



## Heterotopic World Fiction

Thinking Beyond Biopolitics with Woolf, Foucault, Ondaatje

LESLEY HIGGINS AND MARIE-CHRISTINE LEPS

Studies in Comparative Literature and Intellectual History

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### SUMMARY

After more than a century of genocides and in the midst of a global pandemic, this book focuses on the critique of biopolitics (the government of life through individuals and the general population) and the counter-development of biopoetics (an aesthetics of life elaborating a self as a practice of freedom) realized in texts by Woolf, Foucault, and Ondaatje. Their world fiction produces transhistorical, transnational experiences offered to the reader for collective responsibility in these critical times. Their books function as heterotopias: spaces and processes that recall and confront regimes of recognized truths to dismantle fixed identities and actualize possibilities for becoming other. The work defines and explores a slant, biopoetic perspective that is feminist, materialist, anti-racist, and anti-war.

### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

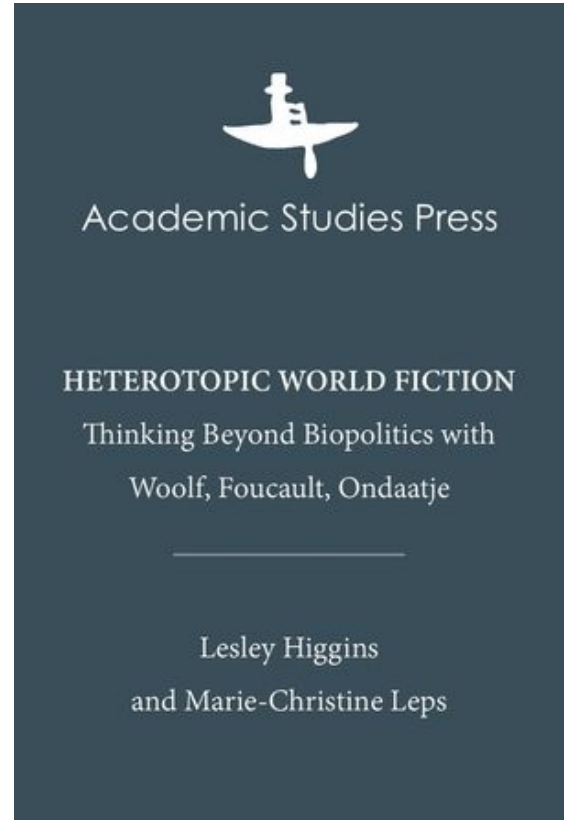
**Lesley Higgins**, Professor of English at York University, specializes in late Victorian and modernist studies. Author of *The Cult of Ugliness: Aesthetic and Gender Politics*, she has also edited three volumes of Gerard Manley Hopkins's prose. Research interests include world literature, feminist studies of modernism, textual studies, and poetry.

**Marie-Christine Leps**, Associate Professor of English at York University, is founding coordinator of the Graduate Diploma in World Literature. Author of *Apprehending the Criminal: The Production of Deviance*, she specializes in literary and cultural theory, world literature, and discourse analysis. Her current project focuses on world fictions of friendship.

### PRAISE

"*Heterotopic World Fiction*, an exposé of the migratoriness that lies at the heart of transnational literature, makes a substantial and necessary contribution to the broadening field of world literature. Intellectually agile and marvellously navigable, this book shifts its locations of inquiry from Toronto to Sri Lanka, from ships to tunnels, from metropolitan London in the twentieth century to rural France in the nineteenth century. Higgins and Leps draw upon a rich and diverse corpus of memoirs, polemical treatises, and fiction to demonstrate the persistence of biopolitical and biopoetical ethics in literature. Scholars working in the area of human rights, activism, and biopolitics will turn to *Heterotopic World Fiction* for its engagement with questions of risk, danger, and truth-telling in the face of oppression."

— Allan Hepburn, McGill University



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