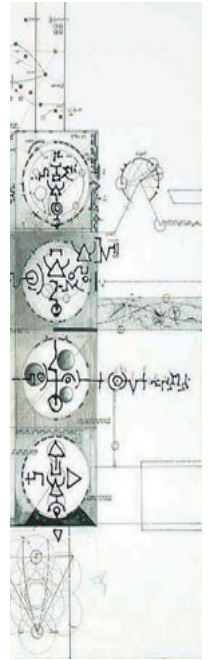


Maps of the Imagination

Discussion Questions
Tuesday, Week 4, April 20th



1. What is the “Theater of the World”?
2. On page 133, after several discussions of maps, Turchi switches gears. He writes, “Beginning writers are told to write what they know, and all too often they do, with wearisome results.” Sorry kids. That’s what he says.

What’s he doing here? What does this have to do with the “Theater of the World” and Maps?

3. More philosophically on pages 134 – 135, he quotes O’Conner, “... in art the self becomes self-forgetful in order to meet the demands of the thing being seen and the thing being made.” And on the next page: “The challenge is not only what to select for telling and how to present it, but how to evoke, simultaneously, the Theater of the World—how to make the leap from ego-vision to omnivision.”

These lines present a rough outline of a complex arrangement of the ontology of creative work and aesthetic experience. Draw a diagram (a map?) of what Turchi is describing...make it clear enough that someone else could understand it. You might try a series of diagrams to show parts, stages, or different views. If you have trouble getting started, circle all the big idea words in the quotations above. These are certainly going to major aspects of your diagram. Look, too, at the verbs that connect these ideas....

4. What is psychological realism? How would it differ from other “realisms”?
5. At the bottom of page 139, Turchi really tips his hand for you, making claims about mental maps. Take note of how mental maps are “theaters of the world.”
6. Think of several examples of novels in which the mental map (or world or theater) of a main character and/or narrator is a critical feature of what the novel is about.
7. Turchi uses the example of the film *Memento* to talk about a few things. One interesting point is that the “makers of *Memento* teach is how to ‘read’ the film.” Discuss how repetition, anticipation, and expectation fit into how we learn to read different novels / stories / films.
8. On page 156, Tuchi suggests a tension between the *mind* and *world*, and even between *memory* and *realism*. How can we be realistic about what we remember when memory is flawed and strange? What is more realistic, a fiction that conveys the concreteness and complexity of the world outside or the fiction that reveals the strange and at times surreal workings of the mind? Assuming your answer is, “both,” why do you think writers and readers in different times/places might be drawn more to one or the other? Aside from a simple preference, why would one choose one over the other?