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978-0-521-45853-5 - Shakespeare and the Geography of Difference

John Gillies

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In this engaging book, John Gillies explores Shakespeare's geographic imagination, and discovers an intimate relationship between Renaissance geography and theatre arising from their shared dependence on 'poetic' geographic traditions in which geography is already moralised or alive with human and dramaturgical meaning, pre-eminently the meaning of otherness. Dr Gillies shows that Shakespeare's images of the exotic, the 'barbarous, outlandish and strange', are grounded in concrete historical fact: to be marginalised was not just a matter of social status, but of belonging, quite literally, to the margins of contemporary maps. Through an examination of the icons and emblems of contemporary cartography, Dr Gillies challenges the map-makers' overt intentions, and the attitudes and assumptions that remained below the level of consciousness. His study of map and metaphor raises profound questions about the nature of a map, and of the connections between the semiology of a map and that of the theatre.

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*For Ali, Sylvia,
and the memory of
my father, Douglas Neil Gillies*

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