Deep American Wests
Literature,
Sense of Place and Rootlessness
Beyond the 98th Meridian.

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METHODS

The viewer / writer / reader [of the text ] stands metaphorically in both the unwritten and the written landscapes, enters the territory on the page the same time it is created in the mind - a profound involvement with place through real three-dimensional landscapes and the described and imagined landscape.

Translations between Literary Theory and Cartography /GIS

- M. M. Bakhtin, *Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel* (1958)
- Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language, a semiotic approach to literature and art* (1980)
- Franco Moretti, *Distant Reading* (2013)

GIS and Computer Assisted Qualitative / Quantitative Data Analysis (CAQQDA) methods.
But to those that love them, the plains are endlessly fascinating, a place where the constant interplay of land and sky is always dramatic . . . Those long vistas, those splendid clouds tempt the imagination as the plains of Castile tempted Don Quixote.

Larry McMurtry. 1999 Crazy Horse

“Map of Don Quixote's Route through Spain”
Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra. From *El ingenioso hidalgo Don Quixote de la Mancha* [The ingenious nobleman Don Quixote of La Mancha], 1780.
Lonesome Dove tetralogy, 1875-76

The prequels
(1) Lonesome Dove (1985) tetralogy, 1875-76

(2) Dead Man’s Walk (1995), set in the 1840s,
(3) Comanche Moon (1997), set in 1850s-'60s,

The sequel
(4) Streets of Laredo (1993) set in the late 1870s.
MEXICO
in 1842

Published by C. L. PULS, No. 40 Soho St. near Pearl.
NEW YORK.

AN ACCOUNT OF TEXAS AND CALIFORNIA,
and of the United States, under the administration of Mr. Polk.

NEW YORK,
CHARLES J. LONDON, Printer.
1842.
Whether it be primeval wilderness, idyllic garden, fraternal unity, or physical place, no single myth of what constitutes a “Texas” home is verified by the narrative stratifications of this novel. Marion Tagnum 1991
All America lies at the end of the wilderness road, and our past is not a dead past, but still lives in us. Our forefathers had civilization inside themselves, the wild outside. We live in the civilization they created, but within us the wilderness still lingers. What they dreamed, we live, and what they lived, we dream.

_T. K. Whipple, Study Out the Land_
Thus the **chronotope**, functioning as the primary means for materializing **time in space**, . . . All the novel’s abstract elements – philosophical and social generalizations, ideas, analyses of cause and effect – gravitate toward the **chronotope** and through it take on flesh and blood, permitting the imaging power of art to do its work. (250)

Mikhail M Bakhtin  
*The Dialogic Imagination – Four Essays*  
Austin, University of Texas Press, 2011
the temporal flow of a dramatic plot can be turned into a set of two-dimensional signs—vertices (or nodes) and edges,' allowing it to 'be grasped at a single glance.'

Moretti, 2013. Distant reading. 211
Lonesome Dove Trail & Chronotopes

1870 U.S. Census
Bukowski’s L.A.
‘Skid Row Latitude’ of 34º0’0”
Dirty Realism

Charles Bukowski’s (1920-1994) depiction of Los Angeles’ “Dirty Realism” accrues from his literary perceptions of the underclass existing in the various flop-houses, brothels, bars, “seedy” districts, and “dog-patch” neighborhoods of the central city from the 1940s to the 1990s.

... unadorned, unfurnished, low-rent tragedies about people who watch day-time television, read cheap romances ... drink a lot and are often in trouble: for stealing a car, breaking a window, pickpocketing a wallet
a heuristic on how to “define a unit of analysis” for geo-database structures, “and then follow its metamorphoses in a variety of environments -until, ideally, all of literary history becomes a long chain of related experiments: a ‘dialogue between fact and fancy’, as Peter Medawar calls it: ‘between what could be true, and what is in fact the case,’” (53-54)

Franco Moretti Distant reading, 2013
along Sunset and Hollywood Boulevards - that is, the poor man’s area of these boulevards where I lived, where we all lived . . . in broken-down courts, attics, garages or slept on the floors of temporary friends.

L.A. Noir

Mike Davis suggests in *City of Quartz* that film and literary noir, a trope of the Los Angeles cultural *intelligentsia* which emerged during the early and mid-twentieth century “made Los Angeles the city that American intellectuals love to hate.” (1992, 2)
1940s-1960s, Watts, African-American deep-south diaspora


1980s, Vietnam-Veteran & 2000s, Japanese-African American
At La Brea I turned north, and swung over to highland, and out over Cahuenga Pass, and down to Ventura Boulevard, past Studio City, and Sherman Oaks and Encino . . . I drove on past the gaudy neons and the false fronts behind them, the sleazy hamburger joints that look like palaces under the colors, the circular drive-ins as gay as circuses with the chipper hard eye car hops, the brilliant counters, and the sweaty greasy kitchens . . .

Raymond Chandler, The Little Sister, 1949
Julia Kristeva, *intertextuality*
“a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another.”

*Axes*
horizontal (linking text, author / and the reader)
vertical (linking the text with external texts)


Roland Barthes, *text codes*
(1) *hermeneutic* - narrative turning points,
(2) *proairetic* - narrative actions and function,
(3) *cultural* - social and historical knowledge,
(4) *semic* - medium of intersecting text codes, such as novel, map, film, T.V. show, data, etc., and
(5) *symbolic* - themes, subjects, characters, settings.

*S/Z*, 1974, pp. 18-20
Devil in a Blue Dress, “reworks the city grid in terms of the segregated subject” and “emphatically names the streets, the hotels, and the exact coordinates of segregation” (Karen Voss, 1998, 173).
I am inclined to say that geographically the two most important events of my life-time have been the settlement of the last of the prairie lands and the coming of the Model T Ford, one an end, the other a beginning of a series of cultural processes.

*The Morphology of Landscape* (1925)
A more substantive understanding of landscape is required. Such a substantive understanding of landscape derives, I would argue, from the historical study of our changing conceptions and uses of land/landscape, country/countryside, and nature. It is an understanding, furthermore, that cannot focus on the country or the city, but must incorporate the mutual definitions and relations of both.

Kenneth R. Olwig, 1996.