SPATIAL LITERARY STUDIES

INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO SPACE, GEOGRAPHY, AND THE IMAGINATION

Edited by
Robert T. Tally Jr.
Spatial Literary Studies

Following the spatial turn in the humanities and social sciences, *Spatial Literary Studies: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Space, Geography, and the Imagination* offers a wide range of essays that reframe or transform contemporary criticism by focusing attention, in various ways, on the dynamic relations among space, place, and literature. These essays reflect upon the representation of space and place, whether in the real world, in imaginary universes, or in those hybrid zones where fiction meets reality. Working within or alongside related approaches, such as geocriticism, literary geography, and the spatial humanities, these essays examine the relationship between literary spatiality and different genres or media, such as film or television. The contributors to *Spatial Literary Studies* draw upon diverse critical and theoretical traditions in disclosing, analyzing, and exploring the significance of space, place, and mapping in literature and in the world, thus making new textual geographies and literary cartographies possible.

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Spatial Literary Studies
Interdisciplinary Approaches to Space, Geography, and the Imagination

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For Ying Fang
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Introduction

Spaces of the Text: Literary Studies After the Spatial Turn

*Robert T. Tally Jr.*

Although many of its features can be found in earlier forms of literary criticism, history, and theory, spatial literary studies is relatively new. Whether it is understood as a discrete and recognizable subfield within literature and the humanities or in a more amorphous sense, as a general comportment toward the objects of study that happen to emphasize matters of space, place, mapping, and so forth, spatial literary studies is associated with the “spatial turn” in the humanities and social sciences. Identifying precise dates of origin are not possible or even desirable, but most practitioners locate the spatial turn as having occurred within the past fifty years or so, and various methods of dealing with space and literature have only emerged in the last few decades. Literary geography, which is arguably an older interdisciplinary field, has grown exponentially in recent years, and it has been joined, supplemented, or even challenged by other approaches involving both literature and geography, such as the Geographic Information Systems-oriented “spatial humanities” or “geohumanities,” along with geocriticism, geopoetics, literary cartography, and others. Spatial literary studies contributes to, and partakes in, aspects of all of these fields.

As with any relatively new approach or set of approaches, there is a great deal of uncertainty and ambiguity about what constitutes its characteristic attributes or concerns. Such indeterminacy has also proven quite productive, however, insofar as a wide variety of approaches to the investigation of space and literature have been assayed, yielding fascinating results at times, which themselves are suggestive of paths for future inquiry and analysis. Scholars and critics engaged in spatial literary studies are thus refining and redefining the field and its practices through their work, which in part makes the area so dynamic. Spatial literary studies continues to develop, to make connections with other critical practices and disciplinary fields, and to influence the ways that readers and writers engage with the text and its spaces, broadly imagined.

As I discuss in Chapter 19, in initially using the phrase “spatial literary studies” I had not intended it to serve as a label for a discrete field or critical practice. Rather, I had intended the word *spatial* as a mere adjective,
modifying *literary studies* only so far as to note that such studies emphasized matters of space, place, mapping, geography, architecture, spatial relations, and so on. I had thought this would include the sort of work being done under the name of literary geography, geocriticism, or what have you, but only to the extent that all of these practices dealt with literature and space, broadly conceived. Understandably, however, lines would be drawn and boundaries between various approaches established and recognized. Spatial literary studies may thus appear as one of many discourses in which these issues figure prominently, and the development of this and other related methodological, philosophical, or thematic approaches will undoubtedly lead to new connections, cross-pollination, and extensions into unforeseen areas in the years to come.

Spatial literary studies enable scholars to reflect upon the representation of space and place, whether in the real world, in imaginary universes, or in those hybrid zones where fiction meets reality. In examining spatial representation in literary works, spatially oriented criticism has also invoked interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary practices, frequently making productive connections to architecture, geography, history, politics, social theory, and urban studies, among other fields. Spatial criticism is not limited to the so-called real world, but often calls into question the facile distinction between real and imaginary places, while investigating what Edward Soja has referred to as the “real-and-imagined” spaces of the world. Similarly, such criticism is interested in the relationship between spatiality and different media or genres, as film or television, music, computer programs, and other forms supplement, compete with, and problematize literary representation. Spatial literary studies frequently draws upon diverse critical and theoretical traditions in disclosing, analysing, and exploring the significance of space, place, and mapping in literature and in the world, thus making new textual geographies and literary cartographies possible.

*Spatial Literary Studies: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Space, Geography, and the Imagination* is thus intended to be exploratory as well as explanatory. The essays in this volume represent some of that range and variety of work being done in spatial literary studies today. Although the book’s five parts—labelled “Geocritical Theory and Practice,” “Geographies of the Text,” “Geographies in the Text,” “The Problematics of Place,” and the brief “Plus Ultra”—designate in a quite general way the different sorts of work being accomplished in the essays placed within them, such categories can really contain that work. These titles are tentative and heuristic—names that might helpful but are not required. That is, I do not want to suggest that these divisions somehow represent categories within spatial literary studies more generally, nor do I want to say that spatial literary studies must focus on matters of geocriticism, geography, or place in any exclusive sense. If these issues are prominently in view in the chapters that follow, that only shows some of the *topoi* and
themes addressed in spatial literary studies today. The essays themselves certainly stand on their own.

*Spatial Literary Studies* begins with a series of essays on “Geocritical Theory and Practice.” In Chapter 1, “Geocriticism at the Crossroads,” Mariya Shymchyshyn offers a sweeping overview of geocriticism, broadly understood as including various examples of spatial literary studies in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. She surveys the writings of a number of spatially oriented critics, theorists, and scholars at the cutting edge of the spatial turn, while also examining the foundations for such work to be found in influential precursors, including geographers, urbanists, and philosophers. Drawing upon Mikhail Bakhtin’s evocative concepts of the chronotope, Shymchyshyn argues that the geocritical theory and practice is presently at a “crossroad,” in which multiple possibilities for future work present themselves to the scholar interested in literary spatiality.

In Chapter 2, “How to Do Narratives With Maps: Cartography as a Performative Act in *Gulliver’s Travels* and *Through the Looking Glass*,” Emmanuelle Peraldo and Yann Calbérac examine the distinction between literary narratives and maps in order to question the specificities of both words and images in the text. To that end, they focus on two major masterpieces of British literature, Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* and Lewis Carroll’s *Through the Looking-Glass*, works providing imaginary maps that enable readers to locate the plots in a discernible spatial framework. Peraldo and Calbérac argue that, rather than merely anchoring the narratives in a given place, the maps have a performative function; instead of stabilizing the characters and plots on in a homogenous graphic space, the maps trigger the action and redefine its place, in effect performing the functions commonly associated with narrative itself.

Jessica Maucione’s “Locating the Limits and Possibilities of Place” offers a different sort of overview of theoretical debates regarding space and place. Maucione discusses the pitfalls of various symbolic and metaphorical treatments of space and place, arguing against a binary opposition of space versus place. She ultimately finds those narratives of place that cohere according to an imagined or real interdependence among the inhabitants of a recognized place most valuable, such that they are inspired or required to live in relation to one another. Drawing from literary examples, Maucione contends that because narratives of place revalue “minor” locales and their “minority” inhabitants, while also presenting alternative modes of being, they have the potential to disrupt the grand, totalizing narratives associated with nationalism and globalism.

The essays in Part II examine the ways that the texts under consideration map the worlds they represent or otherwise depict spatial relations. Thus, in Chapter 4, “Mallarmé, Poet of the Earthly World: On Spatiality in *L’Après midi d’une Faune*,” Rogério de Melo Franco observes that the concept of space has frequently been understood in Mallarmé’s
writing as either part of a meditation on how to fill the blank of the page or a vaguely conceived poetic notion related to the poet’s highest aesthetic aspirations, such as the ambitiously imagined *magnum opus* known simply as “the Book.” Melo Franco believes Mallarmé’s reflection upon properly spatial, earthy, and territorial matters has not received the attention it deserves. Focusing on one of Mallarmé’s most famous poems, “The Afternoon of a Fawn,” he investigates its spatiality in connection with narration, myth, and memory. Melo Franco uses the conception of the *après-midi* to suggest a theoretical unity of time and space in the poem.

Julia Kröger focuses on the construction of Parisian “lived space” in the work of nineteenth-century naturalist author Émile Zola in Chapter 5, “Zola’s Spatial Explorations of Second Empire Paris.” Following Henri Lefebvre’s triadic theory of space production, she begins by retracing the physical and conceptual appropriation of space by Zola documented in his notebooks, the *dossiers préparatoires*. The seemingly non-reflexive perceptions noted in the *dossiers* testify to an emotive and affective real-life encounter which, along with cognitive materials, such as maps, are translated into the lived space of the storyworld via Zola’s various strategies of narrativization. Kröger argues that Zola thus helps us to understand the ways that space is produced within the formal constraints of the novel and highlights the importance of real, material space in the understanding of lived space—a spatial facet that literary studies have often tended to ignore.

In Chapter 6, “‘Dr. Livingstone, I Presume?’: The Demonic Grounds of M. NourbeSe Philip’s *Looking for Livingstone: An Odyssey of Silence*,” Kate Siklosi draws upon the work of feminist human geographer Katherine McKittrick in her innovative reading of the Tobagan-Canadian novelist’s fascinating tale of memory and exploration. McKittrick had invoked the concept of the “demonic” in her ground-breaking critical text *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle* in order to rethink “the complex linkages between history, blackness, race, and place.” Siklosi argues that, by “opening a way to the interior” through her novella, M. NourbeSe Philip re-appropriates a colonial expression of geographic domination while enacting a “demonic” re-patralisation of African cultural representation. The phrase, originally from Scottish missionary and explorer Dr. David Livingstone’s travel diary, presents the colonial metaphor of Africa as the unknown “dark continent,” with its embedded figuration of the eroticized black female body. This “opening of the interior,” a central motif of Philip’s text, thus announces the concomitant geographic and sexual violence of colonial imperialism, and also articulates a transgressive space of resistance. In Siklosi’s view, the protagonist’s nomadic odyssey across time and space, undertaken without maps or guides, displaces the linear geographic “truths” of colonial exploration with a demonic spatiality.
Michelle Dreiding, in “Rethinking the Beginning: Toni Morrison and the Dramatization of Liminality,” observes that the beginnings in Morrison’s novels enact an uncanny moment of disorientation. They are beginnings in medias res, and, more importantly, beginnings of spatial deictic uncertainties that leave a reader with the absence of a stable system of reference. They enact the predicament of a beginning that precludes the fantasy of an absolute point of origin. Morrison’s beginnings self-consciously advocate an imperative to engage in a continual process of re-reading; of revisiting the initial disorientation so as to avoid a “conclusion to living” (as Nietzsche had put it). Dreiding finds that, in these liminal moments, Morrison actualizes the particularly American discourse of the frontier—the privileged locus of “perennial rebirth.” Within this discursive American space of potentiality and of a compulsive return to the border, Dreiding argues, Morrison rewrites the American myth of the frontier and thereby moves a narrative that has been culturally marginalized to the centre. Reading the incipits of Morrison’s novels Jazz (1992), Paradise (1997), and Love (2003), each of which dramatize a structural and geographical liminality, Dreiding discovers a spatial poetics necessary for the political project, which in turn opens up the dialogical possibility to “draw a map,” as Morrison puts it, but “without the mandate for conquest.”

Moving into the different but related media of theatre and television, Elizabeth Robertson examines the work of the notable British writer-director Stephen Poliakoff in Chapter 8, “‘You’ve been here before?': Space and Memory in Stephen Poliakoff’s Dramas.” Poliakoff’s work has centred upon an examination of memory, history, and historical consciousness, and questions of space and place play important roles in the ways in which Poliakoff dramatizes his memory-narratives on stage and screen, occupying his dramas as physical and imaginative sites where past and present collide, and where memory can be recovered, reconstructed, and confronted. Through close reading of visual and written texts, focusing especially on scenes from the television dramas Perfect Strangers (2001) and Capturing Mary (2007), as well as the stage dramas Blinded by the Sun (1996) and My City (2011), Robertson examines how Poliakoff explores individual microhistories through the entrenchment of characters’ memories in place and space, thus creating private sites of memory.

The distinction may not be entirely tenable, but the chapters in Part III tend to focus on representations of spaces within the texts under consideration, at least more so than the examination of the spatiality of the texts themselves. Thus, for example, in Chapter 9, “Caves as Anti-Places: Robert Penn Warren’s The Cave and Cormac McCarthy’s Child of God,” Ralph Crane and Lisa Fletcher explore the unique type of space in order to reveal the spatial alterity of caves. They argue that analysing the literary representation of natural subterranean voids requires a
careful re-theorisation of the dynamic relations of space and place. The
difficult question of how meaning comes to be attached to a particular
space, thus transforming it into place, is central to Robert Penn Warren’s
*The Cave* and Cormac McCarthy’s *Child of God*, both of which depict
male protagonists who retreat underground, albeit for quite different
purposes. According to the standard definition, a cave is a natural cavity
beneath the land large enough to admit a human body, but—as the novels
selected for this chapter show—caves fascinate and terrify us because
they confound human assumptions about our role in assigning meaning
to the Earth’s spaces.

Sarah Ager looks at another unique type of space in “A Geocritical
Approach to the Role of the Desert in Penelope Lively’s *Moon Tiger* and
Michael Ondaatje’s *The English Patient*.” Although critics have focused
on the role of history in these novels, Ager urges the reader to address the
complex relationships between characters and the spaces they occupy.
Written between the late 1980s and the early 1990s, both novels look
retrospectively at events of World War Two in the Western Sahara, show-
ing how the desert space changes over time and how it is perceived dur-
ing the lifetimes of the protagonists. Following Marc Augé’s concept of
“non-places,” Ager asks whether the physical desert is represented as
a merely transitory space, in contrast to Gaston Bachelard’s geocritical
conception of “home” as a mental space. Ager argues that the space of
the desert both forms and challenges the characters’ sense of identity and
belonging.

In Chapter 11, “Isolated Spaces, Fragmented Places: Caryl Phillips’s
Ghettoes in *The Nature of Blood* and *The European Tribe*,” I. Murat
Öner offers a geocritical reading of Caryl Phillips’s deviant Othello char-
acter in *The Nature of Blood*, examining his transformation in, and per-
ception of, the ghettoized space of Venice; at the same time, this chapter
explores the real-and-fictional space of Venice in *The European Tribe* (a
work of nonfiction). Using the interdisciplinary methods of geocriticism
to analyse the continuously changing spatial relations and unseen power
relations in these texts, Öner explores the space of the “ghetto” in these
works, disclosing a map of Venice in the explicit and implicit references,
allusions, and connotations in *The Nature of Blood* and *The European
Tribe*.

Adam R. McKee, in “Eternal Return and the City/Country Dynamic
in Milan Kundera’s *The Unbearable Lightness of Being,*” establishes an
unlikely connection between the well-known Nietzschean themes present
in the novel and the classic ideology-critique and historical examination
urban and rural forms in Raymond Williams’s *The Country and the City*.
McKee argues that Kundera confronts the split between the country and
the city from the standpoint of a Central European nation bound up in
totalitarian, Soviet-communist rule, rather than through the standpoint
of Williams’s capitalist England, thus inverting or subverting the binary
Introduction

distinction. While many critics have responded to Kundera’s somewhat flawed engagement with philosophical issues in the text, McKee notes, few have addressed the way in which the discourses contribute to the specific engagement the country/city divide in the novel that describe the ideologically saturated geographies of the Czech countryside and Soviet Prague. In the end, McKee argues, Kundera and Williams deconstruct this country/city binary by showing the inherent instability in both categories and their most common conceptualizations.

While noting the many shared concerns and overlapping territories of geocriticism and postcolonial theory, Dustin Crowley offers a critique of the ways that geocritical theory approaches postcolonial spaces in “Transgression, Boundaries, and Power: Rethinking the Space of Postcolonial Literature.” Crowley looks at works by Kenyan author Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o and Nigerian author Chris Abani, and he finds that their narratives represent a more complex understanding of boundedness and spatial freedom or transgression than that which is privileged in geocriticism. Drawing from this literature and the work of cultural geography and political ecology, Crowley argues that spatial literary studies should move away from the dichotomized categories it has adopted from its (predominantly postmodern) intellectual antecedents and move toward an understanding of borders and border-crossing as relational, dynamic, and equivocally available to the forces of power and resistance.

In Part IV, what unites the diverse examples of a spatially oriented criticism is a sustained consideration of place in connection to the authors, texts, and contexts being analysed. As becomes clear, place is a problem, or a set of problems, without simple solutions, yet all of the works under review are characterized by a sort of topophrenic engagement that considers the subject of place and the place of the subject. For example, in Chapter 14, “‘Oh, man, I’m nowhere’: Ralph Ellison and the Psychospatial Terrain of Mid-Century Harlem,” Walter Bosse explores the theoretical contours of Ellison’s 1948 essay, “Harlem Is Nowhere.” Bosse argues that Ellison’s text theorizes space in a way that enables resistance against the geopolitical constraints of urban black modernity. As Bosse show, in exploring the underground halls of the Lafargue Psychiatric Clinic in Harlem, “the only center in the city wherein both Negroes and whites may receive extended psychiatric care,” Ellison situates racial politics within a specific institutional milieu. At Lafargue, Ellison works as a kind of ethnographer, and records that the utterance “I’m nowhere” was commonly used by patients as an answer to the simple question, “How are you?” Of course, this response articulates the emotional and psychological severity of life in Harlem at the mid-century, but it does so in fascinating and complex ways. The phrase “I’m nowhere” not only acknowledges the constraints working against an individual’s subjectivity, it also shows the respondent taking hermeneutical control over the terms of her or his existence. As Bosse concludes, the concept of being “nowhere” provides
a new way of articulating displacement as a central moment in the history of the black Atlantic, and the function of “nowhere” as a potentially liberating signifier provides a unique opportunity to view the black vernacular through the lens of spatial theory.

Moving from “nowhere” to a “non place,” Chris Margrave offers a fascinating reading of a key author’s own sense of place in “Covington is ‘The Non Place for Me’: Walker Percy’s Topophilia in the ‘Desert of Theory and Consumption.’” Margrave observes that, through Percy’s commitment to living an incarnational artistic life in the “non-place” of Covington, Louisiana, the novelist created a locus of being from which he explored the deranged abstractions and entertainments found in what he termed the **desert of theory and consumption**. While many articles about and interviews with Percy address his reasons for embedding himself in the Deep South, Margrave argues that few critics have explained how Percy’s justification for choosing his geographical residence informs his artistic production. In his light-hearted essay, “Why I Live Where I Live,” Percy explores the ideas of placement, non-placement, and misplacement, concepts which critics rightly contextualize as terms Percy inherited from Kierkegaard, Marcel, and Camus, among others. Drawing upon Gaston Bachelard’s *The Poetics of Space*, Margrave reads Percy’s non-fiction essays on place to illustrate how Percy’s celebration of Covington reveals the generative source for his unapologetic expression of artistic and religious being.

In Chapter 16, “Alfred Hitchcock’s *The Rear Window*: Cold War, Spatiality, and the Paranoid Subject,” Beatrice Kohler addresses a different sort of place, one less attached to a given toponym and more situated in the multiple registers of the scopophilic subject, from the voyeuristic individual to an entire geopolitical system of surveillance and control. Kohler investigates the notion of an identifiable “Cold War culture” by discussing Hitchcock’s 1954 classic *Rear Window*, focusing especially on spatiality and paranoia. The cinematic screen is seen as a site where socio-cultural conflict is negotiated and political reality is transcoded into fictional narratives. Extending beyond the body of criticism that discusses the movie as a prime example of scopophilia and cinematic self-reflexivity, Kohler attempts to combine extradiegetic politics with intradiegetic aesthetics. Emerging from a culture of McCarthyite furore, post-war anxieties regarding the millions of soldiers returning from World War II, and increasing governmental infringement on privacy, *Rear Window* investigates the politics of suspicion, surveillance, and individual agency by displacing these issues into multiple imaginary screens that are subject to a paranoid misreading symptomatic of the American 1950s.

Will Cunningham examines the liminal spaces of Toni Morrison’s celebrated novel in “Locating the Clearing: Contesting Boundaries in Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*.” Morrison dedicates *Beloved* to the “Sixty Million and more” captured, displaced, and murdered Africans whose physical
lives and cultural identity were terminated amidst the transatlantic slave trade. In Cunningham’s reading, Morrison’s invocation of the transatlantic slave trade frames the story of *Beloved* within the context of spatialized violence, a complex, industrial, and capitalistic endeavour that specifically targeted black identity. The hold of the slave ship could be viewed as a precursor to more familiar, albeit less violent, modern spaces that might be demarcated as placeless: international airport terminals and borders, refugee camps, and military detention prisons. As Cunningham reads them, these locations all occupy that liminal space between opposing binaries; this space is the “third-space,” the borderland, the indefinable, a temporary and fluctuating zone governed by both regulatory and lawless forces. This tension between a space created by the material manifestations of power and the performances of identity within and through these movements of capital reveals an acute, revelatory convergence of spatial and racial identity formation. Cunningham argues that reading the confluence of space and race allows us to see in Morrison’s work a critical mass of dispossessed humanity embroiled in constant relations of subversion and contestation.

Chapter 18, “Remapping the Present: Dave Eggers’s Spatial Virtuality and the Condition of Literature,” addresses the spatial turn in literary studies by way of a parallel turn in virtual theory. Surveying and synthesizing the many invaluable contributions to conceptualizing virtuality, from those of Bergson and Deleuze to those of Daniel Downes and Brian Massumi, Nathan Frank asserts that a “spatial virtuality” accounts for an increasing focus on digitization without dismissing the previous (and, at times, prescient) preoccupations with temporal virtualities. Frank also frames spatial virtuality in terms of N. Katherine Hayles’s compelling work in which virtuality is a condition. Within such a framework, many things happen, not the least of which is a sustained meditation on an information-materiality dialectic, wherein two sub-dialectics are housed: that of pattern-randomness (information), and that of presence-absence (materiality). In Frank’s argument, virtuality as a spatial condition comports with the classic tropes of power and literature, namely, circles and stories about circles. Looking at two novels by Dave Eggers, *A Hologram for the King* and *The Circle*, Frank interrogates how a re-appropriation of Judith Anderson’s intertext, as a condition of potentiality and relationship, might provide the substance of that which is present without being local. In this way, “spatial virtuality” and “a condition of literature” suggest that language and texts are the presence around which information and material bodies congregate, offering new ways forward in exploring the discourses surrounding virtuality.

Finally, by way of an open-ended conclusion or *plus ultra*—the “further beyond” at the edge of the map—Part V contains a chapter in which I discuss the potential distinctions and affinities between what has become identified as *spatial literary studies* and the somewhat more
established interdisciplinary field of *literary geography*. As noted previously, scholars have long examined the relationship between literature and space, place, or mapping, but formal methods or disciplines for such work have only recently come into being. Particularly after what has been called the “spatial turn” in the humanities and social sciences, researchers from various academic and artistic disciplines have developed work in connection to terms such as literary geography, imaginative geography, geocriticism, geopoetics, the spatial humanities, geohumanities, and spatial literary studies, to name a few. Understandably, there would be a great deal of overlapping interest among these emerging practices or subfields, even if the aims and methods of each may vary, and practitioners of one form may find it desirable to distinguish their field from other related ones. Recently, a leading proponent of literary geography has sharply criticized the conflation of that field with spatial literary studies, an ostensible rival primarily associated with my work as a critic and editor. In this concluding chapter, I respond to this criticism, first by explaining my use and understanding of the terms *spatial literary studies* and *literary geography*, then by attempting to create a working definition that would delineate the boundaries between these practices while leaving the possibilities for future collaboration and mutual influence open.

*Spatial Literary Studies* provides a reasonably representative sampling of some of the work being done in this emerging field or set of practices, but as I have said, the field is developing and changing rapidly. Undoubtedly this sort of work will continue to provide insights for literary criticism, literary history, and literary theory, and scholars working in spatial literary studies and related areas will continue to open up and explore new spaces for critical inquiry. I, for one, look forward to seeing what lies further beyond.
Part I

Geocritical Theory and Practice
1 Geocriticism at the Crossroads
An Overview

Mariya Shymchyshyn

In this essay I will outline some of the methodological and theoretical developments in late twentieth-century criticism that led to the spatial turn in the humanities. In particular, I will concentrate my attention on the concepts of space in the works of Henri Lefebvre, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, and Félix Guattari, and I will pursue how they influenced literary theory, causing the emergence of “geocriticism” (e.g., in the work of Robert Tally, Bertrand Westphal, Eric Prieto) or, using another term, “literary geography” (e.g., in Franco Moretti). I will argue that the postmodern condition generated an alertness to space rather than time in different fields of scholarship, as historicism has undergone decline under postmodernism. My conclusion is that incorporating geographical thought into a variety of domains of research offers a better understanding of human experience, social relations, and cultural production. Even though the concept of space, as well as a geographical framework in general, have been revised and injected into recent theoretical inquiries, they have not been fully applied to literary criticism. We can witness the beginning of the process of formation of a coherent spatial paradigm within literary theory.

Over the last few decades the spatial turn has become one of the main focuses in literary theory and cultural studies, enabling (re)conceptualizations of ways of thinking about space and place. The discourse of postmodernism disclosed a break from languages that emphasized history, and concentrated its attention on real and fictional milieu. Neil Smith, in his Foreword to Henri Lefebvre’s *The Urban Revolution*, observes that “whereas space came alive in early-twentieth-century art, physics, and mathematics, in social theory and philosophy it was a quite different story. Space there was more often synonymous with rigidity, immobility, stasis; space itself had become a blind field.” Since the 1960s, space has begun to reassert itself in critical theory, not only as a subject of symbolic readings or as an empty or neutral container of Euclidian geometry, but as a fluid, heterogenic, and composite world, as a palimpsest (Gerard Genette), as a hyperspace that produces derivative spaces, as a referent for an experience of the real, as a product of speech, and as a construct
of social forces and power discourses. As Russell West-Pavlov put it, “Far from being a neutral void in which objects are placed and events happen, space/ing becomes a medium with its own consistency and, above all, its own productive agency.” In his now famous 1967 speech “Of Other Spaces,” Foucault explained that

The great obsession of the nineteenth century was, as we know, history: with its themes of development and of suspension, of crisis, and cycle, themes of the ever-accumulating past, with its great preponderance of dead men and the menacing glaciations of the world. . . . The present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space. We are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtapositions, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed. We are at a moment, I believe, when our experience of the world is less that of a long life developing through time than that of a network that connects points and intersects with its own skein.

Space and geography as major theoretical orientations bring new perspectives and open new horizons in the humanities.

The spatial turn in philosophy, sociology, cultural studies, and literary theory correlated with the redefinition of cultural geography’s agenda. During 1980s and 1990s new cultural geographers brought the topics of sensibility and political interests to their studies. Linda McDowell observes: “what is published and taught under the rubric of ‘cultural geography’ changes in response to the political and economic climate of the times and the structures of disciplinary power.” The epistemological turn of the 1990s stressed understanding culture through space and as space. Culture is not perceived only as tradition handed down from generation to generation, a point that connects it with time and history, but as “a realm, medium, level, or zone.” Space is relevant to the production of cultural phenomena and defines the ways they are produced. As Barney Warf and Santa Arians write in their introduction to The Spatial Turn: “Geography matters, not for the simplistic and overly used reason that everything happens in space, but because where things happen is crucial to knowing how and why they happen.” The new versions of culture that include everything or anything gave way to the intellectual traffic between philosophy, sociology, cultural studies, literary theories, and geography.

The exchange of ideas between scholars of geography and representatives of others sciences gave way to broad, non-stereotyped interpretations of space. For example, geographers like Derek Gregory, Doreen Massey, Steve Pile, and Edward Soja adapted theoretical ideas developed by Lefebvre, de Certeau, Foucault, Lacan, Deleuze, and Guattari. Productive connections between geography and literary postmodernism have been made by these spatial theorists. The postmodernist suspicion
of total explanations, rejection of monopolies of truth, and accent on difference, heterogeneity, and particularity contribute significantly to post-modern cultural geography. At the same time, literary scholars Westphal, Tally, and Moretti drew upon the work of these new cultural geographers in their own criticism and theory. Thus, for instance, Moretti states that “geography is not an inert container, is not a box, where cultural history ‘happens’, but an active force, that pervades the literary field and shapes it in depth.”6 The geographical paradigm becomes more and more a constitutive part of literary scholarship. Although sporadic attention to space or, it is better to say, place, has always been present in philosophical and fictional writings, the emergence of geocriticism in the early 1990s re-accentuated literary discussions.

The history of perception of space and place in different historical periods and different cultures shows fundamental changes in the ways people have imagined the world. In the Renaissance or early modern period several crucial shifts took place and had lasting consequences. Among them was the development of linear perspective, “which not only enabled more ‘accurate’ pictorial representations in the visual arts but also occasioned a wholesale re-imagining of space and of human spatial relations. This is a crucial moment in the history of spaces.”7 According to the American scholar Leonard Goldstein, the emergence of linear perspective between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries located space in three key aspects: (1) space is continuous, isotropic, and homogeneous; (2) space is quantifiable; (3) space is perceived from the point of view of a single, central observer. The shift from the two-dimensional artistic expression of the middle ages and the geometric three-dimensional drawings of the Italian Renaissance to the linear perspective of pictorial art of early capitalism can be explained by the emergence of new forms of private property and commodity production. As Tally observes, “Space could now be measured, divided, quantified, bought and sold, and above all controlled by a particular individual who, in theory, could be the sovereign ruler of all he surveyed.”8 Linear perspective, created in the modern period by Filippo Brunelleschi, reflected the new ways of seeing and enabled the development of a new image of the individual, who became the locus and source of meaning. Tally summarizes:

But the new point of view, which includes linear perspective and mechanism as its method of investigation, is superior [to the earlier iconographic mode] since it gives people a greater control over the environment, both physical and social, than previous interpretations of the world.9

In the philosophical discourse from Heraclitus to Hegel and Marx, the illusion of a transparent, pure, and neutral space permeated Western culture. The dynamics of the understanding of space started with it being
created by God (Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz) or the Absolute (Schelling, Fichte, Hegel) and later, according to Lefebvre, it “appeared as a mere degradation of ‘being’ as it unfolded in a temporal continuum.”10 The geometric format of Euclidean space was interpreted by philosophical thought as absolute and from this it follows that space was used as a space of reference. In the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries many ideas about space were developed. Thus, Descartes believed that space cannot be separated from bodies as bodies are part of space. Newton viewed space as an absolute, independent, infinite, three-dimensional container into which God placed the material universe. Leibniz developed the notion of space as the relation between bodies similar to distance as a relation between two points. Spinoza held the idea that space is God. Kant argued that the world is a subjective mental construction because it is perceived through human reason.

Space is not something objective and real, nor is it a substance, nor an accident, nor a relation; it is, rather, subjective and ideal; it issues from the nature of mind in accordance with a stable law as a scheme, as it were, for co-ordinating everything sensed externally.11

The philosophers, in their capacity of epistemologists, envisaged spaces for the classification of knowledge.

In the nineteenth century, space was mostly understood as the location for great historical events. Therefore, temporality and history assumed a primary importance whereas space was viewed as static and empty. The view of space as a “container of things” diminished the importance of spatiality. The vista of a philosopher or a writer was directed to the things situated in space or to the individual consciousness perceiving them. The notion of historical progression, correlative with industrial and scientific revolutions, gave priority to the concept of time. Time was linearized while space was marginalized and conceived as given and static.

The radical metamorphoses caused by modernization in the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth transformed the idea of space. Feelings of disorientation and disintegration started to characterize the individual consciousness. A break of the linear narrative in fiction and the linear perspective in a pictorial art correlated with a fragmented perception of space. Although issues of temporality were privileged in the critical works about modernism, it does not mean that spatiality did not matter for modernist aesthetics. In his novel The Soul of London (1905), Ford Maddox Ford wrote that “we live in spacious times.” Neglecting space in favor of time is a practice that David Harvey explains in the following way: “Modernity is about the experience of progress through modernization, writings on that theme have tended to emphasize temporality, the process of becoming, rather than being in space and place.”12 In literary studies, objective space was
substituted for the subjective image of space. Therefore, even today, the theoretical problem is to uncover the mediations between them. It is necessarily to separate “a false consciousness of abstract space and an objective falseness of space itself,” as Lefebvre has put it. But despite this, spatial metaphors such as fragmentation, location, center, margin, movement, belonging, and (im)migration became dominant in modernist discourse. That is why scholars today start to think about the spatiality of modernism, for example, in Andrew Thacker’s excellent study of the subject.

During the modernist period the new concept of space emerged in pictorial art. The experimental activity of avant-garde painters that neither imitated objective reality, nor was bound up with subjective emotions and feelings, witnessed the disappearance of points of reference and, as a result, pointed to the crisis of a subject. Picasso’s way of painting can serve as an example: “The entire surface of the canvas was used, but there was no horizon, no background, and the surface was simply divided between the surface of painted figures and the space that surrounded them.” Therefore, space became at once homogeneous and broken; the sign became detached from what is designated. The notion of space is perfectly defined and “born as an already adult and mature consciousness of self.”

The rise of structuralism and later poststructuralism marked a key phase in the turn to space instead of time in critical inquiries. For instance, Edward Soja regarded structuralism to be “one of the twentieth century’s most important avenues for the reassertion of space in critical social theory.” French structuralists and poststructuralists (including Kristeva, Genette, Derrida, Foucault, Deleuze, and Guattari) reversed “the tyranny of the diachronic perspective” (Genette) and acclaimed the “spatial turn” in human sciences. Their writings correlated with the comprehensive theory of space offered by Lefebvre, who viewed space as a void woven of the relationships between subjects, their actions, and their environment. Milieus are created by action, but at the same time, they are modeling the human actors who have constructed them.

It is worth mentioning that structuralist and poststructuralist approaches to space do not always coincide. West-Pavlov states:

Structuralism conceived of space in a manner similar to the ostensibly undifferentiated pre-cultural field which culture then configures, using meaning—making binary oppositions. Instead, the spatial paradigms of poststructuralism stress that space persists in a constant re-configuring of already extant configurations.

For poststructuralists there is no virginal space before configured space, while for certain structuralists (e.g., the early Kristeva) there is always a proto-space, a pre-existing milieu.
Theorists like Fredric Jameson, along with Harvey, Tally, and Soja, argue that the spatial turn in the humanities is a response to the postmodernist condition. In *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Jameson, following Lefebvre and Foucault, has stated that “our daily life, our psychic experiences, our cultural languages, are dominated by categories of space rather than by categories of time.” Postmodern spatiality produced by the processes of globalization is defined, in part, through collapsed spatial barriers. Poststructuralists’ ideas about the social construction of knowledge, human dependence upon institutionalized power networks, and impersonal social structures have evoked interest in the social production of space. Displacement of the priority of individual experience, subjective consciousness, and attention to the discourses of power explain the emphasis on the concept of space over that of place. Moreover, the spatial turn corresponds with the deep paradigmatic changes within the humanities that do not deal so much with the reproductive paradigm of meaning, do not ask what artefacts mean, but how they mean. In this context, West-Pavlov argues: “A deeper truth is not sought behind the statement, the text, the artefact, or the image. Rather the point of intellectual enquiry is to ask how that statement, text, artifact, or image came to be, what made it possible.” As far as meaning is produced in a specific time and context, space is crucial for understanding its production.

Meaning is thus a function of space in which it emerges. Truth and falsehood are replaced by space as the matrix of meaning. An artifact no longer has “a” meaning, no longer unveils “a” truth under the stern scrutiny of the scholar, but rather, participates in myriad relations and connections which permit it to be in such a way that it can subsequently be asked to reveal its truth.

The regime of spatial analysis is directed not towards the decoding of a hidden meaning of a work of art, but draws “attention to a complex of ambient connections which have simply been neglected until now.” Space gives rise to the artefacts and at the same time artefacts reconfigure space; they define each other reciprocally.

The critical attention of postmodernists to the concept of space has been evoked to a large extent by World War II and the anticolonial movements of the postwar years, which led to the problematizing of the myth of history as a single, unified narrative and the destruction of the Enlightenment metanarrative of progress. Processes of decolonization and neocolonialism, along with massive movements of populations (exiles, émigrés, refugees, and explorers), have caused awareness of geographical difference, of the distinctiveness of a given place, and differences among places. Therefore, the phenomenological perspective of space that emphasizes the subjective experience of place, profoundly worked out by Edmund
Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Gaston Bachelard, and Georges Poulet, then later renovated by such philosophers as Edward Casey, Jeff Malpas, Tyler Burke, Hilary Putman, Donald Davidson, and Francisco Varela, has given way to epistemological, environmental or ecocritical (Kenneth White), postcolonial (Aimè Cèsaire, Frantz Fanon, Homi Bhabha, Edouard Glissant, Edward Said), feminist (bell hooks, Lucy Lippard, Doreen Massey, Linda McDowell), and Marxist (Lefebvre, Jameson, Harvey, Soja, Raymond Williams) ideas about space. Their rejection of the priority of individual experience, of the notion of totalizing space as an absolute and inhuman construction, and of spatial uniformity opened up discussions about the heterogeneous nature of space.

It is not, therefore, as though one had global (or conceived) space to one side and fragmented (or lived) space to the other—rather as one might have an intact glass here and a broken glass or mirror over there. For space ‘is’ whole and broken, global and fragmented, at one and the same time. Just as it is at once conceived, perceived and directly lived.\(^{23}\)

Lefebvre argued against the traditional optical format of space. The logic of visualization, dependence on the written word, and the process of spectacularization, which corresponds to metaphoric and metonymic aspects, caused a vanishing of all impressions derived from taste, smell, touch, and hearing, and left the field to line, color and light. He criticized a purely visual passive space.

Many of the ideas about space developed in the second half of the twentieth century (e.g., those of Jameson, Harvey, Soja, and Westphal), were formulated in dialogue about the works of Lefebvre, who in *The Production of Space*, first proposed to distinguish between mental space and social space, and only then to reconnect them. For him

the concept of space is not in space. . . . The content of the concept of space is not absolute space or space-in-itself; nor does the concept contain a space within itself. . . . Rather, the concept of space denotes and connotes all possible spaces, whether abstract or “real”, mental or social. And in particular it has two aspects: representational spaces and representations of space.\(^{24}\)

There should not be any reduction of content to its formal container, reduction of time to space, reduction of objects to signs, reduction of “reality” to the semiophere, or reduction of social space to a purely mental space.

Lefebvre interpreted space from different angles and worked out a broad typology of it. For him, space can be a field of action and a basis of action, it can be actual (given) and potential (locus of possibilities),
quantitative (measurable by means of units of measurement) and qualitative, a collection of materials and an ensemble of matèriel (tools). In writings about spatial architectonics, Lefebvre proposed a capacious definition of space:

Space—my space—is not the context of which I constitute the “textuality”: instead, it is first of all my body, and then it is my body’s counterpart or “other”, its mirror-image or shadow: it is the shifting intersection between that which touches, penetrates, threatens or benefits my body on the one hand, and all other bodies on the other. Thus we are concerned, once again, with gaps and tensions, contacts and separations. Yet, through and beyond these various effects of meaning, space is actually experienced in its depths, as duplications, echoes and reverberations, redundancies and doublings-up which engender—and are engendered by the strangest of contrast: face and arse, eye and flesh, viscera and excrement, lips and teeth, orifices and phallus, clenched fists and opened hands—as also clothed versus naked, open versus closed, obscenity versus familiarity, and so on.25

This profound notion of space as a locus of intersections, contacts, tensions, and relationships gives numerous possibilities to geocriticism. This particular understanding of milieu advocates a polysensuous approach that includes the sounds, smells, and tastes of places.

Lefebvre worked out three aspects of space: experienced space (physical space that can be measured), representations of space (space perceived by planners, etc., and drawn on maps, diagrams), and representational space (imagined by writers and artists). In a broader sense this differentiation can be extrapolated to literary theory and can help to disclose how the representational spaces of fictional texts reflect, contest, or endorse the geographical shaping of different topoi by various ideological representations of space.

Lefebvre also developed the notion of “third space” as the relationship between body and material/object that his follower and postmodern political geographer Soja defines as a space where everything comes together . . . subjectivity and objectivity, the abstract and the concrete, the real and the imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable, the repetitive and the differential, structure and agency, mind and body, consciousness and the unconscious, the disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life and unending history.26

The idea of a thirdspace as a mixture of a lived, experienced space and a perceived space proposed by Lefebvre and later developed by Soja can be extrapolated for use in examining an imaginary space. Discourse of a
body, which is produced by and is the production of space, can give us some notion of a thirddspace that may signify a fictional space. A body is not an object or subject represented by fragmented images or words, but a body that is “reflected and refracted in the changes that it wreaks in its ‘milieu’ or ‘environment’—in other words, in its space.”27 A verbal, semantic, and semiological space can be enlarged by information from the body (smell, taste, sound). An interplay between verbal disembodiment and empirical re-embodiment helps to gain the meaning of lived experience and overcome spatialization in an abstract expanse.

The spatial theory present in the philosophical oeuvre of Foucault has become a paramount part of the recent “spatial turn” in literary and cultural studies. Whereas for Lefebvre, space is a product of social relations and at the same time their producer, for Foucault, space is power, as far as power is always located spatially. This idea is made most explicit in his work Discipline and Punish, which deals with the disciplinary power in modern societies. Social relations of power exist on macro and micro levels. As Thacker explains the difference, for Foucault, contrary to Lefebvre, “the history of spaces is not the history of relations of production, but of relations of power.”28 Of particular interest is Foucault’s “Of Other Spaces,” where he paid peculiar attention to the two main types of space that “suspect, neutralize, or invent the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect.”29 These types are the utopias (sites with no real place) and the heterotopias, a mix of real and unreal places that create a space of illusion or a space that is other. Privileged, sacred, or forbidden places belong to heterotopias, and until recently, such places were assigned to the individuals in a state of crisis (adolescents, menstruating women, expecting mothers, the elderly, etc.). Nowadays these heterotopias of crisis are being replaced by what Foucault called “heterotopias of deviation” (such as rest homes, psychiatric hospitals, prisons). They are designated for individuals “whose behavior is deviant in relation to the required norm.”30 Foucault differentiates the following main principles of heterotopias: every culture tends to form its own heterotopia; society can make an existing heterotopia to function differently; “the heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several places, several sites that are in themselves incompatible”; it begins to function when a person absolutely breaks with traditional time (this includes sites of accumulated time—museums and libraries—places of all times and simultaneously outside of time) or is linked to the transitory time (for example, the time in the mode of festival); heterotopias presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable; and, at last, heterotopias have a function in relation to all the space that remains. Foucault’s ideas about space as domains of power can be further developed into a notion of space as resistance to power. As only within the space of power emerges the space of resistance.
Soja has significantly influenced the radical rethinking of the notion of space in the present moment. Drawing upon Martin Buber’s 1957 essay “Distance and Relation,” Soja connects spatiality with the beginning of human consciousness, stating:

Human beings alone are able to objectify the world by setting themselves apart. And they do so by creating a gap, a distance, a space. This process of objectification defines the human situation and predicates it upon spatiality, on the capacity for detachment made possible by distancing, by being spatial to begin with.31

Spatial distancing allows a being to differentiate itself from objective reality and become conscious of its humanity. The first created space, separated from the totality, thus constitutes the ontological basis for distinguishing subject and object. Speaking about postmodernity, Soja argues that spatiality is the key to making practical, political, and theoretical sense of the contemporary era. He sets his argument about postmodern space within three paths of spatialization: posthistoricism, postfordism, and postmodernism. The first one implies the reassessment of space against the grain of an ontological historicism. “The second spatialization is directly attached to the political economy of the material world and, more specifically, to the ‘fourth modernization’ of capitalism.”32 The term “postfordism” is used to characterize the transformations of the regime of accumulation, mass consumerism, and sprawling suburbanization. The third path is connected with the emergence of a new, postmodern culture of space. Postmodernism overlaps with posthistoricism and “postfordism as a theoretical discourse and a periodizing concept in which geography increasingly matters as a vantage point of critical insight.”33 As a postmodern cultural geographer, Soja has concentrated his attention on the analysis of space and society, and offered new ways of understanding the unjust geographies in which we live. To his mind, spatial theorizations were distorted by short-sighted interpretations of spatiality that theorized space as a collection of things. Spatiality was “comprehended only as objectively measurable appearances grasped through some combination of sensory-based perception.”34 Accordingly, in the social origins of spatiality, its contextualization of politics, power, and ideology were neglected. Soja’s understanding of space is grounded on the premise that spatiality is a substantiated and recognizable social product that is simultaneously the medium and the outcome of social actions. The duality of produced space lies in the fact that it is both a product and a producer of social activity.

Although clear connections exist between the concept of space elaborated by Foucault and those developed later by Deleuze and Guattari,
there are also significant differences between their poststructuralist theories. If Foucault developed ideas about space in their relation to discourses of power, Deleuze and Guattari thought about space in terms of the architecture of the rhizome. As West-Pavlov observes:

Deleuze’s theory of space is not built like a tree, with a central hierarchical trunk from which subordinated ‘branches’ then spread out, themselves branching off into smaller twig-like subtopics. Rather, his theory of space seems to develop horizontally, spreading out tendrils and runner-shoots which then cross each other at some later point, forming a dense web of allusions and interconnections. The very construction of his theory of space itself evinces strong spatial (rather than linear or hierarchical) characteristics from the outset.35

Such an unconventional way of thinking causes difficulties in expressing Deleuze and Guattari’s theorizing of space in a traditional academic mode. I will concentrate my attention on some aspects of their notions of space.

In his famous collaborations with Félix Guattari, as in much of his other writings, Deleuze has sufficiently enlarged the conceptual and terminological domain of spatial theory by introducing into it diagram, plane, map, plateau, deterritorialization and reterritorialization, and smooth-and-striated spaces. In A Thousand Plateaus, the second volume of their Capitalism and Schizophrenia project, Deleuze and Guattari distinguished between a smooth (heterogeneous) and a striated (homogeneous) space. The latter functions as a locus for the state apparatus and, being a sedentary space, is “striated by walls, enclosures, and roads between enclosures.”36 While a smooth space is directional rather than dimensional or metric, intensive rather than extensive, and a “Body without Organs” instead of an organism or organization. In a striated space, lines or trajectories tend to be subordinated to points, contrary to a smooth space in which points are subordinated to trajectory. Despite the dissymmetrical mixes between these two spaces, there are simple oppositions between them.

The smooth and the striated are distinguished first of all by an inverse relation between the point and the line (in the case of the striated, the line is between two points, while in the smooth, the point is between two lines); and second, by the nature of the line (smooth-directional, open intervals; dimensional-striated, closed intervals). Finally, there is a third difference, concerning the surface or space. In striated space, one closes off a surface and “allocates” it according to determinate intervals, assigned breaks; in the smooth, one “distributes” oneself in an open space, according to frequencies and in the course of one’s crossings (logos and nomos).37
The simple opposition between “smooth and striated” gives way to more difficult complications and alterations as far as space is open to the processes of homogeneity or heterogeneity and cannot be seen as stable and static. The aforementioned differences are not objective because it is possible to live striated on steppes or seas and live smooth in cities. Taking this into consideration, Deleuze and Guattari described the interaction between spaces through six models.

The principle of mixture and passage from one space to another is not at all symmetrical, but envisions variable modifications. Deleuze and Guattari distinguished the following models: the technological (for example, embroidery, which has a central theme or motif, and patchwork, with no center or definite construction; fabric with vertical and horizontal elements and felt with no intertwining and no separation of threads); the musical (for example, octave [a fixed distribution of breaks and intervals], which corresponds to a striated space, and non-octave-forming scales, which are produced through the continuous variation and development of form [smooth space]); and the maritime (although the sea is a smooth space par excellence, the astronomical system of navigation employs its strict striation). Regarding the latter, the empirical nomadic system of navigation based on the wind, noise, colors and sounds of the seas supported the smooth nature of a sea, but with the advent of astronomical and later map systems of navigation, a sea became a model of a striated space. It is an example of how a smooth space can be subjugated and occupied by diabolical powers of organization. Therefore, the sea is a smooth space open to striation. In the context of the maritime model it is appropriate to speak about the intermingling of spaces that is explicit in a voyage not being a measurable quantity of movement, but “the mode of spatialization, the manner of being in space, of being for space.” Deleuze and Guattari grounded the mathematical model on Riemann’s notion of the “mathematical concept” as well as on Husserl’s and Bergson’s concept of “multiplicity” that presupposes continuous multiplicities and discrete multiplicities. A Riemann’s space, “which presents itself as an amorphous collection of pieces that are juxtaposed but not attached to each other,” is similar to heterogeneous and amorphous smooth space. If all of the aforementioned models serve to exemplify differences between smooth and striated spaces (patchwork vs. weaving, rhythmic vs. harmony-melody, Riemann space vs. Euclidean space) the link between them can be expressed in terms of elementary physics. The physical model gives grounds for Deleuze and Guattari to differentiate between “free action” in smooth space and “work” in striated space. Writing about the aesthetic model and its possibility to represent the differences and overlapping between spaces, the authors distinguished between “close-range” and long-distance vision, between tactile or haptic and optical space. “The first aspect of the haptic, smooth space of close vision is that its orientations, landmarks, and linkages are
in continuous variation; it operates step by step.” In a smooth space, one never sees from a distance, is never “in front of” any more than is “in.” Orientations change according to temporary vegetation, occupation, and precipitation. On the contrary, “striated space is defined by the requirements of long-distance vision: constancy of orientation, invariance of distance through an interchange of inertial points of reference, interlinkage by immersion in an ambient milieu, constitution of a central perspective.” The opposition between the striated and smooth is not simple; we see that one requires the other, that one gives rise to the other, and at last one tends to become the other.

Particular attention is warranted to Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of geophilosophy, outlined in the collaborative work What is Philosophy? that contested against the reduction of philosophy to its history. Philosophy continually wrests itself from its history “in order to create new concepts that fall back into history but do not come from it.” In its turn, geography unlike history stresses contingency rather than necessity, milieu rather than origin. Geography “is not confined to providing historical form with a substance and variable places. It is not merely physical and human but mental, like the landscape.” Deleuze and Guattari underline the necessity to locate philosophy in a territory, in particular to “reterritorialize modern philosophy on Greece as form of its past.” The separation of geography and philosophy led to the situation when “we possess concepts—after so many centuries of Western thought we think we possess them—but we hardly know where to put them because we lack a genuine plane, misled as we are by Christian transcendence.”

Deleuze and Guattari argued for the development of geophilosophy, which was in their view founded by Nietzsche, who determined the national characteristics of French, English, and German philosophy. Those were the three countries that collectively produced philosophy in the capitalist world. As for Italy and Spain, they “lacked a ‘milieu for philosophy, so that their thinkers remained ‘comets.” Today, geophilosophy finds a way in reterritorializing itself in conformity with the spirit of a people of a particular place. For example, writing about the origins of Greek philosophy, Deleuze and Guattari stated that it appeared as result of milieu and geography rather that of an origin and a history.

Deleuze and Guattari’s notions about nomadology and geophilosophy have provided the foundation for the geocentric approach of Westphal’s geocritical literary studies. A geocritical approach revises the correlation between literary representation and geographical referent first through denying the assumption that “representation remains a slave to reality.” Rather than studying how a fictional depiction conforms to a “real” place, geocritical theorists take the spatial referent as the basis for their analysis, which allows them “to inscribe space in a mobile perspective.” Similar to Deleuze’s idea that a book is not an image of the world, but forms a rhizome with the world—deterritorializes the