

Abstract

Jack Hodgins's *The Invention of the World* (1977) explores the extra-ordinary history of Vancouver Island in a complex story that includes transhistorical and transcultural elements, as well as biblical and mythological allusions. A milestone in the history of Canadian literature, *What the Crow Said* (1978) is one of Robert Kroetsch's most cryptic and challenging stories. The novel has been hailed as a postmodern reimagining of prairie life, full of literary references, transgressions, and ironies. More specifically, both narratives reconstruct two crucial places in the Canadian context—the prairie and the island. Furthermore, *The Invention of the World* and *What the Crow Said* are relevant to a better understanding of how fictional texts innovated the art of novel writing in the twentieth century and the different strategies they employed to do so. Through close-reading of both novels, this article aims to analyse what Brian McHale describes as ontological instability in his seminal *Postmodernist Fiction*. The paper will also explore the various ways in which the two novels can be seen as complementary in terms of their narrative treatment of space. Both authors reimagine a quintessentially Canadian setting, ultimately reconfiguring our understanding of these spaces and challenging how we make sense of reality through storytelling.