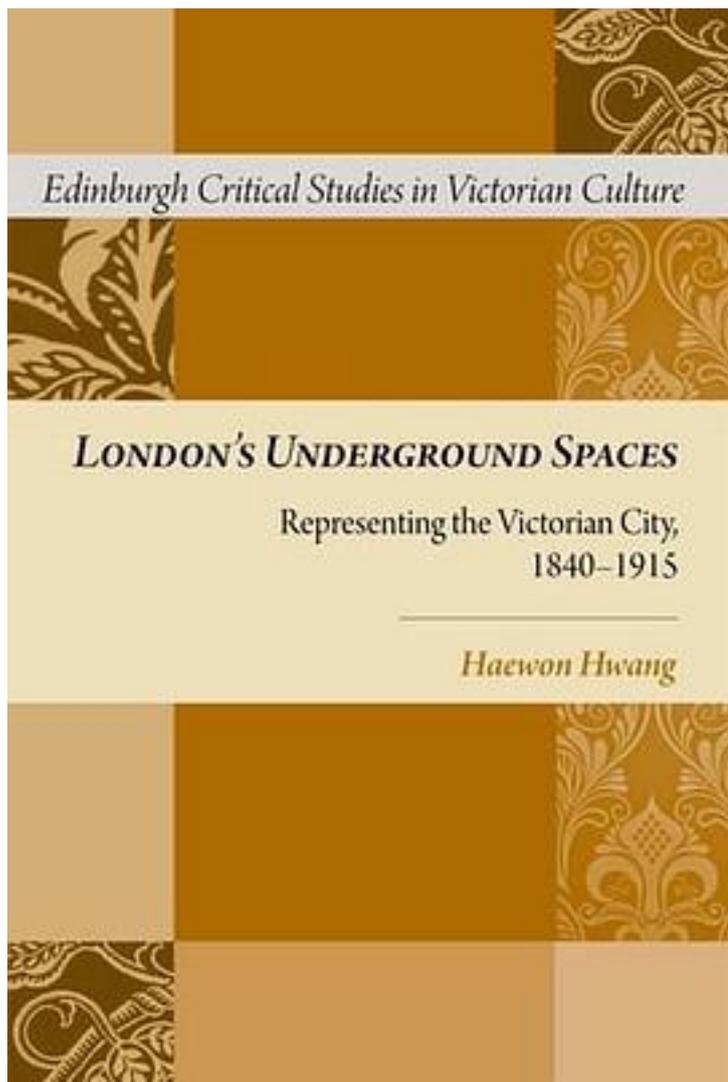


London's Underground Spaces



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Sewers, commuters, corpses and revolutionaries intermingle in this heady and pungent exploration of subterranean spaces. The construction of London's underground sewers, underground railway and suburban cemeteries created seismic shifts in the geography and the psychological apprehension of the city. Yet, why are there so few literary and aesthetic interventions in Victorian representations of subterranean spaces? What is London's answer to the Parisian sewers of Victor Hugo or the unflinching realism of Emile Zola's underworld? Where is the great English underground novel? This book explores this elision not as an absence of imaginative output, but a presence and plenitude of anxiety and fears that haunt the pages of Charles Dickens, George Gissing, Bram Stoker and Mary Elizabeth Braddon. The way these writers negotiated the dirt and messiness of underground spaces reveals not only the emergence of Gothic, socialist, and modernist sensibilities, but the way all modern cities deal with what is unseen, intangible and inarticulable. It is an interdisciplinary study that explores Victorian maps, guidebooks and advertisements, alongside literature, journals and art to bring the period to life. It draws on modern critical frameworks of Derrida, Lefebvre, and Kristeva to recover and to conceptualize the lost spaces of the Victorian city. It redefines 'underground' beyond its spatial usage to look at the emergence of underground revolutionary movements in fin-de-siecle London. It argues for the distinctiveness of London's underground culture and its influence on other global cities.

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