

Geocriticism and Spatial Literary Studies

Series Editor:

ROBERT T. TALLY JR., Texas State University

Series description:

Geocriticism and Spatial Literary Studies is a new book series focusing on the dynamic relations among space, place, and literature. The spatial turn in the humanities and social sciences has occasioned an explosion of innovative, multidisciplinary scholarship in recent years, and geocriticism, broadly conceived, has been among the more promising developments in spatially oriented literary studies. Whether focused on literary geography, cartography, geopoetics, or the spatial humanities more generally, geocritical approaches enable readers to reflect upon the representation of space and place, both in imaginary universes and in those zones where fiction meets reality. Titles in the series include both monographs and collections of essays devoted to literary criticism, theory, and history, often in association with other arts and sciences. Drawing on diverse critical and theoretical traditions, books in the Geocriticism and Spatial Literary Studies series disclose, analyze, and explore the significance of space, place, and mapping in literature and in the world.

Robert T. Tally Jr. is Associate Professor of English at Texas State University, USA. His work explores the relations among narrative, representation, and social space in American and world literature, criticism, and theory. Tally has been recognized as a leading figure in the emerging fields of geocriticism, spatiality studies, and the spatial humanities. Tally's books include *Fredric Jameson: The Project of Dialectical Criticism*; *Poe and the Subversion of American Literature: Satire, Fantasy, Critique*; *Utopia in the Age of Globalization: Space, Representation, and the World System*; *Spatiality*; *Kurt Vonnegut and the American Novel: A Postmodern Iconography*; and *Melville, Mapping and Globalization: Literary Cartography in the American Baroque Writer*. The translator of Bertrand Westphal's *Geocriticism: Real and Fictional Spaces*, Tally is the editor of *Geocritical Explorations: Space, Place, and Mapping in Literary and Cultural Studies*; *Kurt Vonnegut: Critical Insights*; and *Literary Cartographies: Spatiality, Representation, and Narrative*.

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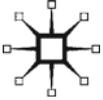
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Spatial Engagement with Poetry
By Heather H. Yeung

SPATIAL ENGAGEMENT WITH POETRY

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SPATIAL ENGAGEMENT WITH POETRY

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for Tom

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SERIES EDITOR'S PREFACE

The spatial turn in the humanities and social sciences has occasioned an explosion of innovative, multidisciplinary scholarship. Spatially oriented literary studies, whether operating under the banner of literary geography, literary cartography, geophilosophy, geopoetics, geocriticism, or the spatial humanities more generally, have helped to reframe or to transform contemporary criticism by focusing attention, in various ways, on the dynamic relations among space, place, and literature. Reflecting upon the representation of space and place, whether in the real world, in imaginary universes, or in those hybrid zones where fiction meets reality, scholars and critics working in spatial literary studies are helping to reorient literary criticism, history, and theory. *Geocriticism and Spatial Literary Studies* is a book series presenting new research in this burgeoning field of inquiry.

In exploring such matters as the representation of place in literary works, the relations between literature and geography, the historical transformation of literary and cartographic practices, and the role of space in critical theory, among many others, geocriticism and spatial literary studies have also developed interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary methods and practices, frequently making productive connections to architecture, art history, geography, history, philosophy, politics, social theory, and urban studies, to name but a few. Spatial criticism is not limited to the spaces of the so-called real world, and it sometimes calls into question any too facile distinction between real and imaginary places, as it frequently investigates what Edward Soja has referred to as the “real-and-imagined” places we experience in literature as in life. Indeed, although a great deal of important research has been devoted to the literary representation of certain identifiable and well-known places (e.g., Dickens’s London, Baudelaire’s Paris, or Joyce’s Dublin), spatial critics have also explored the otherworldly spaces of literature, such as those to be found in myth, fantasy, science fiction, video games, and cyberspace. Similarly, such criticism is interested in the relationship between spatiality and such different media or genres as film or television, music, comics, computer programs, and

other forms that may supplement, compete with, and potentially problematize literary representation. Titles in the *Geocriticism and Spatial Literary Studies* series include both monographs and collections of essays devoted to literary criticism, theory, and history, often in association with other arts and sciences. Drawing on diverse critical and theoretical traditions, books in the series reveal, analyze, and explore the significance of space, place, and mapping in literature and in the world.

The concepts, practices, or theories implied by the title of this series are to be understood expansively. Although geocriticism and spatial literary studies represent a relatively new area of critical and scholarly investigation, the historical roots of spatial criticism extend well beyond the recent past, informing present and future work. Thanks to a growing critical awareness of spatiality, innovative research into the literary geography of real and imaginary places has helped to shape historical and cultural studies in ancient, medieval, early modern, and modernist literature, while a discourse of spatiality undergirds much of what is still understood as the postmodern condition. The suppression of distance by modern technology, transportation, and telecommunications has only enhanced the sense of place, and of displacement, in the age of globalization. Spatial criticism examines literary representations not only of places themselves, but also of the experience of place and of displacement, while exploring the interrelations between lived experience and a more abstract or unrepresentable spatial network that subtly or directly shapes it. In sum, the work being done in geocriticism and spatial literary studies, broadly conceived, is diverse and far reaching. Each volume in this series takes seriously the mutually impressive effects of space or place and artistic representation, particularly as these effects manifest themselves in works of literature. By bringing the spatial and geographical concerns to bear on their scholarship, books in the *Geocriticism and Spatial Literary Studies* series seek to make possible different ways of seeing literary and cultural texts, to pose novel questions for criticism and theory, and to offer alternative approaches to literary and cultural studies. In short, the series aims to open up new spaces for critical inquiry.

Robert T. Tally Jr.

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My work on this book benefited greatly from a period of initial, related research between 2007 and 2011, which resulted in a doctoral thesis, *Affective Mapping in Contemporary British Poetry*. I am indebted to the Arts and Humanities Research Council, whose award of a full doctoral scholarship made that research possible, and to Gareth Reeves, without whose support and guidance neither that project nor this would have taken the particular forms they did.

I would also like to thank Rob Tally, first for publishing some of my early work on voice, affect, and space in *Geocritical Explorations*, and second, for the continued encouragement to think spatially—to submit a manuscript (this one!) to be a part of this very exciting book series; and Giovanna Buonono for including an earlier version of my work on Mimi Khalvati in her special issue of *Soundings* journal on the female voice and fictional maps of Britain. Many thanks are due to Brigitte Shull and Ryan Jenkins, whose patience, editorial guidance, and transatlantic support through the finicky elements of getting this book to print have been indispensable; and to Peter Jaeger for a detailed engagement with and critique of the manuscript, and for helping extend my thinking about *scriptura continua* by

pointing me in the direction of Steve McCaffery's critical work on this phenomenon.

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IN-TEXT ABBREVIATIONS

(see Bibliography for full reference)

AOD Alice Oswald, *Dart*

—

KJF Kathleen Jamie and Brigid Collins, *Frissure*

KJTH Kathleen Jamie, *The Tree House*

KJWE Kathleen Jamie, *This Weird Estate*

—

MKEL Mimi Khalvati, *Entries on Light*

MKSP Mimi Khalvati, *Selected Poems*

—

TKCP Thomas Kinsella, *Collected Poems*

TKLP Thomas Kinsella, *Late Poems*

TKRP Thomas Kinsella, *Readings in Poetry*