

The Poetics of Space through the Prism of Geography: The Case of La Honte by Annie Ernaux

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Abstract : This study represents an investigation into the poetics of space within Annie Ernaux's autobiographical work *La honte*, highlighting the intricate interplay among space, the individual, and society. The research aims to dissect the spatial dimension of the town Yvetot, the referential locale of the author's childhood, drawing upon the frameworks of geocriticism and geopoetics. Our analysis exposes a profound dialectical tension fundamentally predicated on the binaries of "interior/exterior" and "here/there," emphasizing how space and its occupants may reciprocally influence each other. This endeavor aspires to attribute meaning to space in Ernaux's writing in *La honte* and to forge a connection between spatial elements and the author's autobiographical perspective, heavily imprinted by social dynamics. Ernaux's approach fluctuates between certain binaries that segment space according to the collective perception of social hierarchy, thus unveiling the author's preoccupation with social distancing. Consequently, space transforms into a structured milieu that transfers fear and insecurity to the child, where spatial and architectural segregation further cements class divisions in terms of the language employed by its inhabitants. Ernaux's depiction of space serves both as a repository of collective memory and an instrument of social distinction, where her autobiographical perception echoes within a collective geography marked by class determinism and culture.

Keywords : geocriticism, literary study, social class, social space, spatial analysis

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