

Geopoetry and Geopoetics: a supplementary digression

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Conversation between the author and Kenneth White after *Edinburgh Geologist 67* had gone to press clarified not just the origins of the Scottish Centre for Geopoetics (one of several such groups across the world) but of the whole movement.

Back of it all, and ahead of it all, is the work of Kenneth White. On the basis of his own work and thought, White founded the International Institute of Geopoetics in 1989, and pretty soon there were centres working on this basis from France to Chile via Italy and Germany. Tony McManus, following White's path, founded the Scottish Centre for Geopoetics in 1995.

To focus now on geology. On the website of the International Institute of Geopoetics, central point of the whole network, among many inaugural texts in several languages, there is one entitled "Precision Points – Geopoetics and the other 'geos'. Among those "other geos" (recent creations) are listed and discussed geopolitics, geo-philosophy, geo-literature, etc. Geology, and Geography are not mentioned. Simply because, as is evidenced by White's work in essay, narrative (waybooks—other than novels and more than travelogues) and poem, they go without saying. In his introduction to geopoetics, *Le Plateau de l'Albatros* (translated from the French into several languages but not yet available in English), they are so obviously foundational.

The theory-practice of geopoetics is neither Human or Physical Geography, nor the subsurface Geology that I am more familiar with. As White says (pers. com.) "geopoetics goes beyond those separate categories. It has something to say to all disciplines, and enters into areas beyond humanism as habitually understood"

*Kenneth White,
Isle of Ouessant, North Brittany, 1996.*

Raised at Fairlie, on the West Coast of Scotland, White was strongly influenced by the geology he encountered there, walking among the Devonian Old Red Sandstone shorelines. And he has continued exploring geographical and geological contexts all over the world.

