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A Theoretical Exposition to Geo-criticism: Mapping the Philosophical Trajectory of Spatial Studies

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Abstract
Time and Space are the two cardinal aspects that determine the narrative, character development, and thematic elements of a story. Space in fiction refers to the way authors use physical, symbolic, or metaphorical spaces to shape the narrative, amplify characters, and convey multitudes of themes. It encompasses various aspects of setting and environment, including how space is described, its significance within the plot, and its impact on the overall narrative. As a generic narrative tool, space serves as an altar in fictional contexts - both real and imaginary, original and fictionalised – affixing intensity, depth, richness, details and emotion to the narrative, defining and redefining atmosphere, meticulously describing settings, scrupulously establishing environments that could shift the readers into an engaging and engrossing landscape. Spatial studies in literature or rather 'the spatial turn' gained prominence in the latter half of the 20th century that marked a shift in academic and critical approaches to literary analysis, emphasizing the importance of space and spatial relationships within literary texts. The current paper traces the theoretical trajectory of how spatial studies and literary cartography have gained momentum in the milieu of literary investigation and how space/place has become topical as a critical category much like power, culture, gender, class and race. It also lays out the basic tenets of geo-criticism, a multi-dimensional emerging field in fictional studies that focuses on how a space/locale/environment/region narrated and recreated in the reader's imagination becomes phenomenal.

Keywords: Space, Spatial turn, Geocriticism, Topography, Literary Cartography, Psychogeography, Third Space, Chronotope

Introduction

"Not surprisingly, geography's concern with the arts has been largely decorative"

(Tuan 1978)

The relationship between space and literature has been a significant and evolving aspect of literary studies since there are multiple ways and different aspects by which a place or space evince itself in literary works. In literature authors use **space** as a tool for storytelling, exploring themes, and conveying

meaning. Quite interestingly the exploration of space in literature contributes to the overall meaning, themes, and interpretations of the text as space, in literary terms, refers to the physical, cultural, social, and symbolic environments depicted in literary works. The interpretation of literary spaces can be subjective, sometimes influenced by individual perspectives, cultural contexts, and historical awareness. Often the setting of a literary work, encompassing physical locations and environmental details, plays a crucial role in shaping the narrative. It provides the backdrop against which characters and events unfold. Different settings can evoke specific moods, contribute to the development of characters, and influence the overall atmosphere of the story.

Fictional settings can range from realistic depictions of actual places to imaginary or fantastical landscapes. A great deal of novels depict the diversity of fictional settings in fiction, from those grounded in reality to others that push the boundaries of imagination, reflecting the wide range of genres and styles in literature. Although 'Maycomb' in *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960) by Harper Lee is a fictional town, it is strongly influenced by the real-life town of Monroeville, Alabama where Harper Lee grew up. "Maycomb was an old town, but it was a tired old town when I first knew it. In rainy weather the streets turned to red slop" with mule-driven Hoover carts and dirty roads, a poverty stricken setting that captures the essence of the American South during the 1930s (Lee 6). Comparably Hilary Mantel's *Wolf Hall,* (2009) a compelling historical novel provides a realistic depiction of historical settings such as the court of Henry VIII and the political landscape of the time. While the events and characters are real, the novel fictionalizes the inner thoughts and motivations of its protagonist, Thomas Cromwell. For lovers of fictional terrains and readers of fantasy fiction, the lush dairy farming landscape near the Waikato town of Matamata, New Zealand, that became home to the peaceful Shire region of Middle-earth – the astounding location of J R R Tolkein's most widely read works, *The Hobbit* (1937) and *The Lord of the Rings*,(1954) the fantastical, amusing and scathing universe of Lilliput, Brobdingnag, Laputa and Houyhnhnms in Jonathan Swift's political satire *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) are undeniably geographical treasure troves.

Literary works often explore cultural and social spaces, reflecting the values, norms, and dynamics of a particular society or community, these spaces serve as lenses through which authors critique or comment on societal issues. Cultural and social spaces may include cities, neighbourhoods, institutions, and specific gathering places as in Orhan Pamuk's *Snow* (2002), Arvind Adiga's *The White Tiger* (2008), Rohinton Mistry's *Such a Long Journey* (1991) and *A Fine Balance* (1995)

Istanbul's fate is my fate: I am attached to this city because it has made me who I am…For me it has always been a city of ruins and of end-of-empire melancholy. I've spent my life either battling with this melancholy, or (like all Istanbullus) making it my own. (Pamuk 2005)

Descriptions of topography and geography contribute to the physical environment of a literary work, influencing the narrative's spatial orientation. The geographical features of a location, such as mountains, rivers, or landscapes, may hold symbolic significance or affect the characters' experiences. Travel narratives, starting from Homer's *Odyssey* (1614) to Alice Morrison's *Walking with Nomads* (2022) often rely heavily and luxuriously on the portrayal of geographical spaces. In literary critical studies, the shift to space; spatiality, geography, topography, and place have mostly become predominant since 1960s.

The Gothic landscapes in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), the vibrant and dangerous Indian jungle in Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book* (1894), J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle earth, the fictional Hundred Acre

Wood in A.A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926), Isla Nublar, the fictional island in Michael Crichton's *Jurassic Park* (1990), the metaphorical Mississippi River in Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), the chaotic city of Mumbai in Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* (1988) and the fictional town of Brahmpur in Vikram Seth's *The Suitable Boy* (1993) are instances that showcase the diverse fictional spaces / real landscapes reflecting the social, cultural, and geographic diversity of the world where each author brings a unique perspective to their portrayal of spaces, offering readers insights into the complexities of human lives.

The novel (*The Suitable Boy*) is not only a love story but also a depiction of India; however, it does not attempt…to represent the whole of that vast nation. It portrays only a specific slice of it, the middle and upper classes of North Indian society in the early 1950's. (Atkins 21)

Sometimes literary works feature symbolic or imaginary spaces that transcend the physical realm and represent the psychological states, dreams, or abstract concepts. Adding layers of meaning to the narrative, these spaces allow authors to explore themes beyond the literal contributing to the overall richness and depth of the literary experience. The exploration of characters' internal spaces, as in Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* (1927), including thoughts, emotions, and memories; understanding the characters' psychological spaces as the intense entanglement of Paul Morel's imbroglio due to mother-fixation in D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* (1913), provides insight into their motivations, fears, and growth. Most of the well-known stream-of-consciousness novels delve into the immediate thoughts and perceptions of characters.

The allocation of space within a literary work can reflect power dynamics, social hierarchies, and political structures; spaces serve as settings for conflicts, resolutions, or transformative moments. The representation of space can serve as a commentary on societal structures and become arenas for emotional, social, or existential battles. Russian novels like Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (1867), Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (1867) and *Anna Karenina* (1878), Anton Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* (1903) and Mikhail Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita* (1967) are not only physical settings but also symbolic representations of the cultural, social, and political dynamics of the time. They contribute to the depth and complexity of the narratives, providing a backdrop against which the characters' struggles, philosophies, and destinies unfold.

Readers may form connections with the depicted spaces, and their perception of these spaces influences their understanding of characters and events. Time and time again personal experiences and cultural backgrounds veined through a fictional work can also shape readers' interpretations of literary spaces. For instance Zadie Smith's debut novel *The White Teeth* (2000) reconfigures local places as dynamic sites of multicultural conviviality in the present day city of London. As a matter of fact readers with experiences of multicultural urban settings may connect more personally with the depictions of cultural hybridity. The intersection of personal identity and cultural context is evident in the pages of Jhumpa Lahiri's lucid and elegant fictional domain, the cultural dilemmas confronted by the Indian Bengali family from Calcutta and their American born children in her *The Namesake* (2003). Similarly Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah* (2013) is a socio-political searing exploration of race relations in America written from a postcolonial perspective where Ifemelu, a Nigerian woman is shuttled between the American and Nigerian spaces, quite relatable to anyone who has encountered harrowing experiences with immigration, race, and cultural adaptation.

Space, Geography, Fiction – The Spatial Turn

Geography ... has meant different things to different people at different times and in different places. (Livingstone 7)

The concept of 'spatial turn' is frequently associated with Michel Foucault's *Of Other Spaces* (1967)*; The Poetics of Space* (1958) by Gaston Bachelard, Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* (1974)*;* Mikhail Bakhtin in his *The Dialogic Imagination* (1981) and Edward Soja's *Postmodern Geographies* (1989), who examined various concepts of spaces and places in cultural studies, geography, architecture, literature and social philosophy. Homi K Bhabha's phenomenal concept of "third space", Victor Turner's "liminality", Walter

Lippmann's 'conceptual vocabulary of "pseudo-environments", Mircea Eliade's 'heirophany', Deleuze and Guattari's spatial concepts like 'nomadology',

"deterritorialization" and "reterritorialization" are a few conceptions in the broad spectrum of spatial analysis.

In the 1970s and the later period, critical investigations in space received a humongous thrust which gradually replaced the concept of time with spatial precepts in the works of prominent French spatial theorists like Virilio, de Certeau, Deleuze, Guattari, Baudrillard, Auge, Latour and Virilio. Today when space and place becomes paradigmatic concerns in the exploration of the social, cultural, economic and political relations underlying a human society, contemporary cultural philosophers and critics like Edward Said, Stuart Hall, Benedict Anderson and Raymond Williams redefined the significance of "space as a framing device in the creation of cultural imaginaries"(Hubbard and Kitchin 2). Discourses on spatial studies from Antonio Gramsci's spatial dimensions of power, and the implications of culture in shaping spatial practices voyaged far into Jean Baudrillard, Gerard Ó Tuathail, Paul Virilio and Judith Butler's rich spatial thoughts that reconceived the concepts of gender, race, power, culture, geography, art, society and mankind.

Human Geography

In the 1880s and 1890s a new route opened up in the spatial discourses – human geography. It is an interdisciplinary, both quantitative and qualitative in approach, comprehensive geographic analysis of interactions, adaptations, adjustments and modifications between humans and their surroundings. Human geographers came into vogue by validating the precept that people never lived in a pattern of geometric relationships but resided in a world of meaning. Leading human geographers like Carl Sauer, Ernst Ravenstein, Vidal de la Blache, David Harvey and Yi-Fu Tuan postulated that the affinity and intimacy of personal experiences and encounters with space produce a "sense of place" (9).

As a multi-layered domain, human geography establishes strong connections with other related social sciences leading to sub-fields as social geography, cultural geography, urban geography, settlement geography, political geography, feminist geography, Marxist geography and even population geography.

What distinguishes human geography from other related disciplines, such as development, economics, politics, and sociology, are the application of a set of core geographical concepts to the phenomena under investigation, including space, place, scale, landscape, mobility, and nature. (Castree 2013)

Since 1970s the critical approach and inquisitiveness towards space have undergone humongous paradigm shifts. Describing space in terms of social, political, economic, cultural and power aspects led to sophisticated insights from which conceptions like 'relational geographies, spatial fix, German Lands-

chaft tradition, spatial divisions of labour, environmental determinism, geopolitics, relocation diffusion, electoral geography, military geography, cultural landscapes, urban geography and geography of gender'(12) developed and loomed large over the spatial disciplinary domains. In the writings of post-colonial giants namely Homi K Bhabha, Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, Amartya Sen and Michael Watts, "spatial metaphors help convey complex political ideas, power dynamics, and resistance"(5). These metaphors furnish readers with a tangible and relatable framework to understand abstract political concepts. The spatial metaphor of 'Big Brother watching over citizens' in

George Orwell's dystopian cautionary tale *1984* (1949) metaphorically depicted the intense control and scrutiny exerted on the citizens by the authoritarian regime. Orwell's arrangement of spaces on the farm in *Animal Farm* (1945) is allegorical of the political hierarchy that reflects the unequal power dynamics among the animals and mirrors the corrupting influence of authority. Then again the setting of Gilead in Margaret Atwood's futuristic dystopian novel *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) symbolizes the oppressive political regime, with different locations representing different aspects of societal control in a near-future New England in a patriarchal, totalitarian theonomic state. In fact these instances of spatial emblems serve to elucidate the readers to understand the nuances of political themes within the narrative.

Conventionally the literary probe into fictional settings focussed primarily on the study of characters, the sequence of plot events, the conflicting incidents of the story and even the methods employed in story-telling rather than the setting or locale of the story. With the abounding waves of spatial turn and its relentless advances, literature ushered into new academic avenues of literary geography, geocriticism, spatial literary studies, urban studies, literary cartography and so forth.

Literary geography

Literary geography is a subfield within cultural geography that focuses on the spatial aspects of literature that involves the study of how literature represents, interprets, and interacts with geographical spaces and places. This critical sphere examines the relationship between texts and the landscapes, cities, regions, or countries they depict, exploring how the sense of place influences literary works and how literature, in turn, shapes perceptions of space. Thomas Hardy's depiction of Egdon Heath as a central and evocative setting in *The Return of the Native* (1878) serves as a prime example of how a geographical location becomes a character in the narrative. The heath influences the lives and fates of the novel's characters, illustrating the impact of physical space on the unfolding story. Another remarkable instance is the geographical and cultural landscape of the region, Ayemenem in Kerala, intricately woven into Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* (1997). Set in the fictional village of India, the story revolves around the Meenachal River, the family home, and the surrounding natural environment that play vital roles in shaping the characters' lives and the unfolding events." All stories require borders and border crossings, that is, some form of intercultural contact zones, understanding 'culture' in its broadest sense." (Friedman 196)

A much broader domain in space explorations within narratives, **spatial literary studies**, explores how spatial elements contribute to the meaning, structure, and interpretation of literature. According to the Texas State University Professor Robert Tally "What Edward

W. Soja has termed the real-and-imagined places of literature, criticism, history, and theory, as well as of our own abstract conceptions and lived experience, these constitute the practical domain for spatial literary studies" (Tally 2014). Scholars in this field analyze the ways in which authors use spatial

elements to convey meaning, reflect cultural contexts, and engage with social, political, and psychological dimensions. While not a literary work itself, Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* (1974) has heavily impacted spatial scholars on how space is socially constructed and how literary texts contribute to the production of spatial meanings. Closely Michel de Certeau's concepts of "space" and "place" in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984) have been applied to spatial literary studies whereby scholars analyze how characters navigate, appropriate, or resist spaces in literary texts, shedding light on the spatial dynamics of ordinary experiences. While Edward Soja's *Thirdspace* (1996) challenges traditional binary distinctions in spatial studies by examining how authors create spaces that resist simple categorization; Jamaica Kincaid's nonfiction indictment of the Antiguan government, *A Small Place* (1988) is a spatial critique that explores the impact of colonialism on Antigua, essentially a literary exploration of the socio-spatial consequences of imperialism.

Authors often use the methodical intersection of time and space to convey themes, explore character development, and create a unique atmosphere in fictional storylands. David Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas* (2004) weaves together multiple narratives spanning different time periods and locations which substantiate the intersection of time and space crucial in literature, influencing the temporal dimension of the narrative. Unfolding a single day tale in London, exploring the inner conflicts of the characters, Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) weaves a narrative woven between the present life and memories of the characters in an urban setting. In H.G. Wells's *The Time Machine* (1895) the plot delves into speculative concepts of time travel and the consequences of temporal displacement through the protagonist's journey to the distant future. These instances validate the manipulation of time within the spatial context that contributes to the richness and complexity of literary works.

Historical settings provide a contextual backdrop, allowing authors to explore how societies and individuals change over time. The portrayal of time-bound spaces contributes to the historical and cultural richness in fictional as well as non-fictional chronicles. Set against the backdrop of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the rise of the Taliban, and the diaspora of Afghans to the United States, Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* (2003) explores the impact of historical events on the lives of its characters in the way that Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006), set during the Nigerian Civil War (Biafran War) in the late 1960s provides a backdrop for exploring the impact of political turmoil on individuals and families - a novel that addresses themes of identity, nationalism, and the consequences of conflict. In Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* (2003), Amir, the protagonist finds himself swayed by a plurality of moods as reflected in the following lines, "The Street happens to be a noisy lane in a maze of alleyways choked with pedestrians, bicycles and rickshaws" (Hosseini 207). Furthermore he had to "re-evaluate his surroundings re-orient himself" (Hosseini 207). "The ground was cool under my bare feet and suddenly, for the first time since we had crossed the border, I felt like I was back" (Hosseini 222).

Urban versus Rural Spaces

Urban and rural settings are distinct literary spaces that carry different connotations and themes as urban environments may symbolize modernity, anonymity, or complexity, while rural landscapes may evoke notions of simplicity, tradition, or a connection to nature. Authors use these settings to explore contrasting aspects of society and human experience. F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* (1925) is an uncanny portrayal of the bustling urban landscape of New York during the Roaring Twenties where the

city represents the glamour, excesses, and moral decay of the Jazz Age. Furthermore Don DeLillo's "New York" in *Cosmopolis* (2003), Italo Calvino's "imagined cities" in *Invisible Cities* (1974) and Charles Dickens's chaotic and crowded London in *Bleak House* (1853) serves as a backdrop for social commentary; each city represents a unique concept or idea, exploring the multiplicity of experiences within urban environments. These literary cities serve as metaphors for the richness and intricacies of real-world urban settings.

'In a sense the city can only ever be understood textually, because it is far too complicated…to be encapsulated in its material totality' (Moran 165).

Rural and rustic dwellings discussed and portrayed in many novels like the pastoral landscapes and agricultural communities of rural England in Thomas Hardy's Wessex in *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), the rural countryside, the vast, open spaces and the agricultural backdrop of Nebraska in Willa Cather's *My Ántonia* (1918) and the fertile agricultural region and topography of the Salinas Valley in John Steinbeck's *East of Eden* (1952) illustrate how authors use rural settings to convey distinct atmospheres, social dynamics, and thematic elements in their works. Urban spaces are often associated with modernity, complexity, and anonymity, while rural spaces are linked to tradition, simplicity, and a closer connection to nature.

Though the exigencies for urban studies in social sciences peaked in the late 1960s, literary authors accorded for a distinct domain to investigate into the changing function of the city in literature that can designate a concrete concept of urban literature. As the city becomes the dominant ecological feature of modern western society, "Literary Urban Studies, highly inspired by the Russian formalist interest in literariness, insisted on the methodological study of the 'citiness' - the elements that are specific to the city and the urban condition" within literary narratives (Ameel 2018) . Jane Jacobs's, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), Mike Davis's *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (1990), Richard Florida's *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002), Saskia Sassen's *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo* (1991), Mitchell Duneier's *Sidewalk* (1999) and Jan Gehl's *Cities for People* (2010) are phenomenal instances that contribute to the understanding of cities, addressing issues such as urban planning, social dynamics, economic development, and the cultural significance of urban spaces.

In his *Atlas of the European Novel* (1999) and *Graphs, Maps, Trees* (2005), Franco Moretti begins explicitly to utilize maps as an analytic tool for bringing literary studies closer to the scientific ideal. With the help of visually ascetic maps he analyses both the "space in literature" and "literature in space," demonstrating how and to what degree literary forms are shaped by geography, that is, by their embeddedness in or traversing of different social and political milieus. (Moretti 1999, 2005)

Literary Cartography

Cartography, the science and art of mapmaking, is the study and practice of making maps, which are visual representations of geographic spaces or territories. The development of literary cartography - the exploration and representation of literary works through maps or spatial visualizations, reflects a dynamic interaction between literature and visual representation. From ancient texts to contemporary digital projects, the use of maps in literature continues to evolve, offering readers new ways to engage with the spatial dimensions of fictional and non-fictional worlds. The geographical descriptions of Odysseus's journeys in Homer's epic, maps within manuscripts related to religious pilgrimage narratives, travel narratives and adventure stories illustrated the exploration and mapping of new territories

incorporated into literature during the classical, medieval and renaissance periods. The 18th and 19th centuries saw a growing interest in detailed and artistic maps accompanying Romantic and Gothic literature as in the eerie grotesque novels of Ann Radcliffe, Mary Shelly, R.L.Stevenson and Henry James where spatial elements were crucial to the atmosphere and plot. A whimsical map of the Wonderland portraying Alice's fantastical journey in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), the iconic maps and intricate landscapes in Tolkien's Middle-earth, featured in "The Hobbit" (1937) and "The Lord of the Rings" series (1954-1955), the country estates and farm houses, rural England of the 19th century, territories of townships in Jane Austen contributes to a deeper understanding and appreciation of fictional fabrics.

In *Pride & Prejudice*, neighbourhood comes first—literally. It's the first character introduced, the establishing shot for the world that Austen creates, and the defining order of the relations within it. We, along with the Netherfield players, join the story by moving into it. (Chau 2023)

The latter half of 20th century and the early 21st century witnessed a renaissance in the fantasy genre with J.K. Rowling's "Harry Potter" series and George R.R. Martin's "A Song of Ice and Fire" series that set the tradition of incorporating detailed maps into their books, enhancing the sense of place in their fictional worlds. Literary spatial studies entered a new phase marked by the digital age as literary cartography assimilated online platforms, digital technology and artificially intelligent components in presenting elements of literature, geography, and visual studies. Whether in fantasy, science fiction, or historical fiction, maps play a role in enhancing readers' engagement with the narrative and world-building.

Surprisingly, [the director David] Yates repeatedly sticks the threesome (Harry, Hermione and Ron) into vast natural landscapes, posing them in aerial shots on rocky promontories overlooking sweeping plains or on windswept dunes by the rolling sea. It's almost as if, in the absence of Hogwarts, he's making the void. (Children's Literature 2019)

Geocriticism

Over the past few years 'Geocriticism', a new interdisciplinary method of analysis that prioritizes space, places and geographical practices in literary criticism, provided a way of reading literature with a heightened sensitivity to spatial relations, as well as to place and to mapping, in and around the texts under consideration. "All critics like Robert Tally, Greg Garrard and Bertrand Westphal agree upon the omnipresence of space, place and mapping at the core of the analysis in Geocriticism"(Kashikar 2019). Geocriticism was theorized by Bertrand Westphal in an innovative work entitled *Le Géocritique: Réel, fiction, espace* (2007) and its translation into English, *Geocriticism: Real and Fictional Spaces* in 2011 by Robert Tally. According to Tally this critical labyrinth could be a sort of "literary critical counterpart to Deleuze's notion of geophilosophy"; if cartography designated the spatial critical theory, geocriticism could be affirmed as a "reading practice geared toward understanding the ways in which narratives represented, shaped, and influenced social spaces"(Tally 2016).

"Most recently, with the rise of **geocriticism, literary geography, and the spatial humanities** more broadly, the importance of spatiality has only grown. Geocriticism, which has burgeoned in these last ten or fifteen years especially, partakes of this overall interest in space, place, and mapping, while also establishing its own place within literary and cultural studies"(Tally 2016). Primarily it was in the late 1980s and the mid-1990s that geocritical investigations gained momentum bringing back "world

literature" in to the global-studies-era, freed from centers and peripheries; and "linked to real-life referents"(Moraru 2016) that made it settle in the global discourse with grounding texts like *Geocriticism: Real and Fictional Spaces* (2011), *The Plausible World: A Geocritical Approach to Space, Place, and Maps* (2013), *Geocritical Explorations* (2011), *Literary Cartographies* (2014) and many other.

Conclusion

If maps were catalysts to human endeavours in the millennia, to control, grasp and "actively appropriate known and unknown Geospaces", maps in the modern age were "employed in literary geography, schools, and tourism to illustrate living places of famous authors, spaces represented in literary texts, the diffusion of literary currents, regional differences in productivity within a national literature, and the like" (Juvan 2015). Maps in literature iconized geographies of fictional worlds as in Swift's *Guliver's Travels* (1726), Moore's *Utopia* (1516) and Faulkner's "Yoknapatawpha County" but in the 19th century pioneering maps of literature sketched "literary tourism, pilgrimages to writers' houses, and visiting the "original" scenes described in poetry and fiction"(Juvan 88). It was in 1998 that Franco Moretti, the Italian historian, in his *Atlas of the European Novel* (1997) and *Graphs, Maps, Trees* (2005) pleads for "a geography of literature" by bringing "literary studies closer to the scientific ideal"(qtd. in Juvan) Maps have become potent analytical tools today with the advent of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and satellite navigation technologies.

Though it was developed with the intention of digital mapping and cartographic analysis in the 1960s and has outgrown in the 1980s to a technological application mode, today GIS "lies at the heart of…spatial turn" and makes possible multi-layered and interactive representations of various data as well as the spatial integration of their different formats, yielding analyses of an enormous information input" (Bodenhamer 2010)

Spatial studies is on its way heading towards its future tasks of comparative and transnational research in domains like "cultural transfer and literary translation; the diffusion and interaction of literary forms, genres, styles, and themes; their interdiscursive circulation over different linguistic territories; and the international social networking of writers" (Juvan 81-96). Mapping spaces and epitomizing real as well as fictional geographical landscapes is always intriguing and absorbing as human lives never thrive without stories and stories in turn are relentlessly wedded to territories.

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