

ASA 2007

Panel F2, Maps and the Materiality of Movement

note: please do not quote without the author's permission
only **Figures 1,2,3,4,9,10** (in bold) are illustrated here

PATRICK LAVIOLETTE

*Contouring and Contesting Cornishness**

Abstract

With reference to the relationship that exists between maps and identity in Britain's Cornish peninsula, this paper explores the dialectics between discourse and practice. It claims that cartographic portraits condition, and are conditioned by, experiential journeys as well as social images which both project and reflect cultural identities. Such spatial projections embed notions of home and belonging into the fabric of individual and collective perceptions of the region. The paper therefore highlights some of the more affective ways of gauging the interactions that people have with the visual imagery and iconography of maps. By revealing how its distinctive contour typically stands as a symbolic form of local representation, it suggests that the very shape of Cornwall emphasises cultural distinction. Moreover, by investigating the embodied construction of belonging that takes place through map outlines, I am ultimately interested in evaluating how residents and visitors frame their discursive, visual and sensorial experiences of place. This, I argue, occurs through a diversity of mapping practices which are interesting in spatial, social and cross-cultural terms.

Keywords: Map iconography; material metaphor; landscape; Cornish identity.

*What, a map? What are you talking about? Don't you know what a map is?
There, there, never mind, don't explain, I hate explanations;
they fog a thing up so that you can't tell anything about it.*

-- Samuel Langhorne Clemens 1889.

INTRODUCTION

Samuel Clemens chose the pen name Mark Twain because it was an old Mississippi River term for navigating through safe water. As the boatman's call "mark number two" it signified the second marking on a line that measured a depth of two fathoms or twelve feet, that is, a safe depth for a steamboat to travel. In a sense then, this name choice is itself about mapping the identity of place, in this case by reference to a vocational shipping idiom linked with the Mississippi area. The quote is also interesting in relation to this overview about maps in Cornwall because it is taken from Twain's book *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. By its reference to the

* This paper was initially presented in November 2002 at the American Anthropological Association conference in New Orleans. Subsequent versions were given in March 2004 as part of the Cultural & Historical Research Group seminar series of UCL's Geography Department as well as in the Geography & English seminars at Tremough's Combined Universities of Cornwall in October 2006.

mythical King of the Britons, the title has an affiliation with Cornwall because of this peninsula's associations with these legends (Orange & Laviolette 2007). These often recount that Arthur had occupied the coastal castle of Tintagel, near the village of Camelford (or as some would have it, Camelot, the fictional Seat of the Knights of the Round Table) (**Fig. 1**).

The citation from Twain is all the more relevant here because I want to use it as a means of introducing certain methodological and epistemological tensions. In particular, those that exist between an informant's spoken justification on the one hand (revealed by the dismissal of listening to the explanation, "there, there, never mind, don't explain") and the more phenomenologically informed descriptive knowledges that arise from observational or embodied experiences on the other. In this paper, I shall navigate through these tensions by relying on evidence that comes from discursive explanations about maps and mapping, as spoken by my informants in Cornwall during more formal interviews, as well as from their more engaged encounters with maps as assessed through ethnographic participant observation. I also draw on data taken from analyses of popular items of material culture that depict maps of the region such as post-cards, business adverts, art logos, tourist brochures and guide books.



FIGURE 1 Mural Map of *Cornwall* featuring King Arthur. S. Jennings (Callington Murals Project, July 1999, by the author)

Maps as methods

Maps and mapping were an important part of my research in Cornwall. They formed a material methodology for gathering information about a range of related topics concerned with landscape perception, tourism, belonging and the cultural construction of place. But as representations, maps are used here as more than just methods of recording or presenting data. Rather, I consider them in a way analogous to how the anthropologists Marcus Banks & Howard Morphy (1997) have theorised a range of visual media -- as data in and of themselves. The consideration of maps throughout this paper is that they are a form of information that has arisen from my ethnography as well as a tool that I used to solicit responses from people and gather data.

Two specific methods lent themselves well towards engaging with people and their relationships with mapping. The first was a self-conscious attempt to meet informants spontaneously and interact with them on common ground. This meant using public transport, hitch-hiking and taking walks with residents and visitors. These short expeditions allowed me to trace the trajectories that informants took during the journey and therefore to draw-out certain comparisons between the choices that they made in travelling through Cornwall and their more imaginary landscapes or mental maps. Indeed, an excellent way of soliciting peoples' descriptions of their surroundings is to allow for some form of physical engagement with the environment either preceding, during or following more formal types of interviews.

The second strategy was to elicit landscape responses with the help of various graphic tools, like photographs, brochures and maps. One type was the *Cornwall Landscape Assessment* produced by the Cornish Archaeological Unit in 1994. By requesting that my informants comment on the representation of certain regions according to the character zones of this historic landscape assessment, I was thus able to delve into their imaginary, mnemonic and experiential geographies given the manifold visual identifications that such objects entice. As was the case with Janet Hoskins' (1998) ethnographic research, the tactic of interviewing with the aid of tangible artefacts has allowed for responses that were spontaneous, interactive and open-ended.

From this vantage point, the conceptual frame for much of this analysis centres upon two themes that are of particular relevance to the study of visual culture: map usage and tourism promotion. For instance, the visual anthropologist and curator Elizabeth Edwards reveals that the objects linked with holidaymakers "[...] are an important facet in the ongoing consideration of the politics of representation" (1996: 216). Further, Brian Harley (1987; 1992) reminds us that cartographic processes are themselves inextricably linked with the development of colonial and national ideologies as well as with the formulation of Imperial subjectivities. Their research emphasises that if we seek to better our understanding of hegemonic social structures, we need to be more attentive to the manipulations of symbolic power which occur in the business of mapping places, identities and histories.

Although Harley's work is groundbreaking, I nevertheless want to challenge his

somewhat top-down assumptions of power in relation to the political control over the production of maps. Instead I want to offer a more emancipatory view, where power in Foucauldian terms is ubiquitous and therefore maps can equally be used to subvert. In other words, they can form visual and material narratives of resistance. The consumer research specialists Stephen Brown & Darach Turley (1997) amplify this position by warning that Baudrillardian views of hyper-reality - where simulacra or reproduction take precedence over authentic images - rarely do justice to the diversity of real life holiday experiences. Consequently, they suggest that scholars should consider the materiality of travel in its habitual contexts. Hence, it is to the experiences and discussions of mapping that I now turn in order to explore how social anthropology in particular, and human geography more obviously, can help us define the relationship between map projections and the appropriation of socio-cultural difference.

As a narrow peninsula leading into the Irish Sea and surrounded by over 240 miles of coastline, Cornwall has an obvious and distinctively geographic outline. Because of its coastal setting, associated with many water based vocations and sea-side pastimes, as well as the nature of its industries more generally, maps in and of Cornwall have had an historical importance that is distinct from many places in the UK (**Fig.2**). Somewhat controversially perhaps, I will thus argue that the Duchy of Cornwall has a singular relationship with mapping. For instance, this territory's strategic location has meant that the Cornish coastline has for centuries been mapped-out extensively for military purposes. Further, the merchant navy, in addition to numerous fishing and sea-side sporting activities, have all depended on a detailed marine cartography of the area. Further still, Cornwall's minimally disturbed rural character has resulted in numerous and detailed topographic descriptions by archaeologists and historians. The exploitation of the region's rich mineral deposits, particularly of tin and China clay, has equally required extensive geological surveys.

Maps of this peninsula have thus been powerful social actors historically, carrying symbolic agency and standing as representative icons in the formation of the region's identities. The distinctive shape surrounded by sea emphasises to residents and visitors alike that this place is more isolated and separated from England than the other counties. As Daphne Du Maurier points out in *Vanishing Cornwall* (1967), Cornwall's outline on a map is, like Italy's, reminiscent for many people of a fisherman's sea boot, which is indeed one of the regions' most important industries (Thomas 1997). It has thus been mapped out as a place that is at once geographically bounded, culturally binding and politically bemused – a place that is separate (**Fig. 3**).

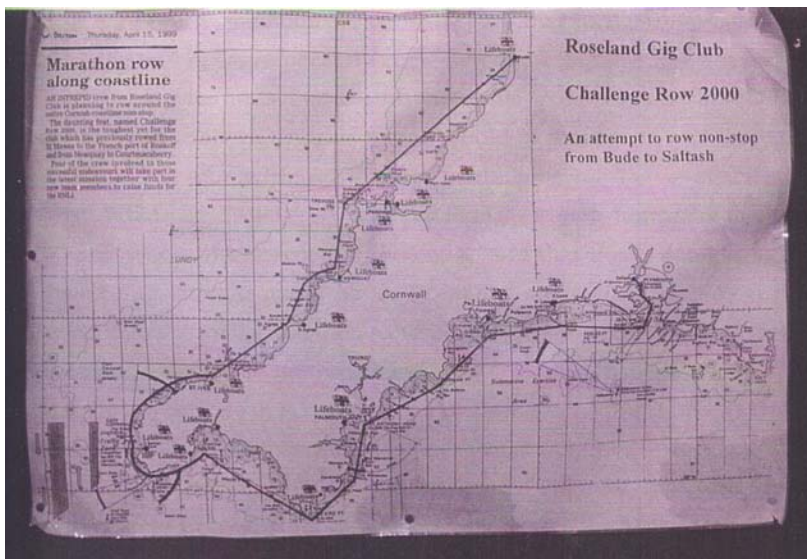


FIGURE 2 Challenge Row 2000 Map (Roseland Gig Club, Oct. 1999, photo by the author).



FIGURE 3 MK logo (2003, photo by D. Cole of MK)



FIGURE 4 Cornish Homecomings/Dehwelans 2004 Map of Cornwall (website).

Because of this separation, map images continue to be of great significance in Cornwall, although an important shift of emphasis has occurred regarding their topographic representations. The use that the Great Western Railway has made of visual cartography to promote Cornwall as Mediterranean in the early 20th century has infiltrated into many aspects of political economy. Consequently, the region's recent de-industrialisation has meant that leisure mapping has become one of the most significant economic activities West of the Tamar. The need for traditional scientific cartography has thus been transposed to a different type of accuracy -- one that facilitates walking, hiking and site seeing; in other words, one that serves the tourism and heritage industries (Thornton 1993). Depictions of place and leisure exploitation have substituted many of the representations pertaining to natural resource use. Moreover, some of the search for scientific rigour in relation to industrial mapping has lost ground to artistic, generic and playful depictions, so that we now find a relatively high proportion of freehand or imaginary map representations of the region. Indeed, many different types of logo maps are cropping up across Cornwall. One good example is the promotion piece for the 2004 Cornish Homecomings Festival (Dehwelans) which was created by the winner of a regional graphic design competition (**Fig. 4**).

THE VISUAL CULTURE OF MAPS

Let us briefly look at some of the more interesting iconic and vernacular examples of maps. The blacked-in contour of the Duchy on a white guest house in Lanner offers a good illustration of how the area's outline and colour associations are incorporated into domestic architecture to symbolise a sense of national unity (Fig. 5). This sign was removed in 2004 because the family have stopped offering B&B accommodation. Nevertheless the owner proudly keeps it in the basement and admitted that it was inspired by his patriotism.

Another striking example is the painting *Cornubia -- Land of the Saints* by John Miller. This painting is displayed in Truro Cathedral. It was unveiled in 1980, by the Duke of Cornwall Prince Charles II, for this place of worship's centenary. The picture iconically maps the significance of religion in the area by depicting with Celtic crosses the 248 parish churches in the Diocese, with a ray of light beaming down upon Truro Cathedral from the heavens. It also symbolically represents Cornwall's separation from England through an aerial view of the peninsula that directs the eye away from a sombre and shadowed mainland. It entices our gaze instead towards a setting sun that illuminates West Penwith and the Land's End.

Symbolic map representations of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly also occur on murals in Callington, Penzance and the island of St. Agnes (Figs. 6 a,b). These are notable for their use of icons or place-names to depict archetypal regional activities and traditions. For its part, the Cornish Archaeological Unit's map of historic landscape character zones is a comprehensive project of professional cartography that

is meant to strengthen the endowment of the region's heritage for posterity (Herring forthcoming).

Numerous other examples of this sort of map usage exist including among others, the *Cornish Studies* journal covers of volumes four through six; the representation of Cornwall in Mylor Bridge's Pandora Inn, where the county is being pulled away from England by a fleet of fishing vessels; or the topographic simulation of the peninsula that my friend Frank made while playing the computer game 'Civilisation'; or even the cartographic depiction of St. Austell Brewery's 'Ale Trail' which two of my key informants Nigel and Sara were so fond of completing (Fig. 7); on another level, Andy (aged 27), an emigrant since the age of ten, provides an interesting example of embodying the region's shape via his tattoo of the peninsula, which he had made only a few years after moving to Canada.

As far as actual cartographic representations in postcards are concerned, these are relatively popular. I was able to collect and analyse a sample of twenty nine different ones which came from stalls and shops throughout the region. They depict the whole peninsula or districts thereof (e.g. West Penwith, The Lizard, North Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly). To a lesser degree, I also refer here to map images associated with similar items of popular culture: for instance, those in books, picture displays, tourist brochures as well as other tourist memorabilia such as tea towels, plates, posters, confectionery boxes and so forth.

Postcards of maps constantly reference villages and towns. Bodmin, Truro, Penzance, Launceston, Falmouth and St. Ives are the most commonly cited places. Conversely, by comparing the colours most used in these postcards (e.g. blue, green, black, grey, gold) with the ones that informants most associate with Cornwall during conversations or interviews (e.g. blue, green, gold, black and white), we see a tight overlap. Many specific icons and photo images are also reoccurring in the card images. Indeed, certain things repeat as icons but not as photos such as roads, clay tips, light houses, Jamaica Inn and Truro Cathedral. Conversely, certain features make better photographs than icons like beaches, harbours, sunsets and Celtic crosses. Boats, beach enthusiasts, engine houses, standing stones and St. Michael's Mount for their part recur as both icons and photos. By repeatedly depicting the same sites and towns, these accessible and visible maps are directing people to popular destinations and keeping them at bay from non-tourist places. If this interpretation seems a bit strong, then an alternative might be that these maps provide check lists to visitors about what activities and places make up the proper Cornish experience.

The presence of nature in these postcard maps mainly takes place through images and icons of sea, surf and sun. That is, sunsets, crashing waves and open blue water are the most common referents, with palm trees, birds (seagulls and birds of prey) and sea animals (fish, seals and whales) also appearing frequently. Consequently, Cornwall comes across more as a place of leisure than a wilderness. The iconic and photographic presence of people in many of these map postcards reinforces this statement. Interesting geographical omissions include the Tamar Bridge and Tamar

river generally as well as the Hurlers and Merry Maiden standing stones, Gwennap Pit and the Minack Theatre. Additionally, although these cards reveal that Cornwall harbours mainland Britain's most Westerly point at Land's End, most fail to indicate that the Lizard Point is the most Southerly. Another thing to note about these maps is that most make only very subtle statements about any Cornish separation from England. Despite the high presence of the County Logo and Duchy Coat of Arms, the use of nationalist slogans such as St. Piran's flag or the national tartan is rare. In such terms, these map postcards allow people to see the Duchy as both part of and apart from the hegemonising concepts of Englishness or Britishness.

The use of the words 'part of Devonshire' instead of just Devon (or Devonshire) on many such maps reinforces this point since it implies more than just two neighbouring counties. Rather, it suggests an almost complete separation. Direction is also significant on these map images in that the A30, Cornwall's spine, guides long distance travel from North East to South West. As such, it cuts a line through the North-South coastline division. Interestingly, what appears on paper to be a diagonal movement from top right to bottom left is locally referred to as vertical movement, i.e. up-country and down Cornwall.

FIGURE 5 Outline of Cornwall on a B&B (Lanner, August 1999, by the author).

FIGURE 6 a Penzance train station, West Penwith mosaic (1999, by the author).

b Penzance train station, West Penwith pavement map by D. Kemp (2003, by the author)

FIGURE 7 St Austell Brewery Ale Trail (2000 by the author).

FIGURE 8 (Saints Way, 1999 by author).

CARTOGRAPHIC INTERACTIONS

An interesting point about geographical representation is that when asked to draw outlines of the Duchy during focus groups, select informants almost unanimously turned sheets of paper on their side to frame Cornwall horizontally instead of vertically. Though this might be expected because of the peninsula's shape, it nonetheless highlights how regional representations are often made to parallel a panoramic configuration of landscape. In this case, the outline, like a landscape photograph is most convincing when framed lengthwise.

In discussing drawn images of the Cornish map with Stan (aged 30), an emigrant of 10 years, he mentions that these often distort the territory's shape. He believes that images including parts of West Devon are intended to give Cornwall a more elongated appearance thus drawing out the region's resemblance to a fisherman's boot. He also offers that this distortion is meant to exaggerate the region's isolation, strengthening the visual analogy that "the Duchy steps away from England and into a Celtic sea". In this sense, the shape is altered to stress a one way directionality, from the border towards West Penwith and Land's End. The modification of the shape therefore serves to highlight the direction in which Cornish identity travels - away from the source of Imperialism and towards the freedom of the Western world.

In a similar sense, one academic informant affiliated with the Institute of Cornish Studies recounted to me that “the spatial uses of the territory’s image is as popular and emphatic as the symbolic uses that Texans or Australians make of their distinctive outlines”. Consequently, the materiality of this peninsula’s shape matters. It reveals a reification of the silhouette. The contour typically stands as a local symbol of representation. Shape is related to identity and is inherently rolled up in it. Maps in this context are constructs of the visual, the social and the physical.

On two extensive walks with Lilah (aged 29), a post-graduate student from London, the subject of access to land and its relationship with cartography was discussed at length. The first of these walks consisted of the top section of the Saint’s Way near Padstow on the North coast (Fig. 8). The second also included a Southern portion of the Saint’s Way along the coastal path from St. Austell to Fowey. After these excursions, this informant was adamant about buying a booklet about the history of the Saint’s Way. The conversations during these walks revealed that Lilah had quite reflexive views about issues concerning access to the countryside. For example, she stated how footpaths reinforce her impressions of what England is, i.e. an exceptionally segregated and divided-up country of which every inch has been described and mapped. She admits that her orderly, methodical side really likes that such paths are predictable. This means that she will not unexpectedly come across an impasse like a river, cliff face or angry landowner. She adds that in this case, she does not see that Cornwall is an exception. Her expectations that this region would be more wild and rugged are met in a visual sense but not with regards to accessibility or the availability of spatial knowledge. What she dislikes is that in walking through footpaths one’s freedom is restricted and seems monitored. She hastens to add that this is something she dislikes about there being no wild places left in Britain as a whole. What was at first a visual myth for her about the presence of a Cornish wilderness seems to have crumbled after her map guided experiences on the ground.

It is important to remember at this stage that most visitors to Cornwall are generally English. The local term ‘emmet’ (Cornish for ant or ant infestation) stands as a derogatory qualifier for English tourists and not others. As Mr Stanley from Redruth points out: “a buncha German tourists in a pub are simply a group of German visitors. The word emmet targets the English ‘cause we’re Celts [...] standing on top of Carn Brea you can see ‘em on the A30, loads of cars inching their way along like emmets”. This description about observing and looking down on tourists (both literally and figuratively) is interesting. It is as if the high ground of Cornwall is conceptually used by certain local residents as an observation platform from which to survey or scrutinise holidaymakers, hence classing them as separate. Mr Stanley’s son Frank introduced earlier adds to this type of reasoning by saying that “emmets are especially those clueless tourists, the kind whose presence you can’t ignore -- whose presence here is actually offensive. They go hill walking or surfing even when there are signs up prohibiting these activities and then they get stranded and need to be rescued.” This

suggests that holidaymakers are sometimes perceived as not abiding by advice based on local knowledges of place.

Finally, take another informant who is a member of *Cornish Solidarity*. He claimed that it was unfortunate that the Tamar River, which separates Cornwall from Devon for all but 4 miles, did not cut all the way through. In his words: “It’s one of the great shames of Cornwall that the River Tamar doesn’t make it all the way to the North coast. As an island we’d probably have made it as a proper nation. Maybe we should start digging”. This informant further claims, “there’s something almost spiritual about crossing the Tamar into Cornwall. I know I’ve arrived safely then”. From this we can appreciate that Cornwall is frequently depicted as cut off from the mainland. What these informants reveal is that topography and maps contribute to the discourses about social identity, home rule or sovereignty (**Fig. 9**).



FIGURE 9 (Homecomings banner, Gorseth 2006 by author).



FIGURE 10 (Gwellheans 2004 by author).

Cartographic Resistance

The scenario that I am presenting, whereby the culture of maps in Cornwall allows for dissidence, parallels Benedict Anderson’s (1996) and Maryon McDonald’s (1989) research. For example, Anderson demonstrates that the ‘map-as-logo’ has come to underscore the significant delimitation of political domains. Though the rationale might have been benign at the outset -- the practice of cartographically isolating and colouring colonies with particular dyes on the part of Imperial states transformed maps into pure signs. No longer did they need to have an actual bearing on the world. Under this new guise, maps entered a political economy of commodification, befitting for the market of books, magazines, posters, tea towels and so forth. Anderson gives the example that it was this new form of territorial maps that brought quarrelling

young West Papuan nationalists together against the Indonesian state. These images came to form an ideological iconography which was “instantly recognisable, everywhere visible, the logo-map penetrated deep into the popular imagination, forming a powerful emblem for the anti-colonial nationalisms being born” (I996: 250).

For her part, McDonald reveals how Breton militants (i.e. those involved in the nationalist movement) use ‘historical’ maps to emphasise the Celtic defiance of persecution. Maps that might otherwise delimit the complexities of internal and external definition prefer to depict a thriving Celtic culture. She suggests that the way in which such militants frequently map the modern Celtic countries disregards contemporary reality and cultural history. Through such cartography, France is largely ignored except Brittany which for its part is completely pictured as Celtic beyond a limit that extends from Mt St. Michel to the Loire. Consequently, she claims that, although these map images might propose that the Breton/French language duality is comparable with the duality between Brittany and France, this is not and has never been the case either socially or geographically. Furthermore, McDonald briefly traces the shifting boundaries of Celtic identity in Eurasia.

Since Cornwall is obviously present in this discourse about depicting Celtic identity, we should equally be aware of another significant cartographical category: the propaganda map. Such maps are becoming increasingly popular in the Duchy. Some, however, are also quite controversial given that they are responsible for outlining highly charged contours which convey loaded notions of nationalist confrontation and spatial ‘ethnicity’ (Harley I992; Pickles I992). What is interesting about the use of maps with particular ideological agendas in Cornwall is of course how they endorse or resist representations that are part of wider discourses dealing with such issues as globalisation, marginality and peripheralisation (**Fig. 10**).

MARGINAL PERIPHERALITY

The concept of marginality is itself central to the discourses about local and global identities. Such an approach identifies how socially stratified societies consist of several social groups and networks, each pursuing their own specific sub-cultural lifestyles. Anthony Cohen (2000) stresses that it is important to consider the variation that exists between these subcultural strands who affiliate with similar sibling groups and those who integrate into the dominant one.

The phenomena of marginalisation often results from within social systems without particular causes being apparent. Such generic forms are characteristic of a community or territory that is adversely affected by uneven development brought on by hegemonic structures. In this sense, the notion of a better tomorrow has usually been at the expense of Others -- generally those Others on the geo-cultural margins. Social vulnerabilities to marginality include: demographic irregularities relating to age, gender and minority status; weakened educational status; contested ethno-cultural characteristics; fragmented histories; and unstable migration patterns. All these factors

affect Cornwall in ways which are both subtle and overt. They also provide evidence for how peripheral areas can self-perpetuate their condition. The Cornish peninsula is a disparate region filled with many spatial identities whose pasts and presents are contested, if not paradoxical. To an extent then, Cornwall has been transformed into a marginal territory where identities play off against each other.

It is therefore important to remember Michel Foucault's oft quoted assertion about marginality in *Discipline and Punish*. "The lyricism of marginality may find inspiration in the image of the 'outlaw', the great social nomad, who prowls on the confines of a docile, frightened order" (Foucault 1977: 301). Indeed, the connections between Cornwall and the lyrical portrayal of the 'outlaw' date back centuries. The black and white Cornish flag is for many reminiscent of the piracy flag of skull and crossed bones. Think also of Daphne du Maurier's smugglers taking refuge at *Jamaica Inn* (1936). Or of Sir Jonathan Trelawney's incarceration by James II for protesting against the Declaration of Indulgence. Here the Bishop of Exeter became part of a list of famous Celtic renegades populated by such names as William Wallace and Rob Roy MacGregor.

Based on a legendary tale of outlawed love, betrayal, deceit and death, Richard Wagner's Arthurian epic *Tristan und Isolde* is set in the Celtic hearth of Cornwall, Ireland and Brittany, whereby the Cornish peninsula is centre stage. Nearly a century and a half after Wagner's rendition, *Tristan & Yseult* has returned to its land of inspiration. The internationally acclaimed Cornish group the Kneehigh Theatre Company have transformed the opera into an elaborate multi-media production, featuring live and recorded music, acrobatics and dance. For the past 3 years they have performed this tragedy-comedy at dozens of venues, many of them outdoors across Cornwall (Fig. 11). An integral part of Kneehigh's theatrical orchestration is to fit both story and set design into the surrounding landscape. Such places as Restormel Castle, The Minack Theatre and the Eden Project have thus served as interactive backdrops, whereby their historical and mythical legacies are used and reinterpreted. In this sense, the theatrical appropriation of each site transgresses both time and space.

Now in thinking in terms of the relationship between peripherality and Cornishness, many people such as the locally based scholar Philip Payton (1992) vehemently argue that Cornwall is far from peripheral. Indeed, the idea that this region is not backstaged makes up part of Kneehigh's opening gambit to *Tristan & Yseult* when King Mark pronounces the following lines early on in Scene II (Fig. 12-13):

"Now picture this country etched on a map...
Then regard what you see as nothing but crap.
Forget what you've been taught or think you know:
The centre of everything's here – Kernow.
We don't look inland there's not much point.
Let Rome rule the Anglos, there foreheads anoint.
No, outward lies the way!
Inland there's little to write home about and much less to say.

To my left, our sister nation, Brittany.
A place quite akin to this vicinity.
But to my right howls Ireland, hell-bent on war
And this is a threat I cannot ignore” (Grose *et al.* 2005: 25).

The Cornish King goes on to profess how he fashions his Rule fairly, with a depth of logic and reason, not wanting war or treason. But he insists that he will defend his homeland with a relentless passion until his very last breath.

“My soul is in the rock, my blood in the rivers.
This land a gift that the ocean delivers.
We are fashioned by the wind and the sea.
I’ll not give up its freedom easily” (Grose *et al.* 2005: 26).

Such expressions about Cornwall’s peripheral centrality fit particularly well with the arguments of the anthropologist Victor Turner (1973) in his piece ‘the Centre Out There’. This nuanced model of pilgrimage indicates how devout religious zealots journey outside their socio-economic hubs towards marginal satellites which are in truth at the heart of their faith and the construction of their worldview. Marginality and peripheralisation, Turner reminds us, are context specific terms that are both flexible and manipulated socio-politically. Yet if being on the margins is tantamount with being on the edge, then surely as a narrow peninsula, Cornwall has more land/sea edge ratio per square mile than any other region in Britain. Marginality or peripherality are therefore geographical realities. They are not just social constructions. Here the topographical materiality matters and in this case it is inherently about a fluid yet stable mapped out boundary where the coastline meets the sea (Laviolette 2006 a,b).

This is far from saying that the cultural construction is not important, even less an attempt to undermine the significance of the imaginary. Quite the opposite, my emphasis is exactly upon that middle space where the social imaginary and the material meet. The imagination is usually seen as images and dreams engendered in the mind through cognitive and cerebral processes. Through a series of associations, I attempt to challenge such a conception, perhaps even turns it on its head in a way reminiscent of James Fernandez’ work (1986). For instance, in relation to his notion of experiential metaphors, he states: “Ideas are always emergent. We squeeze them out of embeddedness -- out of participation -- out of a relatedness of men and women”. Thinking along these lines, the aim here is to emphasise the embodied and embedded nature of the imaginative periphery (Fig. 14).

Gaston Bachelard is an obvious point of reference for any concern with the imagination. Given the caveat that I have outlined above, his seminal reflections on the material imagination in the elemental substance of liquids in *Water and Dreams* is particularly relevant (1942). Bachelard bears witness to the imaginative human freedom

whereby he asks us to lay aside or suspend our preconceptions. Instead we are encouraged to cultivate a capacity for awe and wonder. But he nonetheless falls into a Husserlian phenomenological perspective which prefaces the transcendence of our cognitive faculties (Husserl 1931). Consequently, Bachelard suggests that our experience of the elements does not guide our imagination but rather it is guided by them. Seminal though his contributions are, I nevertheless want to contest these normative perspectives on the cognitive imagination. Conversely, I propose that the interaction of body, landscape, movement and mapping is an experiential and existential arena in which the peripheral imagination can be acted out. The practice of stretching the mind and body to the limits -- and of playing with identities, marginalities and modernities – establishes a solid cultural basis for an embodied creativity; for a creativity of the body.

FIGURE 11 Map of UK, Tristan & Yseult, Kneehigh, Minack Theatre (2003 by author).

FIGURE 12 Tristan & Yseult, Kneehigh, Eden Project (2004 website).

FIGURE 13 Map of Celtic World, Tristan & Yseult, Kneehigh, Minack Theatre (2003 by the author)

FIGURE 14 Karaoky cartography. New year 2000, Mount's Bay, Mullion, (by the author)

CONCLUSION

Maps are quintessential tools and symbols for geographers. They form an important component in the results of their research. Dennis Cosgrove for instance, argues that images in general have been of interest because of their common association with various cognitive, spatial and representational forms of modeling (Cosgrove 1999; Dorling & Fairbairn 1997). Despite a developing interest in images and visual culture, anthropologists have largely overlooked the medium of mapping, at least as far as traditional topographic maps go. The ethnographer Malcom Crick (1976) provides one exception by explicitly conceptualising map usages in semantic anthropology and social psychology. His definition for what constitutes a map is that it is “something that is itself a representative device [and] can be employed as a means of representation” (1976: 129). He divides mapping metaphors into two categories: those that fit either into ‘mirror theory’ where they are iconic reflections of spatial reality, or those that are a part of a ‘semantic field’ theory where they generate a figurative spatial language. Though this dichotomy is questionable, Crick is still able to make an astute claim that the social scientist’s task is to devise methods of reading maps that chart out the world-views and lifeworlds of different social groups.

Despite his concern, the broader cultural use, interpretation and understanding of cartographic images has not been of particular interest outside geography. The closest parallels that ethnographers have come up with has been in relation to deciphering the ritualistic, navigational, wayfinding, mnemonic, nationalistic or artistic mappings of territories and landscapes. Such themes occur in the work of Barbara Bender (1992);

Alfred Gell (1985) Tim Ingold (2000); Susanne Küchler (1993); Mary McDonald (1989) and Howard Morphy (1991).

For instance, Alfred Gell's (1985) draws on ethnographic material on the navigational skills of Melanesian seafarers. This work on how to read spatial navigation illustrates the ways in which mapping in Melanesia is often indexical and egocentric. The person references him or herself in relation to known markers. The purpose of mapping in this context is to produce images, the navigational utility of which emanates from their relationship with an imaged spatial grid or cartographic coordinates. But what of the non-navigational purposes of these images? For many inhabitants, maps in Cornwall stand outside or at the edge of most of their relations to place. Maps in this respect are iconic of national ideologies or feelings of difference. Cultural distinction is played out on a territorial rather than topographic playing field (Fig. 15).

The present approach, which focuses heavily on the material representation of the image, paves the way for new levels of experiential understanding in the study of more conventional topographic depictions -- what I shall call 'anthropography' -- the phenomenological account of how people give meaning to maps, map-like images and mapping experiences. That is, how they inscribe place with cartographic significance and, through these loaded representations, visually shape both their own identities as well as the identities of these objectified artefacts and the areas they depict (Laviolette 2007).

As I have suggested, the Cornish peninsula's shape is itself intrinsic to the formulation of many types of identities. This is so in a material and not functional or deterministic way however. In other words, through the repeated uses of the actual contour we encounter a self-perpetuating visual metaphor about belonging. The shape acquires an agency and an identity which become in themselves sources of identification. In this instance, maps have many meaningful layers. They are good to travel with, good to think with and good to affiliate identity with. Put differently, they help harmonise and integrate Cornwall into a more coherent geographical and socio-political whole. So Harley & Woodward (1987) are correct in reminding us that, despite their seeming reflections of it, maps actually inaugurate meaning. But in this case maps are not oppressing symbols. One of their contemporary roles use is thus to exert a figurative and esoteric power that both shatters and exceeds the immediate social context. In these terms, maps become a process for generating the significance of spatial difference. Rather they are counter hegemonic, they give a voice to the local. They have a ubiquitous presence and they metaphorically reconstitutes a shape for belonging.

This paper has explored some of the cartographic modes for communicating what Cornwall is all about. By offering various materialist and ethnographic interpretations of the meaning behind certain map images and depictions of this place, the idea has been to provide an anthropological interpretation of Cornish map projections. Such cartographic images thus share with what the theoretical archaeologists Michael

Shanks & Christopher Tilley (1987) would call an ‘obviousness’ that is socially validated through the combination of tradition with visual imagery and material culture. But in accepting a detailed awareness about the significances of maps and mapping by my informants, it has also been necessary to consider the more discursive levels of mapping the Cornish peninsula. Hence, as the geographer Yi-Fu Tuan iterates: “[...] valued artifacts must be maintained by human discourse” (1980: 466), a discourse that, as this paper demonstrates with regards to Cornwall, we can assess by using maps and mapping as methodological tools as well as thinking about the ways in which they relate to the formulation of social identity.

I started this paper with a literary example and at times I have used the literary and the discursive to support my arguments. But I could have easily employed nothing but the literary medium to tell you something about the relationship between maps and Cornish culture. In a hermeneutic vein, I could have provided readings of such influential authors as Thomas Hardy, Virginia Woolf, Daphne du Maurier and even Richard Wagner. Indeed, the approach of mapping-out the literary landscape is an important methodology that geographers and anthropologists use all the time. And it is hardly incompatible with other methods. Nevertheless, I have attempted to suggest here, by drawing on additional sources of information, that the solely discursive is limiting and can even be misleading if there is not some effort to complement this approach with certain embodied material. By focusing on a particular type of artefact and metaphor - one that is at the heart of geography but often neglected in other disciplines - I have used the map to sketch out methodological and epistemological concerns with the excessive divide that some people place on the distinction between discursive and phenomenological approaches. If nothing else, however, this essay has at least demonstrated the way in which experiential and metaphorical mapping practices are an interesting frame of reference for understanding the formulation of social relations and cultural identities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For their comments on earlier drafts, I am grateful to Phil Crang, Tim Ingold, Jean-Sébastien Marcoux, Chris Pinney and Chris Tilley. Thanks also to the contributors and participants of the three seminars where this paper has been presented: the ‘Material Methodologies’ panel at the 2002 conference of the American Anthropological Association, New Orleans; the Cultural & Historical Research Group Seminar Series in the Geography Dept. at University College London; and the Geography & English Seminars at Tremough’s Combined Universities of Cornwall. I’d also like to acknowledge the assistance of the Québec Ministry of Education for post-graduate research funding and the University of London Central Research Fund for financial support in the latter stages of my fieldwork. Finally, thanks to all my informants in Cornwall, most of which appear as pseudonyms in this paper unless consent was given.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, Benedict 1983. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.
- Bachelard, Gaston 1942. *L'Eau et les Rêves. Essai sur l'Imagination de la Matière*. Paris: José Corti.
- Banks, Marcus & Howard Morphy (eds) 1995. *Rethinking Visual Anthropology*. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press.
- Bender, Barbara 1992. Theorizing landscapes, and the prehistoric landscapes of Stonehenge. *Man (N.S.)* 27: 735-755.
- Brody, Hugh 1997. *Maps and Dreams: Indians and the British Columbia Frontier* Illinois: Waveland Press.
- Brown, Stephen & Darach Turley 1997. *Consumer Research: Postcards from the Edge*. London: Routledge.
- Cohen, Anthony (ed) 1999. *Signifying Identities: Anthropological Perspectives on Boundaries and Contested Values*. London: Routledge.
- Cosgrove, D. (ed) 1999. *Mappings*. London: Reaktion Books.
- Crick, Malcolm 1976. *Explorations in Language and Meaning: Towards a Semantic Anthropology*. London: Malaby Press.
- Dorling, Daniel & David Fairbairn 1997. *Mapping: Ways of Representing the World*. Harlow: A.W. Longman, Ltd.,
- Fernandez, James 1986. *Persuasions and Performances: the Play of Tropes in Culture*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Foucault, Michel 1977. *Discipline and Punish. The Birth of the Prison*. (trans. Alan Sheridan). New York: Vintage. p301.
- Gell, Alfred 1985. How to read a map: remarks on the practical logic of navigation. *Man (N.S.)* 20 (2): 271-286.
- Grose, Carl, Murphy, Anna Maria and Emma Rice 2005. *Kneehigh's Anthology - a collection of recent work: Tristan & Yseult, The Bacchae, The Wooden Frock & The Red Shoes*. London: Oberon Books.
- Harley, J.Brian & David Woodward (eds). 1987. *Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient, and Mmedieval Europe and the Mediterranean*. Chicago: Univ. Press.
- Harley, J.Brian 1992. Deconstructing the map. In Barnes, J. & J. Duncan (ed) *Writing Worlds: Discourse, Text, and Metaphor in the Representation of Landscape*. London: Routledge.
- Harmon, K. 2004. *You are Here: Personal Geographies and Other Maps of the Imagination*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press.
- Hoskins, Janet 1998. *Biographical Objects: How Things Tell the Stories of People's Lives*. London: Routledge.
- Husserl, Edmund 1931. *Méditations Cartésiennes Introduction a la Phénoménologie*. (Trans. E. Levinas) Paris: Armand Colin.
- Ingold, Tim 2000. To journey along a way of life: maps, wayfinding and navigation. In *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill*. London: Routledge.
- Küchler, Susanne 1993. Landscape as memory: the mapping of process and its representation in a Melanesian society. In Bender, B. (ed). *Landscape - Politics and Perspectives*. Oxford: Berg.
- Laviolette, Patrick 2003a. Cornwall's visual cultures in perspective. *Cornish Studies*. **11**. 142-167.
- Laviolette, Patrick 2003b Landscaping Death: resting places for Cornish identity. *Journal of Material Culture*. **8**, (2), 215-40.
- Laviolette, Patrick 2006a Ships of relations: navigating through Cornish maritime art. *Inter. Journ. of Heritage Studies*. **12** (1), 69-92

- Laviolette, Patrick 2006b Green and extreme: Free-flowing through seascape and sewer. *Worldviews*. **10** (2), 178-204.
- Laviolette, Patrick 2007. Anthropography: identity and material mapping of movement. www.materialworldblog.com Jan
- Maryon McDonald 1989. *We Are Not French!: Language, Culture and Identity in Brittany*. London: Routledge.
- Morphy, Howard 1991. *Ancestral Connections: Art and an Aboriginal System of Knowledge*. Chicago: Univ. Press.
- Du Maurier 1936. *Jamaica Inn*. London: Victor Gollancz.
- Du Maurier, D. 1967. *Vanishing Cornwall: the spirit and history of an ancient land*. London: Victor Gollancz.
- Payton, Philip 1992. *The Making of Modern Cornwall: Historical Experience and the Persistence of 'Difference'*. Redruth: Dyllansow Truran.
- Orange, Hilary & Patrick Laviolette. 2007. The importance of being there: A disgruntled tourist in King Arthur's Court. *ASA Thinking Through Tourism*, panel E3 'Great Expectations'.
- Pickles, John 1992. Text, hermeneutics and propaganda maps. In Barnes, J. & J. Duncan (ed) *Writing Worlds: Discourse, Text and Metaphor in the Representation of Landscape*. London: Routledge.
- Shanks, Michael & Chris Tilley 1987. *Re-Constructing Archaeology: Theory and Practice*. London: Routledge.
- Smail, D.L. 1999. *Imaginary Cartographies. Possession and Identity in Late Medieval Marseille*. Ithica: Cornell Univ. Press.
- Thomas, C. 1997. See your country first: The Geography of a railway landscape. In Westland, E. (ed) *Cornwall: The Cultural Construction of Place*. Penzance: Pattern Press.
- Thornton, Paul 1993. Cornwall and changes in the tourist gaze. *Cornish Studies* 1. 80-96.
- Thrower, Norman 1996. *Maps and Civilisation: Cartography in Culture and Society*. Chicago: Univ. Press.
- Tuan, Yi-Fu 1980. The significance of the artefact. *Geographical Review*. **70** (4): 462-72.
- Turnbull, D. 1989. *Maps are Territories: Science is an Atlas*. Victoria: Deakin Univ. Press.
- Turner, Victor 1973. Centre out there: pilgrim's goal. *History of Religions* **12**: 191-230.
- Twain, M. 1889 *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. *The Writings of Mark Twain, Volume XVI*. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers

PATRICK LAVIOLETTE is Senior Lecturer in the School of Visual & Material Culture, Massey University, New Zealand. This paper was presented during the time when he was a post-doctoral fellow in the Department of Anthropology & Bartlett School of Graduate Studies, University College London. In the context of the interdisciplinary study of identities and landscape metaphor, his research interests include the ways in which alternative forms of art, housing, sport and transport influence the material conditions of social movements as well as the cultural awareness of place and placelessness. Contact email: p.laviolette@massey.ac.nz