

Geographies of Nation and Region in Modern European and American Fiction

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**Abstract:** In his article "Geographies of Nation and Region in Modern European and American Fiction" Thomas O. Beebee proposes that beyond using character, plot, and style, modern fiction also has entertained its readers with mental maps of heterotopias. A mental map is an imaginative representation of place derived from experience or story. Following Michel Foucault, heterotopia is defined as an "other space" both familiar as and different from the real. The "imagined communities" (Anderson) of nation and region are themselves heterotopias that receive confirmation and/or contestation through the discursive territoriality of literary prose. The mental maps of literature participate in the cycle of cultural production, in which readings of texts (in the broadest sense of "text") combine with lived experience and social relations to produce new texts that conform to public genres such as novels, travel narratives, and so forth. For a study-example, the writings of José Maria Arguedas (1911-1967) are analyzed as mental maps that construct a heterotopian vision of the Peruvian nation.

**Thomas O. BEEBEE**

### **Geographies of Nation and Region in Modern European and American Fiction**

Narratologist Mieke Bal outlines the elements of a "descriptology" and posits that description rather than narration lies at the heart of the novel. Describing landscape and topography, which I condense into geography in the title of my paper, seems to be a major project of fictions by a number of authors, from Nikolai Gogol's *Dikanka* and Juan Benet's *región* in the Old World, to Mary Austin's *Land of Little Rain* and *Country of Lost Borders*, and William Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County in the New. How to make sense of fiction as geography/cartography? Such an undertaking raises the following methodological considerations: 1) A number of literary narratives of the last two hundred years, written in a number of languages and on at least three continents, have as a goal the drawing of "mental maps" for their readers. I have narrowed my concerns to mental maps of heterotopias, which I define as fictional places that invoke readers' lived experiences of space and place; 2) As the most powerful and contested of meanings attributed to place in the modern era, and one that links space and topography with social events and relations, nation is a crucial concept for analyzing the operation of heterotopias; 3) As my main tool for analyzing mental maps I use Hayden White's mimesis-diegesis-diataxis triad. In particular, diataxis represents the rhetorical strategy for using spatial elements to create narrative, and vice versa; 4) Maps of any type are cultural productions; 5) The cultural production of mental maps involves a cyclical interchange between private perceptions and public forms; and 6) Comparative analysis across a chronological and cultural range, can help us better understand the process of mental mapping in literature.

"Queequeg was a native of Kokovoko, an island far away to the West and South. It is not down in any map; true places never are" (Melville 852). Ishmael's dictum in *Moby Dick* reminds us that places' most substantial truths remain invisible to mapping. Conversely, Huck Finn's exclamation, "We're right over Illinois yet. ... Illinois is green, Indiana is pink. ... It ain't no lie; I've seen it on the map, and it's pink" (23), shows the power of imagination -- in the literal sense of mental imaging -- to construct what most would agree is an overly simplistic sense of "imagined community" in the US, where one lives either in a pink state or a green state. For Twain's Huck Finn, the truth of place is a function of mapping, whereas for Melville's Ishmael it is what inevitably escapes mapping. Melville invokes utopia, the no-place, while Huck only perceives of place as a collection of physical *accidentiae* that impinge on the senses. That both reflections arise in the context of eccentric journeys -- Tom and Huck are taking a balloon trip -- and out of confrontations with an Other cannot be mere coincidence.

I apply the notion of "heterotopia" from Michel Foucault's "Des espaces autres" ("Of Other Spaces"). After establishing the historicity and discrete functionality of different social spaces, Foucault posits two complementary categories of sites that "have the curious property of being in relation with all the other sites, but in such a way as to suspect, neutralize, or invert the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect" ("Of Other Spaces" 24). These two sites are: the utopias, which exist exactly no place; and the heterotopias, that is, the "counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which ... all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted" (24). Under utopias I understand imaginary places, while under heterotopias I understand what I call "true imaginary places." There is however a degree of redundancy to the term "true imaginary place," because some geographers already define "place" as "a segment of space which an individual or group imbues with special meaning, value, and intention" (Parmenter 4). In other words, place is a segment of space made true by being endowed with imaginary qualities -- again, using "imaginary" in the sense of imaging something rather than directly perceiving it. We can only imagine, not perceive, meanings, values, and intentions. Foucault notes that a mirror epitomizes the concept of heterotopia, since it opens a space both absolutely unreal and at the same time constitutive of reality as placedness. A hall of mirrors is both illusion, in that the mirrors artificially expand the physically available space, and also reality, inasmuch as the mirrors inevitably

help constitute that space as it is lived, navigated, and perceived. We may resume the mirror's combination of fiction and reality by saying that the mirror exemplifies the mapping of space, especially because here the mapping process is taken to the extreme of fidelity: the mirror maps point by point, but nonetheless distorts. Heterotopias are thus "virtual" spaces that remain recognizable and meaningful to those who experience them. They are true imaginary places. Every fiction engenders cognitive disorder or, as Bal puts it, the "unmaking" of the readers' world, as these latter compare the "verbal map" of the text with their own mental maps. Just as dissonance in search of resolution provides the interest of a melody in music, so too the cognitive dissonance of heterotopia focusses readers' attention on nation or region, as they weigh the similarities and differences of their own spaces and communities against fictionalized ones.

In the modern period, perhaps the most powerful and contested special meaning, value, and intention associated with space has been nation. In the "Keywords" section of her book on exile literature, Sophia A. McClennen provides a definition for the more specific and historically bounded term, "nation-state": "The nation-state refers to the physical borders of a country as well as to those formal institutions responsible for its existence" (McClennen 26). Matthew Sparke alerts us to the significance of the hyphen linking nations with states: "As a text-spanning symbol of space-spanning phenomena, the hyphen in nation-state came to represent two mutually reinforcing geographical processes. On the one side were the diverse state practices such as border policing, migration control, and planning that regulated territorial belonging. On the other side were the modern space-producing social and cultural dynamics that, in generating taken-for-granted national landscapes, national monuments, national maps, and so on, gave state regulation its space and place of legitimacy" (Sparke xiii). Territory and boundaries, in this view, are not ontological givens, but rather cultural productions needed by the state in order to become a nation, or vice versa. Narrative, too, produces space in order to come into being. The coming-into-being of literary fiction intersects with national projects, and in so doing, reveals something about those projects. Benedict Anderson's approach, which notes that nations are formed when people partake of the same set of symbolic landmarks, be these physical or literary, counters empirical descriptions of national identity as "collections" of customs or laws -- or, as in the "anthropogeography" of Friedrich Ratzel, as the product of geographical features that mix and separate peoples. To appropriate the title of one of the seminal essays of modern political geography, the state is an important (although not the only) *Landschaftsgestalter*, or creator of landscape (see Hassinger).

Perhaps the simplest mental map is the place name, the mental image conjured by the utterance of sounds like "Ukraine," "Brazil," "Kokovoko," or -- Juan Benet's sly coinage -- *región*. The sharing of names such as these, and of the assumption of mutual understandings about what is meant by them, provides a ready example of Anderson's "imagined community." Yet the diversity of processes needed for the construction of such a sign, when brought to the surface, make a straightforward and unambiguous reading of it impossible. Homi Bhabha states the difference thus: "The recurrent metaphor of landscape as the inscape of national identity emphasizes the quality of light, the question of social visibility, the power of the eye to naturalize the rhetoric of national affiliation and its forms of collective expression. There is, however, always the distracting presence of another temporality that disturbs the contemporaneity of the national present" ("DissemiNation" 295). Bhabha notes the uneasy coexistence of naturalized with narrativized landscapes. Many place names would lose their evocative and what Bhabha calls their "pedagogical" qualities if the etymological entries describing their histories were to gain the upper hand in their inhabitants' minds. Thus, the narrativization of landscape can easily disrupt the pedagogical dimension of national discourse.

The verbal map is one form of what Peter Gould and Rodney White have called the "mental map." In their book of this title, Gould and White take verbal or conceptual data and represent it graphically in (for the most part contour) maps. These maps bear a resemblance to humorous maps such as the famous "New Yorker's Map of the United States," in which New York takes up 80% of the space, Long

Island is the same size as Canada, and Florida is just to the south, with a small, uninteresting wilderness in between. That is, the map's distortions (and, as Melville and Twain suggest, all maps are distorted) are affective: places that are loved by or known to the New Yorker appear larger and closer than if they had been outlined by a neutral party or method. Gould and White asked people in Pennsylvania to rank places in the United States in terms of desirability. The rankings were then mathematically converted into isobars. Rather than using size to indicate the affective impact of a region, as in the New Yorker's map, Gould and White contrast high with low. We see high areas, in the eighties and nineties out of a possible 100, in and around Pennsylvania itself, in California, in Florida, and in Colorado -- the celebrated "Rocky Mountain High." We also observe a "Southern trough," showing that states such as Mississippi -- despite or because of Faulkner's literary efforts -- and Alabama have little appeal for Pennsylvanians. Gould and White also interviewed people in Alabama, and the mental map derived from those interviews shows a certain symmetry to that of the Pennsylvanians. California, Florida, and Colorado continue to receive high ratings, and of course Alabama has substituted Pennsylvania as a very desirable place to live. The two maps show steep declines starting at the Southern and Western borders of the states where the interviewees live, respectively. Pennsylvanians consider their own portion of the Appalachians to be a desirable place to live, but not the part pertaining to their neighbors in West Virginia. Alabamans vastly prefer their own portion of the Deep South to that occupied by Louisiana and Mississippi.

We might say that these contour lines represent the kinds of stories Americans tell each other about the various regions of their country, mixed perhaps with their actual experience of these regions. We see in Gould and White's presentation only the map, but not the stories, images, and other cultural information that people have absorbed in order to construct their mental maps—the conveying of which is one of the jobs of literature and other narrative media. A mutual conditioning occurs between the narratives we construct about certain places and regions, and the overall pleasure or displeasure we experience in imagining them. Images, such as "concrete jungle," provoke stories, such as the ones shown on *New York Law*, which then recondense into images and maps ("Don't go there!"), and so on, in a cyclical process that I describe in more detail below.

An example from literature would be the mental maps to be read out of the fiction of the Peruvian author, José Maria Arguedas (1911-1967). A trained ethnographer and bilingual in Quechua and Spanish, Arguedas wrote fictions that are inevitably to be construed towards other genres — now towards autobiography, now towards ethnography, now towards mythography — but always, I would argue, towards geography. My simple diagram of the mental map that emerges from reading Arguedas's work is in Figure 1:

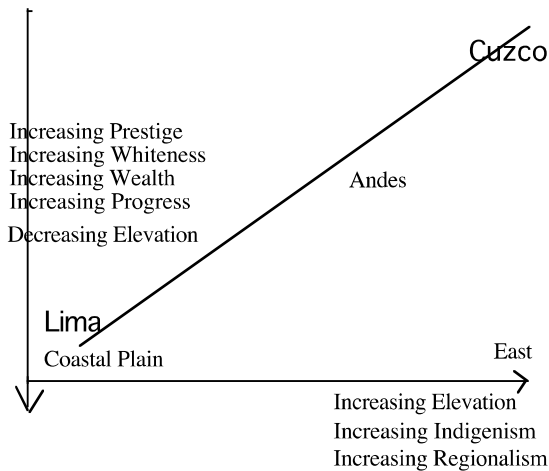


Figure 1: The Peruvian Mental Map in José Maria Arguedas's Work

The graphic shows that the coastal plain of Western Peru is dominated by the Spanish and their "new" capital, Lima, while the Andes mountains form the territory of the Indians and the ancient Inca capital of Cuzco. Arguedas's Law of Altitude of Peru is that decreasing elevation brings increasing prestige, progress, and economic independence. Increasing elevation "Indianizes," but it also brings a certain degree of cultural independence. This binary scheme appears with great clarity in the early work of Arguedas, while the later fiction, such as the posthumous *El zorro de arriba y el zorro de abajo* (Fox Above and the Fox Below), shows complications arising through the deterritorializing processes of nationalism, migration, international capitalism, and globalization (this despite the fact -- and the dialectic is typical of Arguedas -- that the title of the novel continues to express the binarism in the clearest fashion imaginable). In terms of the development of Arguedas's fiction, from the early stories of *Agua* to this last novel, we could speak of a gradual recognition of the Indianness of the coast and of a descent into its environs. Inasmuch as his fiction works towards a sublimation of the binarisms of the mental map sketched above, crossing Peru's "ríos profundos" ("deep rivers") to construct a nation of "todas las sangres" ("all the races"; the phrases are titles of Arguedas novels listed in the works cited), we might speak of Arguedas as a "Peruvian" nationalist. That is, Arguedas's writing attempted to redefine the territory of Peru outside the vision of its dominant hierarchies, incorporating Indian visions of reality the way his narratives incorporate Quechua into Spanish, resulting in agrammaticalities, new vocabulary, and mispronunciations such as the one reflected in the non-official spelling of "Peru."

Arguedas communicates these oppositions iconically, through geographical symbols such as rivers, roads, oceans, and, in the short story "Orovilca," a lake. The narrator of this last-named story, of Andean origins but attending school in Ica, on the Nazca plain, explains his predicament: "I was a first-year student who had recently arrived from the Andes, and I tried to be inconspicuous, because in those days, in Ica the same as in all coastal cities, indianized mountain people were looked down upon, not to mention those coming from small towns" (unless indicated otherwise, all translations are mine) ("Yo era alumno del primer año, un recién llegado de los Andes, y trataba de no llamar la atención hacia mí; porque entonces, en Ica, como en todas las ciudades de la costa, se menospreciaba a la gente de la sierra aindiada y mucho más a los que venían desde pequeños pueblos" [76]). Here we see a complete identification between geographical location and social position. The previous paragraphs have identified the narrator with the "chaucato" bird, who is "campesino" (75) -- literally, "of the countryside," but also a word for "peasant." The narrator is not Indian, but "aindiada" (indianized), because he has only recently arrived from the highlands, where all social classes undergo influence from native cultures -- a process symbolized by the Indian bullfight or *yawar fiesta* in the novel of that name. With time, the patina of Andean culture might be worn away, both through contact with the Europeanized world of the coast, and through the maturation process that kills every young person's magical view of the world. Rivers symbolize the isolated nature of Andean life, which allows each community to operate under its own customs and laws. On the Europeanized coast, the water disappears from the surface and goes underground: "In the bowels of the earth, in the pockets where perhaps only the roots of very old ficu trees reach, there is crystalline and fertile water. ... The voice of the chaucato bird is the only sign that below the sun we have this deep current" ("En el fondo de la tierra, en los núcleos adonde quizá sólo llega la raíz de los ficus muy viejos, hay agua cristalina y fecunda. ... La voz del chaucato es el único indicio que bajo el sol tenemos de esa honda corriente" [77]). Only the mysterious lagoons, among them Orovilca, that the narrator visits with his friend Salcedo, provide a non-continuous, magical line of communication with the highlands: "[The lake] appears isolated, as one of the earth's mysteries, because the Peruvian coast is a southern desert, in which the valleys are just thin threads linking the ocean with the Andes. And the soil of these oases produces more than any other in the Americas. It is dust that the water from the Andes has renewed every summer, for thousands of years" ("Aparece [la laguna] singularmente, como un misterio de la tierra; porque la costa peruana es un astral desierto donde los valles son apenas



delgados hilos que comunican el mar con los Andes. Y la tierra de estos oasis produce más que ninguna otra de América. Es polvo que el agua de los Andes ha renovado durante milenios, cada verano" [82-83]). The language is almost that of a geography textbook, but infused with poetic interjections and a sense of mystery that derive partly from the discontinuity of the landscape. The Andes are at once distant and unapproachable, but also constantly present through the nutrients they provide the soil when the summer run-off swells the intermittent rivers of the coastal desert, as Salcedo describes it: "The water comes to Nazca in January; it comes slowly and the riverbed swells slowly, rises, until it forms waterspouts that drag along roots dislodged from the bottom, and rocks that spin and crash in the torrent" ("Llega el agua en enero a Nazca, viene despacio y el cauce del río se hincha lentamente, se va levantando, hasta formar trombas que arrastran raíces arrancadas de lo profundo, y piedras que giran y chocan dentro de la corriente" [86]). The Quechua word for this seasonal flooding is "lloqlla," and it is an image Arguedas returns to in *El zorro* to represent the migration of highlanders to the coast. Significantly, the narrator then asks Salcedo whether he has visited the Andes, and he responds in the affirmative -- "I got as high as 4200 meters" ("a 4200 metros" [86]). Like the movement of tides, or the hydrological cycle itself, the downward flow of water is balanced by the journey upward of a Nazqueño into the mountains. The comparison is of apples and oranges, unless one conceives -- as an Indian would -- of water as a living, intentional being, the equivalent of a person. Such, in brief, are the outlines of Arguedas's mental maps.

Hayden White calls the mechanism for moving between narrative and image, for the process of transforming description into plot such as we have seen in the example above, diataxis (literally, "movement through"). White argues that "discourse must be analyzed on three levels: that of the description (*mimesis*) of the 'data' found in the field of inquiry being investigated or marked out for analysis; that of the argument or narrative (*diegesis*) running alongside of or interspersed with the descriptive materials; and that on which the combination of these previous two levels is effected (*diataxis*). The rules which crystallize on this last, or diatactical, level of discourse determine possible objects of discourse, the ways in which description and argument are to be combined, the phases through which the discourse must pass in the process of earning its right of closure, and the modality of the metalogic used to link up the conclusion of the discourse with its inaugurating gestures" (4-5). We see here a triadic relationship between terms, so that the meaning of each depends upon its relationship with the others. Or, as in Figure 2 below, the triad can be represented as interlocking gears. Though White's language implies that the movement is always in one direction, in fact the shifting between the three levels is continual and cyclical. Furthermore, while diegesis and mimesis are observable, diataxis becomes the "third term" between them that must be inferred by the reader. Diataxis is thus the "geographical unconscious" of heterotopian fiction.

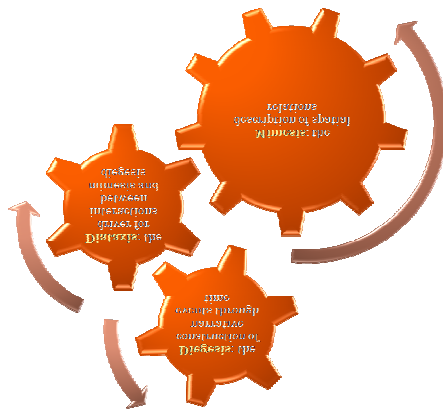


Figure 2: The Diegesis-Mimesis-Diataxis Triad

Simon Schama's book, *Landscape and Memory*, addresses exactly White's dialectic, between the use of stories (diegesis) to define landscape and the ability of landscape (mimesis) to provide continuity to cultural myths and traditions. Schama writes, "our entire landscape tradition is the product of shared culture ... a tradition built from a rich deposit of myths, memories, and obsessions" (14). Schama's approach to cultural memory is to treat landscape archetypes as schemata into which one may place various and conflicting histories. Hence, Schama's landscapes are broadly conceived: forests; rivers; and mountains. To give one example, he takes as the subject of the first part of his book several European forests: Bialowieza in Poland; the Teutoburger in Germany; and Robin Hood's "Sherwood" forest in England. Schama notes in each case the intersecting histories of the forest as physical habitat and as repository of cultural memory. These two histories never overlap completely, and at times they directly contradict each other, as in the Tudor period when "the Crown presented itself as the custodian of the old, free, greenwood [while] it was busy realizing its economic assets" (153). Schama is the Northrop Frye of landscape studies; his book amounts to an "Anatomy of Landscape." As with Frye, the trees are obscured somewhat by the forest of archetypes, but archetypal identification provides a consistent technology of diataxis.

From time immemorial, as Kevin Lynch tells us, and as we may conclude from some of the preceding argument, place and landscape have performed a social function: "The named environment, familiar to all, furnishes material for common memories and symbols which bind the group together and allow them to communicate with one another. The landscape serves as a vast mnemonic system for the retention of group history and ideals" (Lynch 126). Places engender stories that explain these places and make us more aware of them, and so on. As Keith Basso puts it, a "variety of experience, sense of place also represents a culling of experience. It is what has accrued -- and never stops accruing -- from lives spent sensing places" (83). Basso gives an example from the Arizona landscape. When a young Apache cowboy recovering from a bout of debauchery asks to be taken back on by the elder cowboys, they respond with: "So! You've returned from Trail Goes Down Between Two Hills." This reference to a true place, whose topography resembles that of a "notch," is really an allusion to a group of stories associated with that place, concerning Old Man Owl and two beautiful women who tormented him. Each story uses the features of the landscape; for example, the women had set themselves up on the two hills and had taken turns tempting Old Man Owl. He went back and forth between them until he was exhausted. The elders situate their younger colleague morally and ethically by putting him in his place, and they do the latter by "mapping the invisible landscape" of telluric folklore, to use the evocative title of Kent C. Ryden's study. In this anecdote, story helps define place, but place itself assumes a didactic function by helping to tell a story.

To clarify further the process of diataxis by which information is transformed from perception of place into narrative, from uniquely private into communally public, one could consult Richard Johnson's graphic of the cycle that outlines the pathway by which individual, private, lived experience undergoes a production process and becomes public (Johnson 584). There are four positions on the cycle of cultural production, corresponding to: 1) lived experience; 2) production; 3) texts; and 4) readings. Analysis can begin with any number, and proceed from lower to greater like a clock hand circling round. On the left-hand side of the circle is "production," that is, the conversion of private perceptions and personal stories into public forms. This conversion can be considered an aspect of diataxis. The cultural studies approach involves an attempt to grasp and understand as many points of the circuit as possible (as opposed, for example, to a purely formal analysis that would narrow its focus to texts only, at the top of the circle, or to a psychoanalytic approach that would bring to light culture as lived, private lives, the particular, and other elements from the bottom, and so forth). The cycle implies the important role that social relations and "conditions" have on the production of maps of any kind. As two geographers have noted, "the detail and complexity of reality is selected, simplified, and then emphasized, so as to portray only what the map maker believes to be the essence of the map referent space, as defined by the purpose of the map" (Muehrcke 333). For example, traditional chorographic



techniques are not geared toward the representation of situations of sub-state nationalism, borderlands, transnationalism, or diaspora that are competing with more straightforward ideas of nation-state in today's world. Again, that is the job of writing, and in particular of fiction.

Among the many types of maps, mental and otherwise, literary ones distinguish themselves through the rich detail they provide on private perception, the fluidity of movement in them from mimesis to diegesis and vice versa, and their foregrounding of diataxis. The "protagonists in motion" of these literary works, through their traversal of space, topography, and social networks, confront and (re)create their mental maps of nation and region. Literary texts thus function as a source of "discursive territoriality" (Häkli), contributing to the (de)construction of national, local, or regional identity. Literary texts form an exception to the rationalizing processes of modern cartography. Hence, in his thorough sifting of geographers' approaches to the novel, Marc Brosseau notes the lack of methods appropriate to the literary text. By default, geographers wish "to ask of fiction that it become an instrument for [geographers'] basic data collection" (31). Brosseau in his study attempts to construct a dialogue between geographic and novelistic discourse, but stops short of allowing literature a role in the unconcealment of the hyphen in "geo-graphy," that is, a role in the interrogation of what might constitute the boundaries of the writing of the earth, this despite the fact that, as Nigel Thrift indicates, along with the visual arts, literature (in the broad sense) has been among the most complex and seductive forms of geographical simulation throughout Western history: "places have meanings and meanings are always produced, never simply expressed, as part of a wider process of cultural creation. Literature is one way in which such meanings are produced within a culture and ascribed to place, just as place is often appropriated to produce meanings in literature" (21). Anderson, for example, argues that the novel, which he associates with the picaresque genre -- "the movement of a solitary [picaresque] hero through a sociological landscape" -- is powered by this "national imagination," but clearly this is a dialectical relationship (30). Ottmar Ette's perceptive and imaginatively eclectic study, *Literature in Motion*, "interrogates literature regarding the evolution of spatial concepts, which ... were meaningful for the last quarter of the second millennium and that emerge above an aesthetic and 'spatiality' of the modern" (9). Ette's is the first full-length comparison of the effects of motion and space -- as interrelated rather than independent phenomena, and as geopolitical rather than physiological processes -- on the development of modern literature. One of the most important historical formations deposited by these processes, as Ette points out, is the two-edged development of "American thought": thought in the Americas, as a hybridization of European intellectual traditions with telluric concerns; and thought of the Americas by Europeans whose worldview changed drastically after 1492. As its title indicates, Ette's book focuses on travel literature, and especially on travel beyond national boundaries. Although movement is a necessary component of "inspecting the boundaries" of one's mental map of local, national, and regional spaces, transgression of those boundaries is not. The title of Juan Benet's *Return to Region* sums up the repetition compulsion and eternal recurrence that characterize the texts I have mentioned so far. Elsewhere, stasis seems more appropriate, as in the illustrated prose poems of Joy Harjo and Stephen Strom's *Secrets from the Center of the Earth*, where the stillness of the photographic image seems necessary for the drawing of diegesis out of mimesis.

Raymond Williams's idea of the "knowable community," presented in his seminal work, *The Country and the City*, provides an example from literary criticism of the difference between chorographic and literary mapping. Edward Saïd, in acknowledging his debt to Williams, summarizes the latter's contribution as "demonstrat[ing] that literary and cultural forms ... derive some of their aesthetic rationale from changes taking place in the geography or landscape as the result of a social contest" (182). The English landscape as represented in literature is not physical but imaginary, a series of mental maps, in which the contour lines chart the degree of representability of "real" landscape, architecture, and classes of people. Williams's brief description of Jane Austen's mental map of semi-rural England is particularly apt: "Neighbours in Jane Austen are not the people actually living nearby; they

are the people living a little less nearby who, in social recognition, can be visited. What she sees across the land is a network of propertied houses and families, and through the holes of this tightly drawn mesh most actual people are simply not seen" (Williams 166). Williams terms this a "knowable community." Again, there is nothing unusual in Austen's exclusions: it is what mapping is all about. We use highway maps to locate highways, hydrographic maps to locate rivers and streams (but not highways), political maps to locate countries (but not highways, rivers, or streams), and so forth. The surprise is to discover this process at work in the heart of a series of novels, and beyond that, to suggest that such mapping constitutes one of the functions of some portion of modern fiction.

Just as some studies have followed Saïd's lead in discussing the role of cartography in domination and possession, others have addressed the contradictions and complexities involved in the mapping of heterotopias. Graham Huggan, in the conclusion to his comparison of cartographic themes in contemporary Canadian and Australian fiction, attributes an overtly political project to such fictions: a "connection can be made between the symbolic destruction and/or reconfiguration of the national map and the ongoing project of cultural re-evaluation. In the former 'settler colonies' of Australia and Canada, creative writers and critics have participated in a project of cultural decolonization characterized by the gradual displacement/replacement of a 'cartography of exile,' based on the self-privileging value systems of European colonialism, and by a 'cartography of difference,' constructed on principles of cultural diversity that are more appropriate to the heterogeneous nature of post-colonial societies/cultures" (Huggan 147-48). Comparative analysis, such as I undertake here may add useful complexity to Huggan's binary opposition between politically motivated cartography and subversive literary mental maps.

Note: The above article is an excerpt from Thomas O. Beebee, *Geographies of Nation and Region in Modern Fiction*. West Lafayette: West Lafayette: Purdue University Press <<http://www.thepress.purdue.edu/comparativeculturalstudies.html>>, 2009.

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