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Constructing New "Realities": The Performative Function of Maps in Contemporary Fiction

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Space plays a vital part in the way in which we conceive "reality" and in the workings of the imagination in contemporary issues of identity. Orientation in space, be it geographical or mental, has therefore gained increasing importance, making maps and "mapping" omnipresent in everyday discourse: apart from landscapes and other topographical objects, we "map" cultures, behavior, minds, bodies, etc. Writers, in particular, use maps as convenient metaphors with which to describe the world around them. Maps themselves, furthermore, appear in literary texts as strategic visual devices that not only supply readers with a referential guide to the text, assisting their movement within its fictional space, but also draw attention to the representational problem posed by both geographical and fictional space.

Cartography and writing use two different semiotic systems for representation: on a map, the three-dimensional world is viewed orthogonally from above, whereas in a text, it is transformed into a one-dimensional linear one. In this respect, maps and images are more similar in terms of representation, since they can represent space much better than writing. Maps are also non-sequential, i.e. the information on a map can be read in whatever order one likes. This makes the possibilities of mapreading closer to those of interactive computer games and hypertext navigation. On the other hand, maps, like language, use elaborate systems of arbitrary symbols in order to locate or describe geographical places on their surfaces (Nöth, *Handbuch* 488; see Fremlin and Robinson 1). Other important links between them are that they both involve explorations of space and distortions of a reality which they, at the same time, by figuring, visualizing, conceptualizing, recording and representing it, create anew.

This might explain the obvious fascination with maps that writers have displayed since early times: Sir Thomas More, Jonathan Swift, John Bunyan, Daniel Defoe, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Thomas Hardy, Herman Melville,

Joseph Conrad, or William Faulkner – all of these provide examples of how maps have always appeared in literature in English, and still do. A cursory look around any library or bookstore reveals an astonishing profusion of maps in contemporary literature: Margaret Atwood, Paul Auster, Peter Carey, Aritha van Herk, Michael Ondaatje, W. G. Sebald or Minette Walters, to mention just a few, have all incorporated maps into their works at some point. Why is this so? One of the reasons, I would like to suggest, is that the use of maps in fiction enables readers to "see" the story in various ways, thus functioning as a visual strategy which contributes actively to the production of new and intriguing dimensions of space. In this paper, it is this performative aspect of maps that I would like to investigate: how maps produce new "realities," i.e. geographies of a space that is not always directly visible, and how this process is effectively put to utterly disparate usage in contemporary North American postmodern and, in particular, Canadian postcolonial fiction.

The reason why writers display such an obvious fascination with maps may well lie in their own constant struggle with the limitations of writing. Testifying to her great interest in cartography, Aritha van Herk, for instance, admits that she is often looking for an opportunity to introduce a mapmaker or surveyor in her fiction in order to enhance the fact that writers and cartographers alike must "grapple with the urgency to transform reality into a sign" ("The Map's Temptation" 129) of form and content in the space-time continuum. However, although both maps and texts are abstractions, the map's superior spatial representation makes it seem much closer to the geographical, "real" world than a written text in which there is no such direct resemblance between the words and the forms, relationships or processes that the writer tries to express. Thus, as van Herk points out, the writer is left with the difficult task of "reconcil[ing] the terrible implacabilities of resemblance and imagination" ("The Map's Temptation" 129-130). Van Herk's direct reference to Michel Foucault's *The Order of Things*, in which Foucault discusses "the imagination of resemblance" (69-71), brings to the fore the importance that she attaches to both maps and mapping in the production of spatial practices and spatial meaning. Foucault's work on the history of signs indeed includes an analysis of the role of maps and pictures in representation. Tracing the theoretical development of representation in Western civilization, he draws attention to the fact that even the seventeenth-century philosophical and semiotic school of Port-Royal already regarded topographical maps and spatial representation as necessary for what they called "the way of getting to know something by abstraction or precision" ("la manière de connaître par

abstraction ou précision," Arnauld and Nicole 45). As Foucault points out, "the first example of a sign given by the Logique de Port-Royal is not the word, not the cry, not the symbol, but the spatial and graphic representation – the drawing as map or picture" (64). In his discussion of the problematic relationship between signs and their objects, the picture and the map are perfect examples of the cleft between sign and object, since neither has "[any] other content in fact than that which it represents, and yet that content is made visible only because it is represented by a representation" (64). Their ability to make visible the very problematic relationship between the sign and the signified may thus also account for the frequent occurrence of maps in fiction.

The precarious nature of exploring the relationship between sign and object is one of the issues discussed in Paul Auster's *City of Glass* (1988). Readers familiar with the novel might remember the maps of Professor Stillman's weird meanderings around Manhattan that Quinn, Auster's New York writer/detective protagonist, draws in his red notebook. Quinn has been catapulted from his comfortably theoretical and metafictional world of crime into the "real" world by some bizarre phone calls – asking for a private detective called Paul Auster – with the result that he is hired (under the name of Auster) to protect Stillman's son from his father. Stillman Sr. has just been released from prison and has threatened to kill his son, whom he had kept isolated in a dark room between the ages of two and eleven; by depriving him of both human speech and human contact, he had hoped to prevent him from losing the "original language of innocence" (76). Quinn, however, soon realizes that Stillman has other things on his mind than his son. Rather, his passion concerns his project for the reinvention of a "natural," prelapsarian language, a language of the time before Babel, with no gap between signifier and signified; this is to be "a language that will at last say what we have to say. For our words no longer correspond to the world" (91-92). By walking the letters of what Quinn interprets as TOWER OF BABEL in such a way that each daily stroll forms a shape that is both a map and a letter (see Fig. 1), Stillman seems to iconically enact the problem of representing "reality," a process which requires the transformation of the world of objects into signs (Ljungberg, "Diagrams in Narrative" 198).

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Quinn's peregrinations illustrate the central postulate of Michel de Certeau's famous essay on "Spatial Practices" (see Woods 111; Ljungberg "Diagrams" 197), in which, in discussing the similarities between literary and scientific representations of space, he argues that "[e]very story is a travel story" (115). Unlike the later Foucault, who sees space as the site of social constriction that can only be evaded by escaping to what he calls a "heterotopia," a particular kind of utopia that exists outside of all places and is absolutely different (Foucault, "Of Other Spaces" 24), de Certeau argues that those "caught in the nets of 'discipline'" develop ways of resisting social constraints (xiv-v). These strategies include practices used to "reappropriate" space, practices that are manifested in the "clandestine forms taken by the dispersed, tactical, and make-shift creativity of groups or individuals" and that enable individuals to liberate themselves. Among other things, de Certeau points to the relationship between spatial practices, like walking, or what he calls "pedestrian trajectories," and narrated events such as news reports, legends and fiction. Both walking and narration are "stories" because they actually produce geographies of actions, "realities" which they "traverse" and within which they "organize places in our minds; they select and link them together; they make sentences and itineraries out of them" (115). Narratives have a spatial syntax; this could also be said about walking, which constitutes an organization of movements aimed at getting us from one point to another.

Therefore, both walking and narration are forms of mapping. Both are dynamic processes that populate space, creating new "realities" and transforming them into a "real" world. Drawing a distinction between "place" and "space," de Certeau defines "place" (*lieu*) as "the order . . . in . . . which ele-

ments are distributed in relationships of coexistence." "Place" is thus characterized by its indexical and relatively stable quality. By contrast, "space" (*espace*) functions as a "contradistinction to the [sic] place," since it is both dynamic and unstable:

> [S]pace is composed of intersections of mobile elements. It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it. Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities. . . . In short, *space is a practiced place*. (de Certeau 117)

Stories are "narrative maps" and "narrative tours" which, whether pedestrian or narrated, perform the task of transforming places into spaces and vice versa; they also "organize the play of changing relationships" between them, an interplay that spans everything from descriptions of static scenes to rapid successions of events that "multiply" spaces, as in detective stories and folk tales. This interplay of relationships applies fundamentally to both literary and cartographic representations of space, in particular to descriptions of places which are organized either by seeing, as in presenting a tableau, which says "there are . . ." and implies knowledge of a place, or by going, which spatializes actions and thus organizes movements so that "you enter, you go across, you turn" (de Certeau 118-119).

This process of transformation is exactly what Auster has Quinn engage in as he desperately tries to solve the Stillman mystery. The careful notes Quinn takes in his red notebook faithfully reproduce his observations of Stillman's behavior in his new "reality": thus, for instance, he minutely records the way in which Stillman organizes the broken objects he collects on the streets of New York, "an endless storehouse of shattered things," as he calls it (Auster 94); and he interprets Stillman's strange movements by tracing his meanderings onto a map grid of Manhattan's Upper West Side. The problem is that the maps Quinn draws in his notebook are merely his own interpretations, and thus thoroughly virtual, for there is no evidence whatsoever that these "walked map" letters actually correspond to Stillman's "pedestrian trajectories." Not even Quinn himself is certain whether Stillman has actually left him a message at all, since, as he muses, the walked maps are "like drawing a picture in the air with your finger. The image vanishes as you are making it" (86). That is why we can never be sure whether these maps are just another example of Quinn's already problematic relationship with "reality" and of his excessively positivist idea that the "real" world can be accessed through observation. Quinn's disorientation comes about because

the world he is used to inhabiting is a world of representation in which mysteries and problems can ultimately be solved. In contrast to his detective stories, however, the "reality" he has been unwillingly drawn into does not offer any reassuring ending or resolution of the mystery. Instead, in his eager search for the meaning of signs that he is no longer able to interpret, Quinn gets hopelessly lost as signifiers collapse into signifieds and he becomes, in the end, totally disoriented. Sign economy demands a practical function: sign vehicles, as Winfried Nöth points out, "whether iconic or not, are normally different from their object" ("Alice's Adventures" 12). Excluded from the logic of signification, Quinn disappears, leaving only his red notebook behind.

In a totally different vein, Rudy Wiebe, in his novel *The Temptations of Big Bear* (1973), places one map of the Canadian West dating from 1876 at the front and one of the same area dating from 1888 at the end of the book (Figs. 2 and 3). Wiebe is writing about Canadian prairie history, focusing on the twelve years that Big Bear, the Plains Cree chief, held out against the system of Indian reserves. The novel documents the fate of the Plains Cree nation under one of the last prairie chiefs and the breakdown of Indian culture under the increasing dominance of white imperialism, supported by military and industrial power. The opening up of the large western provinces for exploitation and expansion, in particular through the building of the coast-to-coast Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), had made it necessary to enclose the Native Indian population in reserves. The Cree, the Blackfoot, the Sioux, the Métis, the Assiniboines and other tribes suddenly found themselves subject to British law and to a Governor who acted as the "Queen's voice" (Wiebe 20).

The frontispiece map for 1876 (Fig. 2), the year in which the story opens with the British Governor summoning the chiefs to get them to sign over their land, shows a natural world with cartographic icons outlining the prairie landscape. Map symbols indicate the few settlements spread over a vast area up north (to which the symbolic North compass sign orients us) and the few police and trading posts along the border between Canada and the USA. The Indian world depicted on the map is still largely intact. It is a world whose rhythm of rivers, hills and forests is in harmony with the seasons and the prairie itself, and into which both the Indians' physical and spiritual cultures are integrated. In this world, Big Bear is the local chief and spiritual leader. His power comes from his relationship with the land, which in turn embodies the Indians' living space and their spiritual inheritance. When he is told by

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the Governor to "'choose the place he wants to live,'" he answers that this is not possible, because "'no one can choose for only himself a piece of the Mother Earth. She is. And she is for all that live, alike'" (21). The very concept that land is a measurable and surveyable quantity is as unthinkable to him as the idea that he and his family will have "a 'reserve of one square mile.'" Because space is both spiritual and physical, it cannot be delimited in terms of one family in one place; besides, as he asks the Governor, "'Who can receive land? From whom would he receive it?'" (22).

Wiebe's story is not a naive attempt to rewrite prairie history into fiction; after all, as he notes, history is already written and irreversible. Instead, because all written records are white records, he wants to give a voice to all those whose lives and fates have been unaccounted for by offering an account different from the official one. In particular, as Penny van Toorn notes, Wiebe wants to call attention to the fact that the colonization of the prairies involved the appropriation not only of Indian land but also of their utterances and cultural objects. Not only had most Cree utterances vanished, but what remained had been "'rescued' and preserved in white historical, anthropological, and ethno-linguistic texts" (van Toorn 104), that is, reduced to museological data within a white and western society.

It is thus Big Bear's imagined voice and spiritual vision that Wiebe represents as witness to the gradual, but ultimately radical, transformation of the land. Big Bear alone realizes that the very act of signing it away will mean the doom and destruction of his people and of Indian culture:

> Above his smoking camp Big Bear sat in the sky's circle on Bull's Forehead Hill facing west, the drifts angled down into the two valleys, pointed islands and loops wiped level, the rivers' buttes folded down like frozen blankets about him: a white land, yes, and this was his place he had seen often in his many winters, and felt without chinooks. But when he contemplated what he found here, though the land appeared the same, something was wrong with it. As if just under the edge of his vision a giant blade was slicing through the earth, cutting off everything with roots, warping everything into something Whiteskin clean and straight though when he tried to stare down, get under it to see, it looked as it always had, seemingly. When chiefs had given the land away, why should the round sun shine or the chinooks blow? (Wiebe 86)

The menacing deformation of space into the pointed and linear shapes that appear in Big Bear's vision warns him that there are imminent threats to his land and culture which will "slic[e] through the earth" like a "giant blade." The planned completion of the CPR and rapidly developing farming and oil and ore industries will mercilessly "warp" the Indians' universe to make it fit

the linear molds of the new order. Because of his visionary foresight into his people's destiny, Big Bear consistently resists the twin temptations of either using physical violence or capitulating and signing away the land, despite considerable pressure from all sides. He alone understands that his real power lies in the political position that he can negotiate for his people and in his ability to make them adhere to their traditional sacred stories rather than to "Whiteskin" authority. Big Bear persists in his view despite the failures of a preliminary treaty with the whites in 1882[1] and of an attempt to form an Indian Confederation in 1884; but he finally gives up when he receives news of the defeat of his most important allies, Louis Riel, the Métis leader, and Poundbreaker. He is released after a two-year term of imprisonment and dies, experiencing a cosmic vision in which time and space collapse.

The radical changes that took place within the Indians' geographical and cultural space are depicted on the second map dating from 1888 (Fig. 3). It shows the outcome of the political and cultural struggle between the expansionist, neo-mercantilist discourse of the new Canadian government and the nature-bound, spiritual discourse of the Indians.

The 1888 map embodies the new "realities" produced by the artificial, linear, man-made boundaries and enclosures that were foreboded by the "giant blade . . . slicing through the earth" in Big Bear's vision quoted above. Now split into four provinces by borderlines which, although they are imaginary, entail very "real" political, social and cultural consequences, the Indians' natural world has ceased to exist. The railway line, which splits the land in two, functions like a wedge driven into the heartland of the buffalo hunting grounds of Assiniboia, severing the Indians from their spiritual and geographical space. Relocated and confined to their "reserves" – which literally means "land set apart for a special purpose – a limitation, an exception" – they are both marginalized and excluded from any participation in the political and social processes shaping the young Dominion. This also reinforces their status as a negligible quantity for the eager expansionists of the Canadian Conservative Party who had staked their political survival on the completion of the CPR.

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[1] As Kenneth McNaught points out, this treaty could have offered a solution that would have been reasonable, even if it was not ideal (176). But the neo-mercantilist Dominion government, obsessed with the prospect of opening up the West by the CPR, catered only to business barons and unscrupulous industrialists and ignored the Indians' plight. Deprived of their buffalo hunting grounds, the Indians were starving; and a large part of the Métis who had been promised land grants had not received any, which made it hard for Big Bear to control violence.

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These two maps constitute prime examples of the creation of colonial "realities" produced by rationalist European societies, whose boundaries excluded what they perceived as "non-civilized cultures" like the Indians. As Yuri Lotman argues, the very notion of boundary is ambiguous, since it both separates and unites, includes and excludes: it is, however, a cultural necessity, because there can be no "us" if there is no "them" (136). To the Europeans, non-Europeans were considered "pre-logical savages" who constituted "anti-spheres beyond the rationalist culture" (142). The world view thus conceived provided a convenient justification for cutting up the space inhabited by Others on maps, and a basis for marking the boundary between their own "civilized reality" and the "non-civilized" world (142).

This is the very process reflected by the second map (Fig. 3), which shows how the British, by appropriating what they consider "a void," instrumentalize the map to transform "empty space" into their own "civilized reality." It is certainly ironic that, while the map artificially creates the new province of "Assiniboia," the Indians themselves are herded away in reserves, of which one is even in a "location not yet fixed." Because the Indian world is not a "reality" that has to be taken into account, it can therefore be "boxed in" and contained in reserves which have been mainly located on the periphery. By forcing Big Bear and the other Indian chiefs – who can neither read nor write – to sign away their land by marking an "X" in place of their signatures, the Governor reinforces what has already been proven, albeit ironically, by the map, namely, that the pen is indeed mightier than the sword.

Frontiers are traditionally a place for the experience of Otherness and meeting the Other, for challenging and exploring borders and limits, and for producing new "realities." In postcolonial literatures, this kind of performativity is often mimetically enacted in the text. It is also frequently counterpointed by maps. As Graham Huggan argues, maps have been used, in particular in Australian and Canadian fiction, as metaphors and as devices to illustrate the fragmentation of national cultures, the diversification of multiethnic societies, and the threat posed by global capitalism to individual cultural traditions and identity (349). The use of maps thus enables writers to challenge and resist outdated assumptions about their own and other cultures, assumptions that were imposed by controlling colonial powers which also decided how and which maps were to be officially used to represent particular space. But, as the writer/critic Aritha van Herk claims, the colonized are to some extent complicitous in this process:

The document of [sic] map enacts a terrible temptation: the desire to participate in the map's deception, to believe its exercise, even while proclaiming the ironic discrepancies of a representation which can never present what it pretends to represent. The paradox is to endorse the map as [sic] possible voyage but to stop at its representational paradigm. ("The Map's Temptation" 133-134)

Looking back on what she calls her "geografictione," her experimental book *Places Far From Ellesmere*, van Herk confesses in an essay on the novel that writing it was both a "quest and [a] trajectory" for her ("The Map's Temptation" 129). She decided to reject "mercatorized declarations *that what matters* must be mappable" and to object to the layered, non-transparent analyses of complex data that modern maps have come to represent (132).[2] Instead, she resorts to an "unmappable" map, a "blatant refusal of representation," in order to rid the map of its "valorized rhetorical space" (134) by challenging its representational power. Juxtaposing a re-reading of *Anna Karenina* and her narrator's "unmapping" of Ellesmere Island – one of the most remote places on earth, situated in the Canadian High Arctic – van Herk re-sites both Ellesmere and Tolstoy's novel. Arguing that Tolstoy's story is pervaded by the nineteenth century's double standards, she questions his authority as a writer of a woman's destiny by paralleling her narrator's dialogic re-reading of *Anna Karenina* with her experience of reading the natural signs of the island. The text thus enacts the very process of figuring the "self" in continuous dialogue:

But whose invention is she? Tolstoy's? The nineteenth century's? Russia's? The novel's? Yours? She is the north's invention, her figure only dreamable when the eye swings towards the polar star. But how then to read her? Is it possible to read her in the south, from the south? In that blindly south-faced reading, is it possible to read at all? . . . You are closer to Russia than to home: reading is a new act here, not introverted and possessive but exploratory, the text a new body of self, the self a new reading of place . . . the closest you can get to reading and still know story is this undiscovered place, the farthest possible reach of all reaches, this island paradise, this un/written northern novel, this desert un/kingdom. (*Places Far From Ellesmere* 113)

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[2] As has been pointed out by Chandra Mukerji and Bruno Latour, among others, starting with early modern times, the map's increasingly scientific representation has required the constant visual simplification of complex sets of data in order for it to be useful, resulting in a completely new type of map. Instead of representing natural processes or patterns, maps can easily be designed to reflect and even reinforce patterns of control (see Ljungberg, "Mapping New Space").

The intimate second-person pronoun "you" functions here both as an Other and as a self-referring second-person address, which blurs the boundaries between self and Other and between narrator and reader. It also represents the process of the narrator's self-interpretation as dialectic interplay, just as the interaction between her body and the new environment teaches her how to read the island's natural world of movement and flux. The boundary location becomes significant because of the marginal positions of both Ellesmere Island and women (alluded to both in *elles* and *mere*, as in *mère*), particularly in Tolstoy's time. That is why she suggests that "[o]nly the north can teach what reading means, and you are a woman in the north, reading a woman written by a man to whom women were a mystery" (*Places Far From Ellesmere* 132). Drawing a parallel between Tolstoy's misreadings of women and those performed by mapmakers of natural geographies, van Herk provides her book with a map cover which refuses to present actual space, thus subverting the traditionally indexical function of maps (Fig. 4).

Van Herk's ironic use of the (barely legible) symbolic North compass sign on the map (and throughout the book) reminds us that the placement of the North sign is as arbitrary as any other cultural convention, since it is the result of a historical process (whereas the East, West and South are diagrammatic icons, aligned according to the North sign).[3] Placed on an almost indecipherable map of the province of Alberta, the compass North sign is, as van Herk says, "pretending to orientation" ("The Map's Temptation" 134). It thus functions both as an indexical sign of the map's arbitrariness, showing its refusal to represent a given "reality," and as a pointer directing our attention northwards. Her map is diagrammatically iconic, in the sense that the "Woman Island" is placed at the center as the only continuous shape floating on an artificially blue background surrounded by some loose "cartographic shreds" of an old Calgary survey map and fragments of a torn Mercator grid. Hence, the map underscores the relative significance given to the book's last section, "Ellesmere: Woman as Island," which, compared with the three preceding sections, takes up as much space as the other three together. The texts in the three sections about Edberg, Edmonton and Calgary – the places where the narrator has spent the main part of her life so far – are structured

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[3] That the placement of the North sign at the top is a cultural convention introduced with the modern era becomes visible if one considers medieval so-called T-O maps which put Paradise, a place difficult to reach, at the top of the map together with the Orient, which was considered being farthest away. The expression *to orient* derives from this type of map (Robinson 19). According to the OED, the verb *to orient* originally meant "to place or arrange (anything) so as to face the east," before giving way to the general sense (see Ljungberg, "Maps, Semiotics and Communication").

as excavations of different layers reminiscent of archaeological discovery, while the Ellesmere section abounds with maps, lists of hiking equipment, enumerations of islands and the linking of words in unexpected allusions. Whereas the first three sections describe the transformation of wilderness into city monuments built with pre-historic fossils embedded in their stone walls and signifying death and stasis, the narrator's experience of Ellesmere is a celebration of process and constant movement. Like the enigmatic "puzzle-ice" of the Arctic, which is "mesmerizing, [with] its slow wash and float, its conundrum melting and reappearance" (*Places Far From Ellesmere* 88), this landscape eludes fixed boundaries and territories. Hence, van Herk's text functions both indexically, as a description of the actual environment, and, at the same time, diagrammatically, forming a dynamic pattern that mirrors the fragmentary shape and constant movement of the "puzzle pieces" of ice "orbiting in endless float" (111) around Ellesmere's Arctic desert.

By refiguring the boundaries into an exploration of the processes behind the cultural representations of landscape and wilderness – and of women – van Herk thus reinvents Ellesmere Island and repositions it from its marginal location at the farthest edge of cartographic space to the very center of her map. By transforming "the text into a new body of self, the self into a new reading of place" (*Places Far From Ellesmere* 113), she maps both civilized space and the unmapped, undocumented Arctic wilderness of Ellesmere Island. Thus, playing with the map's "temptation and entrapment" ("The Map's Temptation" 133) and its pretensions to objectively representing space, she urges us to "let escape some secret space that defies all mapping" (136), in order to escape the constraints of mapped and mappable "civilized" space, and to explore and to negotiate new "realities" and new discursive space.

To conclude, the use of maps in fiction constitutes an interesting strategy for adding new and challenging dimensions of reading. This is, I would suggest, due to the map's superior spatial and abstract potential, which allows writers to develop additional meaning by means of a non-sequential two-dimensional semiotic system, different from the linear, one-dimensional system of writing. As we have seen in the first of the three very disparate texts we have discussed, Paul Auster has Stillman's "walked maps" enact the problem of representation by creating a new "reality," a Wonderland of signs in which Quinn gets hopelessly entangled and, eventually, lost. On the other hand, Rudy Wiebe has the changes to the Native "reality" that are embodied in the two maps demonstrate the truly performative function maps have had in history, where they have indeed produced palpably different realities. Fi-

nally, Aritha van Herk has her map challenge the claims of maps and verbal signs to represent both a geographical and a gendered "reality." By subverting both mapping and reading conventions, she creates new "realities" that avoid the "gridlines" laid out by traditional appropriations of landscape and literature.

Thus, maps offer writers versatile tools for producing new "realities" in fiction. This is still a surprisingly uncultivated field of research which calls for a more thorough survey than the one I have been able to offer here, in particular because it seems to be such an efficient strategy for engaging the reader in the production of meaning. That is, after all, the very essence of literature.

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List of illustrations

Fig. 1. The letters "O," "W" and "E" as walked by Stillman and reproduced by Quinn in his red notebook.

Fig. 2. Frontispiece 1876 map of *The Temptations of Big Bear* on which the Indian's natural world is still largely intact.

Fig. 3. End 1888 map of *The Temptations of Big Bear* on which the prairies have been split into four provinces and the Indians confined to reserves.

Fig. 4. Map cover of *Places Far From Ellesmere.*