



Plate 1 Europe as a queen, from S. Münster, *Cosmographia*, 1588

INTRODUCTION

Writing worlds

Trevor J. Barnes and James S. Duncan

'How about writing a composition for me for English? I'll be up the creek if I don't get the goddam thing in by Monday. The reason I ask. How 'bout it?' ...

'What on?' I said.

'Anything. Anything descriptive. A room. Or a house. Or something you once lived in or something – you know. Just as long as it's descriptive as hell.' ... 'Just don't do it too good, is all,' he said. 'That sonuvabitch Hartzell thinks you're a hot shot in English, and he knows you're my roommate. So I mean don't stick all the commas and stuff in the right place.'

'That's something else that gives me a royal pain. I mean if you're good at writing compositions and somebody starts talking about commas. Stradlater was always doing that. He wanted you to think that the only reason he was lousy at writing compositions was because he stuck all the commas in the wrong place. ... God, how I hate that stuff.'

(J. D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye*, 1951, pp. 32–3)

INTRODUCTION

Very little attention is paid to writing in human geography. This is ironic, given that the very root meaning of the word 'geography' is literally 'earth writing' (from the Greek *geo*, meaning 'earth', and *graphien*, meaning 'to write'). It is also ironic in another sense, because the one thing that links all geographers of whatever stripe is that they write. Clearly they write about different things, but whatever their speciality they all face the same problem of facing a blank page; that is, the difficulty of convincingly representing to their audience in written form the things that they claim to have done (archival research, literature reviews, fieldwork, abstract theorizing, and so on).

In spite of the fact that human geographers write for a living, until recently the actual process of writing was considered unproblematic. Even now some think that human geography is easier than physical geography because the former only involves writing (sticking the commas in the right place), whereas the latter involves the perplexities of mathematics and the like. Lying behind this flippancy

towards writing is a particular view of language use, one that we will call 'naive realism' or objectivism. Following Eagleton (1983: 134), 'in the ideology of [naive] realism ... words are felt to link up with their thoughts or objects in essentially right and incontrovertible ways: the word becomes the only proper way of viewing this object or experiencing this thought'. The result is that the task of writing is the mechanical one of bolting words together in the right order so that the final construction represents the thought or object modelled. In this sense 'earth writing', rather than 'writing about the earth', was a good description of what geographers thought they were doing. Earth came with its own labels, and provided that they were in the correct sequence one's written account was always a mirror representation. Anyone could do it as long as there were a dictionary and style manual at hand.

In the last decade or so this view of writing has been challenged. Rather than unproblematic, writing is now seen as utterly problematic. This should not surprise us. From our own experience we know that writing is very hard; that words often do not come out the way that we mean them. But there is more to this than individuals struggling to find *le mot juste*. In particular, a number of researchers argue that there is now a general 'crisis of representation' in the human sciences (the phrase has been recently popularized by Marcus and Fischer 1986). Pieces of the world, it is suggested, do not come with their own labels, and thus representing 'out there' to an audience must involve more than just lining up pieces of language in the right order. Instead, it is humans that decide how to represent things, and not the things themselves. As Gregory and Walford (1989c: 2) write, 'our texts are not mirrors which we hold up to the world, reflecting its shapes and structures immediately and without distortion. They are, instead, creatures of our own making, though their making is not entirely of our own choosing.' At least three consequences follow.

First, once we sever the supposed one-to-one link between language and brute reality, the notion that writing mirrors the world is untenable. For there is no pre-interpreted reality that writing reflects. We should note that such a view now seems a general one (at least outside human geography). As the anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1988: 137) writes:

'telling it like it is' is hardly more adequate a slogan for ethnography than for philosophy since Wittgenstein (or Gadamer), history since Collingwood (or Ricoeur), literature since Auerbach (or Barthes), painting since Gombrich (or Goodman), politics since Foucault (or Skinner), or physics since Kuhn (or Hesse).

But if our writing does not reflect some bedrock reality, then what does it reflect? The different scholars cited above each has his/her own particular answer, but most agree that it must involve yet prior interpretations. That is, our texts draw upon other texts, that themselves are based on yet different texts, and so on. In the vocabulary of literary theory there is only intertextuality, defined as 'the process whereby meaning is produced from text to text rather than, as it were, between

text and world' (Rylance 1987: 113). The consequence is that writing is constitutive, not simply reflective; new worlds are made out of old texts, and old worlds are the basis of new texts. In this world of one text careening off another, we cannot appeal to any epistemological bedrocks in privileging one text over another. For what is true is made inside texts, not outside them. As the anthropologist James Clifford (1986: 22) writes:

A conceptual shift, 'tectonic' in its implications, has taken place. We ground things, now, on a moving earth. There is no longer any place of overview (mountaintop) from which to map human ways of life, no Archimedian point from which to represent the world.

Second, writing about worlds reveals as much about ourselves as it does about the worlds represented. Given the point made by Clifford, that when we write we do so from a necessarily local setting (there is no mountain top), the worlds we represent are inevitably stamped with our own particular set of local interests, views, standards, and so on. To understand critically our own representations, and also those of others, we must therefore know the kinds of factors bearing upon an author that makes an account come out the way it does. Once again, Clifford (1986: 6) is useful in providing a partial checklist: the social context in which the piece was written, the institutional setting (audience, intellectual tradition, school of thought), the genre of which it is a part (textbook, scholarly article, newspaper piece), the political position that sustains the authority of the author (colonial administrator, Third World academic, Western journalist) and, finally, the historical context that makes all the above factors contingent on particular times and places. We can readily appreciate Clifford's concern, as an anthropologist focusing on the cultural 'other', with detailing the various 'local' interests that are implicated in the construction of ethnographic representations (see, for example, his discussion of the factors influencing Malinowski's ethnography; Clifford 1988). But other, 'harder' disciplines, such as economics or even physics, are no less immune. For example, Mirowski (1988) deftly unpacks the influences (biographical, political, sociological, institutional) that led to the acceptance and success of a dominant physical metaphor in neoclassical economics. While Bloor (1982) argues that primarily contemporary political and religious factors were behind the constructions of, and controversies over, early theories of light in physics. The broader point is that when we 'tell it like it is' we are also 'telling it like we are'.

Finally, in writing about worlds, we must pay attention to our rhetoric, as well as the rhetoric of others. Under the rubric of objectivism, rhetorical devices such as metaphors, irony, similes and the like are useless, if not nonsensical, aspects of language; at best they obfuscate the truth, and at worst they pervert it. At every opportunity they should be extirpated. With the recent assault on objectivism, there is growing recognition that, far from being merely decorative, rhetorical devices are central to conveying meaning. They are the means by which we persuade our audience that we really did the things that we say we did. In this light,

objectivism itself is just one of many different strategies to convince; like Hemingway's no style, it is a style in itself. Moreover, as Hayden White (1978) argues, it is impossible to get away from such writing strategies or tropes, because they constitute the very object of study. As White (1978: 2) writes, a trope 'is the shadow from which all realistic discourse tries to free itself. This flight, however, is futile; for tropes is the process by which all discourse constitutes the object which it pretends only to describe realistically and to analyze objectively.' Recognition of the centrality of rhetoric is now increasingly found in a number of disciplines: intellectual history (White 1978; LaCapra 1983), anthropology (Clifford and Marcus 1986; Clifford 1988; Geertz 1988), economics (McCloskey, 1985) and even mathematics (Kline 1980). In human geography there has been some discussion by Gregory (1989a). In particular, Gregory criticizes the traditional trope of narrative found in historical geography because of the sense of order and closure that it imparts. Instead, he searches for other writing tropes that celebrate the complexity and openness of 'day-to-day lives of particular people in particular places' (Gregory 1989a: 89). That said, there are very few examples of human geographers exploring alternative tropes.

The purpose of this book is to show, by focusing on landscape broadly conceived, the importance of these arguments about writing and representation for human geography. Clearly landscape is an ambiguous term, and we will not provide any definitive definition of it here. Following Daniels and Cosgrove (1988: 1), landscapes:

may be represented in a variety of materials and on many surfaces – in paint on canvas, in writing on paper, in earth, stone, water, and vegetation on the ground. A landscape park is more palpable but no more real, nor less imaginary, than a landscape painting or poem.

In our collection, landscape is represented in a diverse set of forms, including theoretical models of the space economy, propaganda maps, travellers' accounts of Niagara Falls, Turner's pictures of northern English cities, and more besides. Although the means and purposes are different, linking these different subjects is the attempt at geographical representation: to represent respectively the economic world of profit and loss, the political world of ideology, the physical world of natural wonder, and the visual world of industrialization.

In each of these four examples the three points made about representation above are very relevant. First, the representations are not a mirror copy of some external reality. In some cases this is plainly so, as with propaganda maps, but it is also true of travellers' accounts of Niagara Falls. For, as Patrick McGreevy's chapter confirms, such accounts are based on previous representations; that is, travellers' texts are about other texts and not some pristine falls itself. Second, to understand each of the representations fully we must know something about the context of its authors and audience. Again this even includes such unlikely cases as mathematical modelling in economic geography. As Barnes argues, to comprehend the success of the abstract rational landscapes portrayed by neoclassical

economic geographers it is essential to know that it is underpinned by a physical metaphor borrowed from nineteenth-century physics. The very prestige of science in which the metaphor originated endowed authority on its authors and ensured a favourable reception. Finally, in each of these representations examined one needs to explore the tropes employed – that is, the styles used to persuade the reader. The graphical devices used in the drawing of propaganda maps are perhaps the most obvious case, but they also occur in mathematical models of economic geography (here metaphor is dominant – the mathematical equation convinces because we are ready to accept that it is like some aspect of human behaviour over space).

Now clearly we are using 'writing' in a very broad sense to include such activities as drawing maps, making plans, and even painting. Our justification is that each of these activities, as investigated here at least, involves representing the landscape. With the task of representation the central one (whether accomplished through the medium of words, drawings or paintings), the three general problems discussed above necessarily pertain.

The next section of this introductory essay carries forward the arguments made here by suggesting that three key concepts that emerge from the new literature on writing and representation are text, discourse and metaphor. Specifically, each of the essays in the book draws upon at least one of the three concepts, often more than one, in discussing some substantive case of landscape writing and representation. The final section of the introduction provides a synopsis of each of the essays, showing how each author draws upon one or more of the triad – text, discourse, metaphor – in presenting his or her argument.

TEXTS, DISCOURSES AND METAPHORS

Texts

The notion of text used in this volume is not the traditional one of a printed page or a volume sitting on a shelf in the library. Rather, following Roland Barthes and other contemporary literary theorists and cultural anthropologists, we use an expanded concept of the text: one that includes other cultural productions such as paintings, maps and landscapes, as well as social, economic and political institutions. These should all be seen as signifying practices that are read, not passively, but, as it were, rewritten as they are read. This expanded notion of texts originates from a broadly post-modern view, one that sees them as constitutive of reality rather than mimicking it – in other words, as cultural practices of signification rather than as referential duplications. For, just as written texts are not simply mirrors of a reality outside themselves, so cultural productions, such as landscapes, are not 'about' something more real than themselves. But although not referential, such practices of signification are intertextual in that they

embody other cultural texts and, as a consequence, are communicative and productive of meaning. Such meaning, however, is by no means fixed; rather, it is culturally and historically, and sometimes even individually and momentarily, variable.

It is, however, one thing to argue that the world is like a text, and another to demonstrate it convincingly. Ricoeur's 'The model of the text' (1971) attempts to do just that, though. Ricoeur poses two questions: first, is the model of the text a good paradigm of social science? And, second, is the method of textual interpretation relevant? He argues that for four reasons both questions should be answered positively.

First, he suggests that the principal characteristics of written discourse also describe social life more generally. In particular, meaning in written discourse is concretized when it is inscribed or textualized. Similarly, in social life, institutional objectification, recurrent patterns of behaviour and monuments in the built environment take on the same type of fixity.

Second, within written works an author's intentions and the meaning of the text often cease to coincide; in other words, the text escapes its author (Barthes 1987g). In the same way, institutionalized patterns of action are frequently detached from their collective agents. Deeds have consequences that are often unintended, thereby making it impossible to identify the authors of complex events.

Third, written texts frequently have an importance beyond the initial context in which they were composed. They are interpreted and reinterpreted in the light of changing circumstances. Similarly, social events and institutions are subject to continual reinterpretation.

Finally, the meaning of a text is unstable, dependent upon the wide range of interpretations brought to bear upon it by various different readers. Similarly, social productions and institutions also address a wide range of possible interpreters. But these interpreters are not free to make of the text what they like, but are subject to discursive practices of specific textual communities (Stock 1990). As we will argue below, this implied notion of subjugation need not be as deterministic as in some interpretations of Foucault's work on discursive practices. Rather, we contend simply that to speak, write or read one must do so within the conceptual framework of specific discourses.

The social-life-as-text metaphor is easily applicable to landscape because it too is a social and cultural production. Thus a landscape possesses a similar objective fixity to that of a written text. It also becomes detached from the intentions of its original authors, and in terms of social and psychological impact and material consequences the various readings of landscapes matter more than any authorial intentions. In addition, the landscape has an importance beyond the initial situation for which it was constructed, addressing a potentially wide range of readers. In short, landscapes are characterized by all those features that Ricoeur identifies as definitive of a text.

Reflecting on the text metaphor, the intellectual historian Dominick LaCapra (1983: 19) suggests that, although it involves a certain 'linguistic inflation', its value is in allowing us to understand the problems involved in taking 'reality' or 'context' as unproblematic ground or a gold standard'. Following his reasoning, we suggest that 'text' is also an appropriate trope to use in analysing landscapes because it conveys the inherent instability of meaning, fragmentation or absence of integrity, lack of authorial control, polyvocality and irresolvable social contradictions that often characterize them; characteristics that are demonstrated in the papers that follow.

It is probably in anthropology that we find the most recent use of the text metaphor. In particular, Clifford Geertz (1973: 1988) has been a tireless and enthusiastic proponent of culture as text. For him, culture is something that is 'read' by an ethnographer as one might read written material. Furthermore, he argues that this is not simply an academic pursuit, but one that everyone practises.

In a similar vein, Marcus and Fischer (1986: 26) argue that the principal benefit of the textual analogy for ethnographers is that it focuses their attention on the relationship between the ethnographer's interpretation and that of his/her informants. It makes the researcher reflect critically on the practice of ethnography that for too long, they argue, masqueraded under positivistic social science as an unproblematic description of reality, narrated by an author whose presence is masked by the rhetoric of absence.

More generally, the (postmodern) view of text championed by such anthropologists problematizes the very notion of 'representation' that has become so entrenched in ethnography and, we should add, some foreign area studies in geography. The question of representation that is raised is both epistemological and moral. On the one hand, it poses the question of the translatability of cultural difference – how do we know that our point of view is also that of the native whom we seek to represent? On the other hand, it also raises the ethical question of the morality of speaking for others. This is especially pertinent, as Clifford (1988) makes clear, in anthropology. Furthermore, the concept of text that is invoked in such work also has a critical function by encouraging the interrogation of textual strategies, especially those that presume objectivity.

Associated with the use of the concept 'text' is intertextuality, that is, the textual context of a literary work (Eagleton 1983). Originating in literary criticism, the term has sparked increasing interest among historians (LaCapra 1983; Stock 1990). Likewise, anthropologists (Clifford and Marcus 1986; Tyler 1987b; Geertz 1973) have explored the notion in order to problematize ethnographic descriptions. Tyler (1987b), for example, argues that although most ethnographic accounts are portrayed as objectivist description based on field research, they are better described as intertextual works, highly mediated by a traditional corpus of anthropological monographs and theories.

Furthermore, it is not simply our accounts of the world that are intertextual; the world itself is intertextual. Places are intertextual sites because various texts

and discursive practices based on previous texts are deeply inscribed in their landscapes and institutions. We construct both the world and our actions towards it from texts that speak of who we are or wish to be. Such 'texts in the world' then recursively act back on the previous texts that shaped them. This perspective is explicit in the work of some geographers (Cosgrove and Daniels 1988; Duncan 1990; Duncan and Duncan 1988) and in a number of the essays in this volume.

Discourses

Texts, in the broad sense that we construe them, are constitutive of larger, even more open-ended, structures termed discourses. The latter are frameworks that embrace particular combinations of narratives, concepts, ideologies and signifying practices, each relevant to a particular realm of social action. Between discourses words may have different connotations, causing people who ostensibly speak the same language to talk past one another, often without realizing it. This is because words or other signifiers within discourses have no natural connection with their signifieds (concepts) or their referents. Rather, the relation is socially constructed and therefore variable.

Under this view, discourses are practices of signification, thereby providing a framework for understanding the world. As such, discourses are both enabling as well as constraining: they determine answers to questions, as well as the questions that can be asked. More generally, a discourse constitutes the limits within which ideas and practices are considered to be natural; that is, they set the bounds on what questions are considered relevant or even intelligible. These limits are by no means fixed, however. This is because discourses are not unified, but are subject to negotiation, challenge and transformation. For power relations within a social formation are communicated, and sometimes resisted, precisely through the medium of particular discourses.

In addition, the production and reproduction of discourses are also linked to institutions. Within this context, discourses shape the positioning of individuals in an institution, and the discourses so adopted, in turn, depend upon an individual's position there. Thus discourses constitute standpoints that are defined largely by their relationship to other discourses.

The concept of discourse is a key term in poststructuralism and in postmodernism more generally. It represents a clear break with earlier ahistorical categories of humanism and structuralism such as human nature, timeless meaning or universal rationality. Although structuralism successfully decentres the individual and, in this sense, is clearly a break with humanism (modernism), it is not fully a postmodern project in that it posits transhistorical structures underlying discourses (best seen in Lévi-Strauss's work). Poststructural discourse theory, however, sees discourses as conventional and historical. It assumes that discourses, and the 'truths' that they construct, vary among cultural groups and among classes, races, gender-based or other groups whose interests may clash. In

the most anarchic versions even the existence of different interest groups within society is questioned, along with the very notion of culture (dismissed as a liberal humanist 'totalizing' or 'essentializing' concept; Cottom 1989: 50).

Although competing discourses may evolve among opposing interest groups, there may be a relatively stable discursive formation in which these competing discourses coexist. All the politically engaged classes or other interest groups in a society may support, albeit not uncritically, the hegemonic discourses. Alternatively, there may be open clashes between groups whose presuppositions are based in antagonistic discourses. Roland Barthes (1987d: 200) says that 'discourse (discursivity) moves in its historical impetus by clashes. A new discourse can only emerge as the paradox which goes against ... the surrounding or preceding doxa.'

Much of the work in discourse theory derives from Foucault's studies of the relations between knowledge, discourses, representations and power. Because of its appeal to 'common sense' or its scientific status, knowledge in the form of representations is in itself a power rather than simply a reflection of power relations in the 'real' world 'beyond' the academy, the media or government task force. In this sense, discourses have a naturalizing power which is largely unseen. In his genealogies of discourses Foucault (1967; 1978) studies the construction of discourses and their institutionalization. He argues that it is their association with institutions that legitimates the 'truths' that they produce. The power of discourses derives not so much from the abstract ideas they represent as from their material basis in the institutions and practices that make up the micro-political realm which Foucault sees as the source of much of the power in a society.

Within postmodern ethnography (Clifford 1988; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Marcus and Fischer 1986) there is a related, but somewhat different, notion of discourse that also calls attention to the crisis of representation in social science. Discourse in this literature often refers to a dialogue between researchers and those they study. This dialogue replaces the monologue of an author, a self-authorized 'authority' who represents 'others'. It calls for polyvocality in ethnographic texts and for rhetorical devices that call attention to the artifice in writing ethnographic 'description'. It also calls for the deconstruction of the internal contradictions within dominant discourses about cultural 'opposites'. This view of discourse adopts the same scepticism about unmediated access to reality as other postmodern or poststructural discourse theory, and shares in celebrating difference and opposition.

Metaphors

One form in which discourses can be presented, shaped and can gain authority is as metaphors. Debate and controversy over metaphors, however, has persisted since the ancient Greeks. On the one hand, many have viewed them as, at best, frivolous and ornamental or, at worst, obfuscatory and logically perverted. For example, Hobbes (1962: 34) wrote in *Leviathan* that 'when we use words meta-

phorically; that is in other senses than that they were ordained for; ... [we] thereby deceive others'. This same sentiment was taken up by the British empiricists and the Viennese positivists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, finally reaching human geography in the 1960s during the heyday of the 'quantitative revolution'. Then David Harvey (1967: 551) wrote that 'the form in which ... metaphors are cast seems to hinder objective judgment'.

On the other hand, there has always been a strong undercurrent celebrating the centrality of metaphor. It is found in Vico's work, and Nietzsche's, but in the twentieth century it was first eloquently and forcefully stated by I. A. Richards in his *Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1936). There he wrote that, rather than being 'a sort of happy extra trick with words' (p. 90), metaphor is 'the omnipresent principle of language' (p. 92). In the last fifteen years, interest in metaphor has strengthened, and its role has been explored in disciplines as diverse as physics (Hesse 1980a), anthropology (Gudeman 1986), economics (McCloskey 1985; Mirowski 1988) and human geography (Buttimer 1982).

This increased interest in metaphor partly stems from the critique mounted on objectivism, and discussed in the first section. For objectivism was almost exclusively concerned with validation, that is, developing procedures to check the correspondence between theory and the real world. However, it became increasingly clear in science, at least, that one could not express the real world in its own terms, but only in theoretical ones. Thus it made no sense to check theory against some neutral outside world, because the outside world itself was apprehended only through theory. Interest, therefore, switched from concern about validation to concern about how theories themselves were formulated and developed. Science was then seen 'less as an inert body of positive knowledge and more as an on-going activity' (Cameron 1983: 263). To understand the development and formulation of theory, a number of people turned to metaphor.

Although there is much controversy over the meaning of metaphor, most agree that it asserts a similarity between two or more different things, for example: culture is a text. Here one thing, culture, is 'metaphorically redescribed' (the phrase is Hesse's 1980b) in terms of a frame of reference with which it is not usually associated, a written text. In general, that clash of different frames of reference can produce all manner of effects: incredulity, a smirk or, after sufficient time, a Nobel Prize-winning novel or theory of physics. Of course, in most cases the metaphor is simply forgotten, but in a few the bringing together of two hitherto unrelated things is the creative spark for something much more. As Buttimer (1982: 90) writes, 'metaphor ... touches a deep level of understanding ... , for it points to the process of learning and discovery - to those analogical leaps from the familiar to the unfamiliar which rally imagination and emotion as well as intellect'. In this sense, metaphor provides a bridge for understanding the development and formulation of theory.

There has been considerable discussion as to how metaphors produce the creative spark. The most common approach is called the interaction view, first proposed by Max Black (1962). Here the idea is that the meaning of words is not

fixed, but includes all kinds of associations and kindred concepts. This slackness in meaning enables ideas associated with one thing to be transferred easily to another thing. For example, because the meaning of culture is not definitively set, but includes a penumbra of ideas and concepts, it can be seen to share features with something very different, written texts. This view of metaphor has recently been challenged by Davidson (1979) and Rorty (1989), who claim that metaphors have no meaning other than their literal one, which is nonsensical. Davidson and Rorty are not dismissing metaphor, however. They just do not think one needs to talk about 'transference of meaning', which makes metaphor seem slightly mystical. Rather, precisely because metaphors are literally nonsensical, they are the jolt, the *frisson*, that makes us see the world in a different way; a way that could not be imagined before the metaphor was used (Rorty 1989: 16).

However metaphors create new angles on the world, once they are 'savored rather than spat out' (Rorty 1989: 18) they gradually acquire a habitual use. At that point they are dead metaphors. The significance for the 'on-going activity of science' is that dead metaphors become equivalent to the literal, and are then the basis on which new metaphors are coined. To put it in Kuhn's terms, when we use dead metaphors we are engaged in 'normal' science, not the revolutionary one that comes about only through producing new metaphors. That said, we should always remember that, although dead metaphors are equivalent to the literal, they are not equivalent to some outside real world. They are socially and culturally constructed entities that emerged in an earlier process of metaphorical redescription. As such, metaphors relate to other metaphors and, as in the case of texts, not to some pre-linguistic brute reality.

Turning to our immediate concern of writing, it is helpful when considering metaphor to make a distinction between 'big' and 'small' metaphor use. Big metaphors are those that lie behind general research methods, and schools of thought, while small metaphors are those that pepper individual pieces of writing. Now, clearly, there is some relationship between the two, although there may well be cases where they are inconsistent. In either case, though, the purpose of using metaphor is rhetorical, to persuade the reader that the writer's view is correct. In fact Kenneth Burke (1950), the influential American literary critic, makes metaphor one of his four master tropes, along with irony, synecdoche and metonymy.¹ That trope works precisely by appealing to our desire to reduce the unfamiliar to the familiar; in other words, metaphors persuade by saying that things that we thought were outside our ken (and thereby disconcerting) are really a lot like other things that we know very well.

White (1978) provides examples of the rhetorical power of both big and small metaphors. With regard to small metaphor use, he argues that the persuasiveness of A. J. P. Taylor's book *The Course of German History* is a consequence of its frequent appeal to dead metaphors that, in turn, evoke in the reader's mind an assurance of objectivity. As White (1978: 114) writes: 'it is seldom noted how the effect of "objectivity" can be attained by the use of nonpoetic language, that

is to say, by language in which dead metaphors rather than vivid ones provide the substance of the discourse'. With regard to big metaphor use, White points to the very method of historical narrative itself. A narrative's power, he argues, rests on its ability to evoke the familiar, and thereby to persuade:

properly understood, histories ought never to be read as unambiguous signs of the events they report, but rather as symbolic structures, extended metaphors, that 'liken' the events reported in them to some form with which we have already become familiar in our literary culture.

(White 1978: 91)

From White's comments it should be clear that metaphors are implicated in the very fabric of society and social processes; if they are to work they must resonate against an existing set of social and cultural representations. But in the resonance there is often conflict, intellectual and sometimes physical. Accepting new metaphors and their power to do new things frequently entails jettisoning old metaphors: Blake's old metaphors got in the way of Yeats's new ones, just as David Harvey's old physical metaphors for achieving spatial prediction got in the way of his new ones for achieving urban social justice. As Arib and Hesse (1986: 156) write, 'metaphor is potentially revolutionary'. To establish whether the revolution succeeds, and for how long it succeeds, entails examining both internal issues (e.g. the metaphor's logical consistency), and external ones (e.g. social relationships of power and vested interest). More generally, one should not see metaphor as right or wrong, or static in any sense. Metaphors are tasteful or tasteless (Davidson 1979), appropriate or inappropriate (Arib and Hesse 1986), useful or a hindrance (Rorty 1989). Furthermore, what is tasteful or appropriate or useful emerges only out of the broader social context in which such metaphors are embedded, and that context is dynamic. As a result, the nature of society, including the academy, is measured in part by the kind of 'metaphors it induces or allows, and the [kind] ... of judges of metaphor that it educates or rewards' (Booth 1979: 62). By our metaphors you shall know us.

In summary, the notions of text, discourse and metaphor have emerged as powerful concepts over the last twenty years. Originally defined in terms of literary criticism, they now have a much wider importance, as we have tried to show here. We conclude this chapter with a brief precis of each of the following twelve essays, seeing their discussion of texts, discourses or metaphors as pivotal concepts in their broader claims about the writing and representation of landscape.

DISCUSSION OF THE PAPERS

In spite of all their differences, there are a number of commonalities in the twelve papers that constitute the volume. The most basic is that landscapes, social action, paintings, maps, language and, of course, written documents are all held to be susceptible to textual interpretation. Although the authors of these chapters

have differences of opinion over the nature of that textual interpretation, they are in broad agreement that mimetic representation is a pipe dream that should be abandoned. Another related area of broad agreement is that the objects of enquiry, whether they be landscapes, maps or government documents, must be approached intertextually; showing the way that texts from other conceptual realms cross-cut, transform and, in turn, are transformed by the texts in question. The authors, however, differ in their opinions about how unstable this renders the world. Finally, for all the authors, the concept of power is central, not only to the constitution of the objects of study, but to their representation. Particular attention is devoted to the latter, to how power is inscribed in subjects and objects, and how power must be opened up to critique, no matter where it is found. Note that this unwillingness to privilege and exempt from critique any locus of power is one hallmark of the postmodern attitude, although a number of the essayists would be wary of that appellation.

The first essay, by James and Nancy Duncan, investigates the landscape interpretation of the semiotician and literary theorist Roland Barthes, who was one of the founders of both structuralism and poststructuralism. The focus of the Duncans' concern is primarily theoretical and methodological; that is, they are concerned less with what Barthes thought about landscapes than with how he thought about them. Choosing five of Barthes's books and articles written between the mid-1950s and his death in 1980, they trace his intellectual journey through these works from a structural, semiotic type of landscape interpretation to a poststructural approach. The implications of this shift are simultaneously traced within the realm of political discourse as Barthes moves from his early demystification of the landscapes of the bourgeoisie towards a postmodern critique of power itself, wherever it takes root in the landscape, and the realization that the search for any 'true' text underlying landscape history is a modernist fantasy.

Following is Stephen Daniels's essay, which focuses upon a very different text, a water-colour of Leeds painted by Turner in the early nineteenth century. Daniels reveals the textual quality of this painting by performing a virtuoso reading of it, showing how it 'speaks' both of facets of Leeds's industrialization as well as of the intellectual and political space occupied by the artist. Daniels accomplishes this reading by proceeding intertextually, tacking back and forth between the painting of Leeds and a series of other paintings by Turner and other artists, poetry, prose, city histories of Leeds, biography and contemporary political documents. In this manner Daniels illuminates not only the painting of Leeds but also Turner and his time. While the author does not dwell upon the methodological implications of his work, this chapter serves as a fine illustration of the intertextual approach to interpretation.

Rather than interpreting the human-made landscape of industrialization, Patrick McGreevy turns his attention to a naturally forming one, Niagara Falls. But even the interpretation of nature must be through a textual account. Moreover, such texts vary according to the concerns of both authors and audiences. In

particular, using written accounts of Niagara Falls over the last hundred years – letters, newspaper clippings, diaries, poems and novels – McGreevy neatly brings together issues of text and metaphor. For he argues that such written texts have been informed by the metaphor of death; visitors do not see a pristine falls but one, as it were, that was already written upon by the death metaphor. Within this general interpretation, McGreevy undertakes two tasks. First, to show that the metaphor of death has crept out of the written texts and found its way into the landscape that humans have created around Niagara. This refers not only to the inanimate human-made landscape, but also to the actions of humans themselves (the suicides are the most obvious example). Second, to show that the metaphor of death informing the falls is not some universal sentiment, but arose in a particular social and cultural context, the nineteenth century and its associated Victorian values. Furthermore, having emerged within that context, the metaphor was subsequently used by contemporary writers to construct an internal geography of the falls itself.

Jonathan Smith's essay that follows is also concerned with linking metaphors and texts, in this case a 'big' metaphor that is adopted by many of the authors in this volume, landscape as text. In particular, he is concerned with unpacking the metaphor to understand its wider implications, including those of power relations. Focusing on the issue of scenic beauty, Smith argues that the metaphor of landscape as text implies committed readers. In the modern world, however, the idea of sustained reading is disparaged, among non-academics at least. In contemporary society the landscape is now read in terms of phrases from glossy brochures and the flickering images of television sets. For this reason many individuals are now barred from the kind of reading that is necessary to appreciate the quality of the physical environment. As a consequence, we cannot expect landscape beauty to serve as text that will elicit serious commentaries from those outside the academy. As a result, the very meaning of the metaphor landscape as text implies a certain elitism by those who use it.

Gunnar Olsson is also concerned with the implicit power relationships that subsist in metaphor use, but in this case they are the metaphor of the sign. In particular, drawing upon the work of Derrida, Foucault, Girard and Lacan, Olsson deconstructs the word 'is', which he argues is a key concept in the vocabulary of power. He organizes his argument around the deconstruction of three signs (sets of lines) showing how each presupposes a different mode of thought and power relations. The first is the equals sign (=), which belongs to logic and draws its power from metonymy. It promises something that it can never deliver; an equality between two things that are not the same. The second is the slash (/). It belongs to dialectics and receives its power from metaphor. Finally, the third is the Saussurean bar (—) which splits and unites the two functions of the sign. All three are used in attempts to control meaning in different ways. All are lines of power.

Michael Curry shares many of Olsson's concerns about power but he couches them in historical and sociological terms. In particular, he examines the develop-

ment and implications of two features of twentieth-century academic discourse in human geography: first, an architectonic impulse that desires to create an ordered, hierarchical system; and, second, a reconceptualization of the concrete away from simple description, towards the development of a systematic ontology. Curry exemplifies these two features by focusing on the changing meanings of just one idea, 'forms of life', which has been an important concept within at least four different areas of geography over the last century: within the French school, beginning with Vidal de la Blache; within urban sociology, beginning with Louis Wirth; within some areas of quantitative geography, in particular Q analysis; and, finally, within the emerging set of writings on a post-modern geography. In all cases, Curry finds the move towards both an architectonic approach and a systematic ontology regrettable; it is a move, he argues, that says much about the power and authority of scientism within our society, and the way in which such power and authority infect all levels of the academy. Rejecting any version of 'forms of life' that is tainted by scientism, he returns to Wittgenstein's original use of the term. For Wittgenstein's view, argues Curry, is non-architectonic, and celebrates the diverse concrete experiences of the everyday without reducing them to an ontological theory. Furthermore, under a Wittgensteinian interpretation, 'forms of life' is an inherently reflexive notion; it behoves human geographers who use the term to apply it to themselves, thereby enabling them to understand and criticize the social relations, including those of the power of scientism, in which they are enmeshed.

Trevor Barnes's paper that follows is also concerned with the power of science, but in only one sub-area of the discipline, economic geography. Combining notions of text and metaphor, Barnes argues that the economic landscapes constructed by neoclassical and Marxist economic geographers are underlain by respectively a physical and a biological metaphor. As a consequence, such landscapes do not represent some given external reality, but reflect only the internal logic of the metaphor employed. Barnes then asks whether the internal logic of these two metaphors is appropriate to the respective tasks set them. In particular, drawing upon the work of Mary Hesse, he outlines three criteria of appropriate metaphor use. Applying such criteria in turn, Barnes concludes that both the physical and the biological metaphors used in economic geography are inappropriate. In general, he suggests that both types of metaphor suffer from their narrowness; that they are unable to cope with the diversity of space and place, and therefore either ignore it or reduce it to something less than it is.

The paper by Leslie Hepple is also concerned with metaphor use, in this case their political consequences on the ground. He argues that much recent geopolitical discourse in the southern cone countries of Latin America is informed by an organistic metaphor of the state; one that has been appropriated by the military and used to justify their own vested power interests. Initially the organistic metaphor was used to justify external disputes over national territory with neighbouring countries. More recently, however, it has been employed to direct and legitimate internal military intervention. For once groups within a country

opposed to the military interest were labelled cancerous, and thereby harmful to the organism of the state, justification existed for eradication. The physical brutality of the internal security forces was directly predicated upon the language of metaphor.

Gearóid Ó Tuathail, in the chapter that follows, is also concerned with the geopolitical. In particular, he explores the manner in which South Africa is represented in foreign policy discourse in the United States. Using a broad range of texts by government officials and foreign policy 'experts', he focuses upon what he terms the two major 'scripts' that constitute the representation of South Africa: the first of a morally repugnant place and the second of a strategically important place. Drawing upon the Baudrillard's notion of hyperreality, defined as the simulations of the real which ultimately become more real than the real itself, Tuathail launches a postmodern critique of American foreign policy. He argues that the two central strategic claims of loss of resources and communist threat are both hyperreal. He then draws links between a racist South Africa and racist America, suggesting that this affinity in part accounts for why Americans script a morally repugnant South Africa as a 'tragedy'. The author uses the notion of script and hyperreality not to undermine the existence of 'the real'; after all, the notion of hyperreality presupposes and depends upon a notion of the real. Rather he uses these concepts to reveal the irony and paradox in 'official conceptions of the real'.

Judith Kenny also chooses to interpret a politically charged text, albeit at the municipal level. She studies the Portland, Oregon, Comprehensive Plan, proceeding intertextually by drawing the interconnections between the plan, a broader set of political writings and the specific texts swirling around a particularly controversial land use case in the city. She organizes her interpretation of the relationship between the plan and the land use case around the concept of a discursive field, the range of competing discourses relevant to a particular realm of social practice. She skilfully demonstrates how competing discourses within an American liberal ideology and American planning practice allow groups with different perceived interests (merchant groups, neighbourhood groups, city planners, city politicians) to produce different readings of the plan. As such she argues for a politics of reading that ultimately becomes translated into the material fabric of the city.

John Pickles examines yet a different type of politically embedded text, the propaganda map. More broadly, he conceives of all maps as a form of discourse, which calls into question any correspondence theory of map representation. A more satisfactory way to approach maps, he argues, is through hermeneutics. Drawing upon the methodological insights of Ricoeur and others, he adopts an intertextual approach to maps in general and propaganda maps in particular. Such an intertextual reading of maps explores both the texts in which they are embedded and the contexts into which they are projected. The author's choice of propaganda maps is particularly apposite for questioning correspondence theory, because it challenges the alleged difference between the 'good' and the 'bad'

map, and between the 'true, scientific' map and the 'false, political' map. Pickles convincingly argues that cartography faces a crisis of representation, and shows one way in which the cartographic discourse might be reconstructed.

Enlarging upon Pickles's argument, Brian Harley argues that geography needs an ethnography of modern cartography. He urges geographers to stop seeing maps as part of an objective scientific system and begin to see them as part of a cultural system. This suggests that the link between cartographic representation and reality can be better comprehended through social theory than through positivism. To this end the author using Derridean deconstruction theory and Foucault's notion of discourse attempts to sketch the outline of such a theoretical approach. Arguing that maps are texts which are susceptible to deconstruction, he reveals not only the rhetorical devices used in cartographic communication, but also the inherent intertextuality of maps. He claims that cartography as at present constituted normalizes and disciplines the world and as such is a part of the power/knowledge matrix. Bringing together the Derridean and Foucauldian strands of his argument, he contends that cartography's position within this matrix is made more powerful because of its 'sly rhetoric of neutrality'.

Finally, the Afterword is less a conclusion than a critical reflection on the volume. Believing that some readers will see this collection as a contribution to a postmodern human geography, we reflect critically on the use of that latter term. Ironically our subsequent doubts about postmodernism are themselves born out of a postmodern attitude: one where self-reflection and self-criticism are paramount. Like Peer Gynt, the Great Boyg blocks our way; we can only 'Go round about, go round about.'

NOTE

- 1 White (1978) argues that, because synecdoche and metonymy are themselves forms of metaphor, Burke in effect provides only two master tropes.