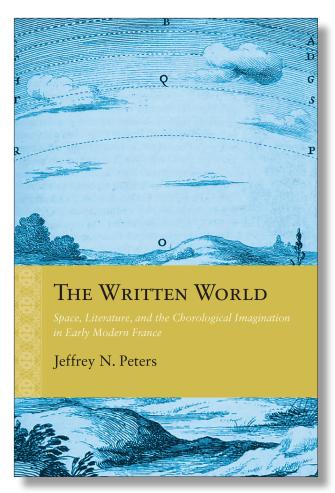
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JEFFREY N. PETERS is professor of French and Francophone studies at the University of Kentucky.

The Written World

Space, Literature, and the Chorological Imagination in Early Modern France

Jeffrey N. Peters

"Jeffrey Peters's new book boldly confronts and explores what has long been hidden in full sight: the crucially important dimension of space in early modern French literature. Geography, landscape, modern urbanism, the significance of major and minor displacements—these facets of culture come into sharp focus in Peters's study. A must-read for all those interested in the French literary tradition." —John D. Lyons, author of *Tragedy and the Return of the Dead*

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In *The Written World: Space, Literature, and the Chorological Imagination in Early Modern France,* Jeffrey N. Peters argues that geographic space may be understood as a foundational, originating principle of literary creation. By way of an innovative reading of chora, a concept developed by Plato in the Timaeus and often construed by philosophical tradition as "space," Peters shows that canonical literary works of the French seventeenth century are guided by what he calls a "chorological" approach to artistic invention. The chorological imagination describes the poetic as a cosmological event that gives location to—or, more accurately, in Plato's terms, receives—the world as an object of thought.

In analyses of well-known authors such as Corneille, Molière, Racine, and Madame de Lafayette, Peters demonstrates that the apparent absence of physical space in seventeenth-century literary depiction indicates a subtle engagement with, rather than a rejection of, evolving principles of cosmological understanding. Space is not absent in these works so much as transformed in keeping with contemporaneous developments in early modern natural philosophy. *The Written World* will appeal to philosophers of literature and literary theorists as well as scholars of early modern Europe and historians of science and geography.

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