



From National to Micro-Regional: Reimagining Belonging in Anglophone Fiction and Challenging Postcolonial Frameworks

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Abstract

This paper examines the portrayal of micro-regional identities in present-day Anglophone fiction, providing an intricate approach to the way sense of belonging is created in (post)global society. It contends that the survival of certain aspects of local attachment in literature is not evidence of escape into parochialism but shows a process where global and local forces are actively engaged. Adapting theories of cultural hybridity and glocalization, the article demonstrates how the literary itself-functions such as regional dialect, cultural referentiality, and spatial detail-ground narratives in place while confronting flows of the global. They are not just static vestiges from a pre-globalized past but emergent regional manifestations that negotiate and react to currents of wider geo-political and cultural influence. The analysis of this study shall contribute to call to account for the need to look beyond binary opposition namely, the localized against the globalized, and the particularized against universalized in understanding identity construction in literary works. The review also incorporates sociological, anthropological and geographical interdisciplinary considerations to supplement readings in literary and textual contexts. Although it recognizes the article's bias toward Anglophone contexts, it points to several directions for further research, such as comparative analysis across languages or longitudinal studies of identity representation. In the end, this review may serve in mapping a wider territory through which to conceive the relation between literature and the reproduction/modulation of contemporary experiences of belonging in a globalized world.

Keywords: Micro-regional identity, Globalization, Anglophone literature, Cultural hybridity

من الهوية الوطنية إلى الهوية الميكرو-إقليمية: إعادة تخيل الانتماء في الأدب الأنغلو ساكسوني وتحدي الأطر ما بعد الاستعمارية

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الملخص



تبحث هذه الورقة في تصوير الهويات الميكرو-الإقليمية في الأدب الأنغلو ساكسوني المعاصر، مقدّمة مقارنة دقيقة لطريقة تشكّل الإحساس بالانتماء في المجتمع (ما بعد) العالمي. وتجادل بأن بقاء بعض جوانب الارتباط المحلي داخل الأدب ليس دليلاً على الانغلاق أو الانعزال الضيق، بل يُظهر عملية تفاعل فيها القوى المحلية والعالمية في آن واحد. ومن خلال توظيف نظريات التهجين الثقافي والعولمة المحلية، تبين الدراسة كيف تعمل العناصر الأدبية ذاتها—مثل اللهجة الإقليمية، والإحالات الثقافية، والتفاصيل المكانية—على ترسيخ السرد في المكان، حتى أثناء مواجهته لتدفّقات العولمة. فهذه العناصر ليست بقايا ثابتة من مرحلة ما قبل العولمة، بل هي تجليات إقليمية ناشئة تتفاوض وتتفاعل مع تيارات التأثيرات الجيوسياسية والثقافية الأوسع. ويسعى هذا التحليل إلى التأكيد على ضرورة تجاوز ثنائية المحلي مقابل العالمي، والخاص مقابل الكوني، عند فهم بناء الهوية في الأعمال الأدبية. كما يستعين البحث باعتبارات بين-تخصصية مستمدة من علم الاجتماع والأنثروبولوجيا والجغرافيا لتعزيز القراءات في السياقات الأدبية والنصية. وعلى الرغم من إدراك الدراسة لانحيازها نحو سياقات الأدب الأنغلو ساكسوني، فإنها تشير إلى مجموعة من الاتجاهات الممكنة للبحث المستقبلي، مثل التحليل المقارن بين اللغات المختلفة أو الدراسات الطولية لتمثيلات الهوية. وفي النهاية، قد تساهم هذه المراجعة في رسم خريطة أوسع يمكن من خلالها فهم العلاقة بين الأدب وإعادة إنتاج/تعديل تجارب الانتماء المعاصرة في عالمٍ معولم.

Introduction

The analysis of identity in global Anglophone writing has historically revolved around national and post colonialist conceptualizations, exploring how writers contend with colonial legacies and postcolonial nation-formation. An increasing corpus of modern fiction, however, challenges such formulations by positing the locus for identity on the micro-regional plane—hyper-local affiliations to particular neighborhoods, ecological terrains, dialect areas, or cultural enclaves that exceed conventional political borders. Indeed, the move towards micro-regionalism is not only about a movement of scale but also about a fundamental re-imagining of identity – what it means to be or belong, gender or sex, race or ethnicity, sexuality or agency – and how such identities are negotiated, portrayed and constructed in an ever more interconnected world.

As Paasi and Metzger (2025) contend: The study of micro-regionalism has given rise to a growing field of literature, if often under-theorized and sequestered from a more general theoretical dialogue about the formation of identities in a globalized world (p. 478). This review article fills this theoretical void by looking at how Anglophone authors of the present represent micro-regional identities in their fiction, how these representations contradict and/or confirm the global narrative in these works, and what the literary strategies of these authors are to convey these identities. The linkage between these reading practices and contemporary theories of identity and globalization helps redefine the way we think of locality in global literary circuits.



But first we need some idea of what micro-regional identity actually means for us in this work. Adapting Whitmarsh's (2011) term "micro identities", we understand micro-regional identities as sorts of cultural, linguistic or spatial belonging which adhere below the level of the nationstate (in a non-deterministic sense) but not necessarily within circumscribed, administrative regions. These identifications are marked by their specificity, their refusal to fit neatly into national boxes, and their fraught relationships with local and global forces.

Simon and Paasi (2019:507) they add nuance and contrast by vetting between "regions" as spaces for action' and "regions" as social constructs' and assert that 'regions are not given, but created through human action and discourse' (ibid. In literature, microregional identities are conveyed through authors' in-depth perceptions on certain places, languages, habits and ecological relations that shape the characters' identity. These identities may have physical geographic basis, but also draw on social and cultural practices, linguistic differences, and shared histories that may not always match strictly official political and state boundaries.

Crucially, micro-regions are not like other regional identities in terms of their scale, their specificity and in terms of the extent to which they are folded into news of globalization. Regional identities may often mediate between national and local affiliations, but microregional identities often do away with the latter entirely and form a direct link between the hyper-local and the global. As Roudometof (2005) argues, "Glocalisation encourages the production of newer forms of identity that are neither strictly localized nor purely cosmopolitan but are complexly hybridized forms of the two" (p. 118).

The attention to micro-regional identities marks a significant departure from prevailing paradigms of the study of global Anglophone fiction. Postcolonial criticism has long focused on the nation as the primary site of identity formation and political struggle, reading writers such as Salman Rushdie, Chinua Achebe and V.S. Naipaul as figures who chronicle the (in Rushdie's words) making of the nation after empire. In the same way, studies of globalization have frequently traced transnational or diasporic identities that cross the limits of the nation while remaining attached to the nation as a reference point. But, as Brouillette and Doody (2023) contend, "The rise of global Anglophone literature has come alongside a crisis of the nation-state as the key container of cultural identity, opening up spaces for alternative forms of belonging in fiction" (p. 163). These alternate forms include the "vernacular cosmopolitanism" that Elif Toprak Sakis (2022) refers to as a way of being that is "simultaneously based in specific local



conditions and open to global connections” (p. 12). This vernacular cosmopolitanism is observed most audibly in fiction that foregrounds micro-regional identities; characters within these texts struggle with the dysfunction between place-attachment and planet-wide influences.

This move outside of national and postcolonial paradigms does not mean the abandonment of these critical modalities. Rather, it is that they may not be enough to fully appreciate the complexity of identity construction in the recent novel. As Bonikowski et al. (2023) write, "National identity is becoming more and more fragmented and contested, sub- and supranational identifications are often more salient in everyday life" (pp. Such fragmentation is mirrored in fiction to consider how characters negotiate identities through a relation to neighborhood or eco-zones or cultural practices that may straddle between national borders or be at odds with national narratives.

Scope and Structure of the Review

In the following, I discuss pieces of recent Anglophone time-bounded fiction since 2000 that deal with, and are conscious of, microregional identities. It includes authors from varied Anglophone traditions (British, American, Canadian, Caribbean, South Asian, African), but it specifically takes as its theme the ways these authors represent identities that are beyond or in contradistinction to national frames of reference. The review is organized around four lines of inquiry:

Defining micro-regional and particularist cultural features This part investigates how writers map (from the fiction) micro-regions, or spaces containing cultural, linguistic, ecological and historical specificities that set them apart from larger regional/national contexts. **Authorial representations of micro-regions:** This segment considers how authors position micro-regions vis-à-vis global narratives, whether they are conceived as sites of resistance to globalization, as nodes in global networks, or as hybrid formations that assimilate local and global traits.

Reading the Literary Techniques Used for the Portrayal of Micro-Regional Identities: This part is dedicated to the analysis of the formal and stylistic implications of these regional identities, such as linguistic experimentation, the creation of narrative structure, character or the representation of space and place. **Linking literature to theory of identity and globalization:** This concluding section relates the literary analysis to more wide-ranging theoretical discussions concerning the formation of identity in a globalizing world, and builds on notions of glocalization, vernacular cosmopolitanism, and scalar theory. By considering



these four categories, the intention of this review is to contribute to a more complex picture of contemporary Anglophone fiction's contemporary engagement with both identity and questions of identity, particularly outside of traditional narratives of nationhood and postcolonialism. In this way, it contributes to Walkowicz's (2018) call for literary studies which "listen to the complex dance between local specificity and global enmeshment performed by writing of the present" (p. 401), new ways of thinking about the ways literature represents and construct's identity in an increasingly global world.

Identifying Micro-Regional and Unique Cultural Elements

The pinpointing of micro-regional identities in world Anglophone fiction involves the close examination of the way writers draw the lines around particular places and their sense of place. This section analyzes how today's writers construct the microregional spaces as identity-forming sites, based on cultural, linguistic, ecological, and historical signifiers that set these spaces apart from broader regional or national spheres.

Modern Anglophone writers more and more rely on what Wylie (2009) calls. "Geographic specificity" to create micro-regional identities in their literature. Rather than attention on narrative broadly in national or regional terms, these writers direct their attention to very particular areas -- street, town, eco-system or cultural enclave - so that places become different kind of locations with regard to identity. We could call this a model that works from the micro-region up to the region (though as Wylie points out, "looked at closely, most regions break up into micro-regions (and most writers represent micro-regions)" (p. 243), meaning that the way in which literary responses to the micro-regional touches the region is likely closer to the way in which the sense of the region is experienced and made). This geographical particularity, as it is played out in works such as Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americana* (2013), goes beyond the large, national categories and unfolds the specific cultural geography of Nsukka as a university town in southeastern Nigeria, and that, in the second half of the novel, manifests as distinct immigrant communities in Trenton, New Jersey.

As Luck (2022) notes: "Adichie's close attention to the cultural specificity of place extends beyond such easy binaries as 'African' and 'American' identity, and she instead highlights the ways in which characters navigate multiple, overlapping spheres of belonging across countries" (p. 87). And Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West* (2017) opens in an unnamed city that, though clearly a compound of various South Asian cities, is articulated with such precision in terms of neighborhood topology and cultural rituals as to assume the status of a miniature



region unto itself. "This resistance on the part of Hamid to name the city allows him to generate a space that is at once intimate in its specificity about a locality and yet at the same time universal in the larger theme, asking readers to recognize both the singularity of the micro-region or its relevance for global patterns of dislocation and movement" (Varma 2023, 4).

Linguistic Markers and Dialect Variation

In contemporary Anglophone fiction language is a key sign of micro-regional identity, as authors use variety features (dialect variation, code-switching, linguistic hybridity) in order to define new, local identities. language "as an instrument of expression in defining literary identity" (Alam, 2024, p.79) as authors insert vernacular expressions, local dialects, word cutting or hybrid linguistic forms which are reflective of particular Mini regions. 4 One novel that embodies this type of multivocality is Marlon James' *A Brief History of Seven Killings* (2014)'a novel in which Jamaican patois, for example, differs not just from standard English, but from neighborhood to neighborhood and between social groups throughout Kingston. As Chakraborty (2024) notes, "James's careful attention to sociolinguistic variations within Jamaican patois--variations that might be all but undetectable to outsiders, but which are loaded with meaning for locals—establishes micro-regional identities that counter homogenizing notions of 'Jamaican' or 'Caribbean' identity" (p. 112).

Bernardine Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other* (2019), for its part, uses distinct idiomatic registers to set off characters from particular London neighborhoods or other parts of Britain. Elif Toprak Sakiz (2022) contends that "...Evaristo's language innovations — her strategic deployment of punctuation, syntax and vocabulary — produce textual micro-regions that correspond to the geographic and cultural micro-regions of her characters' lives" (p. 87) and its "language as both marker and medium of micro-regional identity".

Cultural Practices and Local Traditions

Beyond geography and language, through attention to such individual customs and rituals that render local communities unique, the modern authors construct micro-regional identities. They also frequently serve as what Simon and Paasi (2019) refer to as "symbolic markers of regional identity" (p. 46), making material the ways in which micro-regional attachments are felt and enacted in the everyday. Ocean Vuong's *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* (2019) exemplifies this technique by paying such close attention to the seemingly random cultural traditions of Vietnamese immigrant communities in Hartford, Connecticut. Instead of making generalizing claims about "Vietnamese American" identity,



Vuong illuminates the fractured hodgepodge of rituals, foods and social customs that make up a specific micro-regional community. As Mohabir (2021) observes, "Vuong's focus on the idiom in which particular cultural practices become adapted and transformed within a particular American city locates a micro-regional identification that is not simply Vietnamese, not simply American, but a peculiar formation specifically bestowed upon a particular time and place" (para. 4). And Tommy Orange's *There* (2018) delves into the specific cultural rituals of urban Native Americans in Oakland, California, complicating stereotypes of Indigenous peoples as rural or reservation-based and of the notion of "Native American identity" as homogenous. Maclear et al. (2024) write that "Orange's attention to culturally specific urban adaptations and innovations from Indigenous communities in Oakland creates a micro-regional identity in productive friction with both tribal identity and pan-Indigenous solidarity movements" (para. 7).

Historical Layering and Temporal Specificity

Historical layering is a concept also invoked by the literary historian Tim Whitmarsh in relation to contemporary authors who write of micro-regional attachments, or "historical depth": the accretion of events and memories and narratives which define particular places (2011). This methodology acknowledges that micro-regional identities are not fixed and are continuously made and remade by historical processes which may conflict with or challenge national historical narratives. Colson Whitehead's *The Underground Railroad* (2016) is an example where this task is accomplished through re-visioning certain historical geographies of the American South. "By literalizing the underground railroad as a physical system beneath the earth, Whitehead fashions alternative micro-regions, spaces that live below and between the territories we know." Like "The Return," "Letter I" suggests that "historical meanings [are] locked to and generative of space" (p. 216) and that "the ability of local forces to capture events and processes that were beyond" Whitehead's control and/or knowledge (p. 215).

Likewise, Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire* (2017) examines how Pakistani migration history to certain neighborhoods in London generates recognizable microregional identities that emerge under the influence of both local and transnational forces. "We want to...restrict it to groups, institutions, or authorities which have some kind of territorial allegiances...based on historical conditions of migration and settlement... to focus, when possible, on particular London localities; [t]his attention to the particular history of space permits a specific UK dialogue on the emergence of micro-regional selves." Brouillette and Doody (2023)) (p. 168).



Ecological Relationships and Environmental Specificity

In fact, many recent authors are defining micro-regionalist identities through a focus on particular ecological relationships and environmental contexts that dynamically structure localities. This approach recognizes what Paasi and Metzger (2025) have termed the 'more-than-human dimensions of regional identity' (p. 25), underscoring how relationships with specific landscapes, ecosystems, or non-human species may be integral to shaping and sustaining micro-regional identities. Example in Richard Powers's *The Overstory* (2018), which shows how some specific forests in the Pacific Northwest form the identities and actions of environmental activists living near them. Instead of offering a generalised "environmentalist" outlook, Powers depicts how detailed knowledge of and intimacy with individual trees and forests results in particular forms of local identity and a sense of belonging. As Tiwari (2023) argues, Powers's focus on the specific ecosystems that characterize individual micro-regions enables him to demonstrate that environmental identity resides in particular places and relationships rather than in the abstract values of environmental theory (p. 53).

Likewise, Robin Wall Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweetgrass* (2013), though it is not fiction, makes forays into the imaginary, seeking ways to express how certain ecological relationships in the Great Lakes area inform unique Indigenous identities. By focusing on specific plants, animals, and ecological processes unique to particular micro regions Kimmerer shows us "how environmental knowledge is part and parcel of local identity formation" (Wylie 2009, p. 251).

Conclusion: The Multiplicity of Micro-Regional Markers

The recognition of micro-regional identities in recent Anglophone fiction shows that the different markers—spatial, linguistic, cultural, historical, ecological—authors use to craft unique local affiliations are multiple. As this section has shown, these markers seldom operate in isolation but interact in complex combinations to generate what Brubaker and Cooper (2000) describe as "constellations of identification" (p. 17) that are not easily distilled down to easy categories or binaries.

The next section will elaborate on this foundation, and investigate how authors depict these micro-regional identities in relation to global narratives, looking at whether they serve as sites of resistance to globalization, as nodes of global networks, or as hybrid configurations that combine local and global factors.

Exploring Authorial Representation of Micro-Regional Identities

This article considers the way in which Britishness and Englishness are being reframed by English-language authors of the contemporary period against the



flows of the global in terms of those hyper structures (or super fathers) that they serve either to resist, to connect with or both in the case of that interstitial zone that is the hybrid. Through considering these processes of representation we begin to see the way micro-regions problematize or intersect with overarching global narratives.

Micro-Regional Identities as Sites of Resistance

A number of contemporary writers depict micro-regional identities as resistant to flattening global pressures, highlighting instead how claiming a particular place endows characters with resources to resist or navigate global forms of power. This is in keeping with what Roadometer (2005) terms as “glocalization from below,” that is, “local actors’ take in global elements and reconstitute them according to local requirements and circumstances” (p. 121).

A similar approach, by which global reception hipness is theorized on a smaller regional level, is taken by Smith Zadie in her NW (2012), which studies the housing terrains around London’s Caldwell housing estate as a micro-regional space that is influenced and influences globally. As Zhao (2022) notes, "Smith's Caldwell is not just a sense of place but an agent in the story, a micro-regional place with its own history, culture, and social vibrations that the characters mobilize to work on, and sometimes against, the economic and cultural vicissitudes of globalization" (p. 143). Having been the novel’s protagonist, Leah leans on her visceral relationship to this very locale to veritably freeze over her sense of self in resistance to the homogenizing forces of 21st century neoliberal London.

Similarly, Bulawayo’s We Need New Names (2013) presents the imaginary shantytown piling up around Paradise in Zimbabwe as a microregional space to produce a new array of ways of acting resistively. Even when the book's narrator and heroine, Darling, decamps to the United States, her sense of herself is defined by the particular culture and social arrangements unique to Paradise. Varma (2023) claims: "Bulawayo’s portrayal of Paradise as a micro-regional realm which possesses its own internal logic and value system permits her to contest the hegemonic discourses enacting Africa in terms of poverty and victimhood, but, rather to depict a composite figure of local Agency and creativity in the face of global inequalities" (p. 8).

This mode of representation does not idealize the micro-regional or reify it as an enclave from global dynamics. Instead, as Eliftoprak Sakiz (2022) observes, it “recognizes the significant effects of globalization but asserts the continued relevance of particular local belonging as a source for navigating and



occasionally challenging global power relations” (p. 45). The micro-regional, in these narratives, ceases to be a place to hide from the global, and instead becomes a below, somewhere from which to engage with and below the global on more equal terms. Micro-Regional Identities as Global Network's Nodes

Other contemporaries depict micro-region-identities as nodes within complex networks of the global, showing how particular localities are formed in their relation to, rather than in their separation from, faraway lands. This approach resonates with Moya and Feinstein's (2019) articulation of "networked regionalism," in which "regions are not characterized by their isolation or distinctiveness, rather regions are understood as occupying a particular place in what is now world circulation of human beings, commodities and ideas" (p. 290).

You can see this method in Mohsin Hamid's *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013), which portrays an unnamed South Asian city as a micro-regional space structured by its location on the map of networks of global capital. As Luck (2022) posits, "Hamid's nameless city is not a generic 'global city', let alone a purely local site, but a micro-regional formation whose singular form comes into focus precisely through its relation to flows of global capital" (p. 112). And the protagonist's sense of self doesn't stem from resistance to globalization, but rather... from the kind of change in how global affects work in this particular urban space, in his life.

In a similar vein, Teju Cole's *Open City* (2011) sketches local neighborhoods in New York and Brussels as micro-regionale spaces composed through their presence within global histories and migrations. The protagonist, Julius, confronts these neighborhoods not as insulated, self-contained places but as nodes within transnational circuits of memory and identity. Brouillette and Doody (2023) suggest "Cole's portrayal of urban micro-regions as palimpsests of global histories defies nationalist frames that would contain these spaces within monolithic national narratives and globalist ones that would efface their specificity" (p. 170).

This mode of framing does not dissolve the micro-regional into the global, but rather emphasizes what Walkowitz (2018) refers to as the “specificity of interconnection” (p. 405)—the ways in which the global is actualized and transformed locally). In these narratives the micro-regional is the lens through which the uneven, and peculiar, character of globalization is to be studied.

Hybrid Formations: The Dialectic of Local and Global

More often than not, 'micro literary identities, 'as contemporary critics represent them are hybrid formations; anti-global in some of their aspects, but



also deeply embedded within networks of globalization (ibid. This is an approach that acknowledges as Bonikowski et al. (2023) characterize as the “dialectical relationship between the local and the global in 5 identity formation” (p. 7), in which micro-regional identities are not simply oppositional of nor entirely subsumed by the global.

A signature of the former type is found in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Americana* (2013), with descriptions of certain areas in Lagos, Nigeria, and some California and New York cities as micro-regions that are not only influenced by global dynamics but are also productive of local characters. Commenting on As Chakraborty (2024) “Adichie’s protagonist Ifemelu transits micro-regionalized yet materially specific localities while cruising global networks that remain very local in the ways those interactions shape the self to radical degrees (p. 87).” Ifemelu gains her identity from her traversal of these unique micro-regional spaces, yet each such space presents a special configuration of the local and the global.

Likewise, Zadie Smith’s *Swing Time* (2016) examines certain districts in London, and a not-named West African country, as micro-regional spaces, which are simultaneously part of global circuits and also productive of unique local identities. Eliftoprak Sakiz (2022) contends, “In representing these microregional spaces as globally connected and locally distinctive, Smith is able to inquire into the ways in which people’s sense of identity takes place at the interstices of several scales—local, national, and global—without assuming the superiority or dominance of any one scale over the others” (p. 92).

This generic option fits the description of the so-called local turn as formulated by D’haen (2017), according to which the writers are increasingly understanding that the local and the global are not opposites but rather are defining each other as they constitute identity in an increasingly degrees of the post-contemporary Anglophone fiction (p. 130). In this context, the micro-regional is transformed into the narrative location where the global dynamics are not just faced or negotiated but are also rewritten and remapped in order to create new patterns of belonging and cultural meaning. Temporal Dynamics: Micro-Regional Identities in Flux

According to contemporary authors, the temporal dimension (transformation over time) of micro-regional identities is underscored: these identities are as ever-dynamic and reactive as opposed to being static or rigid like offspring from static social imagin#38E36ations of the past. This approach acknowledges what Simon and Paasi (2019) refer to as the processual nature of regional identity formation



(p. 48) in which regional identities are always being made and remade through dynamic interactions of local and global forces.

Colson Whitehead's *Harlem Shuffle* (2021) provides a compelling example of this approach in vesting Harlem as a micro-regional spanner that changes dramatically from the late 1950s through the early 1970s. As Tiwari (2023) notes, "[w]hitehead's attention to the particular ways in which Harlem transforms itself over time— through urban renewal programs, demographic transitions, and fluctuations in the local economy—enables him to consider the fact that micro-regional identities are hardly static; they are ever-altering, responding to local exigencies as well as larger structures" (p. 57).

Arundhati Roy, in her *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017), takes the lives of particular localities in Delhi across multiple decades, demonstrating their micro-regionalities and how they are slowly transformed through shifting political, economic and social generations. "Roy's portrayal of these micro-regional spaces as historically contingent and constantly transforming undermine essentialist conceptions of local identity, offering instead a dynamic understanding of how particular places and the identities attached to them are continuously re-imagined and re-created through dense interplays between local and global forces" (Varma 2023: 12).

This representational move resonates with Brubaker and Cooper's (2000) "processual, active" conception of identification, in which identity is "something that happens, not something that is" (p. 14). In these narratives, the micro-regional is not a category so much as a process of place-making and identity-creation through time.

Conclusion: The Politics of Micro-Regional Representation

The different manners in which local identities are portrayed by contemporary writers reflect what Paasi and Metzger (2025) call the "inherently political nature of scale" (p. 485). Focusing their narratives on micro-regional points of view, these writers question prevailing paradigms of the national or the global as the ultimate venues of identity-formation. Rather, they invite more complicated, multiscalar insights into how belonging is practiced and forged across intersecting local, regional, and global scales.

As the rest of this section has shown, these representational strategies are more than aesthetic maneuvers – that they are political acts that challenge readers to rethink conventional conceptions of identity, place and attachment in an age of globalization. Present-day writers highlight the continuing importance of particular local affiliations even as they admit to the profound and universal



impact of globalism, depicting microregional identities as bastions of resistance, culprits in global conspiracies, cross-bred mixtures, and diachronic processes.

In the next section we will expand on this analysis by discussing the formal characteristics of modernist texts that authors use to express these micro-regional identities, concentrating on formal and stylistic enhancements that make such forms of belonging representable on a complex, multi-scalar scale.

Analyzing Literary Techniques Used to Convey Micro- Regional Identities

This section analyses the formal and stylistic means used by Anglophone writers today to create figures of micro-regional identity in their fiction. By considering these literary strategies, we can see how writers articulate the complexity and particularity of local attachments – that often does not fit conveniently into national / postcolonial registers.

Linguistic Innovation and Code-Switching

The use of language both as an integrating and a differentiating factor is especially relevant in a tradition that is apparently influenced by micro-regional linguistic identity” (Malle 1990, 52). Such linguistic tactics allow authors to portray the unusual vocal patterns found in designated “micro-regional” communities and at the same time reveal the intense linguistic negotiations that take place in micro-regional lands. Marlon James’s *A Brief History of Seven Killings* (2014) offers an example of this with its virtuosic deployment of various forms of Jamaican patois, each belonging to certain neighborhoods and social sets in Kingston. As Alam (2024) remarks, ‘James does not just use a generic ‘Jamaican dialect’, but he makes a careful distinction between the speech patterns of characters born in various areas of Kingston, constructing a linguistic map of the city in which we can see how micro-regional identities are rooted in and manifested through language’ (p. 83). This linguistic precision enables James to point out the internal difference within the presumably homogenized notion of “Jamaican culture,” and to give a more nuanced and real representation of identity.

Bernardine Evaristo’s *Girl, Woman, Other* (2019) works in a similar way, employing different registers of language to mark characters as being from particular geographical and cultural locations in London and elsewhere in Britain. According to Eliftoprak Sakiz (2022), “Evaristo’s strategic use of syntax, lexicology, and punctuation her vibrant establishment of what shall be named ‘textual microregions’ echoes the geographic and cultural microregions wherein her characters live” (p. 87). In creating a distinctive language for each character, Evaristo shows that micro-regional identities are not just represented – but are



made – through various turns of speech and ways of writing. This stylistic divergence highlights the extent to which language functions as a central site for the production and interpretation of localized identities in the service of a global and national imaginary.

Code-switching (alternate of languages or language varieties) is an especially useful tool for representing linguistic heterogeneity in the micro-regional continuum.” (Tiwari 2023) The kind of codeswitching prevalent in today's fiction does not so much serve as a sign of a blur of cultures but rather of the linguistic ecological system of a certain area, a micro-region, where “several languages are spoken and to some degree utilized according to certain ‘rules of the road’ of co-habitant languages. This approach allows authors to portray the genuine multilingual worlds in which their characters and their setting exist. For instance, how Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie integrates the Igbo language into *Americanah* (2013), or how Junot Díaz includes Dominican Spanish in *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (2007) is such an example. In both cases, code-switching is deployed not just for stylistic punch but to build the linguistic and cultural fabric of particular micro-local worlds, giving readers a deeper more rounded sense of place.

Narrative Structure and Temporal Techniques

Modern writers also use experimental narrative forms and imaginative times to mirror the multilayered and multi-temporal nature of microregional identities. Such formal innovations allow writers to show how particular locales are at the same time formed by multiple temporalities and located at overlapping spatial scales. In *Exit West* (2017), Mohsin Hamid incorporates magical realist features, including magical doors capable of transporting characters instantaneously across continents, to investigate the tension between local attachments and global circulation. As Luck (2022: 134) writes, “Hamid’s magic doors are a structural device that enables him to bear side by side certain micro-regional spaces—a Mykonian bedroom, a London house, a camp in California—disjointed from their transition spaces”. This narrative technique interrupts linear geographical flow, enabling Hamid to underscore characters’ emotional and cultural as well as physical ties to specific places, but not at the expense of mobility across national borders. In this way he disrupts the usual stories of migration where movement is seen either as integration or as the desire for an unattainable past.

Ali Smith’s seasonal quartet — *Autumn* (2016), *Winter* (2017), *Spring* (2019) and *Summer* (2020), too, utilizes a multifaceted temporal framework which configures moments of late-History Britain against wider socio-historical



frameworks. As Zhao (2022) contends, “Smith’s conceptualizations enable her to investigate how particular micro-regional spaces in Britain are constituted by multiple temporalities—the immediate present of Brexit, the longer histories of migration and settlement, and the deep time of seasonal cycles” (p. 167). Through this kind of narrative superimposition, Smith demonstrates the way micro-regional identities are being created within intersections of simultaneous temporal scales.

In this sense, fragmented or polyphonic narrative structures are also effective strategies for representing the plurality of viewpoints peculiar to micro-regional space. In *There*, published in 2018, Tommy Orange takes on a polyphonic narrative that draws upon twelve distinct perspectives, all linked to specific locales and sets of people in Oakland, California. As Maclear et al. (2024) note, “Orange’s polyphonic narrative structure.” This structure enables Orange to depict Oakland as “a constellation of micro-regional communities [each] with a unique relationship to Indigenous identity and urban experience” (para. 9). This storytelling disrupts the integration of “urban Native experience” by revealing internal difference and multiple identities that coexist within the same geographic space.

Spatial Representation and Cartographic Imagination

Modern writers utilize unique methods of representing space and place, creating what D’haen (2017) calls a “cartographic imagination” that charts the particular geographies of micro-regional identities. These spatial tactics allow writers to represent the particular physical and social geographies of specific places as well as the ways these places are imbricated in larger regional, national, and international circuits.

Teju Cole’s *Open City* (2011), is emblematic of such a cartographic- type of approach, showing an extremely detailed knowledge of the geography of New York City, with an emphasis on Harlem, Washington Heights and the Financial District. As Brouillette and Doody (2023) write, “the protagonist is Cole’s main cartographer, mapping the micro-regional space, not only in its physicality but in its historical, cultural, and affective features” (p. 171). On urban walkabouts with Julius, Cole creates a patchwork cognitive map that suggests how those micro-regional spaces are orderly shrapnel, embedded as much by overlapping histories as a wider world.

Likewise, Zadie Smith’s *NW* (2012) uses experimental spatial techniques such as maps, diagrams, and sectioned narratives focused around particular streets and sites to depict the geography of northwest London. Eliftoprak Sakiz (2022)



describes: “Smith’s formal experimentation with the representation of space enables her to depict the distinctive social and cultural geography of northwest London, to map how class, race, and gender are lived in microregional spaces” (p. 94). In this cartographical imagination, Smith constructs northwest London as a diverse patchwork of micro-regions and not an integrated space.

In addition, digital technologies and virtual spaces lend new complexity to the literary depiction of place. Yet, in *Ghana Must Go* (2013) Taiye Selasi demonstrates how digital communication can be a tool for sustaining emotional and cultural connections to micro-regional spaces in the absence of ‘the report’ (12)), the regional home burdens the migrant while the migrant urban home complicates their navigation. As Chakraborty (2024) observes, “Selasi’s portrayal of the ways in which characters engage with digital technologies to remain connected to specific locales in Accra and Boston challenges traditional notions of place-bound identities that necessitate physical presence, and instead shows us how communities of practice between people and spaces at a micro-regional level can be reproduced across transnational space” (p. 103).

Characterization and Embodied Experience

Even current writers use specific means to elicit what it is like to personally feel and physically carry micro-regional identities. These methods permit the writers to study in what way a connection to various localities influences characters’ points of view, behavior, as well as their overall identity. For example, Ocean Vuong’s *On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous* (2019) illustrates the manner in which conveying description that hinges on sensory experience characterizes a protagonist’s particular point of view—centered on what he smells, tastes, and feels physically as it stems from his life growing up in a Vietnamese immigrant group near Hartford, Connecticut. As Mohabir (2021) notes that “Vuong’s focus on the tactile, sensory dimensions of micro-regional belonging enables him to express the ways in which attachment to particular locations runs deeper than cognitive or ideological and is also fundamentally physical and affective” (para. 6). Vuong’s story thus is one that situates micro-regional identity as something lived and felt, rather than merely thought or claimed.

We Need New Names (2013), where NoViolet Bulawayo shows how the protagonist’s corporeal relations to her environment—through her movement through landscapes, her game-playing and ritual activities, and her sensory experiences with food and objects—shape her emerging identity. As Varma (2023) contends, “Bulawayo’s focus on the corporeal dimensions of Darling’s life



in Paradise enables her to show how micro-regional identity is not an abstract notion, but a lived experience that informs how people experience and engage with the world” (p. 9).

Objects, also, become metonymies of local belonging. In Kamila Shamsie’s *Home Fire* (2017), characters affiliate themselves with certain things — a certain Pakistani sweet from a certain part of London, or a certain type of clothing — which serve as material formations of a micro-regional identity. As Brouillette and Doody (2023) observe, “Shamsie’s investment in the material culture of particular micro-regional communities makes possible a scrutiny of how identity is variously articulated and negotiated through the object and practice of everyday life” (p. 169).

Intertextuality and the Literary Tradition

Besides characterization, modern authors often resort to intertextuality and dialogue with different literary traditions in order to investigate the cultural scope of micro-regional identity. These methods enable writers to explore how attachment to particular places is one of cultural texts and practices.

Salman Rushdie’s *The Golden House* (2017) exemplifies this technique with its rich, intertextual web of films, novels, and other cultural references bound up with particular neighborhoods in Mumbai and New York. As Luck (2022) argues, “Rushdie’s intertextual references do not serve as generic signposts of a world citizenry but as very particular cultural coordinates to trace the movement of the protagonist through specific micro-regional spaces featuring their separate cultural geographies” (p. 156).

Similarly, *Swing Time* by Zadie Smith (2016) prefigures local forms of dancing, which are relevant to particular areas in London and one West African country that is not named. According to Eliftoprak Sakiz (2022), the particular interaction of Smith with various localities and traditions of dances provides her with the possibility to demonstrate how cultural practices intersect with or are predictive of the specific sub-regional identities (p. 96). Smith uses the movements and actions of the characters to present identity as a staged and experienced performance.

Writers also rely on particular literary traditions to highlight the long provenance of micro-regional affiliation. In *Harlem Shuffle* (2021), Colson Whitehead wrestles with the cultural inheritance of the Harlem Renaissance, bringing its themes into conversation with Harlem’s social and economic forces in the 1960s. Tiwari (2023) observes that “Whitehead’s engagement with the literary traditions of Harlem enables him to examine the manner in which micro-



regional identity is articulated through and shaped by particular cultural productions which are themselves in a process of evolution in response to local conditions” (p. 58).

Conclusion: Micro-Regional Poetics of Identity

The various literary strategies utilized by contemporary Anglophone writers evince what might be called a poetics of micro-regional identity, a cluster of formal and stylistic resources that facilitate the representation of intricate, multiscaled forms of identification. As this section has shown, these are not simply stylistic choices, but are techniques of knowledge through which writers express the particularity and depth of affective experience of local attachments in a globalized milieu.

Through experimenting with the language, the narrative structure, the spatial configuration, the characterization, and the intertext every literary work and its authors prompt their audience to adopt an attitude towards the places, an awareness regarding the persistence of the place-based identities. These micro-regional representations are not holdovers from a pre-global past but are speculative, emergent formations that work with, against, and alongside global circuits of people, culture, and capital.

The next section will expand on this analysis, locating these literary practices within larger theoretical discourses on globalization and identity, and examining how micro-regional perspectives recast our perception of belonging in the modern world.

Integrating With Present Identity and Globalization Theories

This section places the analysis of micro-regional identities within the spectrum of general theoretical discourse concerning identity formation in a global age. By anchoring literary representations within terms such as glocalization, vernacular cosmopolitanism and scalar theory, one may begin to appreciate more clearly the theoretical implications of micro-regional identities. These frameworks highlight how localized attachments are not isolated phenomenon but are entangled in global processes of place-making and belonging. Informed by this perspective, micro-regional identity becomes a crucial frame for approaching the complex relationship between local specificity and global relatedness in cultural and literary production today.

Beyond binary models: Reimagining scale in the construction of identity

The representations of micro-regional identities investigated in the previous sections undermine binary oppositions between the local and the global, or the particular and the universal. Rather, these texts embody a “multiscale approach to



identity formation” in Roudometof’s (2005) words, whereby “individuals inhabit multiple, overlapping screens of belonging at more or less the same time” (p. 122). This model is consistent with new theoretical frameworks that question fixed scalar hierarchies and stress that scales are not impermeable but instead mutually interacting.

Expanding on this foundation, Paasi and Metzger (2025) admonish “conventional scalar thinking—which conceptualizes the local, regional, national, and global as separate, hierarchical levels” for its lack of representation of the lived experiences of identity in a globalized world (p. 483). Instead, they favor a “topological approach to scale,” which insists that spatial dimensions are not just linearly layered, but rather folded into one another in intricate and relational ways. Perhaps this is another reason why micro-regional identities rarely are presented in contemporary fiction as sealed or free-standing. Instead, they are viewed as complex compositions constructed with the overlapping of a number of spatial registers.

The rigor of the latter approach also resonates with Brubaker and Cooper's (2000) idea of the move away from "groupist" conceptions of identity towards more processual and relational models which stress "identification" over the idea of "identity" as fixed (p. 14). As they insist, “Recognition – of self and other – is constitutive of social existence; ‘identity’ in the strong sense is not” (p 14). This theoretical shift is reflected in modern fictional depictions of micro-regional identities. Izquierdo, Ana María Corrêa Explorations of Transcultural Identity Tropes in Massive Open Online Courses on the Literary Subject This analysis is a step toward establishing the body of work on transcultural identity production and author- ship in Moocs that incorporate literary content as relevant to literary and cultural stu- dies. This fluidity enables literature to interrogate the ongoing negotiation of belonging in micro-regions at once willfully inside and outside.

Glocalization and the Dialectics of Place-Making

The notion of glocalization — the concurrent expression of universalizing and particularizing tendencies in modern social life — provides a useful basis for analyzing the representation of micro-regional identities in recent fiction. Defined by Roudometof (2005), glocalization describes “the refraction of globalization through the local, with differing effects in diverse spatial locales” (p. 116). This model explains why literary micro-regional identities are not shown as purely local or global forms, but as hybrid configurations generated at the intersection of the two.



The literary instances shared above are in step with what Zhao (2022) describes as a “dialectical understanding of glocalization,” in which “the global and the local are not antagonistic,” but “mutually constitutive components in place-making and identity formation” (p. 145). This is dramatically depicted in novels like Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Americanah* (2013) and Mohsin Hamid’s *Exit West* (2017) where we see micro-regional areas that are both impacted by and productive of a transnational dynamic, articulating and facilitating distinct local auras. These works emphasize the continuum of forms and attachments conditioned by global mobility and local rootedness.

Crucially, this dialectical view of glocalization does not imply that power relations do not matter, or even that all places are equally positioned in global networks. As Varma (2023) explains, “The interactions between the global and the local at any given time are always shaped by larger structures of power, including the ramifications of colonizing practices, the workings of global capitalism, and the policies of nation states” (p. 13). Fiction of the present senses this asymmetry but emphasizes also the agency of micro-regions to negotiate, resist or refigure such global patterns. In the process, works of literature frequently depict micro-regional spaces not only as receptacles that respond to the world at large,⁶ but also as nodes in an international network of power and significance.

Everyday Cosmopolitanism and Rooted Mobility

The notion of vernacular cosmopolitanism – an aspirational mode of identification that is hard-wired with local cultural context, but remains open to universal idioms – offers another useful lens for apprehending fiction of the contemporary micro-regional. Eliftoprak Sakiz (2022) describes a notion of vernacular cosmopolitanism as “cosmopolitan forms of openness that are rooted in specific cultural, linguistic, and geographical contexts rather than transcending them” (p. 23). This perspective accounts for characters’ grounded attachments to micro-regional domains just as it accounts for reasons why they continue to interpolate meaningfully with the global flows of culture.

The literary examples that we have considered in foregoing sections resonate with what Walkowitz (2018) terms ‘rooted cosmopolitanism’, where “openness to difference and global connection is not opposed to but rather grows out of particular local attachments” (p. 407). This is well exemplified by Teju Cole’s *Open City* (2011) or Zadie Smith’s *Swing Time* (2016) in which characters’ encounters with diversity are mediated by their connection to a particular neighborhood, sensibility, or urban past. These texts dislodge a simplistic idea of



the cosmopolitan as the rootless, and put in its place the cosmopolitan proper as a complex model of global membership (as a world citizen) that is founded in micro-regional identity.

Vernacular cosmopolitanism calls into question both the naive embrace of hybridity and the nostalgic glorification of cultural authenticity. As Brouillette and Doody (2023) describe, “the notion of vernacular cosmopolitanism permits us to perceive how people mediate their entanglement in global networks without forsaking particular local have an affinities, and to see these affinities themselves changing through global encounters” (p. 172). It is this construct that begins to explain why the micro-regional identities that appear in contemporary fiction seldom present as stable, culturally discrete entities. Rather, they are presented as unstable, dynamic constructs produced through the ongoing interaction of diverse cultural forces. These representations endorse rootedness and openness as coexisting and permit complex meanings of identity that challenge simplistic binaries.

Scalar Theory and the Ontology of Scale orientational scalar theory and the relevant politics of scale. {Scalar Theory and the Politics of Scale}

“Scalar theory”—the study of how spatial scales are socially constructed, mobilized, and contested—offers a powerful analytic tool to approach the political dimensions of micro-regional identities in the fiction of today. As Paasi and Metzger (2025) underscore, “scale is not a neutral, objective category but is always bound up in social relations of power” (p. 485). This outlook highlights the fact such representations of scale in literature—whether they be local, regional, national, or planetary—are necessarily political, reproducing and remaking hierarchies of identity and power.

They provide sites of resistance to dominant scalar framings which center the nation-state or global market as the natural unit of analysis. Such literary representations of micro-regional spaces often work against these hierarchies, by revealing the significance (cultural, emotional, or historical) of what appears to be peripheral space. From this perspective, fiction is a genre through which spatial imaginaries are conceived and can be challenged by structural forces - nationalism, neoliberalism, and globalization.

The caricatured renderings of “community” in the sections above are consistent with what Simon and Paasi (2019) refer to as “scalar politics”, where “different actors strategically mobilize different scales to promote particular political projects” (p. 49). This relationship is evident in recent novels, such as Arundhati Roy’s *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) and Tommy Orange’s *There*



(2018), in which characters lay claim to micro-regional identities as counter-stories to mainstream national narratives. These novels demonstrate how fiction can highlight the tactical deployment of scale as a mode of political articulation and protest.

Scalar theory also helps to account for the fact that micro-regional identities in recent fiction more often constitute sites of contestation than accord. As Bonikowski et al. (2023) note, “different scales of identity – local, regional, national, and transnational – can be mobilized by different players for different reasons, resulting in complex scalar politics as no one scale has a blanket privilege” (p. 8). Those insights uncover political meanings of literary representations that place micro-regional points of view at the forefront, which cause models based on hierarchy where the local or global becomes the first hinge of identity to falter.

Intersectionality, and the Polysemy of Identification

Indeed, by focusing on the intersection of certain micro-regions with other social and literary categories, such as race, class, gender, sexuality and location, we are better equipped to critique the complexity and plurality of micro-regional identities in literature. Tiwari (2023) also highlights that “place-based identities are always lived not in isolation but in tandem with other aspects of identity” (p. 54), leading to unique configurations of belonging that cannot be reducible to one category.

It is on this theoretically foundation that we draw to explore, particularly, the extent to which ‘identification is multiple’ (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000), that is, if “self- and other-identity is essentially situational and context-dependent” (2000: 14). That perspective is evident in books like Bernardine Evaristo’s *Girl, Woman, Other* (2019) and Ocean Vuong’s *On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous* (2019), which feature characters whose sense of place is profoundly bound up in their racial, gendered, sexual, and socioeconomic identities.

The concept of intersectionality explains why micro-regional identities in literature are almost never homogenously depicted. Instead, they are depicted as internally fraught and debated. Indeed, as Alam’s (2024) work highlights, “Even within particular micro-regional communities, people experience and express attachment to place differently depending on where they are located along the other identified axes of identity” (p. 85). This intersectional perspective will thus enrich that place-based identity is negotiated and performed in contemporary literature.

Digital Technology and Virtual Micro Regions



Emerging theory on digital technologies and virtual communities gives some very useful contexts in understanding how new media micro-regions may be represented in contemporary fiction dealing with digital space. As Chakraborty (2024) suggests, “Digital technologies do not so much obliterate place as reconfigure how place is made and felt, offering new potentialities for microregional identity which are not quite physical or virtual” (p. 105). This reconceptualized experience of space implies that identity at a locale can be now contingently built and sustained in hybrids of presence and absence.

The writings featured in preceding sections are consistent with Luck’s (2022) discussion of “digital regionalism,” which refers to “particular online communities that have distinct cultural practices, linguistic innovations, and forms of belonging that mirror those of real-world place-based communities” (p. 167). After all, this is present in novels such as Taiye Selasi’s *Ghana Must Go* (2013) and Zadie Smith’s *NW* (2012) in which characters digital technologies to stay connected to certain neighborhoods and cultural geographies when they have left them behind geographically speaking.

The digital space is imagined and theorized as binary figures of reality and virtuality are being undermined. Zhao (2022) proposes a new metaphysical solution, hybrid spatial paradigm in which “physical and virtual spaces interpenetrate and constitute each other” (p. 178). This model offers a valuable tool with which to comprehend why micro-regional identities are often exhibited in digitally-inflected fiction as not defined by any geographical border. Instead, they are shown to be ‘impure’ or hybrid forms of identity, part digital, part face-to-face.

This investigation of micro-regional belonging also raises important questions to do with identity formation in an age of globalization. As Paasi and Metzger (2025) argue, ...[it] ‘does not mean a retreat to parochialism or nationalism but instead a more subtle understanding about how people really live with globalization, and how they negotiate it. The literature considered in this review article collaborates this nuanced picture, offering composite pictures of how people are living and travelling between intersecting levels of belonging. By connecting literary reproductions with central theoretical constructs – glocalization, vernacular cosmopolitanism, scalar theory, intersectionality, and digital spatiality – this article has established the conceptual utility of micro-regional identity as applied to the study of contemporary, Anglophone fiction. It allows for leaving behind binarism of the local versus the global or the particular versus the universal.



Conclusion

As this review essay has explored, the imaginary contours of micro-regional identities—hyper-local affiliations grounded in particular neighborhoods, ecologies, dialects or cultural zones, often running far in excess of formal geopolitical borders—are dramatized in our contemporary fictions written in English. By considering how authors construct and articulate these identities, how they position them in relation to global narratives, the literary strategies that are employed in their representation, and the intersections of these portrayals with wider theoretical debates around identity and globalization, this review highlights the crucial utility of micro-regional identity as a theoretical optic through which we might engage with contemporary fiction.

The findings of analysis produce several interesting observations about how micro-regional identities are represented in world Anglophone literature. First, modern writers set micro-regional spaces in motion with all kinds of signs—spatial, linguistic, cultural, historical, and environmental—that cross-cut in complicated manners to make recognizable local affinities. More than being isolated or insular, however, writers emphasize their involvement in complex transnational and multinational systems, formed by the repeated intersections of global forces.

Second, modern writers depict micro-regional identities in an enormous variety of ways: as pockets of resistance to homogenizing global forces, as nodes in complex global networks, as hybrids that mix resistance with participation, and as active, fluid processes. 9 These multifaceted strategies of representation highlight the inherent politics of scale, in the process countering current hegemonic approaches that place the national or global as a standard ontology around which to construct the formation of identity.

Third, the writers use an array of challenging literary devices—linguistic experimentation, non-linear narratives, spatial distinctiveness, character subtlety, intertextuality—to convey micro-regional identities in all their complexity and particularity. These aesthetic, stylistic and formal tactics work not only as aesthetic devices, but rather as epistemological apparatuses for the articulation of multiscale and multi-layered senses of belonging.

The literary profiles of micro-regional identity finally reviewed in this article are part of a conversation established with recent theoretical paradigms, where identity is understood as multiscale, processual and intersectional. Analyses of glocalization, of vernacular cosmopolitanism, scalar theory, and the phenomenon of digital spatiality, provide highly productive models through which to



understand how contemporary fiction gestures beyond more traditional national, postcolonial and trans nationalist models, towards identity as relational, situated, and becoming.

The emphasis on micro-regional identities constitutes an important contrast with prevailing models in global Anglophone fiction, which have generally privileged national, post-colonial and transnational paradigms. In focusing on the more localized forms of attachment that are nevertheless inextricably connected to global forces, such approach provides a more nuanced and emplaced account of the emergence and experience of belonging in a world of interconnections.

This reorientation raises profound questions for literary criticism, cultural theory and more general understandings of what it means to be in the world today. It highlights the fact that acknowledging the enduring importance of particular kinds of local attachment is not a retreat into provincialism or nationalism. Instead, it suggests a more nuanced understanding of globalization—not as a man- unfactored sameness, but as a condition articulated via everyday practices, places, and affiliations. In this view, the micro-regional is not a vestige of a bygone era before globalization, but a space constituted through the dynamic interplay of global and local forces and identities.

Potential Uses of the Analysis and Future Work This is just a beginning analysis of this nature. First, comparative literary programs might wish to study how foreign literatures represent microregional identities, and how far similar representational patterns can be found in foreign language systems and cultures. Second, it would be possible to adopt a diachronic approach which would be able to see how the representation of small regions has evolved over time, and whether the fiction of the present century breaks with or continues the legacy of earlier literary traditions. Thirdly, the cross-disciplinary possibilities of this line of enquiry might cross-correlate of literary depictions of micro-regional identity and research into areas like sociology, anthropology, and human geography (adding up to a more comprehensive understanding place-based identity in the epoch of the global).

Framing its analysis in terms of micro-regional identities, this overview intends to promote a more subtle appreciation of the way that recent Anglophone fiction engages with the linked issues of identity, place and belonging. It has also borne out the importance of rising above dualisms – between the local and global, and between the particular and universal – in favour of a multi-scaling approach. In so doing, it attunes itself to the layered, iterative process of making sense of identity in a world being reshaped by interconnection, mobility, and spatial complexity.



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