter and this one are at least partly an examination of Chatwin's response to changing modes of 'belonging' and of identity formation.

[8] This can be seen in the twins' response to the Hiroshima bombing, discussed in the previous chapter, as well as in the relationship between ecology and the Aboriginal sense of territory, as depicted in The Songlines.

[9] Anthony Giddens, The Consequences of Modernity, p.45.

[10] Anthony Giddens, Modernity and Self-Identity (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), p.21.

[11] Ulrich Beck, Risk Society (London: Sage, 1992), p.14.

[12] Beck, "Towards a Theory of Reflexive Modernization", p.14.

[13] This is Piet Strydom's analysis of Lash's critique of Beck and Giddens, which comments usefully on the relationship between the three theorists. Piet Strydom, "Hermeneutic Culturalism and its Double", European Journal of Social Theory 2, 1 (1999), 53.

[14] Examples include groups campaigning against the closure of small schools and rural Post Offices, or against the might of Greenpeace for becoming, to all intents and purposes, a multi-national corporation. All these groups are arguing against the internal logic of modernity as unstoppable and all-pervading. The criticism of Greenpeace reflects a huge level of reflexivity, when individuals can identify themselves as taking a position against an institution which was set up to combat one aspect of the consequences of modernization.

[15] Giddens, The Consequences of Modernity, p.32.

[16] Giddens, "Living in a Post-Industrial Society", Reflexive Modernization, p.81.

[17] Jeffrey C. Alexander, "Critical Reflections on *Reflexive Modernization*", Theory, Culture and Society. 13, 4 (1996), 136.

[18] Alexander quoted in Strydom, "Hermeneutic Culturalism", 46.

[19] Nick Ellison, "Towards a New Social Politics: Citizenship and Reflexivity in Late Modernity", Sociology 31, 4 (1997), 698.

[20] Ellison, "Towards a New Social Politics", 711. Ellison makes clear the differences between his position and that of Beck and Giddens, who view reflexivity as being more closely related to globalization. The point remains that in either formulation of reflexivity the consequences (a reflexive citizenship and reflexive modes of belonging) are equally relevant to Chatwin's work. Given the contingent nature of these theories themselves, it is not possible for my synthesis of aspects of reflexive modernization to take a position on every issue in question. Having acknowledged that differences exist, the interest of these theories to this thesis lies in the comparable processes of identity formation which they articulate, and which can also be identified in Chatwin's depictions of communities and individuals confronting the same circumstances of radicalized modernity.

[21] Strydom, "Hermeneutic Culturalism", 957.

[22] See Chapter Three for a discussion of the processes involved in 'belonging' to a community.

[23] Strydom, "Hermeneutic Culturalism", 64.

[24] Beck, "Towards a Theory of Reflexive Modernization", p.25.

[25] Scott Lash and Brian Wynne, "Introduction", in Beck, Risk Society, p.2.

[26] Ellison accuses Beck and Giddens of "giving too great a place to voluntarism in contemporary social politics" (Ellison, "Towards a New Social Politics", 712). Lash also addresses this issue in terms of 'modernity losers' (see endnote 33). It is certainly the case that Beck and Giddens imply social actors who are almost if not completely free from constraining structures. This remains a subject of debate; in relation to Chatwin's work it is necessary to consider the extent to which individuals can be reflexive, in the sense that they gain awareness of the relationship between the world as it is mediated and the identity of the self. It is of course the case that the history of the Aboriginals has been one of 'losing' to modernity.

[27] Alexander, "Critical Reflections", 138.

[28] Strydom, "Hermeneutic Culturalism", 54.

[29] Scott Lash, "Reflexive Modernization: The Aesthetic Dimension", Theory, Culture and Society 10 (1993), 8.

[30] Beck, "Towards a Theory of Reflexive Modernization", p.13.

[31] Giddens, Modernity and Self-Identity, p.14.

[32] Scott Lash and Jonathan Friedman, "Introduction", in Lash and Friedman, eds., Modernity and Identity (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), p.22.

[33] "The educated person incorporates reflexive knowledge of the conditions and prospects of modernity ... " Beck, Risk Society, p.93. The importance of the opportunity for education is a little-articulated aspect of theorizing reflexive identity. Lash contemplates the distinction between "modernity winners and modernity losers" (Lash, "Reflexivity and its Doubles", Reflexive Modernization, p.121), and argues that being able to construct life-narrative is dependent on more than individualisation. Questions of class and privilege decide whether an individual is in a position to construct a life-narrative. Lash is aware of these concerns, and notes that reflexive identity formation is only possible for individuals with access to "the new information and communications structures" (p.121). For the purposes of this chapter, a consideration of this in relation to Chatwin will be linked with questions of the songlines as a communication structure. The nature of Chatwin's privileged position, in terms of class and education, and the assumptions which it leads him to make will form part of the subject matter of Chapter Five.

[34] Giddens, "Living in a Post-Industrial Society", p.37.

[35] George Marcus, "Past, Present and Emergent Identities", in Lash and Friedman, eds., Modernity and Identity, p.320. Clearly this is related to the reflective ethnography discussed in Chapter Two. The shifting relationships between self-identity and the identity of others point to new forms of belonging and inclusion, as proposed in theories of reflexive modernization. As in the case of the ethnographer and travel writer, however, the unspoken issue of power relations arises. Just as the ethnographer and travel writer were shown to be capable of making the depictions that suited their textual account, so the theorists of reflexive modernization can identify new reflexive practice on the part of individuals and communities. Although writing in a different mode, these theorists are nonetheless presenting a textual account of observed phenomena which is articulated through the same subjectivity as is writing in other

modes. Once again, however, the value of comparison to this thesis lies in the similarity of the processes and their consequences depicted in both this set of texts and Chatwin's work.

[36] Marcus, "Past, Present and Emergent Identities", p324. There is another parallel here, between the concerns of aesthetic reflexivity and the 'messy texts" which Chapter Two identified as a product of reflective ethnography. In both cases, Marcus finds the locus of signification in the texts he is discussing has shifted from a single overarching narrative with its attendant truth claims, to a more loosely structured text, which makes an intervention in open acknowledgement of its own subjectivity and self-positioning, and which is open to the shifting nature of its concerns and depictions.

[37] Beck, Risk Society, p.19.

[38] Beck, Risk Society, p.93.

[39] Beck, "Towards a Theory of Reflexive Modernization", p.6.

[40] There is no space here to discuss at length the choice of rock music, and the relationship between that particular form and the consumer capitalism and cultural norms of Western cultural hegemony. Briefly, I would argue that again this choice represents a form of reflexive modernization, in that rock, which is so closely associated with Western culture, is the choice of the musicians through taste, through exposure to its forms and through the desire to reach an audience. It is certainly the case that Aboriginal bands making popular music have tended to encase their political message (most frequently in relation to land rights) in forms such as rock or dance music, which they know will appeal to a wider audience. There is a complex relationship between the music industry's commercial exploitation of a particular brand of music, and the musicians' negotiation of that exploitation in order to articulate a political message. This is of course true of other styles, such as Reggae, with which Aboriginal music has many similarities, not least in its reflexive positioning in relation to dominant cultures. As Chris Law Davies has written of a 'black' bar in a 'white' hotel in Broome: "Land rights, black solidarity, special and sacred knowledges, broken hearts and true love move transgressively beneath the authoritarian gaze of the dominant white culture." For a more comprehensive consideration of Aboriginal music, see his chapter "Aboriginal Rock Music" in Tony Bennett, Simon Frith, Lawrence Grossberg, John Sheperd and Graeme Turner eds., Rock and Popular Music: Politics. Policies. Institutions (Routledge: London, 1993).

[41] Beck, "Towards a Theory of Reflexive Modernization", p.25.

[42] Lash, "Reflexive Modernization; The Aesthetic Dimension", 8.

[43] Although my reading of The Songlines is not primarily concerned with the post-colonial, and I am aware of the fact that Chatwin glosses the impact of British intervention in Australia, I am not prepared to accept the criticism levelled by Ruth Brown, that "the major players in the Imperial drama are subjected to subtle re-alignment so that Britain, as cultural centre is absolved of all blame for human behaviour" (Ruth Brown, "The Songlines and the Empire that Never Happened", Kunappi 13, 3 (1991), 6). Chatwin's criticism of the British for nuclear testing, for example, (The Songlines p.93) reverses the position which Brown sets up, making it clear that Britain expected Commonwealth Australia to act for the good of the colonial centre, and that the inhumane sacrifice of Aboriginal people was therefore the direct responsibility of the British government. Apart from that, Chatwin's book is simply not about colonial relationships, although, as shown here, they play a part. On one hand Brown complains that Chatwin stereotypes the Australian as 'hopelessly prejudiced', despite the fact that many of the Australian characters in the novel demonstrate a genuine attempt to improve the relationship between white and Aboriginal Australians. On the other hand, she accuses Chatwin of lacking in engagement with these issues, when most of his criticism of white Australians is directed at racism and bigotry, which undoubtedly does exist in Australia. The problem with this approach, as in the case of the fact and fiction debate, is that it presumes a wish on the part of the author to be perceived as writing non-fiction. Brown then insists that writing dealing with the post-colonial situation must be critiqued according to those post-colonial issues alone. This thesis demonstrates that not to be the case.

[44] Beck, Risk Society, p.13.

[45] Giddens, Modernity and Self-Identity, p.14.

[46] Alexander, "Critical Reflections on *Reflexive Modernization*", 138.

[47] Inevitably, many of my comments here are concerned with the duality of effect that is a consequence of modernity. At the same time as modernity is supposed to embody progress, it clearly has disabling effects on communities whose identities and agency are subsumed by power relations which modernity sets up. The same duality is observable in its reflexive form, as the reflexivity experienced enables individuals to reflect upon the structures and narratives in which they are embedded. This experience is not necessarily an enabling one, but may simply bring about an awareness of the extent to which 'radicalized' modernity renders the individual vulnerable to the influence of a myriad of economic and political pressures. Without the necessary reflexive awareness, the communication networks and the access to them which create agency, reflexive modernization is potentially disabling too.

[48] Beck, "Towards Theory of Reflexive Modernization", p.14.

[49] The law, especially as applied by one culture to another, is inevitably non-reflexive as it assumes universal truths and values.

[50] Anthony Giddens, "Living In a Post-Traditional Society", p.64.

[51] Ellison, "Towards a New Social Politics", 698.

[52] Giddens, Reflexive Modernization, p.81.

[53] Nicholas Shakespeare, Chatwin (London: Harvill Press, 1999), p.437.

[54] See Chapter Three, Section One. Featherstone makes this point in relation to the problematized relationships between communities in the context of globalization. Mike Featherstone, Undoing Culture (London: Sage, 1995), p.110.

[55] See Beck and Giddens, in Reflexive Modernization. It is these two who are concerned with defining the criteria that constitute the environment and circumstances giving rise to this reflexive response. As discussed in the previous section, their analysis is based on a reading of the processes of modernity. In my argument, these processes and circumstances still provide the dynamic behind reflexive action, even when it takes place outside the immediate industrialized context which Beck and Giddens discuss.

[56] It is possible to posit a new formulation to deal with the interaction, in reflexive terms, of a non-Western, non-modernized culture, with globalizing modernity that seeks to incorporate it in its structures and values. If we consider this to be 'removed reflexivity', a phrase for which I am indebted to Chris Rojek, we have some sense of the position of the Aboriginal culture, which is aware of the processes of modernity which have been disastrously visited upon it. The more reflexive amongst them gain the necessary agency to maintain their own identity, negotiating between modernity and tradition. 'Removed reflexivity' employs the awareness brought about by 'radicalized' modernity in a turn which privileges the non-modernized, detached quality of an identity which has not been defined in terms of the global modernization which looms on the horizon. It also suggests the physical detachment that is one of the characteristics of the Australian outback (and of many of the sites of travel writing) and therefore returns to the first principle that modernization has to cross geographical space as well as conceptual boundaries.

[57] Alexander, "Critical reflections on *Reflexive Modernization*", 135.

[58] Scott Lash and Brian Wynnne "Introduction" in Beck, Risk Society, p.2.

[49] The law, especially as applied by one culture to another, is inevitably non-reflexive as it assumes universal truths and values.

[50] Anthony Giddens, "Living In a Post-Traditional Society", p.64.

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[57] Alexander, "Critical reflections on *Reflexive Modernization*", 135.

[58] Scott Lash and Brian Wynnne "Introduction" in Beck, Risk Society, p.2.

[59] Lash and Friedman, "Introduction", in Modernity and Identity, p.22.

[60] Ellison, "Towards a New Social Politics", 54.

[61] Lash, "Reflexive Modernization: The Aesthetic Dimension", 9.

[62] Bruce Chatwin, On the Black Hill (London: Picador, 1983).

[63] There should be no need to repeat the arguments of the previous chapter, but it is nonetheless instructive to bear in mind the relationship between reflexive modernization and globalization, insofar as they inform processes of identity formation. This is something which is acknowledged by Beck: "Individualization and Globalization are two sides of the same coin of Reflexive Modernization". Beck, "Towards a Theory of Reflexive Modernization", p.14.

[64] For "reflexive space", see Marcus, "Past, Present and Emergent Identities" p.324. Marcus identifies these 'reflexive spaces' in contemporary ethnographies, a classification that bears consideration when discussing Chatwin's generic experiment in this text, and the sources from which the notebook sections are drawn.

[65] Giddens, The Consequences of Modernity, p.37.

[66] In this section I am figuring the communist regime as a form of radicalized modernity, in the extreme nature of its intervention into the identity of individuals, communities and their social and cultural practices. In this, I follow Zygmunt Bauman's description of communism as an agent of modernity: " … it was under communist, not capitalist, auspices that the audacious dream of modernity, freed from obstacles by the merciless and seemingly omnipotent state, was pushed to its radical limits … ". Zygmunt Bauman, Intimations of Postmodernity (London: Routledge, 1992), p.179. The extent to which this form of modernity informs identity and agency is, I argue, comparable with the extent to which the contrasting processes of capitalist modernity impinge on the life of the individual. Consequently, in my reading of Utz, the response to this 'extreme' modernity, as we might figure it, is comparable to the response to radicalized capitalist modernity already observed in The Songlines.

[67] Lash and Wynne, "Introduction", p.2.

[68] Ellison, "Towards a New Social Politics", 711.

[69] Ellison, "Towards a New Social Politics", 698.

[70] Obviously the Internet was not available to these characters, but cross-border affiliations such as groups collecting certain objects, or the affiliations of sub-political groups, concerned with the environment or nuclear disarmament did exist. These are examples of reflexive community which are denied to the characters living behind the Iron Curtain.

[71] Obviously the depiction of communist Czechoslovakia is made by Chatwin who is a Westerner. The mediation of political and cultural circumstance is filtered through what the first two chapters have established is the product of a specific culture, class and gender. There may be aspects of the novel which are profoundly affected by these influences, as was demonstrated in the texts discussed in Chapter Two. In his reading of Chatwin's work, David Taylor considers Chatwin's background: "An aestheticist posture is made possible only through being in certain material ways a late beneficiary of empire …. There is no explicit political analysis of this legacy; indeed it is arguably most insistently present in a systematic denial of origin …". David Taylor, "Bruce Chatwin: Connoisseur of Exile, Exile as Connoisseur", in Steve Clark, ed., Travel Writing and Empire (Post-Colonial Theory in Transit) (London: Zed Books, 1999), pp.196-7. Taylor's analysis is misplaced. In The Songlines and In Patagonia, the narrator discusses what is clearly a middle-class upbringing. In shorter pieces, Chatwin is explicit about his father's navy rank, and the fact of his attending public school. In my argument, however, these texts are most usefully read as fiction; accounts in which it would be unwise to trust, and in which the narrator is clearly a construct serving textual strategies of authority and structure. This applies equally to Utz: why should the author of a piece of fiction with a first-person narrator be obliged to engage explicitly with the politics of his own class background?

Although I am aware of the influence of his background, my analysis concentrates on the circumstances of the society which Chatwin is depicting, and is less interested in the specific elements of his background which impact on the depictions made. Instead, I am demonstrating a consistency of thematic content in Chatwin's work, and thus privileging the writer's agency over his unconscious preoccupations.

[72] Shakespeare, Chatwin, p.473.

[73] Shakespeare, Chatwin, p.478.

[74] Chatwin himself could be disingenuous about the relationship between humans and their possessions. In "The Morality of Things" he wrote: "the things to which he [man] becomes most attached do not serve any useful function. Instead they are symbols or emotional anchors" (Bruce Chatwin, "The Morality of Things" in Anatomy of Restlessness Jan Borm and Matthew Graves, eds., (London: Jonathan Cape, 1996), p.171). The next chapter will demonstrate the extent to which 'things' in Chatwin's work perform a vital function as emotional anchors. In this analysis it is sufficient to note the ambiguity of

Chatwin's remark, and to establish that the role played by objects is the cause of friction between state constraints and reflexive enablement.

[75] A criticism which globalization theory and, to a certain extent, theories of reflexive modernization, level at globalizing and radicalising Western capitalist modernity is that it is homogenizing. Ritzer's "McDonaldization" thesis (see Chapter Three, Section One) argues this point. Although this is certainly an aspect of Western modernity, the modernity which communism tries to foster in Utz is also a modernity of standardization. The means of ensuring this standardization are inevitably different; the interest here lies in the fact that the response on the part of individuals is strikingly similar. In On the Black Hill, The Songlines and Utz, individuals find some means of formulating and continuing an identity distinct from the identity which containing structures prescribe. They rarely form part of large communities (Benjamin and Lewis, Theo the Tent, Rolf and Wendy, Utz) and can frequently articulate resistance to those structures (Mick and Graham, Winston, Utz).

[76] Giddens, "Living in a Post-Industrial Society", p.95.

[77] Alexander, "Critical Reflections", 138.

[78] The idea that manual labour is good for the mind may be close to what the state actually intends the workers to think. The kind of reflexivity occurring here, however, is one that allows the subjects to be aware of their own positioning within the structures of modernity, and therefore is part of an enabling moment. The community of intellectuals is therefore using the tenets of communist government to their own ends.

[79] Alexander, "Critical Reflections", 138.

[80] Beck, "Towards a Theory of Reflexive Modernization", p.14.

[81] A detailed reading of Utz in the context of the psychology of collecting will be offered in the following chapter. My concern here with the nature of the collection is in the extent to which it is an expression of Utz's strategies of identity formation, and the way in which that sense of individualization is a response to a form of radicalized modernity.

[82] Beck, "Towards a Theory of Reflexive Modernization", p.13.

[83] In the film of the novel, directed by George Sluizer, this hypothesis is assumed to be correct, and the characters of Marta and Utz are shown smashing the collection of porcelain. The film was made after Chatwin's death, so there is no suggestion that this ending was at his insistence rather than being the

director's interpretation (George Sluizer, <u>Utz</u>, Viva Pictures and the BBC, 1998). It does tend to suggest, however, that the hypothesis outlined by the narrator of the novel is accepted by the novel's readership. This version of events is also accepted by the author of a critical piece specifically on <u>Utz</u>: Charles Holdefer. Holdefer sees the iconoclasm of the gesture to be in keeping with the other themes of the novel. Holdefer prefers to read the novel as a treatise on the relationship between art and collector, and on the importance of surface, both in the visual and in Chatwin's prose (Charles Holdefer, "The Spoils of Utz", <u>Les Cahiers Forell</u> 4 (1994), 65-73). There seems to be a sense that this course of action is consistent with the values and decisions that Utz makes throughout the course of the novel. In my contextualization, reflexive modernization theory is one way of understanding the processes, both in the structures of modernity, and the individual response to it, which lead to the destruction of the collection.

[84] Giddens, <u>Self-Identity</u>, p.14.

[85] Strydom. "Hermeneutic Culturalism", 54.

[86] Lash, "Aesthetic Dimension", 8.

[87] It may also be the case that Chatwin was simply politically naive. He was certainly accused of this in relation to the depictions of Aboriginal culture in <u>The Songlines</u> (Shakespeare, <u>Chatwin</u>, p.491). Part of his response to the reception of <u>Utz</u> was to say that it demonstrated that the old Europe survived (Shakespeare, <u>Chatwin</u>, p.478). In fact, the novel depicts the destruction of most of Europe in the Second World War, and documents the circumstances of life under the communist regime. My argument here is that if "old Europe survives" it is in the form of identities which do not allow themselves to be completely dominated by the accelerating modernity which overtakes the previously feudal Europe. The responses shown by the characters in the novel are more than entrenchment, but active attempts to fashion identity from the physical and political environment of communist Prague. As such, it must be seen as a reflexive response, as it does not ignore the new circumstances of modernization in this form, but incorporates aspects of it, making use of the possibilities for self-definition which it brings about.

[88] Alexander, "Critical Reflections", 138.

Chapter Five: Collecting and Nomadism

Section One: Figuring the Collector and the Nomad

The thesis will address one further context of identity formation in Chatwin's work: this chapter will consider the opposition between two contrasting strategies of identity formation: object-ownership and movement. In their extreme forms, as they often appear in Chatwin's work, these are represented by the figures of the collector and the nomad respectively. The figure of the collector appears in Utz, and in some of Chatwin's shorter pieces; collecting was also a feature of Chatwin's own life.[1] Nomadism is characterized (in Chatwin's use of the term) by the ownership of as few material possessions as possible, and by constant movement; it was also important to Chatwin's life, and features in a range of his work, most notably The Songlines. Many of Chatwin's characters negotiate identity through aspects of both practices. This section will use 'Alan Brady' as an illustration of a character whose identity, like Chatwin's, highlights the uneasy relationship between possessions and travel.[2] The second section of this chapter will offer an extended reading of Utz, whilst the third will consider The Songlines, and sections from What Am I Doing Here and Anatomy of Restlessness. The third section will also draw on biographical material to suggest that the divergent practices of collecting and nomadism constituted an important part of Chatwin's own identity formation. Although Chatwin was clearly aware of the detail of nomadic cultures, and wrote on them at length, there is no evidence that he interested himself in the psychology and processes of collecting. It is nonetheless the case that his work features both extremes, and that a study of collecting is useful in understanding its position in opposition to Chatwin's formulation of nomadism. As is the case with the previous chapters, Chatwin's knowledge of the theoretical work employed in this thesis is not being claimed. What is being undertaken is a reading of his work which departs from the previous limited criticism of Chatwin's work, and which does not rely on the issues of genre in order to identify consistent themes in the Chatwin oeuvre.

Initially, the section will consider the phenomenon of self-identification through the owning of material objects. In relation to Utz and to characters that feature in the two anthologies, the chapter will consider work on the collecting of fine art and the narcissistic relationship between collector and collection. In order to contextualize the importance of some possessions that are not specifically works of art, and may not formally be considered a collection, academic work from the area of consumer research will be cited. The section will suggest that there are parallels that link the phenomenon of the static practice of collecting and the practice of nomadism that is considered later in the section.[3]

The premise of this section, confirmed by research on collecting and consumer culture, is that objects are rarely merely functional. This is because the owner invests value into the object that it did not originally have: "Once the object stops being defined by its function, its meaning is up to the subject".[4] This is certainly the case for the characters to be discussed in the subsequent sections of this chapter, as is illustrated by the case of Alan Brady. His treasured possessions include an "iron snake from Dahomey" (S, p.259) which, outside its original cultural context, can only have value because he chooses to invest it with such.

Whether irreplaceable mementoes or items in a collection of rare art, objects acquire value by the negotiation which they make possible between the individual identity of the owner, and the world in which the owner lives. This can be affective of the past, social class, or other possible levels of intervention. They are vital to a sense of self as they:

> ... can help to construct the relationship between "I" and "me" which
> creates individual identity between the individual and others, and
> between the individual and the finite world of time and space.[5]

The greater the effort made to acquire certain objects, the greater importance they are likely to have in relation to the identity of the owner. Hence the identity of the collector is likely to be a good example of this phenomenon:

> The collector ... is often attached to certain kinds of objects rather than others because of their symbolic values, and he tends to use his collection and collecting activities to enhance his self-definition.[6]

The psychology of ownership is therefore a complex construct, concerned more with the relationship between object and owner than between sets or classifications of objects. Since this relationship is a function of the degree to which the owner identifies themselves with the object, the perceived value of the object is in direct relation to its perceived importance to the identity of the owner. In the extreme case of object-ownership, collecting, the importance of the object or set of objects to the identity of the owner is paramount. At the other end of the scale, objects that are perceived as being largely functional have little impact on the identity formation of the owner. Hence Baudrillard's assertion that "... it is invariably oneself that one collects".[7]

Whether or not taken to the extremes demonstrated by Utz, possessions are nonetheless vital to identity formation: Belk claims that possessions follow only body parts and mind in their perceived centrality to self.[8] He also states that "we regard our possession as part of ourselves",[9] and makes clear that the significance of this attachment lies in the inference it allows us to make about the owner: "Unlike arms and legs, the choice and assembly of objects to form a collection is ostensibly a self-expressive creative act that tells us something about the collector".[10] This clearly demonstrates the extent to which value is applied to objects that would otherwise be 'merely functional'.

Collecting can be seen as a form of narcissism, and work in this field frequently figures the collector as narcissist. This presumes a practice of ownership that goes beyond the attachment of importance to souvenirs, as in the case of Brady.[11] Baudrillard confirms

that this sense of self transcends the importance of any object: "The singular object never impedes the process of narcissistic projection, which ranges over an indefinite number of objects. On the contrary, it encourages such multiplication ... ".[12]   The centrality of the owner to the significance of the collection can therefore be seen as a form of narcissism: "Like all fictional narratives it [collecting] offers the scope to play games and experience magical transformations; we are all the heroes of our collections".[13]

Another important factor in the relationship between objects and the self is the context in which they are held. Consideration of family, social or historical context has been used to analyse the nature of ownership, and the ways in which self-identity functions in relation to objects depending on the context of the ownership. This, for example is important in the case of Utz, whose insistence on the values of the nobility is bolstered by his collection in a socio-political context in which his position would otherwise be anachronistic. His appreciation of and devotion to his collection for the aesthetic value which it holds for him contrasts with the prevailing political situation. His insistence on the habits and lifestyle of nobility are equally out of place in the egalitarian thrust of communism. The previous chapter has suggested that the collection plays a role in allowing Utz's self-identification to reflexively transcend the political context of his life. The following section will argue that the collection also forms his identity in ways typical to the collector.

Several commentators have suggested that self-identification with objects can stem from a dysfunctional family background, and that the more extreme the preoccupation, for example of an obsessive collector, the more this is likely to be the case: " ... it may stem from a childhood in which he was given material things rather than love, so that objects came to stand for love and acquiring possessions became a way of assuring himself that he could be loved".[14] Objects may equally replace family completely, or be a means of overcoming a family-related trauma. Alan Brady is a man whose " ... father had been gassed on the Somme, and his mother had died during the week of Dunkirk" (S, p.258).

The 'deepest' layer of possessions that Brady keeps is family-related. Muensterberger suggests that objects may be chosen as substitutes for relationships with people, who have in some way been proved unreliable. The case of Utz, whose collection starts with the loss of his father, may be a parallel. Whatever the specific circumstances, objects clearly function at this level, as Muensterberger concludes: "Thus, favouring things instead of people may be one of several solutions for dealing with emotions that echo old traumata and uncertainties".[15]

Hence the theme of objects as substitutes is an important one. In some cases, which are particularly relevant to this thesis, the acquisition and ownership of objects can be seen as a substitute for liberty of movement. The examples of Utz, or the dying Chatwin, seem comparable with the examples cited by Muensterberger of another form of substitution: "Obtaining one or another object is a prerequisite of finding relief from what one lady described as 'unbearable restlessness'".[16] This reflects the ways in which object ownership can compensate for a social context that is restrictive, or for the loss of freedom. The opposition between ownership and movement will be considered later in this section in relation to nomadism, but it may be noted that the extremes of travel and collecting undertaken by Utz, and echoed by Chatwin himself, represent a negotiation of a situation which Brady, still employed as a salesman, has yet to face. Brady's possessions are important to his identity, but have not yet been called upon to replace the movement that he currently enjoys. The main reasons for reduced freedom of movement may be illness, employment, domesticity or political climate, but the social context in which the objects are held nonetheless contributes to the relationship which they have with the identity of their owner.

If family trauma and substitution for the ability to control one's identity in the outside world both feature as motivations for owners to draw self-value from their possessions, then it is unsurprising that there is great importance paid to history, and to collections which somehow link the present with the past. This can either take the form of family

mementoes, or objects that are reminders of some previous happier existence. It can be further distant in time, relating to a period or place in history which for some reason embodies value for the owner of the object: "The merging of the collection and the extended self helps explain the thematic relevance of some collections to personal and occupational history".[17] This is apparently more likely to be the case in old age, when objects are more likely to relate to the past. Alan Brady's set of memory-evoking objects, and his fear of the end of his working life can be read as illustrative of Belk's line of analysis here: "Our attachment to memory-evoking possessions grows as we accumulate experiences from our past and reduce the stock of pleasurable experiences likely to occur in our futures".[18]

Like Utz, and to a certain extent, Brady, owners of individual memento objects or entire collections can become completely obsessed with the past. Also, in a characteristic displayed by Chatwin's acquisitions throughout his life, the idea that objects have belonged to someone famous adds to the appeal, presumably through another example of the extension of self-identity. As Muensterberger puts it, it is as though there took place "the transmigration of some intrinsic force".[19] Belk's understanding of this aspect of ownership sees it as another means of extending the self:

> Just as our sense of self is extended physically larger, our sense of self can also be extended temporally when possessions connect us to the past. ... By adding the dimension of time to the spatial dimension of self-extension, we become richer characters; we are both literally and figuratively more multi-dimensional.[20]

Beyond the world of the collection, time can be as uncontrollable as space: these objects from the past can allow a transformative gesture that allows the owner to control the past in a spatial environment.

An overriding conclusion in relation to the aspects of ownership discussed above is that objects allow the owner a form of control over time and space, and that collections of objects are extended arenas of control for the individual. The ability to order the position and relative placing of a group of objects in a given environment and to control access to that environment is linked with processes of value-making and substitution. The place in which non-functional objects are kept is a key to the role that they play in relation to the identity formation of their owner. Pearce proposes this in her opening comments on collecting: " ... the layout of collected material in its selected space is a complicated acknowledgement of a single statement in its intellectual, emotional and physical domains".[21] The position of objects reflects the owner's appreciation of the objects' significance to the owner. This illuminates a comparison between Brady (possessions kept in a private strong-box), Utz (collection displayed in cabinets in a private apartment allowing access to a chosen few) and Chatwin (wishing to start a museum).[22] Within the space occupied by valued possessions, the owner is free to imbue them with qualities, and draw from them attributes which are only true of the value which they see in them, rather than the function which the outside world proclaims for them:

> ... the collection offers us a paradigm of perfection, for this is where the passionate enterprise of possession can achieve its ambitions, within a space where the everyday prose of the object world modulates into poetry, to institute an unconscious and triumphant discourse.[23]

That discourse is one of identity formation which is served by the arrangement of objects that reinforce the identity of the owner, not simply in their being owned, but by their being 'placed' as well. Commentators on consumerism and collecting identify a sense of power and creation which collectors feel in relation to their collections. This chimes closely with the theme of creation which runs through the narrative of Utz, and with Chatwin's ambitions for his collection. The collector, in control of the space dedicated to his objects, assumes a role that he can only play in relation to those objects:

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> If there is an allusion to playing God here, perhaps it is apt. The collector as the creator of the collection assumes the role of possessor, controller and sometimes savior of the objects collected. For while consumers can always control what they own and possess, collectors who possess a set of interrelated objects control a "little world".[24]

To make the adjective 'little' more apposite, it should be noted that scale is an important factor in many collections: "A characteristic expression of the urge to manipulate the world through collecting is the decision to concentrate either upon miniature things or upon huge things".[25] The relevance to Utz's collection of miniatures is clear, and I would argue that Brady's collection also fits this mode of collecting as it miniaturizes experience and exerts control by reducing the symbols to a small spatial expression. Once more, this tendency can be seen as another feature of the attempt to use object ownership as a means to control time and space. The "world in miniature" which Pearce describes may be the only "world" which collectors can control, and is therefore of paramount importance to their sense of self. The value ascribed to ownership and control of a group of objects reflects value and a sense of potency onto its owner. In my reading, Chatwin's depictions of these processes involve substitutes for sexual potency, particularly in the case of Utz, as will be discussed in the next section.

A further tendency which is linked with the element of control is the frequency with which owners buy, and collectors collect, objects which are of distant provenance, are exotic in relation to the everyday environment or context of the owner's life, or are from a time or place which is radically different from the one inhabited by the owner. This is true of travel souvenirs,[26] as well as of historical objets d'art such as Dresden porcelain or the archaeological finds sought after by Chatwin. The value of these objects is increased because of their nature: "Because the sacred is mystical, it is enhanced by collecting objects that are distant in time or space from the owner".[27]

The mystical element of object ownership can be observed in the fetishization of possessions. The more owners rely on the object or collection to supply a sense of identity, and to extend the self into a realm of time and space over which they have control, the more they are likely to ascribe mystical powers to the objects which fulfil this role. Mike Baal draws the link between fetishization, "a strong mostly eroticized attachment to a single object or category", and collecting, by pointing to fetishism as the beginning of the "narrative of collecting", in which a given object loses its function except as an object, and gains functionality as a "de-othered extension of the self".[28] Fetishization is a feature of Utz's collecting, and also appears in The Viceroy of Ouidah.

More conventional religious vocabulary also abounds, and several commentators observe the division between the sacred and profane in the world of possessions. The profane are the functional: the objects which have no significant value other than their role in the everyday world. The sacred are those objects believed to be linked with the identity of the owner, whose meaning and place cannot be denied. The space used to house the collection, whether Brady's small box or a more formal display case, becomes a sacred space because of the objects it holds.[29] Belk acknowledges the mystical aspect of collecting thus: " ... perhaps the deepest benefit of collecting to most collectors is one they find most difficult to articulate: that of providing contact with self-transcending sacredness or magic in their lives".[30] These values are also bound up with issues of commerce: to deal with an object in terms of financial value is to profane the fetishized value which it holds for the collector whose sense of self is enlarged by it. Communities of collectors are sympathetic with one another's feelings about their collections. Dealers are therefore held in contempt, for example by Chatwin after his experience at Sotheby's, and by Utz. This can be seen in a series of depictions of the financial side of the art market which are clearly drawn from Chatwin's own experiences, and reflect the view of collecting which he espoused (see endnote 86). The possession of objects becomes an aesthetic issue, although the aesthetic appreciation is merely a coinable term for the deeper significance which an object may have for the identity of an individual. Chatwin's "eye"

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for art is therefore not simply a commercial advantage, but is concerned with a deeper appreciation, as Baekeland has pointed out: "The exercise of a good eye is rewarding because it is a skill with both practical and emotional benefits".[31] This is why suggestions that a collector sell individual items from a collection are treated with the same outrage as a religious profanity by the faithful. On the other hand, guilt about collecting is also articulated in religious terms, according to Belk. Collectors are "tempted" by dealers: "the rationalization often used by collectors to assuage the guilt of self-indulgent acquisitiveness is one that portrays the collector as a saviour of lost, neglected or endangered objects".[32]

It is therefore understandable that the end of a collection, whether through sale, completion or destruction is viewed as a form of death. During the lifetime of the collection, objects may stand, as Baudrillard has it, "for the symbolic transcendence of the subject's own death".[33] The symbolic "death" of the collection, or the dispersal of fetishized objects, bound up as they are with their owner's identity, can have serious consequences for the owner. Owners of possessions, especially collectors, frequently make careful plans for the inheritance of the collection; many would prefer to see it destroyed rather than pass into the hands of an owner who will not appreciate the "value" which they themselves ascribe to it (Utz).[34] Collectors often wish to bequeath collections to a museum (Chatwin). Belk sees this as controlled disacquisition, which, he claims, "can be a source of identity preservation". My reading of Utz will suggest that whether this "controlled disacquisition" is due to impending death or not, it can signal not only preserved identity but identity in flux, a replacement of the collection with whatever the collection was initially a substitute for in any given self-identification.

Another form of 'death' or ending is the completion of the collection: again a point which collectors try to avoid. Collections often have their range expanded, to include objects that were previously overlooked or refused, in order that the project is never finished. Collections are therefore in a constant state of change; as Belk noted, the collector is

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always looking forward to the next acquisition. Alan Brady's project of renewal is threatened by imminent retirement: my reading of this excerpt suggests that his fear is as much to do with the need to renew and revise his collection of objects (around which some fixed level of identity revolves) as it is to do with travel. The end of his travel would mean a form of completion for his collection of objects, and the values in which his identity is invested would become static and stagnant. This concurs with my reading of Utz in the next section of this chapter.

As identity constantly develops and seeks to be enriched by new possessions, the range of possessions, whether part of a collection or not, continues to change. New objects acquire meaning and older ones perhaps lose significance for the owner. Again the example of Alan Brady illustrates this perfectly: "Each time he brought back one new thing, and chucked out one old thing that had lost its significance" (S, p.259). Baekeland suggests that the "constant upgrading can be in response to "a restless need to change", or even a "displaced hostility".[35] It is clear from this aspect of ownership that its sedentary nature is belied by the extent to which movement, change, evolution and disacquisition are vital elements in the relationship between objects and owner. My opposition of this strategy of identity formation with that of constant physical movement is therefore made with the acknowledgement that both extremes involve some form of change and renewal. It may be going too far to suggest that all ownership is sublimated travel, but the relationship between the two is obviously an important and complex one, as is signalled by the identity formation displayed by Alan Brady. Brady's continual negotiation of ownership and movement is perhaps a compromise which others of Chatwin's characters, and even Chatwin himself, do not achieve.

For the purposes of this thesis, the figuring of nomadism, characterized by the "restlessness' which occurs frequently both in work by and about Chatwin, will deal with Chatwin's view of the nomad rather than other uses of the term. Although based on his experience of travel, as well as extensive research on nomadism, the final use which

Chatwin makes of the term in The Songlines represents nonetheless a synthesis of knowledge and a romantic vision of the human need for movement. It is of little use, therefore, to engage in an ethnographic comparison of different nomadic peoples, and their description by Chatwin. The thrust of the chapter, as of the thesis, remains that of examining the processes of identity formation in Chatwin's work. As such, it is more useful to engage in sustained readings of Chatwin's figuring of the nomad. There are sources, mostly literary, which inform my reading and which will be cited here. I am arguing that Chatwin's version of nomadism is a construct which features in his books and informed his life, but does not conform to the figuring of nomadism in other disciplines, either as an anthropological phenomenon or in theoretical work on the nomadic subject. I do not wish to give the impression that Chatwin had a well-conceived version of what the nomadic lifestyle entailed. The early drafts of work on nomadism reveal the contradictions that lie in Chatwin's conception of the term. These contradictions become compounded in the collage of quotations given in The Songlines. In both The Songlines and 'The Nomadic Alternative', he clarifies that nomadism is related to pasture, and that the movement of nomadic people is to do with keeping livestock, and is concerned with movement in a group: "The nomad does not 'wander from place to place aimlessly', as one dictionary would have it. The word derives from the Latin and Greek meaning 'to pasture'. ... The Nomad is a clan elder ... ".[36] However, his depiction of the nomad which comes out of The Songlines, and which doubtless appealed to the independent traveller of the later twentieth century, is an individualistic one, typified by the example of Brady. There is a contradiction, therefore, between the material that Chatwin used to support his thesis, and the endpoint that he seems to be trying to reach. Although the Australian Aborigines are not a nomadic people, it is as much their relationship with movement and space as a means of identity formation that fascinated Chatwin. My analysis of Chatwin's depiction of the nomad, and of movement as a source of identity formation will draw on his shorter pieces on the subject, as it will draw on biographical material. It will focus, however, on Chatwin's

narrative writing in which movement is important to narrator or characters, rather than on his theorizing of the nomad.

It is my argument that the opposition of individuals and cultures either sedentary or in transit, is based on a more complex binary than static against non-static. For Chatwin, the sedentary city-dwellers are inescapably caught up with their possessions, beginning with the ground they cultivate and the house they build, but resting ever more heavily on the possession of key objects which bolster their identity. It is this, in the manifestations discussed above, which the Chatwin oeuvre places in direct opposition to nomadic movement. The rest of this section considers the ways in which Chatwin's figuring of nomadism allows author and characters to engage with both possibilities of ownership and movement. The reading of the 'Alan Brady' excerpt continues in illustration of this.[37]

A useful context for the nomadic element of this opposition is some work which has been done on the figure of the 'wanderer' in literature. From Baudelaire's flaneur to the German romantics, the literary representation of the subject who is driven to movement by impulses he does not fully understand is not unique to Chatwin's work. It shares Chatwin's romantic vision of the nomadic individual, whose spiritual well-being comes from travel. This is the source of Alan Brady's continued self-sufficiency. The few material goods which inform his identity are kept at distance by the continual movement which his lifestyle involves. The following definition of wandering is interesting in relation to Chatwin's idiosyncratic and romantic figuring of the nomadic individual:

> Contrairement à la flânerie ou à la promenade, l'errance n'est jamais
> un plaisir. C'est une obligation à laquelle nous succombons sans
> savoir pourquoi, jetés hors de nous-memes. Elle ne conduit nulle
> part. Elle est échec.[38]

This definition diverges from Chatwin's vision of travel, emphasising the painful element of the activity. For Delvaville, it seems that his affliction only strikes certain individuals. This is probably the case for Chatwin, but the essential difference is that neither Chatwin nor the nomadic peoples from whom he derives inspiration travel randomly. There is always a destination, a motive. Chatwin's figuring of the need for movement is no less concerned with an inexpressible drive than is a feature of Delvaville's definition, but his project is to foreground the spiritually beneficial nature of constant movement, rather than to see it as a burden of the human condition. This is nonetheless the way in which movement occurs for some of Chatwin's characters, notably Utz, for whom travel is a means of escape from his collection, but through which he fails to find a sustainable source of identity. Dom Francisco in The Viceroy of Ouidah also experiences this painful drive, and ultimately becomes miserable in his attempt to counter it through the accumulation of fetishized objects.

This can be contrasted with Matthew Graves's summary of Chatwin's position on nomadism, with its romantic view of the benefits of that activity. Graves's account of Chatwin's personal nomadism makes explicit the link between the need for travel, and the privileging of travel over its opposite value-system, the possession of objects:

> Demoralisé par son travail, degouté par ses possessions, de la bourgeoisie qu'il voyait defiler dans les salles de ventes ... il fut naturellement impressioné par la simplicité et la vigeur des nomades, leurs peu de biens materielles et leurs grandes resources spirituels.[39]

The attraction of the nomadic lifestyle lies in its absence of material goods that Chatwin sees being valued by the art collectors and owners of objets d'art. Travel is not merely the fact of movement, therefore, but also the self-identification with movement instead of objects possessed. The stifling effect of material things which Alan Brady carefully avoids, is escaped through travel: "c'est le voyage comme therapeutique".[40] I am not in agreement with Graves's claim that for Chatwin, travel involved "un dereglement de tous

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les sens".[41] Chatwin's depictions of travel involve a revitalising of the senses; a more acute perception of the circumstances of human life.[42] Although Chatwin's perception of nomadism is based on extrapolations and the romanticising of nomadic ways of life, it is nonetheless an intellectualized one, rather than a self-abandonment to unknown territory. Graves is perceptive, however, in identifying the paradox in Chatwin's own life which, I am arguing, is of vital importance to his literary work:

> En effet, l'impression qui se degage des extraits biographiques et autobiographiques est celle d'un homme en proie au paradoxe. Expert et collectionneur, Chatwin se disait pourtant allergique aux objets d'art et ne detestait pas moins les museés.[43]

Nicholas Shakespeare's biography, written after Graves's work, supports this view, as will be discussed in the following two sections. Chatwin's disgust for the world of material possessions is most evident in the semi-autobiographical material to which Graves refers, but is also present in his depictions of characters in ambiguous, sometimes damaging, relationships with objects or collections. His subsequent turn towards the nomadic is discussed by Alexandre Laumonier:

> "Qu'est ce que je fais la" - une simple question telle que celle-ci permet deja d'en proposer quelques motifs: la singularité du lieu (le "la"), la relation personelle entre ce lieu et l'individu, la sympathie entre le geographique et l'interiorité, une affinité ambigue avec l'ailleurs qui n'est pas le "la".[44]

The individual finds an identification with place, but the place is always somewhere else. The "sympathie" or "relation personelle" with place, I would argue, is the counter of the self-identification with objects, in which the individual enters into a relationship with objects based on the value which they apply to them. The same process, of applying value, and then drawing from an affinity with it, occurs in this formulation in relation to place. This is made explicit by the relationship which Laumonier posits between

geography and 'interiority'. Again, this is a reformulation of the collector's identity which is formed in relation to the static location and interrelations of its collector. For the nomad, in this romanticized version, the valued place is elsewhere, and therefore provokes movement. The nomad is as bound to move as the collector is bound to stay. I am also in agreement with Laumonier's description of this relation as "ambigue": a more useful rendering of the relationship between nomad and movement, as well as collector and possessions, than Delavaville's suggestion of suffering quoted earlier.

The attributes which the first half of this section discussed in relation to objects can, then, be considered in an assessment of how far they are useful to an understanding of Chatwin's opposition to the collector: the nomad. As Laumonier makes clear, place is important, and nomadism can easily be figured as a means of control over time and space. Continual movement implies that no destination is beyond the reach of the traveller: the traveller physically achieves what the collector suppresses through his collection of exotica or tourist souvenirs. In addition, this movement gives some control over time: no period of time is spent in any one place, so that the control of space also dictates the nomad's use of time. When staying in New York, Chatwin countered the sedentary lifestyle that had been imposed upon him by running around Central Park every morning. The reason that he gave for this was "to keep Old Father Time at bay".[45]

Travel, certainly in Chatwin's autobiographical work, is fetishized, and his discussion of nomadism in The Songlines approaches a treatment of sacred and profane as he draws on religious as well as ethnographic sources to present his argument that walking is spiritually beneficial. Several of his characters, notably Alan Brady, are testament to this belief, which accords powers to the process of travel which, like the powers with which material objects are imbued, are not related to the intrinsic value, but to the relationship which they have with the subject, in this case the nomad.

Finally, the context of the travel is as important as the context of the collection. Continual movement may be an escape from trauma, a substitute for relationships, whether sexual or not, and may be prompted by political or economic situations. Examples of all these can be found in Chatwin's work. Similarly, the obsession with objects which once belonged to a famous person is paralleled by the 'following in the footsteps' mode of travel, in which value is ascribed to certain destinations or routes (see Chapter One for discussion of this mode in travel writing). This is usually because they have previously been visited by an admired figure from history, or because they have a personal significance, and therefore represent a kind of replacement for the family memento which is key to the possessions of many collectors.

It can be seen, therefore, that the relationship between collecting and nomadism, as two extremes of identity-forming strategies is a close one in Chatwin's work. As argued in the introduction, negotiation of these two extremes in an attempt to find meaningful identity in any given context is the preoccupation of many of Chatwin's characters, as it was for the author himself. The following sections will consider specific examples from Chatwin's work, and examine the formation of identity of several characters in relation to the material discussed in this section.

Section Two: Collecting and Identity Formation in *Utz*

The following section will offer a reading of Utz, based on the material on collecting and nomadism in the previous section. The figure of the collector is dominant in this text, and Utz as a character displays tendencies of identity formation which are more concerned with the ownership of possessions than with travel. It is nonetheless the case that both sides of the dynamic come into play, and that Utz is driven to movement, in his attempts to emigrate, as much as he is forced to return by his collection. The character of Utz draws on the figure of the nomad, moving as if disdainful of boundaries, due to motivations which are arguably the same as the ones which drive him to collect. The negotiation of this dynamic is, according to Adam Mars-Jones, Chatwin's "most sophisticated attempt to reconcile a strong sense of place with a countervailing conviction of displacement, and a temperamental restlessness".[46] This section will demonstrate the extent to which Utz conforms to the behaviour patterns and value systems of the archetypal collector. The section will also propose a reading of Chatwin's own circumstances and practice that suggests a parallel between the predicament of the writer and his character, and the strikingly similar ways in which they both negotiate the relationship between travel and movement. As in the case of the four previous chapters, a body of theoretical work provides the comparative material here. Chatwin's own attitudes and the extent to which his collecting activity has been documented do suggest, however, that this aspect of identity formation was important to him, and it is reasonable to suggest that its consideration in his writing reflects a personal concern. Since this thesis is arguing for a sustained thematic coherence to the Chatwin oeuvre, it makes sense to pay some attention to the fact that this concern was sustained in his personal life. Apart from demonstrating that the opposition between collecting and nomadism is a theme in other work by Chatwin, the next section will also make further comparisons using biographical work.

Utz is born into the minor German nobility, although he lives in communist Prague during the time-scale of most of the narrative. The period with which the novel is concerned begins between the two World Wars, but the action is concentrated on the Stalinist years, and the period following the Russian invasion. Utz is a collector of Meissen porcelain, to the point of obsession, and the narrative is based on the narrator's meeting with him and one of his friends, and the reconstruction of Utz's life-story after his death. From his youth, Utz conforms to the pattern of collector: his father dies when he is young, and he is given his first porcelain figure by his grandmother in condolence. Of his mother, or any other relationship, there is little mention, and it is clear that the precocious young Utz has quickly substituted a love of porcelain for a love of people, and spends his early years studying its origins and buying examples. He therefore has a childhood in which "he was given material things rather than love".[47] It is certainly the case that in the instance of his father's death, as at other moments of emotional crisis throughout the novel, it is the porcelain which serves to bolster Utz's identity in the absence of close personal relationships: this is his solution "for dealing with emotions that echo old traumata and uncertainties".[48] The porcelain is again linked with the loss of family when: "The deaths, in quick succession, of his mother and grandmother, allowed him to bid against a Rothschild".[49] Hence the family context and the personal identity which Utz creates for himself as connoisseur conform to the behaviour identified by Belk and Pearce.

In addition, the social context of the collection reinforces its role as a means to identify the self with something beyond the prevailing political or economic environment. Utz's insistence on the pretensions of the nobility, supported by his collection and the domestic use of porcelain wares, allows him to continue to adhere to values that are at odds with the utilitarian ethos of the Communist state. Utz displays no allegiance to political ideology, and negotiates each change of regime with a course of action calculated to preserve his collection. He collaborates with Goering's art squad, ostensibly to protect Jews, and is equally compliant with the communist regime. Although this behaviour

suggests a moral position in response to political pressure, it is more closely related to preserving the collection:

> On learning that Klement Gottwald had installed himself in Prague castle. ... Utz's reaction was to give his lands to a farming collective, and his own castle for use as an insane asylum.
>
> These measures gave him time: sufficient at least to evacuate the porcelains, without loss or breakage ... (p.25)

Utz thereby displays a willingness to live in a two-roomed Prague flat in order to maintain the collection, which has assumed greater importance than the castle or lands of his inheritance. A practical, apolitical approach, which leads him to marry his maid in order to keep the flat, governs his outlook:

> Politically Utz was neutral. ... He detested violence, yet welcomed the cataclysms that flung fresh works of art onto the market. 'Wars, pogroms and revolutions', he used to say, 'offer excellent opportunities for the collector.'
>
> The Stock Market Crash had been one such opportunity. Kristallnacht was another. (U, p.21)

It is of course the changing political context which influences Utz's decision to move himself and the collection to Prague. It is therefore entirely possible to read Utz's collection as a substitute for parental love, personal relationships and a whole network of social interactions. The narrator seems sympathetic with Utz's obsession, and there is no tone of condemnation of the collector's exploitation of his situation. As discussed in the previous chapter of this thesis, there is the sense that Utz makes his own decisions, which are provoked rather than decided, by the circumstances of modernity that surround him.

His identification with the collection accords with the observation that the collection can help "to create individual identity between the individual and others ... ".[50] In Utz's case, the identification is complete, as is revealed to the narrator:

> And I realised, as Utz pivoted the figure in the candlelight ... that he, too, was dancing; that for him, this world of little figures was the real world. And that, compared to them, the Gestapo, the Secret Police and other hooligans were creatures of tinsel. And the events of this sombre century - the bombardments, the blitzkriegs, putsches, purges - were, as far as he was concerned, so many "noises off." (U, p.114)

Utz's relationship with the collection bears a striking similarity to the way in which the psychology of collecting is described by Belk: if it is the case that "we regard our possessions as part of ourselves",[51] then Utz's reaction to interference with his collection by the state is acutely observed: "At last when they had gone, he gazed miserably at his miniature family. He felt abused and assaulted" (U, p.58). Again the idea of substitution is made explicit, as is the link between the physical self and the extended self as symbolised by the collection. The narrator is clearly aware of this vital link between collector and collection: "I gasped; knowing that the way to endear oneself to an art collector is to rhapsodise his things" (U, p.52). The narrator demonstrates knowledge not only of the materials under discussion, but of the likely relationship between the collector and his collection. Again, I would argue that Chatwin sympathizes with Utz, and also acknowledges the closure which the destruction of the collection brings to Utz's dilemma. The extent to which this depiction of the collector is based on Chatwin's experience can only be speculative, but it seems likely that Utz, along with other characters in the Chatwin oeuvre, reflects the ambiguous positions that Chatwin held in relation to possessions. This will be discussed at length in Section Three.

It is clear that Utz's collection represents an attempt to "control time and space". The placing of the miniatures in cabinets in a small apartment signifies that the space which they occupy holds more value for Utz than the space which he occupies in relation to the outside world. The miniatures construct the relationship "between the individual and the finite world of time and space",[52] and allow Utz to maintain his self-identity in a world that has abandoned the values to which he adheres.[53] In his attempt to continue the habits of the

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nobility, he also controls the past through the collection, identifying himself not only with the figurines, but with collectors of porcelain from the past, such as Augustus the Strong: " ... as he surveyed the sparkling Swan Service plates, the salt-cellar, the cutlery with chinoiserie handles - he came close to believing his fantasy: that this was the 'porcelain palace' and that he himself was Augustus reincarnate" (U, pp.60-61). As Muensterberger points out, collectors often have an attraction to periods of history, and to items which have previously been owned by figures from history. Utz represents a paradigm of this phenomenon, and certainly seems to feel "the transmigration of some intrinsic force".[54] This aspect of the collection affords him, therefore, some control over time and he thereby compensates for the lack of respect that is shown to his family and status by the prevailing political climate. This is reflected in his daily life, in a set of mannerisms recalling the past that again requires the presence of porcelain: " ... he insisted on the details: the sauce in a sauceboat; the starching of shirt cuffs; the Sèvres coffee cups on Sunday ... " (U, p.84).

Not only does this control of space lead to a lack of movement, but it is perhaps a claustrophobic extreme of stasis. It therefore contrasts strikingly with the eventual movement that will be discussed later in this section. Although the space that Utz controls is small, the level of control that he exerts is extraordinary. His collection, of course, conforms to Pearce's observation that collections are frequently made up of objects in miniature; this is a particularly focused way of controlling space.[55] There is also a strong level of the erotic in Utz's relation to the collection. The narrator at first observes the voluptuousness of some of the figurines, and credits Utz with the self-identification that implies an erotic involvement with these fetishized figures. The reader is told that Utz's obsession has been figured as sexual since he was a boy: "'What', Utz's mother asked the family physician, 'is this mania of Kaspar's for porcelain?' 'A perversion,' he answered. 'Same as any other'" (U, p.20). Later in the narrative, Utz is described using the miniatures as a tool in the seduction of operetta singers, whose music he listens to whilst admiring his collection. Thus for Marta, the collection is inextricably linked with Utz's sexual conquests: "She would cook the dinner and wash the dishes. Then, as Utz began

his routine with the Commedia figures and the music of 'Ariadne auf Naxos', she would slip out ... " (U, p.137).

Utz therefore sees his collection in animistic terms, and the pieces are strongly associated with the erotic. In addition, in the complex relationship between self and collection observed by Baekeland and Belk, there is a religious element to the figuring of the collection. Utz's control over the space that the collection inhabits, and his adaptation of creation mythology, already sees him fulfilling the god-like role that Belk ascribes to the collector,[56] and Chatwin contrasts Marta's committed faith, both in conventional religion and in her employer, with Utz's figuring of the porcelain in religious terms. He explicitly links porcelain with the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. He also speaks of rescuing pieces (U, pp.9-93) from dealers, who do not appreciate the 'true' value, only the financial worth, of their wares.[57] In a more comprehensive way than Alan Brady, therefore, Utz can be seen relying on the miniature world of his collection as a source of self-identity in a social context with which he is at odds. The fact that the collection continues to grow, rather than becoming the fixed quantity of objects that Brady preserves, suggests again that this extension of the self is an uneasy negotiation, which does not completely satisfy the role it is required to play.

Despite this attachment, Utz is motivated to leave Prague and to seek asylum in the West. With the help of his doctor, he arranges to go to Vichy, and begins what becomes an annual pilgrimage. Although there is no suggestion that Utz is convinced by the spiritual strengths of nomadism as described by Chatwin elsewhere, he nonetheless sees travel as a possible replacement for many of the aspects of identity formation otherwise provided by the collection. In effect the narrative is concerned with the ways in which Utz seeks desperately for a replacement for his collection in its role in defining his identity. He turns to the performing arts, to food and drink and to attempted sexual adventure as possible alternatives; it is equally possible to see these as other hypothetical substitutes for the support of family relationship, as well as attempts on a different scale to control time and

space. Instead of being content to exercise his control over the collection, and thus over time which is "distant from the owner", Utz attempts to control space that has hitherto been distant: it is notable that he cannot leave the collection for another location closer to home (although this is of course partly explained by his antipathy to the political regime). He replaces the exotic of the porcelain with the exotic of a capitalist-oriented location in the South of France. During these periods, he is in flight from the collection ("dégouté par ses possessions ... "[58]) which he resents for its hold over his life.

Utz is disappointed by his attempts to escape by travelling. He is apparently willing to travel further from the collection in order to escape from the confines that the combination of the Czechoslovakian state and the miniature world of the apartment inflicts upon him: " ... he had bought a pocket atlas of the world; and, leafing through its pages, he tried to imagine the country he would like to live in. Or rather, the country that would make him least unhappy" (U, p.81). For him, wandering is never a pleasure: it is merely a question of finding an alternative to his life with the collection, or recovering from a real "displaced hostility" that he aims at the collection in his Prague apartment. The difference that travel makes to his experience of the world is that he can no longer play the role of God. The real world does not offer a "paradigm of perfection"[59] from which Utz can draw his "triumphant discourse".[60] As the narrator has already discovered, Utz is the hero of his own collection. Outside the space of the collection he is no hero, no Don Juan, failing to assert himself in any meaningful social interaction, and failing to establish a sense of self through his experience of travel. Despite the desire to escape from the collection, he is disillusioned by the realisation that the real world is lacking in perfection, even compared with Prague, the site of the collection with which he has such an ambiguous relationship. Utz struggles, whether at home or abroad, to resolve the "personal relationship between the place and the individual".[61] It is therefore the case that his relationship with travel, and with the "elsewhere" is also ambiguous.

Although he feels no loyalty to the Czechoslovakian state, Utz is nevertheless a semi-prisoner in Prague because he cannot leave his collection: he cannot stay in the West, because it means abandoning the porcelain. His movement between the East and the West is an indication that his identity is not defined by the territorial boundaries that identify the inhabitants of a given state. Caren Kaplan has discussed the issue of territorial belonging in relation to travel and displacement, and questions the workings of displacement in relation to identity. In her chapter on "Post-modern Question Marks", Kaplan identifies this kind of process as being symptomatic of modernity: "'Just as the solid association between national spaces and identities becomes loosened, and, in some cases, dissolves, the attribution of identity for subjects in modernity is uneven, increasingly differentiated, and, quite often contradictory".[62] National boundaries are loosened in this sense, as Utz is free to leave and return, but do not provide a sense of identity as they might be expected to do. He remains an example of a character who is torn by contrasting possibilities for his own identity, at the heart of which is the tension between his desire to escape through travel, and the sense of identity formed by a collection of objects held in a fixed place.

Like Alan Brady, then, Utz has to negotiate between the two poles of this dynamic. In one attempt, he builds up a second collection of porcelain in the West: " ... the calculation being that if, over the years, the cache in Geneva approached the quality, not necessarily the quantity, of the collection in Prague, he might once again be tempted to emigrate" (U, p.90). When a piece of true quality comes along, however, Utz is unable to leave it in Switzerland: "Thus when others were bent on smuggling out of Czechoslovakia, in diplomatic bags or a foreign suitcase, any article of value they could lay their hands on ... Utz embarked on the opposite course" (U, p.95). Mars-Jones describes Utz's habits as: "a sort of interior emigration ... a cure that never quite became a defection".[63] The pattern that develops therefore, is one that allows Utz to maintain his collection in Prague, but to experience regular periods of estrangement in self-imposed exile:

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> Year after year he made the ritual pilgrimage to Vichy. By the end of
> April his resentment against the regime rose to boiling point. ... By
> April too, he felt acute claustrophobia. ... to say nothing of the
> boredom, verging on fury, that came from living those months with
> lifeless porcelain. (U, p.88)

Too much time spent without travel leads Utz to react against the collection that holds him in place. His travels, however, are subject to the same unease as he goes to find: " ... the fresh air of freedom that rapidly went stale, and order more expensive meals which would disgust him. He would then bolt for home like a man possessed by demons" (U, p.89).

Rather than a permanent commitment to a 'nomadic' lifestyle, therefore, this is "travel as therapy". The 'porzellankrankheit' from which Utz suffers is relieved on an annual basis by these forays into a world that is completely out of his control. He experiences them, however, as a "dérèglement des sens" that accompanies the abandonment of home in favour of "elsewhere" rather than a spiritual enrichment. Eventually, he accepts this compromise: "Before leaving he would make a resolution, never ever to return - while at the same time making arrangements for his return ... " (U, p.88). During this period of the narrative, Utz suffers from the "restless need for change" that characterises Chatwin's 'nomadic' characters. Like Brady, Utz travels in the knowledge that he will return, and never fully abandons the collection in order to travel on permanent basis. Despite this, Utz never fully identifies himself as traveller, or even immigrant. His movement is always relative to the collection; a departure that demands its own return. Unlike Brady's practice, however, the collection does not give him a freedom to move. None of his prospective destinations is chosen for the pleasure of seeing them, and the act of travel does not play the role for Utz that it does for Brady, or indeed for Chatwin.

In this way Utz develops a negotiation of the opposition between travel and possessions, in which the collection is dominant, and which continues to inform his identity, even in Western Europe, as collector. The dynamic changes, however, when his relationship with

Marta threatens the importance of the collection. This development offers an interesting paradigm of the shift in processes of identity-formation that can occur between collector and collection. Perhaps reversing the trait of collecting in order to find a substitute for personal relationships, Utz's eventual position leads to a rejection of the collection. Initially, he marries Marta in order to consolidate his position in relation to the collection:

> One morning, an order came for him to quit the apartment within two weeks: as a single man, he was no longer entitled to two rooms, only to one.
>
> So it had come to this! He would be out on the street, or in some rotting garret with nowhere to store the porcelains. Marriage was the answer. (U, p.133)

The problem is figured as a political one, brought about by a change of regime, and the need to avoid being defined by the state: "It was almost impossible for ordinary citizens not to fall into one or other of the categories - bourgeois nationalist, traitor to the Party, cosmopolitan ... " (U, p.132). Utz is again concerned with defining himself through a set of values, embodied by the collection, that contrast with the identity that the state would force upon him. His marriage is therefore a subversive act intended to conceal the real source of his identity.

Eventually his feelings for Marta become more solid. At her insistence, they lead the life of a conventional married couple. Marta ceases to guard the door, or to sleep rough whilst Utz uses the collection in further sexual conquests. The pity that he initially feels for her changes, and the importance of the collection diminishes in the light of the first genuinely affectionate relationship that the adult Utz experiences. The narrator decides that the collection, in Utz's view, became "bits of old crockery that simply had to go" (U, p.152).

Consequently, after several possible endings to this evolving relationship, the narrator decides that Utz and Marta must have destroyed the collection. Again this negotiation conforms to the importance that writers on the psychology of collecting have observed.

The end of the collection, signifying a ritual death, is a subject of great concern to most collectors. Utz, earlier in the narrative, has revealed this concern and is prepared, in the absence of offspring, to bequeath the collection to the state. The preservation of a collection after the collector's death can be a source of identity preservation.[64] The collection is so closely identified as a physical extension of the self that some transcendence is achieved by its remaining intact. Utz is prone to this sentiment until the value of his marriage asserts itself. He also suffers a stroke. With the establishment of a process of identity formation that is not reliant on the physical existence of material objects, the transcendence that they offer is undermined, and the collection, whether destroyed or not, ceases to play the role that it has played throughout the narrative, of being the defining locus of Utz's identity. In contrast with the position that Chatwin seems to be proposing in The Songlines, Utz does not find a resolution through travel, but through a personal relationship. Although the resolution of the contradiction between travel and possessions differs from Brady's, he nonetheless reaches a position of happiness by abandoning the temptations of both.

The destruction of the porcelain, as befits the religious nature of its role in Utz's identity, is perceived by the narrator as iconoclasm:

> Is there, alongside the tendency to worship images - which Baudelaire called "my unique, my primitive passion" - a counter-tendency to smash them to bits? Do images, in fact, demand their own destruction? (U, p.151)

The metaphor of the sacred, and of transcendence, is therefore present in the consideration of collecting in this text. The complex relationship between identity, objects, the self and control means that the iconoclasm of destruction is partly the destruction of the self, and hence relates, in a masochistic way, to the role of god which Belk observes as part of the make-up of the collector. Utz seems aware of these processes throughout the narrative, but is able to abandon his role as god, and therefore suffer the destruction of the collection

without experiencing the loss of transcendence and self-destruction that this would usually signify for the collector.

One of the keys to understanding the relationship between the identity formation of the character Utz, and that of Chatwin, is a reading of the effect of the collecting side of the dynamic on the author's own life. The narrator of Utz is never named (although it would appear that he draws on some of Chatwin's experience, particularly of the art world), and although my thesis is concerned with Chatwin's work rather than his life, there are parallels in this instance between the character and the author that illuminate the ways in which Chatwin himself perceived collecting and movement. Nicholas Murray claims that: "Like Bruce Chatwin, Utz is an obsessive collector: the former of ideas and stories, the latter of porcelains".[65] What Murray is missing out, and what Clapp and Shakespeare deal with at some length, is the extent to which Chatwin was a collector of material possessions. Earlier in his life, he had been able to accumulate objets d'art and archaeological finds, and it would seem that there was frequently a period of dispensing with possessions immediately before periods of travel. A change takes place later in his life when, already suffering from the effects of the HIV virus, Chatwin was researching and writing Utz. Clapp makes explicit the link between Chatwin's travel in Europe, his exposure to collecting and his decision to collect:

> When Bruce went to Switzerland to hand over a gift to George Ortiz
> he came back with a plan to make his own collection of objects. ...
> Collecting, which he had so often raged about and written against,
> became another obsessive pastime: 'The Chatwin Collection' was one
> of his most passionate pursuits in the last year of his life.[66]

The significance of this decision in its comparison with Utz lies in the immobility that Chatwin experienced at the end of his life. Wheelchair bound, he could no longer travel, and the periodical abandonment of material possessions in order to adopt the nomadic lifestyle that The Songlines prescribes was impossible. As in the case of many collectors,

the accumulation of objects with the avowed aim of starting a collection is linked with the inability or lack of desire to move. Utz is initially bound to stay in Prague by the political regime; he is certainly unable to move his collection. His self-definition comes through the extension of self through his collection. The significance of the title "The Chatwin Collection" can only serve as evidence that in Chatwin's case too, the objects involved were to be seen as "a source of identity preservation":[67] a means of the self interacting on a meaningful level with the outside world.

In addition to these concerns, there is the classic collector's preoccupation with the maintenance of the collection after the death of the collector. At least subconsciously, it would seem that Chatwin embarked upon this ambitious plan in order to gain control of time, and to achieve "the symbolic transcendence of the subject's own death."[68] Biographers also note his insistence on plans for further travel, despite the debilitating level of his illness. Again, either extreme of the collector/nomad dynamic must come into play when the question of identity formation is raised. The depiction of nomadic Aborigines in The Songlines, at a time when Chatwin was able to travel, and the contrasting sympathy for Utz the collector in the later book are no coincidence, and cannot simply be ascribed to a desire to contradict public expectation. The motivation behind this oscillation derives from Chatwin's own personal experience. The close of the novel, which sees Utz achieve a loving conventional marriage, also parallels Chatwin's experience, in which the sexual adventures of his travel are replaced by the conventional relationship for which they had been a substitute. For Utz, as well as the author, therefore, collecting and movement can be read as emotional substitute. For Chatwin, as much as for his characters, extremes of movement, collection, or a negotiation of the two replace other more conventional relationships and allegiances as processes of identity formation.

It is clear from this reading of the novel that Utz displays the typical behaviour of the collector in relation to the formulation of identity, and in the relationship between self and the outside world which is moderated by a series of material possessions. Chatwin uses

the problematized nature of this process in order to drive the narrative forward: his reconstruction of Utz's life is in essence a reconstruction of the relationship between Utz and his collection: Utz's death resolves the problem, and also signals the end of the collection, as it is replaced by the relationship with Marta. Utz's earlier attempts to negotiate the relationship between possessions and travel by periodically travelling, and establishing modes of identity formation elsewhere are equally problematized, and neither mode of behaviour is ultimately satisfying. Matthew Graves has identified the opposition that drives the novel, and sees Chatwin attempting to move beyond it in this novel: "La poetique chatwinienne semble conduire ... vers une impasse, si ce n'est vers un *dépassement* de ses termes".[69] Graves is right, and although Mars-Jones describes the end of the novel as sentimental,[70] Graves's suggestion of development from The Songlines to Utz supports my reading that the opposition between travel and possessions, as a key to identity formation in Chatwin's work, is ever-present in the oeuvre.

This is Chatwin's most sustained examination of the sedentary extreme of the dynamic, which is nonetheless depicted in other, shorter pieces to be discussed in the next section. It is also clear that the author, though the narrator of Utz does not betray the fact, displays the classic psychology of the collector, and that the extremes of travel and collecting are vital, at different times, to his own identity. The next section, as well as offering a reading of The Songlines and other examples of this dynamic at work, will draw on biographical work to suggest the reasons for Chatwin's fluctuating concern with these two extremes, and to find ways in which accounts of his own life confirm the parallel between the practice described in his novels, and his own travelling and collecting tendencies. The coincidence between the problematizing of possessions and collecting by Chatwin's characters and by the author himself is not, of course, the point of these readings. As the next section will make clear, this reading of Chatwin's work continues the argument made throughout the thesis, of the possibility of identifying ongoing themes in Chatwin's work, and of finding new and innovative ways of contextualizing them.

Section Three: Collectors and Nomads in *What Am I Doing Here,* *Anatomy of Restlessness* and *The Songlines*.

This section will continue the reading of Chatwin's work in the context of collecting and nomadism. In contrast with the reading of Utz, however, here I will examine work by Chatwin in which the figure of the nomad is dominant. Apart from The Songlines, which features Chatwin's most sustained published attempt to present a coherent proposal of nomadic behaviour, I will also consider some of Chatwin's shorter pieces in which identity formation is informed by the dynamic between collecting and movement. Given the argument made in this thesis that all characters in Chatwin's work should be considered as textual constructs, it is equally possible to offer readings of the characters in his journalism, which shows a concern with the same themes as his novels. The section will also continue to draw on biographical material in order to suggest ways in which Chatwin's own life and identity formation can be seen to parallel those of his characters. It is difficult to ascribe a fixed point of view to Chatwin, given the unreliability of his own textual accounts in the first person. If anything, biographical work only confirms the fluctuating response that Chatwin himself made to the problem which permeates his work. It is useful, nonetheless, to be aware of the fact that establishing himself as a nomad, as well as acquiring objects which had an aesthetic appeal, were two modes of Chatwin's behaviour, and were informed by the same reflections on the subject which inform his writing.[71]

Chatwin's romanticizing of his own travel informs his figuring of the nomad and the motivation towards nomadism. In "Letter to Tom Maschler" published in Anatomy of Restlessness, Chatwin comments on his own experience whilst proposing a book which will deal with nomadism on a broad historical and cultural brief: "I have a compulsion to wander and a compulsion to return."[72] This compulsion is comparable with Delvaville's description of "errance": "c'est une obligation à laquelle nous succombons ... ".[73] Chatwin's comment also makes an explicit link between his own travel and the cyclical

travel of the pastoral nomad. However, the practice of the individual Western traveller is immediately contrasted with this: "True nomads have no fixed home as such; they compensate for this by following unalterable paths of migration" ("TM", p.76). Chatwin's migration and return was of a more selective nature: he often travelled in search of specific experience and cultural knowledge. There is an ambiguity, therefore, in his statement that nomadism is a subject which "appeals to irrational instincts" ("TM", p.75). Chatwin's travel, although romanticized, was not irrational, nor was it that of the pastoral nomad. The difference between the two is one of the motivations for Chatwin's prolonged attempt to rationalize the nature of the desire to travel. In this early version (the letter was written in 1969) the differences between nomad traveller and actual pastoral nomad seem indissoluble. Nevertheless, the important opposition between movement and possessions can already be seen. By 1973, Chatwin is proclaiming that: "Our mad obsession with technological progress is a response to barriers in the way of our geographical progress".[74] The human urge to control space is imagined here as being channelled towards technology as a substitute for the movement that most sedentary city-dwellers are denied. The opposition to collecting, made so soon after his departure from Sotheby's in 1966, is more impassioned than the objections to consumerism that feature in The Songlines: "And do we not all long to throw down our altars and rid ourselves of our possessions? Do we not gaze coldly at our clutter and say 'If these objects reflect my personality, then I hate my personality'".[75] This outburst indicates that the characteristic values ascribed to objects by the collector are already well understood by the writer. The link between the material possession and the sacred is clearly in place, as is the recognition that the collected objects represent an intervention in the outside world on behalf of the self. The relationship between personal identity and possessions is as forcefully made as is the romanticized drawing on nomadic impulses that Chatwin claims as his own in the "Letter to Tom Maschler". Graves identifies a possible resolution of the dynamic between art and movement in Chatwin's early admiration for nomadic art: " … l'art nomade est vital et essentiellement renouvelable".[76] Chatwin's own practice of acquiring and then disposing of works of art converges with this nomadic quality of

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'renewable' art. It may be that one of the reasons for his objection to sedentary collectors was that their collections are not 'renewable', but permanent and static. The opposition between nomad and collector is something that Nicholas Shakespeare identifies in his biography. On one hand examining the implications of the "Nomadic Alternative" and the "Letter To Tom Maschler", Shakespeare is aware of the inherent contradictions in Chatwin's position: "Bruce extolled the nomads for having left no traces. In the same breath he marvelled at the buildings he found in Jam and Balkh and Herat".[77] On the other, Shakespeare is also aware of the recurrence of this theme throughout Chatwin's life. In this section, I will demonstrate its occurrence in Chatwin's earliest prose, whether written as journalism or fiction.

Chatwin's short story "Milk" demonstrates the aspects of travel that Chatwin consistently opposes to collecting, and that fulfil many of the needs which the ownership of possessions would otherwise supply. On the ethnographic material taken from his travels in Benin (see Chapter Two), Chatwin superimposes a narrative in which identity and release from stasis are the result of travel. The story describes a young American's first trip to Africa, and depicts the travelling experience as liberating. Jeb escapes from New England, with its restrictions and advice, and engages with the sexual activity that is so often associated with movement. He sees the "sinuous black body laid over a pile of pink flesh",[78] and later succumbs to sexual attraction, which he would not have done at home. The comparison can be made with Utz, in search of sexual activity outside the confines of his collection. For Jeb who "had been three weeks on the road", the replacement of other sources of identity formation with the benefits of travel is made explicit in the following dialogue: "' ... Some people die in a convent and I shall die in the bush.' Jeb agreed it was better than a convent" ("M", p.42). Again formal religion is substituted by travel, which takes on a spiritual quality.

In these pieces, Chatwin is more sympathetic with the traveller, and portrays Jeb's experience, both of travel and the associated sexual activities, in terms of epiphany:

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"From that morning he would never forget the white light and blowing curtains, and never stop thanking for the taut breasts ... " ("M", p.45). This is a long way from the stifled sexuality of the 'perversion' of collecting. In these pieces, Chatwin is highly critical of collecting, but remains sympathetic with the collector. In another phrase from "The Morality of Things" he claims that "the art collection, then, is a desperate stratagem against failure ... " ("MT" p.172). Despite his empathy with collectors, collecting is depicted as an unhealthy extreme, whereas the opposite extreme appears physically and spiritually uplifting. Chatwin's consideration of both nomadism and collecting is confused in these early pieces. He makes little distinction between collecting and simply owning. He accepts the role played by possessions, and sympathizes with the collector. But he also confuses different sorts of travel, equating nomadism loosely with modern travel, and giving an incoherent account of the essential differences between the pastoral nomad and the traveller in modernity.

Despite his criticism, therefore, the figure of the collector is present, and sometimes sympathetically portrayed in these pieces. Chatwin is prepared to admit that: "All human beings have the emotional, if not actual, biological, need for a *base*, cave, den, tribal territory, possessions or port ... " ("TM", p.77). He writes sympathetically of Donald Evans, perhaps for the same reason as his understanding of Brady. Evans initially appears to fit the image of the collector: he inhabits a miniature world that replaces sexual activity, allowing him to negotiate on his own terms the relationship "between the individual and the finite world of time and space".[79] Evans's collection is typical in its substitution of lived experience for controlled environment:

> By fifteen he had filled three volumes of a "World Wide Stamp
> Album" with postal issues from mythical countries. ... Each, in some
> way, expressed his romantic yearning for the remote and exotic ...
> " [80]
> .

Later in life Evans returns and creates more stamps in response to his inability to cope in New York: "the scale of the city dwarfed and depressed him" ("DE", p.266). Like Brady, however, Evans travels as a means of escape: "He was also liable to bouts of wandering fever, and he even invented a capital city Vanupieds (Barefoot Vagabond) to describe his habit of roaming round the world" ("DE", p.266-7). It is the sedentary life, rather than the outside world as a whole, which persuades him to inhabit the world of imagination offered by his stamps. A parallel with Utz is possible, as Evans abandons his miniature world in favour of travel, and then retreats back into his collection.

Another sympathetic portrait from Chatwin's journalism, "George Costakis: The Story of An Art Collector in the Soviet Union", underlines this unwillingness, or inability on Chatwin's part to abandon this side of the dynamic. There is no doubt that Costakis identifies himself through his collection, and the piece demonstrates several classic attributes of the collector. Costakis "rescues" pieces,[81] and is delighted to display his collection, conforming to what Baudrillard describes as the "triumphant discourse" of self which occurs in the act of displaying a collection.[82] There is "an allusion to playing God" here,[83] as collector and collection are seen in terms of iconography: "his apartment has become an object of pilgrimage" ("GC", p.157). Chatwin's sympathy with this example of the collector is evident from his comment that: "Too often a visit to a famous art collection entails a display of sterile exhibitionism on the part of the owner, but Costakis affects all comers with his enthusiasm" ("GC", p.157).

The example of self-sacrifice that Chatwin gives of Costakis's dedication to his collection is his failure to buy a car, thereby making explicit the opposition between collecting and travel:

> The next acquisition was always a real struggle. Some years ago he saved up the money for a car, and his wife was ecstatic about the prospect of picnics in the country. A few days later a Chagall arrived, and the car returned mysteriously to the garage for repairs. He asked

her "Which do you prefer, the Chagall or the car?" To which she
replied, "I like the Chagall, but ... ". The Chagall stayed on the wall,
and the car stayed in the garage. ("GC", p.156)

Chatwin seems sympathetic to Costakis's response to the works of art. The tone is one of
understanding and amusement, rather than the criticism which is reserved for Axel
Munthe in "Among the Ruins", another journalistic piece: "Tiberius had owned twelve
houses on the island, Munthe had to have twelve. Tiberius was a collector of statues,
Munthe had to have statues too".[84] One of the problems that causes Chatwin's difficulty
is reconciling the aesthetic appreciation of objects (and the reflexive ability to mediate the
self through them) with the consequent desire to accumulate and possess such objects.
Like the fictional Utz, Costakis houses his collection (and his wife) in a small apartment,
and appears to thrive on this extension of self. In a final classic trait of the collector, he
intends to achieve the transcendence of self by having the collection maintained after his
death:

Rumours are in the air of a Soviet Museum of Modern Art. Costakis,
who is tender-hearted towards the country of his adoption, and will
not have her slandered, sees in this a vindication of his life's work.
He cannot afford to give them outright, but one day he would like to
see his pictures in that museum. ("GC", p.158)

In this move, which is typical of the collector, Costakis does not leave the collection to his
family, but prefers to achieve a final 'vindication'; an acceptance of his project, and
therefore of himself, by the authorities which control the space and values of the outside
world. The translation of his miniature world into a space that is valued by all is symbolic
of an appreciation of the self. Chatwin's 'tender-hearted' comment seems to be in
sympathy with this, and the rest of the piece criticizes Lenin for his belief in technology
rather than the aesthetic. Chatwin seems to be in approval of the new acceptance of
futurist art by the state, and is perhaps offering this as vindication of the collector. As in
the case of Utz, the opposition of collector to a communist regime tends to sharpen the

narrator's sympathies towards the collector. For this reason both Utz and Costakis are given more sympathtic portraits than are collectors in capitalist modernity, such as Munthe, or the Sotheby's dealers in the pieces entitled "Tales from the Art World".[85] Nicholas Shakespeare discusses a book that Chatwin proposed to write at the end of his life, which planned to expose the unscrupulous activities of Peter Wilson, a Sotheby's director.[86] Perhaps, given the greater freedom of movement that Chatwin associates with the Western version of modernity, sympathy for those who choose collection over movement is limited. In a communist regime, the accelerating intrusion of modernizing processes is a block to movement, and a reflexive retreat into the aesthetic as a form of self-identification is more understandable. As demonstrated in the previous section, Chatwin seemed to see donation to museums as a way round the bind of aesthetic appreciation involving ownership of possessions.

In these collections therefore, the figures of both collector and nomad can be read, negotiating their individual identities through a combination of travel and possessions. Chatwin, despite the evangelical tone of his earlier pieces on nomadism, demonstrates an understanding of both tendencies. His sympathy with the collector is surprising, given his departure from Sotheby's, and the values that it represented. From the readings presented above, it is clear that both sides of the dynamic were present in Chatwin's writing, whether presented as fiction or journalism. This section will conclude by considering the most sustained piece that Chatwin wrote in favour of the nomad: The Songlines.[87]

The Songlines is based upon Chatwin's own travelling, at a stage in his life when the nomadic side of his activity reached its most energetic. By the time he came to adding the quotations from the notebooks to the frame of narrative based on his travel, he was suffering from the onset of AIDS. The novel, in its romantic view of the nomad, conforms to the picture of "errance" quoted in the first section of this chapter; it is also in

this work that Chatwin shows most clearly the characteristics of "depaysement" and its "therapie", both for the narrator, and for a whole culture.

Chatwin's admiration for the Australian Aborigines' cultural practice is based on his examination of the relationship they construct between place, movement and self-identity. Figured as nomadic in this text (although of course they are neither nomadic in the pastoral sense in which, for example, the Quashgai are nomadic, nor in the way that Chatwin proposes in his earlier formulations of nomadic activity), this description includes an awareness of the relationship between self and community. The narrative is anecdotal, and it is not instructive to rehearse the content of those anecdotes here; it is important however, to note that movement creates a territory, described in song, which defines both individuals and their geographical and social 'place'. This thematic concern, on which both narrative and notebooks turn, is nearly identical to the one described by Laumonier in his article on 'errance'. The song establishes "la singularité du lieu",[88] and the owner of the song establishes, through travel on the route and in the places described by the song, "la relation personelle entre ce lieu et l'individu". Both the narrative and notebook sections are clearly concerned with "la sympathie entre le geographie et l'interiorité." Travel and place are central to Chatwin's project, in the same way that this chapter has demonstrated the sympathy between 'interiorite' and object or collection that can be seen at the centre of his depictions of Utz, Evans and Costakis.

The Aborigines have what Graves describes as "grandes resources spirituels". This can be seen in the tranquillity of the death of the three elders at the end of the narrative: "They knew where they were going, smiling at death in the shade of a ghost gum" (S, p.325). Chatwin equates this with the fact of travel by foot throughout their lives, comparing them with "ideal man" who "shall walk himself to a 'right death'" (S, p.324). The same phenomenon is noted admiringly by Chatwin in relation to movement when he describes Limpy's self-identification with the Native Cat: "He was smiling. His head swayed to and fro. The sound became a lovely melodious swishing; and you knew that, as far as he

was concerned, he was the Native Cat" (S, p.324). Chatwin, apart from the academic arguments that formed the basis for his first book proposal "The Nomadic Alternative" and the academic guise of some of the content of the notebook sections, is clearly romanticizing here. The relationship between individual and place is deeply-felt rather than academically described (see Chapter Two, Section Three for an account of Chatwin's combination of observed data and personal engagement in The Songlines) and this contributes to the depiction of 'nomadic' cultural practice which Chatwin is trying to establish.

This defence of nomadism is therefore constructed at several levels in the text. Initially a description of Aboriginal cultural practice, the frame narrative is supported by a range of quotations that all examine the relationship between place and self, and suggest that the ideal relationship is one which involves movement. To a certain extent, the narrator of the novel self-fulfils the prescription of movement for which the novel argues. The sub-textual suggestion from both the narrative and the notebooks is that the narrator has himself embarked upon a lifetime of travel. Apart from setting up the ethnographic authority which Chapter Two of this thesis discusses, this also serves to validate for the reader (presumed not to be Aboriginal) a life that opposes the sedentary practice that Chatwin sees as characterizing the late-twentieth century. Chatwin diagnoses the ills of modernity, whether capitalist or communist, and proposes a remedy, that of self-identification through movement.[89] I would argue that, as stated at the start of this section, Chatwin's view of nomadism as he applies it to the context of modernity, is far removed from the pastoral nomadism that he discusses in "It's a Nomad *Nomad* World" and "The Nomadic Alternative". He specifically prescribes movement as a cure for the ills of modernity: large cities, high-rise flats, restricted movement. He is proposing neither pastoral nomadism nor tourism, but a personal negotiation of the world by staying on the move. The text can be read as a working out, on practical and theoretical levels, of the implications of this for the relationship between place and self, and for identity formation (as figured in the Aborigines as well as the narrator). The picture of the

narrator, based on Chatwin's own travel, is ironic in the light of a statement from the "Letter to Tom Maschler" quoted in the first half of this section:

> There have been two main inducements to wander: ECONOMIC and NEUROTIC. For example, the International Set are neurotics. They have reached satiation point at home; so they wander - from tax-haven to tax-haven with an occasional raid on the source of their wealth, their *base*. ("TM", p.83)

Having condemned the international set as neurotic, Chatwin then explains the economic reasons for their travel. This description sounds like a modern version of the pastoral nomadism that Chatwin admires elsewhere in the letter, as well as the practice of the nomadic warriors that he amusedly pits against early settlers in excerpts from the notebooks. Having deliberately set his own position against the economic, in favour of a spiritual romanticized version of nomadism which has more in common with Laumonier's literary figuring of 'errance', Chatwin opens himself up to the 'neurotic' charge: biographical description quoted in this chapter also suggests that this was the case.

In fact his mention twice in the "Letter to Tom Maschler" of the human need for a 'base' is exactly what he describes in The Songlines. Although Chatwin would like the Aboriginal culture to coincide with the romantic view of the nomad that his own travel and the notebook sections suggest, what the narrative actually describes is a culture that has worked out a negotiation of movement, possessions and self-identity. The Aborigines envisage the roles of possessions and movement very differently from the way in which the inhabitants of Western modernity have envisaged them. Others were aware of this problem when Chatwin first produced work on nomadism, as Shakespeare relates: "It seemed ... that there was a fundamental psychological difference between wandering away and then back to a fixed base, on the one hand, and wandering from place to place, without a fixed base, on the other".[90]

Graves correctly ascribes the "peu de biens materielles"[91] as one of the features of nomadic culture that appealed to Chatwin. What also appeals is the use to which these material possessions are put. As with the account of Brady, Chatwin seems to sympathize with the role of the tjuringa in identity formation, and respects the dignity of the relationship between "la geographique et l'interiorité" in its physical manifestation at the tjuringa-house. In doing so, he is also respecting the phenomenon observed by Pearce, of material possessions which:

> ... can help to construct the relationship between "I" and "me" which create individual identity between the individual and others, and between the individual and the finite world of time and space.[92]

The negotiation of this relationship by the Aborigines is evidently a different one from that made by Utz, with the objects having a more overtly religious significance, less financial value. Nonetheless, their importance in their cultural context is as great as Utz's collection in his, and the link between self and tjuringa is made more explicit: "Of one young layabout in Alice, I heard it said, 'he hasn't seen his tjuringa. He doesn't know who he is'" (S, p.319). This, despite the important relationship between self and geographical location, suggests an equally important role played by fetishized possessions in defining the self and negotiating the relationship between self and time and space. Chatwin presents the tjuringa as having a vital role to play in the positioning of the individual self in relation to place and history: "It is the actual body of the ancestor (*pars pro toto*). It is a man's *alter ego*; his soul; his obol to Charon; his title-deed to country; his passport and his ticket 'back in'" (S, p.318). In this case, the Aborigines conform to Belk's description of owners who "regard their possessions as part of themselves".[93] A parallel can be drawn between the tjuringa and Chatwin's own notebooks. Although he does not articulate the importance of the notebooks in the same way as the relationship between the young Aborigine and his tjuringa, something similar is nonetheless taking place: "To lose a passport was the least of one's worries: to lose a

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notebook was a catastrophe" (S, p.180). A passport relates the individual directly to a place of origin, a geographical location. The relative importance of losing a notebook tends to suggest that Chatwin invested a sense of self in them that made them a fundamental part of his identity. I made the point earlier in this chapter that Utz represents a 'triumphal display' of knowledge, and its organization, on the part of Chatwin. The notebook excerpts in The Songlines can be seen in the same light. Once again, the self-contradiction of his position, in praise of the nomads 'peu de biens materielles' and yet also in praise of objects which define the self and its relationship with geographical locations seems to indicate that Chatwin never completely worked out a final position on this dynamic. The range of different negotiations of this dynamic undertaken not only by the narrator, but by the characters throughout the Chatwin oeuvre suggest that this indecision is reflected in his literary work.

The case that I have made in this chapter does not depend on Chatwin having worked out a final position. Biographical material demonstrates that his opinion changed depending on personal circumstance as much as on the theorising of the nomad discussed in this section. Instead, I have demonstrated that Chatwin draws on two contrasting contexts for his characters' and his own identity. This final contextualization of Chatwin's work, therefore, sees him drawing on a fundamental opposition, and articulating versions of it throughout his work and life. His concern with the context of late-twentieth-century Western capitalist society is manifested in his reaction against one of the extreme forms in which it is manifested: the collection. I would argue that Chatwin, at least in certain examples from his work, sees collecting as part of a reflexive practice in which the individual constructs an identity that may be provoked by, but is not dependent on, the modernized circumstances of their life. This is certainly the case with Utz, whose response to the modernity in its communist form is to forge a set of values and live them in direct response to government intervention, and limited freedom of movement. Donald Evans may be another example of the collector whose aesthetic, formed in response to the modernizing world around him, stabilizes the self. It is

perhaps only in these circumstances, of the modernity whose accelerating processes Chatwin distrusted, that collecting is, in his view, permissible. Chatwin is suspicious of collecting but, despite his antipathy, relates the ways in which objects, or collections of objects, form a vital part in the identity formation of late-twentieth century individuals to a more fundamental need in human behaviour. This allows him to portray sympathetically the individuals and cultures which, to a varying degree, rely on this sort of attachment for their identity. Chatwin's own life, however, demonstrates his enthusiasm for the opposing pole of the dynamic: the role of travel. In a range of depictions discussed in this chapter, Chatwin attempts to demonstrate the ways in which a practice he posits as a form of nomadism is the answer to the ills provoked by an exaggerated reliance on material possessions. As I have demonstrated, Chatwin is often unaware of the irony of his own pronouncements on nomadism, resulting from his own attachment to objets d'art, and his undoubtedly late-twentieth-century ability to travel across continents with the resources and funds at his disposal. It is nonetheless the case that in his work and his life, there are a few occasions upon which the dynamic is balanced and provides an adequate sense of self with the necessary base and freedom of movement. Chatwin is also unaware of the irony behind his own travel, which was made possible by modernized forms of transport (including the four-wheel drive in Australia). Despite his focus on identity formation in the twentieth century, few of Chatwin's subjects find a response that involves the role of the aesthetic and movement. The Australian Aborigines are one example. Another, as the first section of this chapter shows, is Alan Brady, about whom Chatwin wrote: "He is the only man I have ever met who solved the tricky equation between things and freedom" (S, p.183). This is of course the narrator's voice, which a critical reading should not equate with Chatwin's voice. Chatwin's textual performance organizes material in support of his nomadism thesis, and his pronouncement about Brady may be an exaggeration. Although it is problematic to rely on statements like this from Chatwin, a critical reading of his work can draw the conclusion that Chatwin's characters, apart from Brady, have difficulty in solving this 'tricky equation'.

Endnotes to Chapter Five

[1] The figure of the collector features either as subject or supporting character in "Howard Hodgkin", "Madeleine Vionnet", "George Costakis: The Story of an Art Collector in the Soviet Union", "Heavenly Horses", "Donald Evans", and as a theme in "Tales of the Art World" (What Am I Doing Here (London: Picador, 1990). It appears also in Anatomy of Restlessness (Jan Borm and Matthew Graves, eds., London: Jonathan Cape, 1996) "The Estate of Maximilian Tod", "The Morality of Things" and "Among the Ruins". It is fair to say, therefore, that it is a theme that features frequently in the Chatwin oeuvre. This chapter will demonstrate the vital relationship between collecting and identity in Chatwin's work.

[2] Brady features in the notebook sections of The Songlines (London: Picador, 1987), pp. 257-9. Subsequent references will be given parenthetically in the text preceded by the abbreviation S.

[3] There are also links between the rise of the collector and consumer as they appear in the late-twentieth century and the development of modernity. Remy Saisselin makes this clear when he discusses the changes in the purchase and ownership of art that took place in the nineteenth century. According to Saisselin, art as 'bibelot' became available to the middle classes through the opening of museums and department stores (Remy G. Saisselin, Bricobracomania: The Bourgeois and the Bibelot (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985). Although this chapter does not take modernity as its subject, it is worth noting that the conditions of modernity are those in which collecting is made possible for a wider range of people. It is also a period in which greater numbers of people became city-dwelling sedentarists. Inevitably, therefore, the thesis continues to examine Chatwin's depiction of phenomena that are linked with processes of modernity.

[4] Jean Baudrillard, "The System of Collecting", in John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, eds., The Cultures of Collecting (London: Reaktion Books, 1994), p.8. This is clearly expressing the same thing that Chatwin intended in the remark quoted in Chapter Four, endnote 74, in relation to 'things' as 'emotional anchors'. The links between Chatwin's positions on this subject and the contextualizing material quoted here will be examined in Section Two and Three of this chapter.

[5] Susan M. Pearce, On Collecting (London: Routledge, 1995), p.177.

[6] Frederick Baekeland, "Psychological Aspects of Art Collecting", Psychiatry 44 (1981), 45.

[7] Baudrillard, "The System of Collecting", p.12.

[8] Russell Belk, "Possessions and the Extended Self", Journal of Consumer Research 15 (1988), 160.

[9] Belk, "Possessions and the Extended Self", 139.

[10] Russell Belk, Collecting in a Consumer Society (London: Routledge, 1995), p.89.

[11] The analysis of collecting, as in the case of Utz and Chatwin, involves ownership at a greater level of intensity, and suggests, therefore, a deeper preoccupation with self and self-identity. Psychologically, the ownership of objects contributes to the sense of self, and this is more profoundly the case for collectors, who invest a greater amount of time, effort and meaning into their collections, and correspondingly tend to have a greater sense of identification with them. This is the import of the statement made by Belk, quoted above, about possessions being an extended part of the self. (Belk, "Possessions and the Extended Self", 160.)

[12] Baudrillard, "The System of Collecting", p.12.

[13] Pearce, On Collecting, 412. This view is echoed by Maurice Rheims, who goes so far as to say that "A collector come to see himself as a sort of Don Juan." Maurice Rheims, Art on the Market trans. David Pryce Jones [1959] (London: Weidenfield and Nicholson, 1961), p.31.

[14] Baekeland, "Psychological Aspects", 49.

[15] Werner Muensterberger, Collecting: An Unruly Passion (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p.9.

[16] Muensterberger, An Unruly Passion, pp.251-2.

[17] Belk, Collecting in a Consumer Society, p.91.

[18] Belk, "Possessions and the Extended Self", 149.

[19] Muensterberger, An Unruly Passion, p.59. Chatwin's purchases in this area were an ostentatious display of his famed aesthetic judgement, and drew on myths associated with objects. For example a campaign chair perhaps used by Napoleon, and a shawl perhaps owned by Freud.

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[20] Russell Belk, "Possessions and a Sense of Past" in Belk, ed., <u>Highways and Buyways: Naturalistic Research From the Consumer Behaviour Odyssey</u> (Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research, 1991), p.117.

[21] Pearce, <u>On Collecting</u>, p.256.

[22] Clapp gives an account of the doomed "Chatwin Collection", which Chatwin attempted to set up when very ill. Susannah Clapp, <u>With Chatwin</u> (London: Jonathan Cape, 1997), p.226. There is also a strong parallel between the description of Brady's strong-box, and Chatwin's personal possessions towards the end of his life: "By 1988, he had more or less relinquished "anything artistic", apart from a few tiny, exquisite objects stored in a cardboard box. ... The cardboard box operated as the black tin deed-box of Bruce's Mr. Brady ... " Nicholas Shakespeare, <u>Bruce Chatwin,</u> (London: Harvill Press, 1999), p.511.

[23] Baudrillard, "The System of Collecting", p.89.

[24] Belk, <u>Collecting in a Consumer Society,</u> p.70.

[25] Pearce, <u>On Collecting,</u> p.188.

[26] This is one way of understanding Brady's combination of English and foreign artefacts: when he is in London, the African objects are souvenirs of a distant life, in which he is sure of his identity. When in Africa, the souvenirs of family and childhood around which he migrates centre him in a time and place that are otherwise out of his grasp.

[27] Belk, <u>Collecting in a Consumer Society,</u> p.95.

[28] Mike Baal, "Telling Objects", in <u>The Culture of Collecting,</u> p.105.

[29] Russell Belk, Melanie Wallendorf, John Sherry, Morris Holbrook and Scott Roberts, "Collectors and Collecting", <u>Advances in Consumer Research</u> 15 (1988), 550.

[30] Belk, <u>Collecting in a Consumer Society,</u> p.94.

[31] Baekeland, "Psychological Aspects", 55.

[32] Belk, <u>Collecting in a Consumer Society,</u> p.81.

[33] Baudrillard, "The System of Collecting", p.17.

[34] Baekeland, "Psychological Aspects", 57. This can even manifest itself as a jealous desire to simply prevent anyone else enjoying the objects. I would argue that this jealousy is again related to the sexual sublimation of the collection, whose fetishization invests it with erotic value.

[35] Baekeland, "Psychological Aspects", 48.

[36] Chatwin, "The Nomadic Alternative", in Anatomy of Restlessness, p.86.

[37] It should be noted at this point that there are other figurings of the nomad and nomadism to emerge in the last few decades. There has been extensive ethnographic work done by the Carlsberg Foundation, which has funded anthropological fieldwork in several regions. In addition the figure of the nomad has been appropriated by postmodern critical theory as a means of understanding the position of the subject in relation to the state, or other organisational principles, notably in the work of Deleuze and Guattari ("Nomadology", in A Thousand Plateaus [1988] (London: The Athlone Press, 1996). Deleuze and Guattari conceive of nomadism as "the war machine" which is in opposition to the "polis". Although their figuring of the nomad makes reference to the pastoral, and to their exteriority to the state, it does so with a different agenda from Chatwin's use of the term. The most useful parallel between the two is Deleuze and Guattari's description of the space of nomadism having points which are relays on trajectory of movement. This seems to coincide with Chatwin's depiction of the songlines. However, the use of the theory in A Thousand Plateaus concentrates on the relationship between the nomad as War Machine and the State, whilst Chatwin's refers to a more personal emancipation. Whilst Deleuze and Guattari's 'nomadism' is part of a structure which they posit as a means of considering the subject inside and outside state apparatus, Chatwin's 'nomadic alternative' is more whimsical, less comprehensive, and has more in common with the literary inheritance of 'errance' quoted in this section. Deleuze and Guattari's use of the term does not, therefore, contribute to my reading of Chatwin's work. It is interesting to note, however, that in both cases the figure of the nomad is appropriated by Western cultural discourse, and is used at a remove from the immediate context of actual nomadism, in a project which critiques (depending on the commentator) the condition of "postmodernity" or "radicalized modernity". Also in both cases, the use of the term is highly idiosyncratic, and comes to signify what the author needs it to signify, rather than being a more ethnographic reading of the differences between the postmodern capitalist state and the practice of nomadic cultures.

[38] Bernard Delvaville, "Une Quete Metaphysique", Magazine Littéraire 353 (1997), 21. "Contrary to 'flanerie' or the promenade, wandering is never a pleasure. It is an obligation to which we succumb

without knowing why, thrown outside of ourselves. It leads nowhere. It is failure." All translations from Delvaville's article are my own.

[39] "Demoralised by his work, disgusted by his possessions, by the bourgeoisie whom he saw queuing in the sale-rooms ... he was naturally impressed by the simplicity and the vigour of the nomads, their few material goods and their huge spiritual resources." Matthew Graves, "Depaysement et Ressourcement dans l'Oeuvre de Bruce Chatwin". Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1992, p.32. All translations from Graves's thesis are my own.

[40] "it is travelling as therapy." Graves, "Depaysement et Ressourcement", p.13.

[41] "a derangement of all the senses." Graves, "Depaysement et Ressourcement", p.13.

[42] The idea of the "nomadic subject" has also been appropriated by feminist discourse, for example in the work of Rosa Braidotti (Nomadic Subjects (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994)) and Janet Wolff ("On the Road Again: Metaphors of Travel in Cultural Criticism", Cultural Studies 7, 2 (1993), 224-38). Both these commentators have an abstract use for the figure of the nomad, allying the self-empowerment in relation to fixed institutions and the ability to cross boundaries with a possible figuring of the female subject. Again, this figuring of the 'nomad' is of little relevance to my reading of Chatwin, which rests on the opposition between the nomad and the collector. Although Chatwin uses his construction of the nomad in ways that are at least partly metaphorical, he nonetheless bases his idea on the idea of actual movement, which more theoretical appropriations of the term do not. His work cannot usefully be compared with ethnographic work such as Victor Azarya's Nomads and the State in Africa: The Political Roots of Marginality (Avebury: Ashgate Publishing, 1996). Like other ethnographic work on nomadic cultures, Azarya is concerned with examining a clearly defined research area, and with basing a cause and effect argument on an analysis of specific groups of people in specific historical, economic and political contexts.

[43] "In effect, the impression which comes from biographical and autobiographical extracts is that of a man at the prey of a paradox. Expert and collector, Chatwin nonetheless declared himself allergic to objets d'art, and disliked museums no less." Graves, "Depaysement et Ressourcement", p.26.

[44] ""What am I doing here" - a simple question which itself permits us to propose a few themes: the singularity of the place (the "here"), the personal relationship between that place and the individual, the sympathy between the geography and the interiority, an ambiguous affinity with the "elsewhere" which is

not the "here"." Alexandre Laumonier, "L'errance, ou la Pensee du Milieu", <u>Magazine Littéraire</u> 353 (1997), 20. All translations from Laumonier's article are my own.

[45] Shakespeare, <u>Chatwin</u>, p.347.

[49] Adam Mars- Jones, "Taking the Cure", <u>Times Literary Supplement</u> (23rd November 1988), 1041.

[47] Baekeland, "Psychological Aspects", 49.

[48] Muensterberger, <u>An Unruly Passion</u>, p.9.

[49] Bruce Chatwin, <u>Utz</u> (London: Pan Books, 1989), p.21. Subsequent references will be given prenthetically in the text, preceded by the abbreviation <u>U</u>.

[50] Pearce, <u>On Collecting</u>, p.177.

[51] Belk, "Possessions and the Extended Self", 139.

[52] Pearce, <u>On Collecting</u>, p.177.

[53] There is clearly a link here between Utz's behaviour and that of the twins in <u>On the Black Hill</u>. In both novels, the characters become attached to possessions in order to maintain their identity. It is not only ownership, but also control of the space in which the possessions are displayed that is relevant. In both cases the ability of the characters to incorporate new items, relating to the changes in the outside world, is a measure of their engagement with the accelerating forces of modernity that are inevitably problematizing their identities.

[54] Muensterberger, <u>An Unruly Passion</u>, p.59.

[55] Pearce, <u>On Collecting</u>, p.188.

[56] Belk, <u>Collecting in a Consumer Society</u>, p.70.

[57] In his analysis of the difference between the consuming middle classes in their search for 'bibelots' on which to spend their new wealth, and the genuine aesthete, Saisselin states: "The true aesthete is ... isolated from the merely rich by separating the aesthetic realm from the notion of property, from the

possession of bibelots" Saisselin, <u>Bricobracomania.</u> p.160. Herein lies the difference, in Utz's eyes, between his own position and that of the consumer who wishes to acquire status from his belongings.

[58] Graves, "Depaysement et Ressourcement", p.32.

[59] Baudrillard, "The System of Objects", p.89.

[60] Baudrillard, "The System of Objects", p.89. The extensive name-dropping, coupled with the knowledge of porcelain, which Chatwin displays in the novel, is itself a form of triumphant display. This concurs with Mars-Jones's view: "If he has a weakness, it is that the insistent detail can seem in some way self-advertising, drawing attention not to the things seen, but to the quality of the eyes seeing them" (Mars-Jones, "Taking the Cure", 1041).

[61] Laumonier, "L'Errance", 70.

[62] Caren Kaplan, <u>Questions of Travel: Postmodern Discourses of Displacement</u> (Durham, U.S.: Duke University Press, 1996), p.9.

[63] Adam Mars-Jones, "Taking the Cure", 10.

[64] Baudrillard, "The System of Objects, p.17.

[65] Nicholas Murray, <u>Bruce Chatwin</u> (Bridgend, Wales: Seren Books, 1993), p.111.

[66] Clapp, <u>With Chatwin,</u> p.226.

[67] Baudrillard, "The System of Objects", p.17.

[68] Baudrillard, "The System of Objects", p.17.

[69] "[In <u>Utz</u>] The chatwinian poetic seems to lead ... towards an impasse, if it is not towards a surpassing of its terms." Matthew Graves, "Bruce Chatwin, ou l'alternative nomade", <u>Cahiers Forell</u> 4 (November 94), 28. All translations from Graves's article are my own.

[70] Mars-Jones, "Taking the Cure", 1041.

[71] Brian Johnson has written of Chatwin's relationship with his notebooks, and associates them, and the writing which they contain, with a form of collecting: "It is worth recalling that both Chatwin and Lévi-Strauss were not only discriminating collectors, they were also autobiographers. Autobiography as a creative act of self-constitution is structured, in its ethnographic mode, as a process of textual salvaging. For Chatwin and Lévi-Strauss, autobiography is literally a matter of re-collection: consolidating the self by collecting the other" (Brian Johnson, "In a Savage Hand: Allegories of writing in Chatwin and Lévi-Strauss", Henry Street 6, 2 (Fall 1997), 44-45). The argument that belongings constitute part of the self, and are conceived of as part of the body (Belk, "Possessions and the Extended Self"), could be read into this statement. The importance of the notebooks therefore derives from their physical state as possessions, the 'triumphal display' of knowledge they contain, and the 'self-constitution' of autobiographical discourse to which they contribute.

[72] Bruce Chatwin, "Letter to Tom Maschler", in Anatomy of Restlessness, p.76. All subsequent references will be given parenthetically in the text, preceded by the abbreviation "TM".

[73] Delvaville, "Une Quête Métaphysique", 71.

[74] Bruce Chatwin, "It's a Nomad, Nomad World", in Anatomy of Restlessness, p.102.

[75] Chatwin, "The Morality of Things" p.170. Subsequent references will be given parenthetically in the text, preceded by the abbreviation "MT". This observation coincides with Baekeland's, quoted in section one of this chapter: "The collector ... tends to use his collection and collecting activities to enhance his self-definition" (Baekeland, "Psychological Aspects", 8). Chatwin's suggestion that this form of self-definition be rejected is of course more explicitly worked out in the final section of Utz.

[76] Graves, "l'alternative nomade", 23.

[77] Shakespeare, Chatwin, p.230.

[78] Bruce Chatwin, "Milk", in Anatomy of Restlessness, p.39. Subsequent references will be given parenthetically in the text, preceded by the abbreviation "M".

[79] Pearce, On Collecting, p.177.

[80] Chatwin, "Donald Evans", p.265. Subsequent references will be given parenthetically inn the text, preceded by the abbreviation "DE".

[81] Chatwin, "George Costakis", p.155. All subsequent references will be given in the text, preceded by the abbreviation "GC".

[82] Baudrillard, "The System of Things", p.89.

[83] Belk, Collecting in a Consumer Society, p.70.

[84] Chatwin, "Among the Ruins", in Anatomy of Restlessness, p.159.

[85] Chatwin, What Am I Doing Here, pp.355-366.

[86] "Six months before he died ... Bruce focussed his rage against Wilson and Hewitt. He claimed to have resigned from Sotheby's because he was being forced by them to sell the Pitt-Rivers collection "fraudulently" to America.

      This was the tale he might have written, in Cary Welch's words, 'a nasty novel to undone the wretched crook of the 'ahtworld''." Shakespeare, Chatwin, p.180.

[87] It is my intention in this thesis to argue that, as well as the close readings of specific texts offered, all the contextual material could be used to inform a reading of any of Chatwin's texts. Although there is no space for such an extensive project here, it is worth noting Pfister's comment on In Patagonia: "Chatwin's book is not only an anthology ... a compilation; it *is about* collecting, collections and collectors" (Manfred Pfister, "Bruce Chatwin and the Postmodernization of the Travelogue", Literature. Interpretation. Theory 7, 3-4 (1996), 260). In Patagonia's concern with collecting aside, there is also evidence of identities that are bolstered by possessions which come to reflect qualities of self, such as the objects of Welsh provenance owned by the Welsh community in Gaiman. After the liberating movement of emigration, their subsequent stasis is characterized by attachment to possessions.

[88] Laumonier, "L'errance", 70.

[89] Iain Chambers has proposed that modern cultural practice has found its own way of marking a 'songline': "The religious aura of this nomadism has clearly waned in the more secular networks of western society. Perhaps it still continues to echo inside the miniaturised headphones of modern nomads as the barely remembered traces of a once sacred journey ... " (Iain Chambers, Migrancy. Culture. Identity (London: Routledge, 1994), p.53). The cultural practice of the audience of this 'songline' has the features of a radicalized modernity, and expresses a negotiation between the values of nomadism and the widening possibilities of identity formation available. It is perhaps not what Chatwin had in mind, but the narrator of The Songlines seems to respect the "Qantas Dreaming" shown to him by Joshua (S, p.173).

Chatwin's 'songline' would of course have made use of such technology, and this defines his nomadism as much as the figuring of the 'sacred journey'.

[90] Shakespeare, <u>Chatwin,</u> p.218.

[91] Graves, "Depaysement et Ressourcement", p.32.

[92] Pearce, <u>On Collecting,</u> p.177.

[93] Belk, "Possessions and the Extended Self", 139.

Conclusion: Chatwin, Interdisciplinarity and Further Readings

In concluding this thesis, I would like to make some final remarks about my close readings of Chatwin's work, and to consider the implications for the interdisciplinary readings, which the chapters have given. Throughout the five chapters of the thesis I have demonstrated, in a range of contexts, the importance of certain types of identity formation in Chatwin's work. The first two chapters of the thesis argue that the narrator and the characters can be analysed according to the ways in which they construct a sense of self. I have concentrated on cultural identity, as seen in a range of allegiances and oppositions, and have examined how the formation of individual and communal identity functions in Chatwin's narratives. My close readings of Chatwin's work have also shown that this concern can usefully be read as one which unites the whole oeuvre, and which clearly develops between individual texts. It is of course entirely possible to argue that other writers have established a consistent approach in their depiction of the ways in which their characters seek a sense of identity. The point here is that it is particularly interesting in the case of Chatwin, whose work has been perceived as depicting a wide-range of subject matter and locations in a variety of forms, and has been seen as writing in a variety of genres, both fictional and non-fictional. I have argued that this diversity has led to the problematic critical approach to Chatwin, which has either dealt with his texts in isolation, or which has tried to make different literary comparisons for each one. In Chapter One, I made the point that often Chatwin's work is not concerned with describing travel. The shorter pieces, which I discussed in Chapter Two, and my reading of Utz support this contention. Instead of comparing Chatwin's work with depictions of travel, therefore, I have argued for a homogenous set of themes, consistently addressed throughout his work. In consequence, my readings concentrate on a narrow set of concerns throughout the oeuvre, as opposed to introducing a wide range of different literary forms as comparative material.

One of the reasons why this is a useful departure from previous studies of Chatwin's work is that the theme is not itself suggested by Chatwin. As the Introduction suggested, a strength of Matthew Graves's work is the way in which it approaches Chatwin's work from one consistent viewpoint.[1] The theme of nomadism that occupies Graves, however, is one suggested by Chatwin, and by the ur-text of the nomadism book upon which Graves concentrates much of his attention. The same is true of the literary contextualizations that have exercised popular and academic commentators, notably the extensive discussion of genre undertaken by Andrew Palmer.[2] The examination of identity formation made by my thesis is a consequence of my identifying themes in Chatwin's work that he did not acknowledge as being vital, although I also recognise the thematic importance of themes such as nomadism and collecting, which Chatwin consciously addressed in his work.[3] I have thus demonstrated that the focus on unconscious concerns with identity formation is a means of analysing Chatwin's work.

The readings that I have given, and the theoretical material I have used, have not engaged at length with the fact and fiction debate, preferring to examine Chatwin's work along the lines of thematic concern. I contend that my thesis offers a new understanding of Chatwin's work without concentrating on the problematized area of fact and fiction. Although this debate continues to be an area of research, my thesis has concentrated on the possibilities offered by interdisciplinary study. I have given a coherent reading of Chatwin's work, and drawn comparisons between Chatwin's themes and the interventions made by theorists working on similar concerns around cultural identity. I hope that this approach will open up possibilities for further innovative readings of his work, and will suggest new ways of reading other literary texts. The interdisciplinary methodology which I have employed could be used to analyse texts that display a concern with identity formation across a similar period of late-modernity. This does not necessarily mean texts that are perceived as travel writing. After the next few pages,

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which make concluding points about the five approaches considered in this thesis, I will discuss some of these possibilities in more detail.

Initially, I identified the weaknesses and gaps in the arguments most commonly advanced in relation to texts of travel. Also in the first chapter I made it clear that contextualization in relation to genre and criticism in terms of veracity were both limited approaches to Chatwin's work. My close reading of In Patagonia, which has most often been classified as travel writing, demonstrated the departure of Chatwin's writing practice from the confines of generic convention. I wanted to concentrate on a reading of Chatwin's work that did not limit itself to considering the tropes of a single genre. My departure from criticism on the lines of genre applies not only to the novelistic style of Chatwin's work, but also avoids the obligation to consider in structural terms the commonplaces of the travel genre such as the "pilgrimage or quest" identified by Pfister.[4] I argued that texts with such diverse settings and concerns as The Songlines and On the Black Hill could not be discussed in terms of the same generic expectations. This followed the work by Palmer that exemplified this point by choosing to consider Chatwin's work in comparison with five separate literary genres. I also proposed that an examination of the veracity of Chatwin's work would be disappointed by the shifting, fictionalized depictions which he makes, and that since much of his work was openly fictional, an approach to the whole oeuvre could not rely on this mode of criticism. The concentration on the concerns that I set up in Chapter One inevitably involves the absence of certain critical approaches, and I am aware of these. Even in relation to identity formation, for example in globalization theory, there are other literary comparisons that could have been made. The convergence of concerns between Chatwin's work and Raymond Williams's Border Country novels is an example of this.[5] A reading of Chatwin's and Williams's work in relation to globalization theory, would I suggest, reveal similarities of theme and depiction, which again transcend the issue of genre. Another comparison, with Axel Munthe, would demonstrate the similarities in the two writers' depiction of the ways in which the dynamic between possessions and

movements informs the identity of characters and narrator.[6]   Further literary contextualization of Chatwin may be done, therefore, despite this chapter's suggestion that criticism based solely on the attempt to classify by genre has limitations. I would like to suggest that more illuminating comparison might be based on thematic concern and subject matter rather than on genre: hence the proposed comparisons with Williams and Munthe.

Critical practice, as well as indignant comment from inhabitants of various locations described by Chatwin, has naturally concentrated on a few aspects of his work. There has sometimes been admiration for Chatwin's enigmatic personality. There have also been accusations of 'misrepresentation' of his subjects in Chatwin's fiction.[7] Throughout my thesis, my readings have concentrated on what happens in the texts, rather than what may have happened in Wales, Australia or any other geographical location.[8] In this, the thesis follows the example set by the strongest academic work on Chatwin, notably the thesis by Matthew Graves, which is quoted in Chapter Five. The useful aspects of this reading argued for coherence in Chatwin's work, rather than for an assessment of the record which he gives of his travels. In this reading of the Chatwin oeuvre, the diversity of setting and narrative concern is outweighed by a series of comparisons. Initially, there is the suggestion that the writing practice is consistent throughout the oeuvre. Nicholas Shakespeare's biography is a source of information about this, as is Susannah Clapp's memoir.[9] Both point to Chatwin's use of material that he researched in order either to reference it during the course of a narrative, or to use directly as narrative incident. The thesis does not wish to go too far down the cul-de-sac of an intentionalist argument, but it does contribute to my argument for an ongoing coherence of theme and approach in Chatwin's work to demonstrate that he worked on a diverse range of narratives in similar ways. In particular, my use of the term "meta-textual" offers a way of analysing his practice of incorporating materials from beyond the immediate experience of travel into a range of narratives. This does not necessarily refer to textual material, although this is often the case, but can also be reference to cultural

norms, travel experience or other anecdotal material which Chatwin incorporates into other narrative locations in order to create parallels. Again my identification of this practice as consistent in Chatwin's writing practice allowed for criticism of the oeuvre as a whole, especially in my argument that Chatwin's use of the meta-textual was different from that in other depictions of travel. Initially identified by several commentators (Pfister, Borm et. al.) as a practice whose exaggerated use marked Chatwin's intervention in the travel-writing genre in <u>In Patagonia</u> as innovative, Chatwin's use of the meta-textual continues in his other work. It is not unusual in the discipline of Literary Studies to consider a writer's work as a whole. It has rarely been the case, however, that a body of work which has been perceived as being based on travel writing but which includes journalism and fiction has been considered as such. Canonical judgements have marked a difference between the novelist who also writes travel writing, and the travel writer who tries his hand at fiction. Studies of Grahame Greene or Evelyn Waugh, for example, have seen their bodies of work as a coherent whole. This has more rarely been the case with Chatwin, Paul Theroux or Jonathan Raban, who have all been considered primarily as travel writers who try their hand at other forms.

My main contention is that, structural and textual practice aside, the coherence of Chatwin's work lies in what can usefully be read as a concern with identity formation. My first chapter concentrated on the identity formation of characters in texts that have previously been separated by genre in other criticism. This is also true of the importance of the "narrative intelligence" in the text, a factor which I have considered in relation to travel narrative as well as to texts which are more clearly novelistic. Along with comment on the consistency of Chatwin's approach to constructing texts, the first chapter therefore established a thematic approach through which to engage with Chatwin's work. The first chapter serves as a form of literature review: establishing the debate around Chatwin and travel writing, considering criticism which focuses on genre, and making textual comparisons so that subsequent chapters can concentrate on non-literary contextualizations. Like the first sections of those subsequent chapters, it is selective, but

reviews a wide enough range of secondary work for me to position Chatwin, and my reading of his oeuvre, within an already established context.

My second chapter continued the concern with the textual, but focused on the role of the narrator rather than the construction of characters within the narratives. The chapter demonstrated that an understanding of Chatwin's work is increased by a comparison of his self-identification within the texts with that of the ethnographer in ethnographic texts. The chapter continued the concern of the thesis with textual comparison, but developed an argument, via Clifford, Marcus and other commentators,[10] that Chatwin's presence in his texts is an example of non-reflexive practice in the establishment of textual authority. Chatwin's privileging of first-hand experience, and the contrasting of his own perceptive appreciation of cultural difference with the banality of others' establishes textual authority in a manner which is typical of earlier ethnographic modes. In addition, the presence of this narrator has implications for the way in which other characters are depicted. In texts of a journalistic nature, as well as in full-length fictional narratives, Chatwin's 'fieldwork' strategies reinforce the relationship between reader and narrator, as well as ensuring that the identity of characters in the texts functions in the way intended by the narrator. The authority established by non-reflective ethnographic practice directs attention onto the performance of the narrator as expert, whilst concealing the strategies by which he depicts the other characters. The thesis thus demonstrated the importance of the establishment of the identity of the narrator within the text, and used this argument to move on from the fact and fiction debate noted in some contextual material in the first chapter. Following on from my argument in that chapter, that Chatwin's work is best looked at beyond the immediate context of the literary text, the second chapter made a non-literary, albeit textual comparison which emphasised the importance of the theme of identity formation. The thesis thus began the series of interdisciplinary readings which my introduction had suggested and for which the first chapter had prepared the ground.

The third and fourth chapters of the thesis have much in common with each other in terms of methodology. Drawing on sociological theory, these two chapters continued the interdisciplinary approach initiated by the consideration of reflective ethnography in Chapter Two. Apart from offering a reading of themes and concerns in Chatwin's work, they suggested new comparative materials for the close reading of literary texts that engage with the encounter between cultures in an era of radicalized modernization.[11] The unifying dynamic of identity formation addressed by my chapters not only demonstrated that these comparative materials provide an illuminating examination of Chatwin's work, but additionally demonstrated the extent to which the theme of identity formation can be read in his oeuvre.

The close readings and cross-references made in this thesis in the connected contexts of globalization and reflexive modernization do not engage at length with the huge body of work on the subject of modernity as a whole. As established in the introductory first sections of each of these chapters, the theoretical sections in each case must be selective. I argue that Chatwin's work engages with sufficient of the concerns of modernity, as it has been figured in the theoretical material, to make the concern with radicalized modernity clearly relevant. Pfister's article on postmodernization already suggests that engagement with forms of modernity, albeit in the context of their literary expressions, is a fruitful one in Chatwin's case.[12] Still with the focus of identity formation in mind, the close readings made in these chapters, apart from marking what I believe to be a new departure in criticism of Chatwin's work, also serve to demonstrate that the aspects of modernity with which Chatwin is engaged are consistent throughout his oeuvre. The theoretical work which I have made use of is relevant to the encounter with a range of cultures, and the attempt to draw links between processes of identity formation that I identify in Chatwin's work. In addition, they articulate the narrative sense of development of the aspects of modernization, across the twentieth century, that also features so frequently in Chatwin's narratives. All five of Chatwin's full-length texts are concerned with the increasing influence of inter-cultural encounter, and the way in which

this has developed throughout different periods of the last century. Mike Featherstone has discussed the narrative aspect of processes of globalization and reflexive modernization.[13] My thesis contends that there is a parallel between this sense of narrative in the development of social and cultural change, and the manifestations of these changes as addressed by Chatwin. An example of concerns which Chatwin's texts have in common with the theoretical ones can be found in the refiguring of territoriality discussed by Waters,[14] which is particularly relevant to the depictions of travel and the clash of cultures depicted by Chatwin. The clear influence of the global on the local, and the attention paid in both text and context to the effect on small ethnic identities of distant events are other examples. In the case of reflexive modernization, there is the example of the accelerated and self-undermining nature of radicalized modernity which is discussed in the theoretical material, and which I argue features in The Songlines. The circumstances of reflexive modernization are also indicated by the narrator's constant examination of cultural identity, and of its reformation on the part of characters in Utz.

Beyond the concern of the thesis with the coherence of Chatwin's oeuvre, Chapters Three and Four in particular open up new possibilities for the relationship between text and context. This thesis demonstrates the use of globalization and reflexive modernization theory in an intervention in the discipline of Literary Studies. There is of course a divergence between the terms used by these areas of theoretical debate and the language of the novel employed by Chatwin. The thesis does not argue that Chatwin was necessarily aware of scholarly, sociological or economic studies in these fields (although he certainly knew of some of it, for example by McLuhan), or that the authors of the theoretical material are commenting directly on Chatwin's work. The close readings offered by this thesis are the only point of interaction between these texts, and the readings offered are constructed in this thesis from the convergences between literary text and theoretical work. Nonetheless, the two close readings offered in the second sections of the third and fourth chapters demonstrate the extent to which the theoretical material is relevant to Chatwin's work, and allow the thesis to discuss identity formation as a theme

which he consistently addressed. It is clear that, for example, examination of the attempt by the travel writer to find vanishing communities, untouched by modernity, is a limited view of Chatwin's project. His engagement with processes of change during the twentieth century refutes the simplistic view of his as a primitivist position. The point of my discussion of Chatwin's depictions of communities and individuals is to emphasise the importance of their response to encroaching processes of modernization.

The discussion of narrator identity and performance in Chapter Two, can be taken further. I contend that Chatwin's writing can itself be seen as a process of self-identification (as traveller, as writer, but also in a performative role in relating the relationship between local and global, primitive and meta-modern) on Chatwin's part. Catalysed by the encounter with such a diverse range of cultures and locations, Chatwin's own self-proclaimed rootlessness finds expression in depicting these relationships.[15] The texts themselves can also be seen as globalizing and reflexive, as they recount (to a late-twentieth-century reflexive readership) the differences and clashes between radicalized modernity and cultures in which other forms of identity formation are prevalent. Chatwin's work arguably contributes to the processes which he is describing. This may be true of other travel writing but is particularly so, and particularly ironic, in the case of Chatwin's concentration on ascetic nomadism as an alternative cultural practice. An extension of the interdisciplinary reading of Chatwin's work that these contexts make possible might engage with a qualitative methodology, identifying the readership of these texts, and interrogating the perceptions of both narrator and non-Western modernized communities which they engender. I suggest that theories of globalization and reflexive modernization might equally provide an interesting context for the flows of meaning from writer to reader which Chatwin's 'globalization', of for example Aboriginal culture, sets up. This argument could equally be true for the consumer theory employed by the fifth chapter, which in particular lends itself to a qualitative approach. Fruitful work might be possible in relation to the identity formation suggested for the reader by ownership of and engagement with Chatwin's texts. I

suspect that a remarkably homogenous attitude might be found amongst Chatwin's readers as to what they perceive to be the value to themselves of these texts. That research, which interrogates the readership as much as the texts, is beyond the range of this thesis, which has been more concerned with the nature of the depictions made within the texts, and with giving a coherent reading of the Chatwin oeuvre. My application of these areas of theory has been concerned with establishing the sustained engagement which Chatwin makes with processes of modernization and the effects which they have on the identity of characters within the texts.

What is clearly demonstrated by the fifth chapter is that another non-literary contextualization is possible in relation to how aspects of Chatwin's work intervenes in the identity formation of characters and narrator. This chapter diverges a little from the methodology of the others, as it is prepared to draw more heavily on biographical material, as well as theoretical approaches. This is a consequence of the extent to which Chatwin's problematic relationship with collecting has been documented. It is also due to the fact that Chatwin's figuring of collectors and nomads is an idiosyncratic one, influenced by his own activities. As my fifth chapter demonstrates, the figure of the nomad in particular departs from other formulations of nomadism in recent cultural theory. The chapter is closest to Graves's approach to Chatwin in its concentration on the theme of nomadism. It differs from that study, however, in its identification and contextualization of a contrasting position: that of collecting, or object ownership. Much has been said, in both scholarly work and reviews, about Chatwin's obsession with collectors, and about Chatwin's own collecting, either of stories, or even other collectors.[16] Much has also been made, especially by Graves, of Chatwin's self-avowed concern with nomadism. This chapter contrasts those two contradictory facets and argues that both are in the service of characters' and narrator's formation of a sense of self, and of their identification of themselves against others. Given the importance of Chatwin's background to the subject matter of his work (this is especially true of journalistic work or short stories), my fifth chapter is informed by a range of work that

approaches identity formation from different perspectives. Hence there is material from the field of fine art collecting, as well as the more psychologically interpretative work on consumer theory. Chatwin's fluctuating position on the dynamic between possessions and movement makes it a particularly illuminating opposition to read in his oeuvre, and the biographical material mentioned above makes it possible to suggest a development in his life which is paralleled by a development in his work. Inevitably Chatwin's background and life not only made these contrasting activities obvious matter for his writing, they also provided him with the specific subjects and knowledge to inform the detail of narrative. The chapter therefore combines reference to Chatwin's personal circumstances with another interdisciplinary study in the close reading of Utz. Once again the conclusion to be drawn is that the dynamic of movement and possessions was not only subject matter, but related directly to questions of identity formation. The characters discussed in the fifth chapter, in the light of the theoretical material, use collecting, movement, or a combination of both, in order to provide a sense of self. This final chapter completes a cross-referenced reading of all Chatwin's major work as well as several of his shorter pieces and notebook entries.

Processes of identity formation are a vital part of Chatwin's work, and can be proposed as a common theme upon which to base readings of his work. My methodology argues for an understanding of Chatwin's work as a thematically consistent whole, not as a disparate, generically unrelated group of texts. In addition, I have argued that interdisciplinary readings of Chatwin's work are possible in relation to certain areas of non-literary theory, which deal with some of the same processes that Chatwin depicted. This approach has implications for literary studies, and specifically for the study of texts which feature travel and the confrontation between agents of radicalized modernity and other cultural identities. It argues that generic cross-over and innovation in a writer's oeuvre should not mean that critical practice has to abandon the attempt to comment on that oeuvre as a whole. My thesis has demonstrated that a possible methodology for a reading which does not wish to focus on the question of genre, is to make use of the

interdisciplinary bodies of work that I have made use of. It is upon this interdisciplinary approach and its further implications that I would like, finally, to comment.

The reading of Chatwin's work through recent theorizing about the nature of accelerating modernization is one which I believe helps to illuminate key themes of Chatwin's work. These theories are certainly related to the processes of identity formation upon which this thesis focuses. An interesting turn, however, which has been outside the scope of this thesis, would be to offer readings of the processes of modernity offered by, for example, the texts of globalization theory which provided material for the first sections Chapter Three. In the thesis as it stands, the focus on Chatwin naturally limits a close reading of these texts to selective exegesis. It would be a worthwhile project, however, to learn the lessons of reflective ethnography, and of the close readings this thesis has proposed, and to essay critical reading of texts of globalization theory. A move away from the ontological debate which questions the veracity and accuracy of this theorizing, would be to offer readings of these texts, in comparison with other, perhaps literary, texts depicting the same processes. The comparison would be made on the grounds that the processes depicted by these texts are textual constructs tending towards a deliberately ordered representation of processes and events. Textual strategies are at work in these representations, as they establish the authority of the writer, and describe the effects on individual and community identity of the processes which globalize or radicalize modernity. The selection of these processes and events, and the concentration upon the inter-linked aspects of their implications is not a less pragmatic one than my own selective practice. My reading of Chatwin's work in this context is, I believe, an innovative step for literary studies. Another step might be an analysis of the way in which modernity theory privileges descriptions of certain processes, such as the spread of communications networks, in order to draw their conclusions. I would like to argue for a reading of the bodies of theory that I have used in this thesis, in relation to other literary or filmic texts. Apart from my consideration of Chatwin's work as an oeuvre unified by a coherent set of themes, I would hope that the contribution that this thesis has to make to a wider field of

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cultural studies is to insist on dialogue between different sorts of texts. In this thesis I have also demonstrated that it is the shared concerns of the texts that make possible the interdisciplinary readings which I have undertaken, rather than their belonging to the same discipline or genre. My suggestion that the relationship which I have established between theoretical work and literary texts may be extended, but also be inverted, must be explored elsewhere than in this thesis. What I have been able to do in this thesis is to identify an ongoing theme in Chatwin's work, and to use a range of interdisciplinary theoretical materials in order to give a reading of it. Identity often becomes problematized in the encounter between radicalized modernity and other cultural formations: the settings and subject matter of Chatwin's narratives foreground this encounter. My readings have thus demonstrated that processes of identity formation are important to his characterization and as a means by which he develops narrative. I have been able to reveal strategies behind the performance of the narrator as well as descriptions of individual identity formation which are characteristic of Chatwin's work. Finally, I have shown that it is possible to read Chatwin's work as a thematically unified whole, and this I believe, is a worthwhile contribution to the study of his work.

Endnotes to Conclusion

[1] Matthew Graves, "Depaysement et Ressourcement dans l'Oeuvre de Bruce Chatwin". (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1992).

[2] Andrew Palmer, "Bruce Chatwin: A Critical Study". (D.Phil. Thesis: University of Sussex, 1991).

[3] The concern with the literary, for example, is presaged by Chatwin's comment that he is a "literary traveller". Bruce Chatwin and Paul Theroux, Patagonia Revisited, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1992), p.7. The study of the role that other texts play in Chatwin's work, or of the way in which Chatwin's work draws on different literary genres is therefore, at least in part, a response to Chatwin's own perception of his work.

[4] Manfred Pfister, "Bruce Chatwin and the Postmodernization of the Travelogue", Literature, Interpretation, Theory 7, 3-4 (1996), 253-267.

[5] Both authors are concerned with the impact of change on small local communities and the local response to these processes of change, often associated with modernization. By coincidence, the setting of Williams's Border Country novels is similar to that of Chatwin's On the Black Hill. See Raymond Williams, Border Country (London: Penguin, 1964); Second Generation (London: Hogarth Press, 1988) and The Fight for Manod (London: Hogarth Press, 1988).

[6] Axel Munthe, The Story of San Michele (London: John Murray, 1939).

[7] An Independent article from 1992 is an example of this. Claiming to have identified one of Chatwin's characters as being based on a friend of hers, the writer pleads that this is, in a fascinating phrase, a "case of genuine misrepresentation". This suggests that some claims to have been misrepresented are false, but that the author's firsthand knowledge of the subject allows her to pass comment on a fictionalized depiction. The article also articulates the common viewpoint that, despite the novelistic form, and despite the processes of fiction clearly at work, all the characters and events should be depicted accurately and with no invention or deviation. This mode of criticism would clearly make most of Shakespeare's plays, for example, unacceptable as mendacious and "genuinely misrepresenting". Rebecca Hossack, "Rebecca Hossack on Bruce Chatwin's The Songlines", The Independent 4th January 1992, 26. Hossack states that "Chatwin is writing about the Pupunya-Tual cooperative ... ". In fact The Songlines states that the artist is a member of the Pintupi tribe, and one of the most important artists in Cullen. There is

no such place, and the tribe does not exist: they are fictional. There is a division between what readers expect of texts that appear to be travel writing: some readers express dismay at the idea that fiction may be used in the construction of narrative and depictions of character and place; others take pleasure in the literary skills of a writer who can construct a fictional narrative around themes of travel or depiction of place.

[8] Morphy's article, mentioned in Chapter Two, is an example of criticism which accepts that Chatwin's depiction of Aboriginal culture must necessarily be selective and serve the purposes of the novel. Morphy's robust argument is that if any ethnographer thinks that Chatwin has got it wrong, they should go and do better themselves (H Morphy, "Behind the Songlines", Anthropology Today 4, 5 19-20). I am not absolving any writers of responsibility for their work, but I am certainly arguing that critics must accept that to criticize a fictional narrative on the grounds of realism and veracity is begging the question that the writer is proposing a real and true account. This is certainly not the case with Chatwin.

[9] Nicholas Shakespeare, Bruce Chatwin (London: Harvill Press, 1999), and Susannah Clapp, With Chatwin (London; Jonathan Cape, 1997).

[10] I focused more on reflective ethnography and its discussion of the practice of writing than on specific ethnographic studies. Much of the argument about reflective ethnography comes from George Marcus and Dick Cushman, "Ethnographies as Texts" (Annual Review of Anthropology, 2, (1982), 25-69; and James Clifford and George Marcus, eds., Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography (London: University of California Press, 1986).

[11] Anthony Giddens, The Consequences of Modernity (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), p.151.

[12] Pfister, "Postmodernization", 253-267.

[13] Mike Featherstone, Undoing Culture (London: Sage, 1995).

[14] Malcolm Waters, Globalization (London: Routledge, 1995), p.3

[15] Tim Youngs gives an account of Chatwin's self-identification in his essay "Punctuating Travel: Paul Theroux and Bruce Chatwin", Literature and History, 6:2 (Autumn 1997) 73-88. Youngs is sceptical about the more poetic aspects of Chatwin's self-identification, but notes nonetheless the immediate contrast which Chatwin sets up between destructive modernity (The Cold War, etc.) and isolated communities and places which are not defined in the same terms (Patagonia, the Australian Outback).

[16] Clapp, "Bruce Chatwin, who collected collectors", <u>With Chatwin,</u> p.228.

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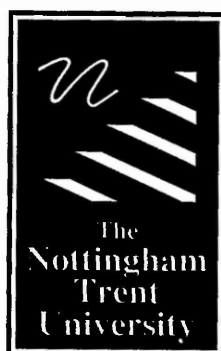Wright, Ronald H.   Time Among the Maya. London: Abacus, 1997.

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