

Introduction to Twentieth-Century Literature

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(Murray 019, Mondays and Wednesdays 2:30–4:30)

April 24, 2017. Silko, Díaz.

review

- ▶ represented attitudes / implicit attitudes
- ▶ stereotype, individual, collective
- ▶ defamiliarization: seeing along another line
- ▶ “Soul Brother”: Naipaul’s solidarity?

postwar American literature and pluralism

The high cultural pluralist writer is additionally called upon to speak from the point of view of one or another hyphenated population, synthesizing the particularity of the ethnic—or analogously marked—voice with the elevated idiom of literary modernism....

Associating the *individual* writer with a *group* from which she draws a claim to personal literary distinction, high cultural pluralism becomes one model, in the university environment, for the productive mediation of “group-think” and “individual genius.”

Mark McGurl, *The Program Era: Postwar Fiction and the Rise of Creative Writing* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2009), 57–59.

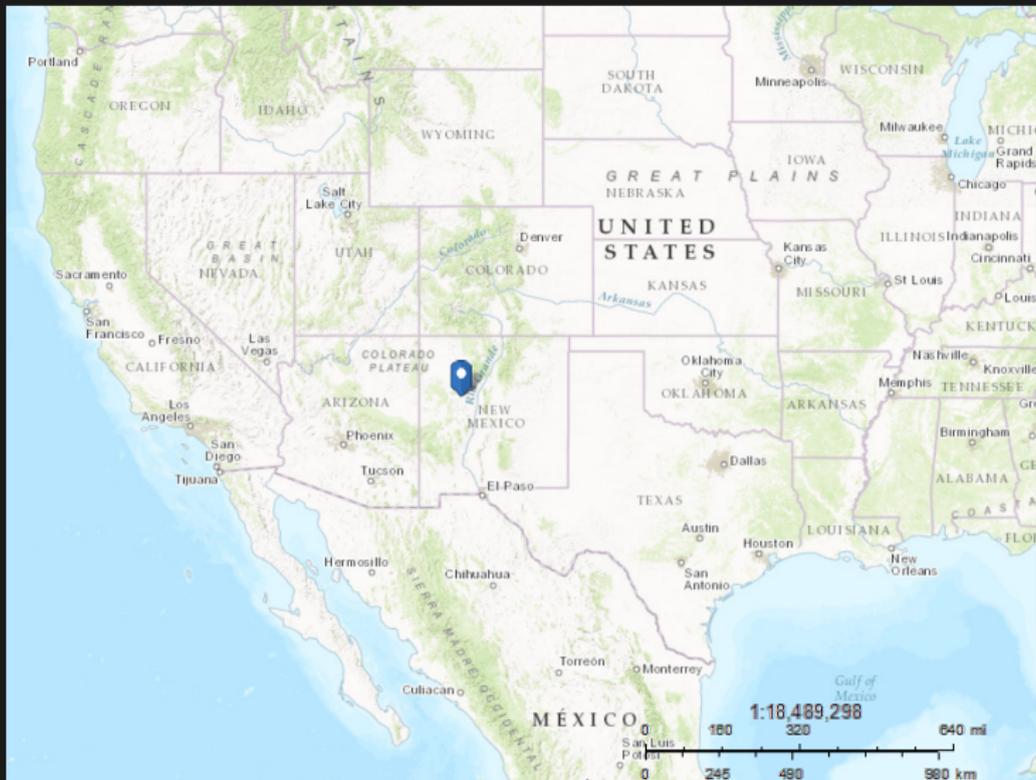
- ▶ What language is American literature written in?

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Silva turned to me and smiled. “Go back up the mountain, Yellow Woman.”

The white man got angry when he heard Silva speak in a language he couldn't understand. (“Yellow Woman,” 1035)

He's a pato now but two years ago we were friends and he would walk into the apartment without knocking, his heavy voice rousing my mother from the Spanish of her room and drawing me up from the basement, a voice that crackled and made you think of uncles or grandfathers. (“Drown,” 1241)



American FactFinder, U.S. Census Bureau.

voice of the people

Storytelling lies at the heart of the Pueblo people...and I want to remind you that we make no distinctions between the stories—whether they are history, whether they are fact, whether they are gossip—these distinctions are not useful when we are talking about this particular experience with language. Anyway, there was a young man...

Leslie Marmon Silko, “Language and Literature from a Pueblo Indian Perspective,” in *English Literature: Opening Up the Canon*, edited by Leslie A. Fiedler and Houston A. Baker (Baltimore: JHUP, 1981), 60.

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- ▶ How does “Yellow Woman” represent the relation between story and fact?

I will see someone, eventually I will see someone, and then I will be certain that he is only a man—some man from nearby—and I will be sure that I am not Yellow Woman. Because she is from out of time past and I live now and I've been to school and there are highways and pickup trucks that Yellow Woman never saw. (1032)

The tribal police would file a report. But if old Grandpa weren't dead he would tell them what happened—he would laugh and say, “Stolen by a ka'tsina, a mountain spirit. She'll come home—they usually do.” (1034)



American FactFinder, U.S. Census Bureau.

far-away lands

In the distance you can see the Raritan,³ as shiny as an earthworm, the same river my homeboy goes to school on.

3. A major river in central New Jersey. (1245)

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- ▶ How is a sense of place constituted by the story?

As a son I feel I owe her that much, even though neither of us has a car and we have to walk two miles through redneck territory to catch the M15. (1244)

She is dreaming, dreaming of Boca Raton, of strolling under the jacarandas with my father. (1249)

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We'd visited the school and I'd seen how beautiful the campus was, with all the students drifting from dorm to class. (1248)

next

- ▶ Morrison, “Recitatif,” in *N.*