

## ***The Difference***

*after Kafka*

the countries of the world are too great  
too clear-cut, too conclusive, to contain  
all the counties that we have within us

\*

how beautiful they are, the islands  
that we've never been to

\*

languages dissolve nations  
into song and poem

\*

*after Benjamin*

nations are all romance  
but without the poor  
of the world  
there'd be no myth

\*

each night, before we go to sleep  
the radio turns off our borders  
and broadcasts to all the sailors  
far, far, out at sea

\*

our laws are imitations

\*

the world knows itself as an arc

\*

a domain we all share: SKY

a utopian language: ALLONEWORD

a utopian technology: ALLONEWORLD

a notion of the self, given extension and exclusion: NATION

the 'also ran' of politics : REGION

the countries on the edge of England: BRITAIN

the Aegean, inverted: HEBRIDES

a glimpse of happiness: HY-BRAZIL

a diminishment to the ray of the nation: EMIGRATION

a little more colour: IMMIGRATION

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*after Sir Thomas Browne*

we carry countries within us  
that we can only seek without us

\*

where should we go

NORTH

when we feel the need

SOUTH

to change our clothes

where should we look

EAST

to find a change in the light

WEST

from day to night

Alec Finlay

Alec Finlay is an internationally recognised artist, poet and publisher whose work crosses a range of media and forms, from sculpture and collage, to audio-visual, neon and new technologies. Born in Scotland in 1966, much of Finlay's work reflects on our interaction with nature and considers how we as a culture, or cultures, relate to landscape.  
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