

HPEN7018: MEMORY THEATRES & MAPS



Jerry Brotton describes it as an egocentric map – placing the self at the centre

A close-up view of the Babylonian map of the World - the oldest *mappa mundi* in existence. This partially broken clay tablet contains both cuneiform inscriptions and a unique map of the Mesopotamian world. Probably from Sippar, Mesopotamia, Iraq.

THE HOUSE AS A SITE OF DREAM AND SELF: THE THEATRE OF MEMORY/ THE MEMORY PALACE

Writing creates pattern where there is none, makes order of disorder

- Repetition and prediction/recognition in reading
- Reading itself as a movement forwards and a standing still
- Memory palaces insert the unknown into the known – fuse short and long term memory
- The daytime world in the night-time world - houses as sites of memory - either safety or a prison (Jane Eyre) then the forgotten attic the unknown overwhelming the known
- The house which becomes unpredictable or has a forgotten wing , a section no longer visited.; a hidden door or room, a cellar

The journey / the quest: *Idylls of the King*, 'Child Roland to the Dark Tower Came,' *The wasteland*. the western/the road movie– *Thelma and Louise*, *Taxi Driver*, *Paris Texas*

- Ursula Le Guin: *Earthsea Tombs of Atuan* individual and dark 'light a candle cast a shadow'
- The quest in *Lord of the rings* – Gollum in the dark underground

Light is forbidden here." Kossil's whisper was sharp. Even as she said it, Arha knew it must be so. **This was the very home of darkness, the inmost center of the night.**

Three times her fingers swept across a gap in the complex, rocky blackness. The fourth time she felt for the height and width of the opening, and entered it. Kossil came behind.

In this tunnel, which went upward again at a slight slant, they passed an opening on the left, and then at a branching way took the right: all by feel, by groping, in the blindness of the underearth and the silence inside the ground. In such a passageway as this, one must reach out almost constantly to touch both sides of the tunnel, lest one of the openings that must be counted be missed, or the forking of the way go unnoticed. **Touch was one's whole guidance; one could not see the way, but held it in one's hands.**

"Is this the Labyrinth?"

"No. This is the lesser maze, which is beneath the Throne."

"Where is the entrance to the Labyrinth?"

Arha liked this game in the dark, she wanted a greater puzzle to be set her.

"The second opening we passed in the Undertomb. Feel for a door to the right now, a wooden door, perhaps we've passed it already-"

Arha heard Kossil's hands fumbling uneasily along the wall, scraping on the rough rock. She kept her fingertips light against the rock, and in a moment felt the smooth grain of wood beneath them. She pushed on it, and the door creaked open easily. She stood for a moment blind with light.

They entered a large low room, walled with hewn stone and lighted by one fuming torch hung from a

THE QUEST FOR DARKNESS: *THE TOMBS OF ATUAN*

chain. The place was foul with the torch-smoke that had no outlet. Arha's eyes stung and watered.

"Where are the prisoners?"

"There."

At last she realized that the three heaps of something on the far side of the room were men.

"The door isn't locked. Is there no guard?"

"None is needed."

She went a little farther into the room, hesitant, peering through the smoky haze. The prisoners were manacled by both ankles and one wrist to great rings driven into the rock of the wall. If one of them wanted to lie down, his chained arm must remain raised, hanging from the manacle. Their hair and beards had made a matted tangle which, together with the shadows, hid their faces. One of them half lay, the other two sat or squatted. They were naked. The smell from them was stronger even than the reek of smoke.

One of them seemed to be watching Arha; she thought she saw the glitter of eyes, then was not sure. The others had not moved or lifted their heads.

She turned away. "They are not men any more," she said.

"They were never men. They were demons, beast-spirits, who plotted against the sacred life of the Godking!" Kossil's eyes shone with the reddish torchlight.

Arha looked again at the prisoners, awed and curious. "How could a man attack a god? How was it? You: how could you dare attack a living god?"

The one man stared at her through the black brush of his hair, but said nothing.

"Their tongues were cut out before they were sent from Awabath," Kossil said. "Do not speak to them, mistress. They are defilement. They are yours, but not to speak to, nor to look at, nor to think upon. They are yours to give to the Nameless Ones."



Mnemonics (Memory Palace)

Knowing a place & placing a memory – embedding short term memories in long term memory systems; categorising and ordering

MEMORY PALACE: KEEPING THINGS IN PLACE



UNKNOWN THINGS LURKING

Deep down here by the dark water lived old Gollum, a small slimy creature. I don't know where he came from, nor who or what he was. He was Gollum — as dark as darkness, except for two big round pale eyes in his thin face. He had a little boat, and he rowed about quite quietly on the lake; for lake it was, wide and deep and deadly cold. He paddled it with large feet dangling over the side, but never a ripple did he make. Not he. He was looking out of his pale lamp-like eyes for blind fish, which he grabbed with his long fingers as quick as thinking. He liked meat too. Goblin he thought good, when he could get it; but he took care they never found him out. **He just throttled them from behind, if they ever came down alone anywhere near the edge of the water, while he was prowling about. They very seldom did, for they had a feeling that something unpleasant was lurking down there, down at the very roots of the mountain.** They had come on the lake, when they were tunnelling down long ago, and they found they could go no further; so there their road ended in that direction, and there was no reason to go that way — unless the Great Goblin sent them. Sometimes he took a fancy for fish from the lake, and sometimes neither goblin nor fish came back.”

J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*

MAPS & JOURNEYS

OVERCOMING THE MONSTER The protagonist sets out to defeat an antagonistic force (often evil) which threatens the protagonist and/or protagonist's homeland. *eg Perseus, Theseus, Beowulf, Dracula, The War of the Worlds, Nicholas Nickleby, The Guns of Navarone, Seven Samurai (The Magnificent Seven), James Bond,*

RAGS TO RICHES The poor protagonist acquires power, wealth, and/or a mate, loses it all and gains it back, growing as a person as a result. *eg Cinderella, Aladdin, Jane Eyre, A Little Princess, Great Expectations, David Copperfield,*

THE QUEST The protagonist and companions set out to acquire an important object or to get to a location. They face temptations and other obstacles along the way. *eg The Iliad, The Pilgrim's Progress, The Lord Of The Rings, King Solomon's Mines, Watership Down, Raiders of the Lost Ark, Monty Python and the Holy Grail.*

VOYAGE AND RETURN The protagonist goes to a strange land and, after overcoming the threats it poses or learning important lessons unique to that location, they return with experience. *eg Ramayana, Odyssey, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, Goldilocks and the Three Bears, Orpheus, The Time Machine, Peter Rabbit, The Hobbit, Brideshead Revisited, The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, The Third Man, Back to the Future,*

COMEDY Light and humorous character with a happy or cheerful ending; a dramatic work in which the central motif is the triumph over adverse circumstance, resulting in a successful or happy conclusion.[3] Booker stresses that comedy is more than humor. It refers to a pattern where the conflict becomes more and more confusing, but is at last made plain in a single clarifying event. The majority of romance films fall into this category. *eg A Midsummer Night's Dream, Much Ado About Nothing, Twelfth Night, Four Weddings and a Funeral,*

TRAGEDY The protagonist is a hero with a major character flaw or great mistake which is ultimately their undoing. Their unfortunate end evokes pity at the folly and fall of a fundamentally good character. *eg Anna Karenina, Carmen, Citizen Kane, Julius Caesar, Macbeth, Madame Bovary, Oedipus Rex, Romeo and Juliet.*

REBIRTH An event forces the main character to change their ways and often become a better individual. *eg Pride and Prejudice, The Frog Prince, Beauty and the Beast, The Snow Queen, A Christmas Carol, The Secret Garden, Peer Gynt,*

THE NATURE OF MAPS: SELECTION & PERSPECTIVE



World Map of al-Mas'udi pre-956
– *trade routes plus orientation to look up to Mecca*

MEDIEVAL ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE



(Inverted to current orientation)

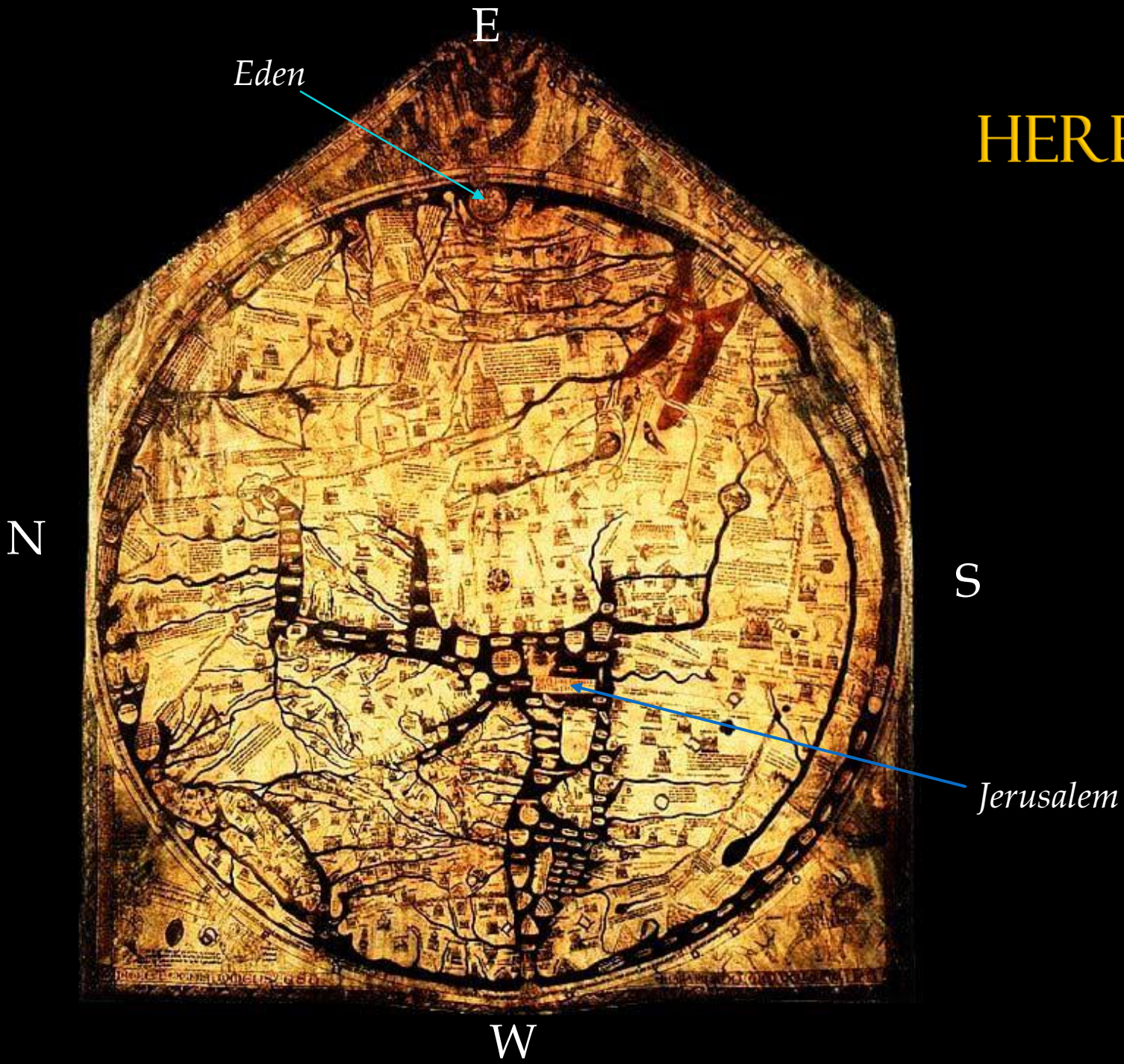
IMPERIAL MAPPING

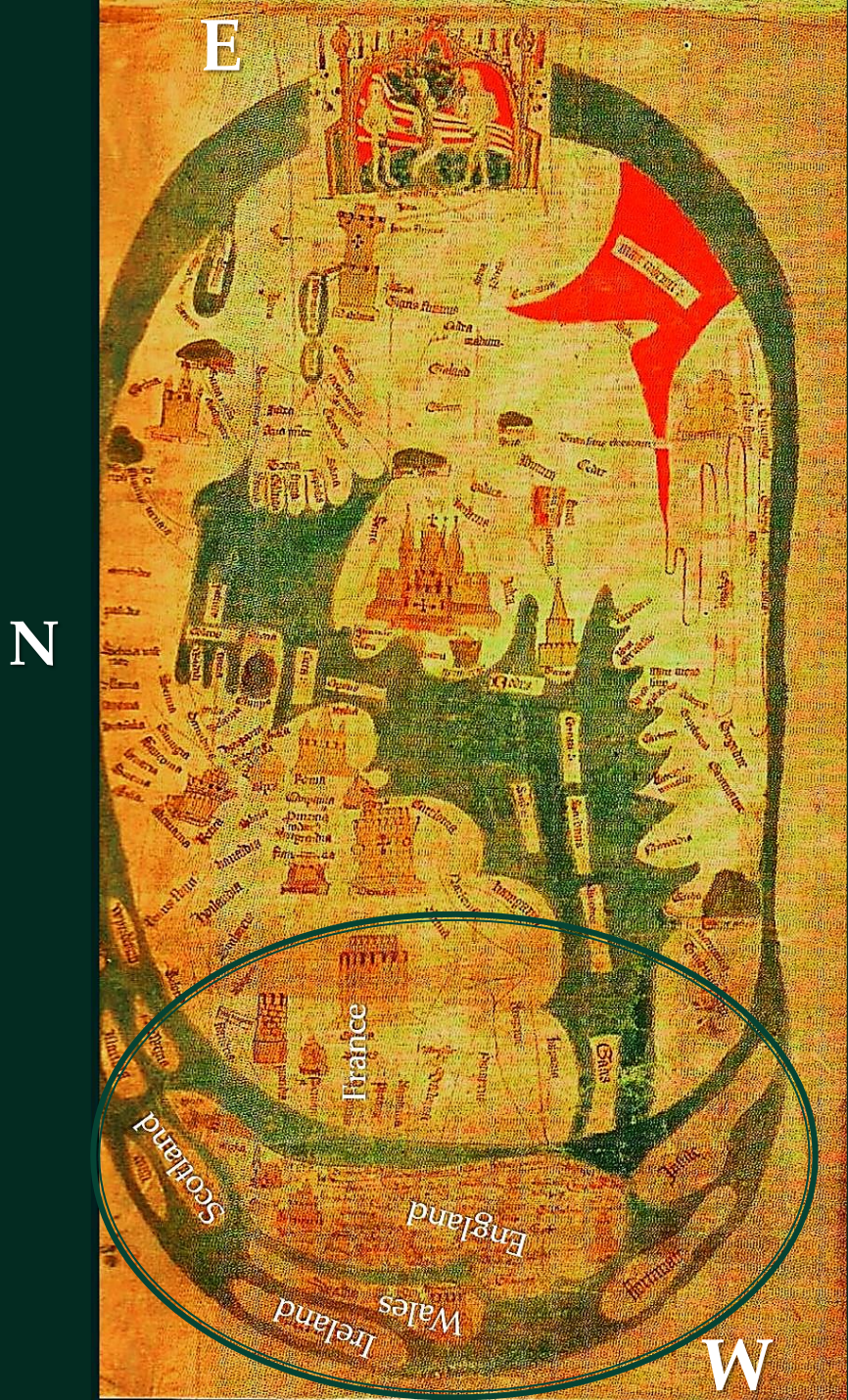
Now when I was a little chap I had a passion for maps. I would look for hours at South America, or Africa, or Australia, and lose myself in all the glories of exploration. At that time there were many blank spaces on the earth, and when I saw one that looked particularly inviting on a map (but they all look that) I would put my finger on it and say, 'When I grow up I will go there.' The North Pole was one of these places, I remember. Well, I haven't been there yet, and shall not try now. The glamour's off. Other places were scattered about the hemispheres. I have been in some of them, and... well, we won't talk about that. But there was one yet—the biggest, the most blank, so to speak—that I had a hankering after.

“True, by this time it was not a blank space any more. It had got filled since my boyhood with rivers and lakes and names. It had ceased to be a blank space of delightful mystery—a white patch for a boy to dream gloriously over. It had become a place of darkness. But there was in it one river especially, a mighty big river, that you could see on the map, resembling an immense snake uncoiled, with its head in the sea, its body at rest curving afar over a vast country, and its tail lost in the depths of the land.

HEREFORD MAPPA MUNDI

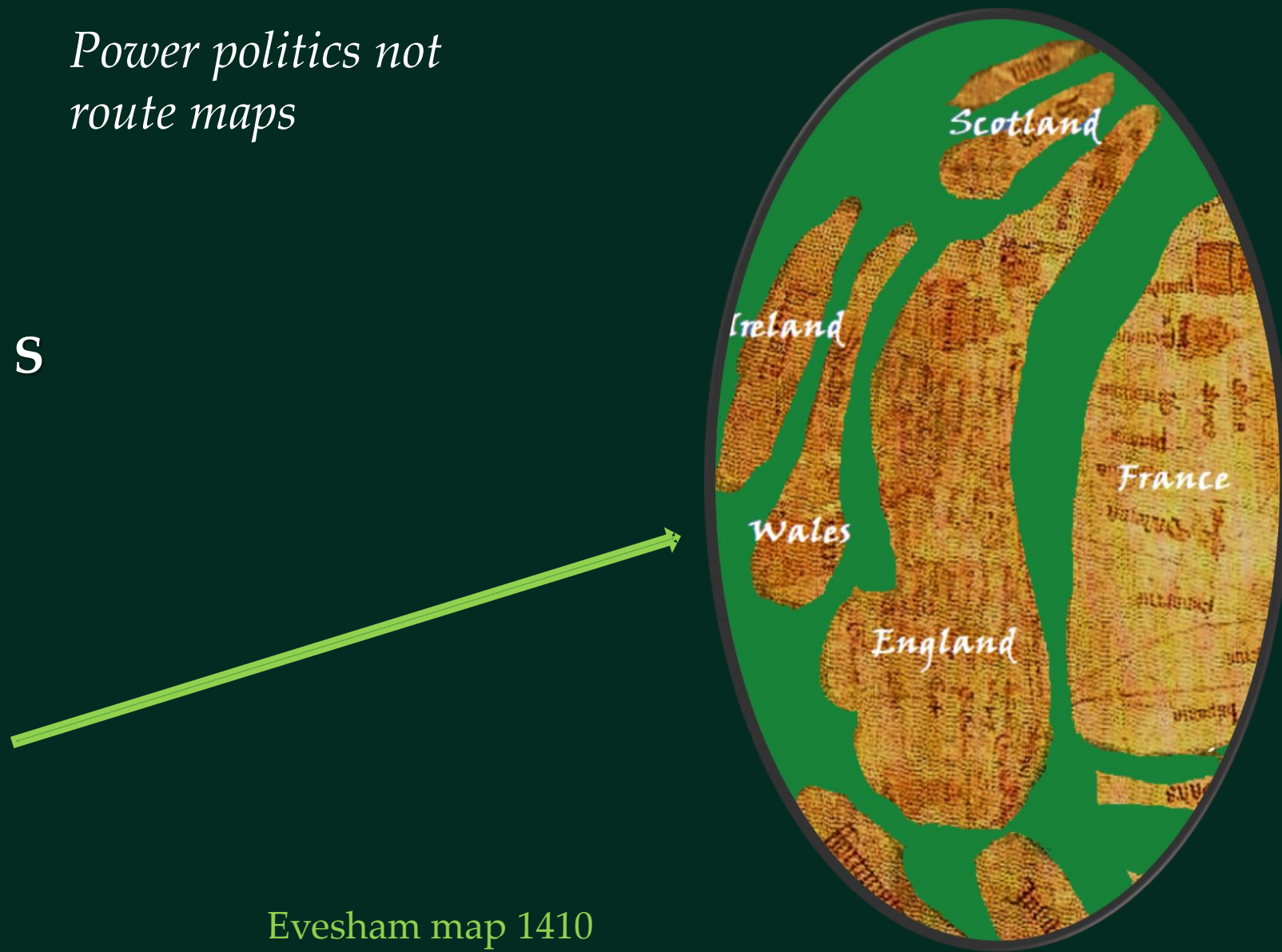
Not about travel or trade but
about the place of power at the
centre and orientation towards
Christ and 'fall' from Eden



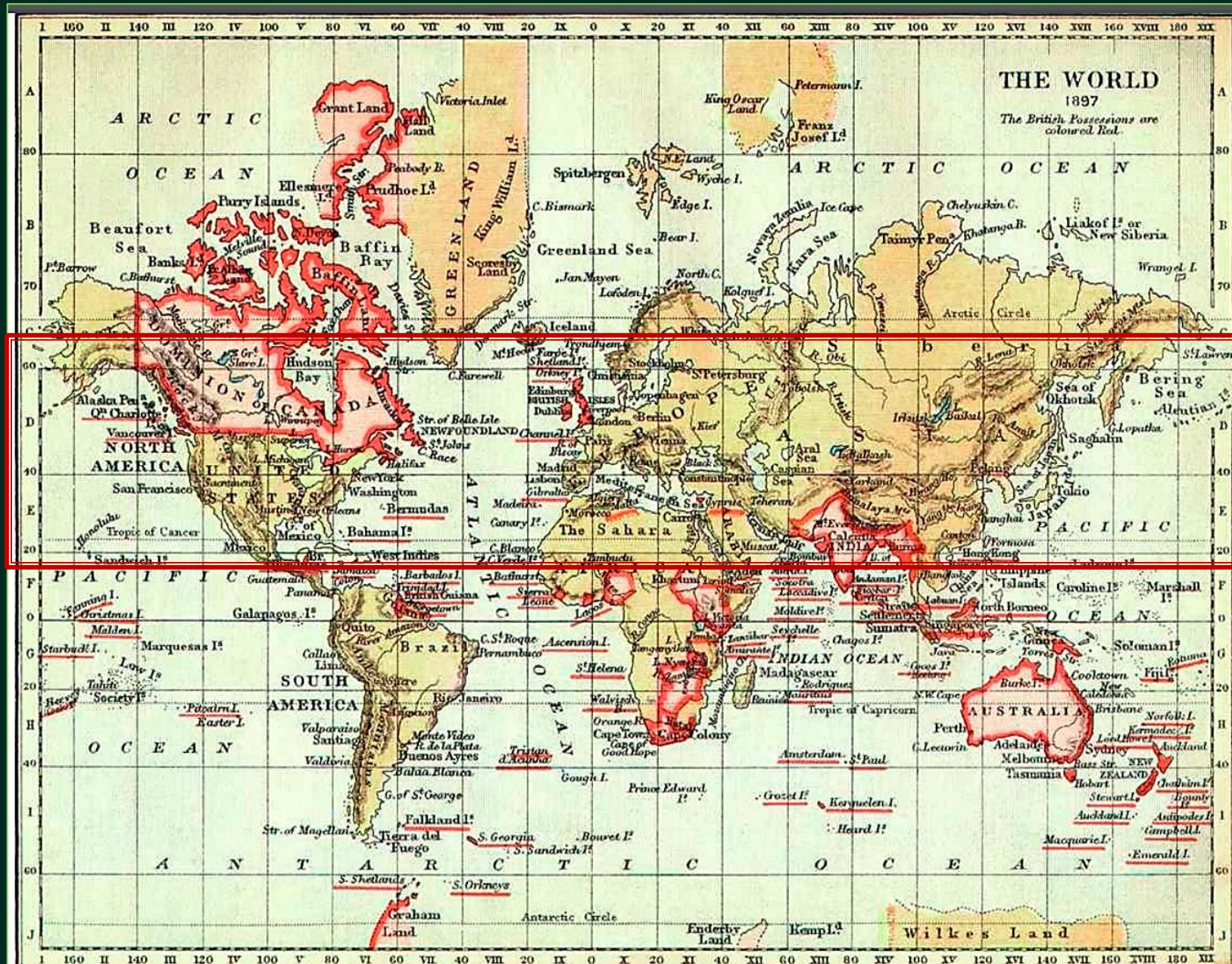


ENGLISH POLITICAL MAP: ENGLAND WALES & SCOTLAND

*Power politics not
route maps*



Evesham map 1410



MERCATOR MAPPING POWER

Spatial allocation for trade routes Trade in the central band (compare the size of the British Isles to India – or Australia)

Master got up quickly and went into the study. Ugwu's confused fear made his eyelids quiver. Would Master send him home because he did not speak English well, kept chicken in his pocket overnight, did not know the strange places Master named? Master came back with a wide piece of paper that he unfolded and laid out on the dining table, pushing aside books and magazines. He pointed with his pen.

"This is our world, although the people who drew this map decided to put their own land on top of ours. There is no top or bottom, you see."

Master picked up the paper and folded it, so that one edge touched the other, leaving a hollow between. "Our world is round, it never ends. *Nee anya*, this is all water, the seas and oceans, and here's Europe and here's our own continent, Africa, and the Congo is in the middle. Farther up here is Nigeria, and Nsukka is here, in the southeast; this is where we are."

He tapped with his pen.

"Yes, sah."

"Did you go to school?"

"Standard two, sah. But I learn everything fast."

"Standard two? How long ago?"

"Many years now, sah. But I learn everything very fast!"

"Why did you stop school?"

"My father's crops failed, sah."

MAPS: FINDING A PLACE

HALF A YELLOW SUN



2005 BBC tilted angle (4,000 complaints in days)

THE CENTRE & THE MARGINS: LOCAL MAPS

Mike Parker



2005 spoof weather map from the perspective of Scotland

It is a truism to say that names are important to us. They are not just signpost to our present identity; They also contain clues to our past. One of the characters in ...*Translations* says]... we call that crossroads Tobair Vree. And why do we call it Tobair Vree. ? I'll tell you why, Tobair means a well. But what does Vree mean ? It's a corruption of Brian (Gaelic pronunciation). Brian - an erosion of Tobair Bhriain. Because 150 years ago they used to be a well there, not at the crossroads, mind you - that would be too simple - but in a field close to the crossroads.' **When such a name is translated from the Gaelic of the West of Ireland into modern English, what is gained? What is lost?** In *Translations* a play set in colonial Ireland of the 1830s, two British Army cartographers are making a new map of Ireland in which all the Gaelic place names are anglicised to their nearest equivalent. Such a task poses dilemmas: 'What do we do with a name like that? Do we scrap Tobair Vree all together and call it – What? - the Cross? Crossroads? Or do we keep piety with a man long dead, long forgotten, his name 'eroded' beyond recognition, whose trivial little story nobody in the parish remembers?' Brian Friel's play explores the psychological and moral implications of the kind of translation that colonial occupation renders inevitable. **The names which are given language and culture confer on the landscape both denominate and describe. They set up familiar terms of reference and cannot be disturbed without causing the local people to suffer a sense of loss of identity and continuity with the past.** The British soldiers intent on efficiently mapping the region of Donegal and renaming its landmarks are vandals uprooting ancient tradition.

Manus: What sort of translation is that, Owen?

Owen: Did I make a mess of it?

Manus: You weren't saying what Lancey was saying!

Owen: "Uncertainty in meaning is incipient poetry" - who said that?

Manus: There was nothing uncertain about what Lancey said: It's a bloody military operation! ... what's "incorrect" about the place-names we have here?

Owen: Nothing at all. They're just going to be standardised'. Manus: You mean changed into English?

Owen: Where there's ambiguity, they'll be Anglicised.(p.32.)

Hugh: We must learn those new names [...] We must learn where we live. We must learn to make them our own. We must make them our new home. (p.66.)

Lancey: [W]e will embark on a series of evictions and leveling of every abode in the following selected areas - ... Swinefort Burnfoot ... Dromduff.

Brian Friel, *Translations*

THE LIBRARY ALTERNATIVE MODES OF STORAGE



Fonthill Castle Library Room

November 2020



MVRDV's Tianjin Binhai Library
Goes Viral via #YearInDesign2018

Feb. 2019

REVEALING SKELETONS



CONTAINING DIFFERENCE

DISCUSSION