

**MAPPING LITERARY SPACES:  
MEMORY, PLACE, LOCALITY**

*Editors of this book dedicate it  
to the memory of Jerzy Stencel*



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# **MAPPING LITERARY SPACES: MEMORY, PLACE, LOCALITY**

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## PREFACE

Recently space has moved to the forefront of interdisciplinarily conceived humanities. After centuries of explorations of outer space, the eye of the scholar has fixed back on the mundane parameters of human existence, on the space that lies before the naked eye, at our fingertips, in the too-too-solid vicinity. With such groundbreaking ideas to lead the way as Heidegger's conception of being-in-the world, scholars have acquired a new boldness, which alone is needed to confront the nearest, the inner-worldly, rather than the Cartesian abstract extension. But then they soon realized that explorations of the close-at-hand has been conducted for ages, and have found their way into literary works. This realization has in turn led to another one, namely that the inner-worldly space is soaked with signification; that rather than being an unknown and hostile terrain, it lies there, soaked with identities — personal, national, ethnic — and with living memory; thus turning those literary works which have taken up the task of charting this territory, into living records of the lived time and space, of the lived chronotope. It is studies of such "abstract and brief chronicles of the time" that we offer the Readers for their kind perusal.

This volume is a post-conference collection of essays, and as such brings a yield of an effort of English-language scholars in, chiefly, Poland's literary departments determined mentally to wrestle with the many problems of human spaces as they have been wrought into the fine tissue of literary texts.

Due to the crisscrossing and overlapping thematic concerns and theoretical positions, we have decided not to use the usual division of a collection of essays into problem-sections. On the other hand, it has seemed advisable to give suggestions to the Readers as to what problems the individual texts have tackled. Hence, steering clear of both the Scylla of pigeonholing

and the Charybdis of indeterminacy, we have decided to complement the author-and-title list of contents with a descriptive-topical one, hoping that the bearings given will enable the Readers to come up with an itinerary of their own for their voyage across the pages of this volume. Hoping, further, that this voyage will not turn into sea-sick crossing and begging pardon with the Authors for taking these liberties with their names, which was only done for the joint sakes of utility and perspicacity, we bid this volume go forth into the world and prosper.

*Wojciech Kalaga, Jacek Mydla*

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