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LITERARY CARTOGRAPHIES
SPATIALITY, REPRESENTATION,
AND NARRATIVE

Edited by
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36. Eugen Ruge, *In Times of Fading Light*, trans. Anthea Bell (Minneapolis: Graywolf Press, 2013), 101. Originally published as *In Zeiten des abnehmenden Lichts*. Reinbek bei (Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag GmbH, 2011). Hereinafter, page references to the English translation are cited parenthetically in the text.
37. Schalansky, *Atlas of Remote Islands*, 9.
38. Kehlmann, *Measuring the World*, 4. Today the shortest trip actually takes just under three-and-a-half hours.
39. Kehlmann, *Measuring the World*, 7.
40. Schalansky, *Atlas of Remote Islands*, 23.
41. Ibid.
42. Anke S. Biendarra, *Germans Going Global: Contemporary Literature and Cultural Globalization* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012), 17.

CHAPTER 12



CHARTING THE EXTRAORDINARY: SENTIENT AND TRANSONTOLOGICAL SPACES

Rhona Trauvitch

The functions and implications of mapping hinge on ordinary ideas of space and its objects: it is taken for granted that the space and the objects therein exist on one ontological stratum, and that the subjects of the map are stationary and inanimate. Certain narratives do away with such taking for granted. In this essay, I will consider particular works of and tropes in fiction, and investigate mapping across two divides: the chasm between sentience and insentience, and that between the fictional and non-fictional.

To understand how certain literature complicates the very notion of space, and therefore the mapping thereof, we must first review the mapping of ordinary space, and inquire, What does mapping accomplish? Mapping situates: charting an entity places it in a specific location with relation to other entities. Mapping fixes: charting an entity serves the function of anchoring it among other anchored entities. Mapping duplicates: charting an entity creates a representational copy thereof. This last consequence is taken to its extreme in Jorge Luis Borges's "On Exactitude in Science," wherein cartographers map an empire according to a one-to-one map-territory relation: "the Cartographers Guilds struck a Map of the Empire whose size was that of the Empire, and which coincided point for point with it."¹ Borges's story suggests how readily the two layers of map and mapped can be treated and tread on interchangeably. In terms of a map's percipient,

mapping allows one to locate oneself in relation to the map's subject. We know we are on this street, which, beyond that building, will turn into another. And though we cannot see the implied totality, we imagine, zooming out, this street and its buildings ensconced in a neighborhood, nestled in a town, crouched within a nation, and so forth.

The accomplishments of mapping in terms of both the mapped objects and their percipients are shaken when the mapped is extraordinary. I would like to look at two types of extraordinary, even absurd space: that which is sentient, and that which lies at ontological interstices. An examination of how such an irregular space is charted reveals that our ideas of mapping within and of fiction can be expanded in fascinating directions, allowing us to reconceptualize the possibilities of literary cartography.

MIÉVILLE'S SENTIENT SPACES

The first characteristic we cannot take for granted when considering spatial absurdities is that of the insentience of space and the objects therein; China Miéville certainly does not. What happens if a street gets up and moves, if a building sighs and ambles away? These questions have become pertinent by way of Miéville's fiction, namely the short story "Reports of Certain Events in London" and the novel *Embassytown*. An analysis of the adjectives used to describe the spaces, places, and edifices in the two narratives reveals that these objects are not only mobile, not even just animate, but also sentient.

The differences among these three aspects—mobility, animation, and sentience—are crucial, as each aspect connotes a separate mode of existence. Mobility involves a change of location across time, and thus mapping a mobile object entails the coordinates of space and time. Animacy is more complicated, as an animate object, whether in motion or not, is alive: it was born, and it will die. It requires certain conditions in order to sustain life, such as nourishment and a bio-friendly environment (in terms of temperature, terrain, and rival life-forms).

Sentience is the most complex of these three modes of existence, as it implies the existence of a mind, cognition, reasoning abilities, decision-making abilities, and the capacity to feel. Due to its mind, a sentient entity can be fickle, and it is precisely this fickleness that turns out to be problematic when mapping comes into play. As we will see below, these differences in modes of existence become vital in a discussion of a given object's mappability.

In "Reports of Certain Events in London," the narrator—presumably Miéville himself—receives a mysterious package, whose content first implies and then explicitly divulges the existence of feral streets: *viae ferae*. A clandestine society has been following these streets for decades, noting how they appear and disappear, or, "occur" and "unoccur." As the society members chart the feral streets, we can chart throughout the story the adjectives that describe these streets. Such tracking suggests that the streets are peculiar and nonstandard to say the least, not only because they are mobile and animate, but also because they are sentient.

Initially, the strangeness of the *viae ferae* is presented in terms of their mobility. For instance, society members note that "Tracking the movements of VF is notoriously difficult" and "the time between VF arrival at and departure from a locus has decreased by a factor of 0.7. VF are moving more quickly."² Then the tone veers, as the adjectives shift from describing motion to describing animacy: "The anecdotal evidence we have all heard, that VF have recently become more skittish and agitated, appears to be correct."³ While "skittish" and "agitated" may well describe motion, they are adjectives that, at least figuratively, can be applied to an animate being. As we soon discover, however, the adjectives are not used figuratively: the *viae ferae* are characterized by qualities more complex than motion.

Later in the narrative the adjectives used to describe the streets are patently ones that correspond to descriptions of sentient beings:

"Varmin Way wasn't just passing through; it was *resting*, it was *recovering*, it had been attacked." "So far as I can work it out, Varmin Way and Stang Street were highly antagonistic at that stage, but now they're almost certainly noncombative." "The *Viae* are fighting, and I think they always have."

Even more obvious are adjectives that pertain to the most definitive of animate beings' actions: "the stories that Potash Street and Luckles Road courted and mated and that that's how Varmin Way was born."⁴ That the two streets courted indicates that they are not only animate, that is, reproducing as organisms do, but also sentient, inasmuch as they partake in the ritual of courtship.

In *Embassytown* it is not the streets, but rather the city's edifices that are not only mobile and animate, but also sentient. Technology developed by the Ariekei species has enabled "biorigging," which combines inanimate material with bioforms. The human characters distinguish between typical objects and biorigged objects: "we crossed over the zone where the architecture went from the brick and ivied wood of

my youth to the polymers and biorigged flesh of the Hosts, from alley-tangles to street-analogues of other topographies."⁵ Another instance of the latter is a "biorigged locomotor" that "was heaving, putting out temporary muscular legs to strain along with its engine." The adjectives used to describe the biorigged objects pertain to animal qualities as well: the locomotor not only moves, but also heaves, which suggests that it is not just mobile, but also animate. Other examples of such description are as follows: "They'd lived so close, maybe in some biorigged dwelling that sweated air at them inside." "The room was punctured with ventricles: I could hear it breathing." "If buildings around them were still healthy enough their dog-sized animalculae would break the corpses down"⁶ Sweating, breathing, and staying healthy pertain to animacy, not just or even necessarily to motion.

As in "Reports of Certain Events in London," in *Embassytown* the adjectives used to describe biorigged objects concern not only motion, but also emotion: "The buildings had been unhappy for days. They were rearing and breathing steam, purging themselves of the biorigged parasites they bred, that were Ariekene furniture." Or: "It was in a plaza in the city, a big square made bigger by cajoling the buildings." And: "Behind us we heard the distress call of a last building left alive."⁷ Thus, like the *viae ferae*, the buildings are not simply mobile, they are also sentient. "Unhappiness" is not used figuratively, but rather literally, and such an adjective implies that its subject is conscious. Likewise, "cajoling" and "distress call" are terms that can only be associated with or applied to a cognizant being.

Particularly interesting is the following description: "The city twitched. It was infected. [...] Addiction had gone into the houses, which poor mindless things shook in endless withdrawal. The most afflicted sweated and bled. Their inhabitants rigged them crude ears, to hear EzRa speak, so the walls could get their fix."⁸ As animate beings, the houses are susceptible to addiction, withdrawal, and associated symptoms. The characterization of "mindless" is telling, especially because houses do not typically possess minds. The description of the houses as mindless draws one's attention to the peculiar fact that they once had a mind to begin with.

Charting the change in the adjectives from those that pertain to motion to those that pertain to animacy, and finally to those that pertain to sentience is important because the three are vastly different modes. In order to explicate this notion more clearly, we can use Miéville's 2009 novel, *The City & The City*, as a counterpoint.

Of the three narratives of Miéville's mentioned, this is the one that is most readily applicable to matters of mapping and literary

cartography. The novel's world posits two cities that exist in the same geographic location, whose borders crisscross, and whose residents walk side-by-side topographically, but ideally not consciously. Should they happen to see or hear them, residents of one city are supposed to "unsee" and "unhear" the residents of the other city, so as to maintain the cities' boundaries. One consequence of this complex situation is that some locations in the cities are crosshatched: they either belong to both cities simultaneously, or are of unclear designation. This use of crosshatching complicates the cartography of the two cities, both technically and ideologically.

The streets and edifices of *The City & The City* are not physically mobile, animate, or sentient, but their intricate situation serves as a counterpoint that is revealing in terms of our argument. One particular description makes this especially apparent, and is therefore reproduced here in full. What follows is a depiction of the process of going from one city to the other, with certain words highlighted by me to indicate the shifting social spatiality:

Then the vehicles with their stamped permissions-to-cross emerged at the opposite end from where they entered, and drove into a foreign city. Often they doubled back, on the crosshatched streets in the Old Town or the Old Town, to the *same space* they had minutes earlier occupied, though in a new juridic realm.

If someone needed to go to a house physically next door to their own, but in the neighbouring city, it was in a different road in an unfriendly power. That is what foreigners rarely understand. A Besz dweller cannot walk a few paces next door into an alter house without breach.

But pass through Copula Hall and she or he might leave Beszél, and at the end of the hall come back to exactly (*corporeally*) where they had just been, but in another country, a tourist, a marvelling visitor, to a street that shared the *latitude-longitude* of their own address, a street they had never visited before, whose architecture they had always unseen, to the Ul Qoman house sitting *next to* and a whole city away from their own building, invisible there now they had come through, all the way across the Breach, back home.⁹

In these lines, certain words emphasize technical location; they refer to proximity, distance, relative position. Other words correspond to a shift enabled, created, or tainted by man. Thus, "cross" refers to the physical act of going from one place to another, whereas "permission" is a concept that is a human construct. Likewise, "same space," "physically," "corporeally," "latitude-longitude," and "next

to" are devoid of human "interference," while "juridic," "neighbouring," "breach," and "country" are concepts made possible only by way of social construction. In the same vein, to "unsee" an object, and to imagine that an entity is "a whole city away" both require a mind, and cannot exist in a setting where there is no presence of minds.

This example serves as an apt counterpoint because it is a mind that is implicated in the extraordinary entities that are portrayed in "Reports of Certain Events in London" and *Embassytown*. In *The City & The City*, the streets and edifices are not mobile, animate, or sentient, but the way they are mapped is determined by entities with minds: people. The *de facto* situation of borders and boundaries is that they are determined by humans. Whether the separation is etched by a natural border as in the case of Spain, France, and the Pyrenees, or made by arbitrary straight lines as in the case of the Midwestern states of the United States, the decision is man-made.

The preceding segment is a stark representation of how the mind produces and maintains spatial borders. Beszel and Ul Qoma are mappable; it is difficult to set out their complicated boundaries and crosshatches, but it is also conceptually simple. The reason it is conceptually simple is that it is not the map's subject that is sentient, but rather the map's maker, the cartographer. The cartographer—the cognizant being who can reason and make decisions—can map but not be mapped, at least not in a conventional sense. It is not feasible to perpetually fix, in location or otherwise, a sentient and fickle being. We cannot orient ourselves with relation to something that cannot be fixed. Earlier, we noted the effects that mapping accomplishes, and none of these things can be accomplished when it comes to mapping sentient subjects.

If it were simply a matter of mapping a mobile entity, we could solve the conundrum by adding the axis of time to our axis of space. Moving entities such as tidal waves, planets, and aircraft are regularly charted. The issue of sentience, however, is vastly more complex, as sentience entails cognition, theory of mind, decision-making, processing, and emotion. These aspects, at least given our current technological means, preclude determinism and therefore conventional mapping. In other words, if mapping constitutes localizing or fixing the subject, we cannot apply it to that which is sentient. Thus, we are left with the following choices: (1) declaring that a sentient being is unmappable; or (2) accepting that mapping animate things is possible, but noting that such mapping entails a reconceptualization of what mapping means.

The first choice seems correct, but does not hold, because the sentient beings in Miéville's fiction *have* been mapped. This is clear by virtue of their being successfully described, and the success of this description manifests itself any time a reader comprehends and can imagine Miéville's narrative. In *Spatiality*, Robert T. Tally notes that literature "functions as a form of mapping, offering its readers descriptions of places, situating them in a kind of imaginary space, and providing points of reference by which they can orient themselves and understand the world in which they live."¹⁰ Since Miéville's narrative has "offer[ed] its readers descriptions of places, situat[ed] them in a kind of imaginary space, and provid[ed] points of reference by which they can orient themselves and understand the world in which they live," it can be said to function as a form of mapping. Thus the second choice must hold true: in order to map extraordinary space or the object within it, we would need to rethink what mapping can and should accomplish. Let us consider another instance of extraordinary space so as to better ascertain how to go about such rethinking: the case of transontological space.

MAPPING TRANSONTOLOGICALLY

The second divide across which narratives have mapped is that between the realms of fiction and non-fiction. This is most readily apparent when we consider a stunning ontological twist on an already fascinating trope: fictional crossovers and transontological crossovers. To flesh out how crossovers work, and conceive of how they may extend across the ontological border, we will analyze crossovers in conjunction with the construct that best represents them: the rhizome. Drawing on Umberto Eco, Gilles Deleuze, and Félix Guattari, we will see that if we view crossover universes as rhizomes, we will be able to understand their tentaculiferous methods, as well as their abilities to endlessly expand their networks.

In his introduction to the second volume of Win Scott Eckert's *Crossovers: A Secret Chronology of the World*, "A Brief History of the Crossover," Jess Nevins defines the crossover as "a story in which characters or concepts from two or more discrete texts or series of texts meet."¹¹ Nevins lists eight types of crossover:

the fusion of myths; crossovers in which one author's characters are brought together by another author; crossovers within one author's fictional universe; crossovers in which the characters from different creators are brought together by another creator; the afterlife or Bangsian

fantasy; the use of real people as fictional characters; crossovers in which characters from different creators are brought together to form a team; and crossovers in which a fictional world contains characters from numerous authors.¹²

At this point let us distinguish between crossovers and a crossover universe, even though (and perhaps because) the terms will be used interchangeably in this chapter. A crossover is characterized by any of Nevins's definitions above, whereas a crossover universe is characterized by his last definition, "in which a fictional world contains characters from numerous authors." That is, the crossover universe has the particular attribute of extensive culling, and it posits a self-contained world wherein disparately originating characters coexist. It is the crossover universe that forms the rhizomatic network, which will be discussed in detail below. The crossover universe is the most extreme extension of a crossover.

Apart from the general definitions and subtypes, however, we must ask, What is meant by "crossover"? What does the crossing, and what does it cross? It appears that characters cross the boundaries of the book covers that heretofore contained them; they rise from the confines of their own pages and join others who have also crossed on *new* pages. The thaumaturgy of this ascension is accomplished by an author writing the compilation into existence.

Speaking of order, let us examine the rules according to which entities are culled into a fictional universe. Eckert's two-volume *Crossovers: A Secret Chronology of the World* appears to be the most ambitious attempt at amassing as many disparately originating fictional entities as possible into a single chronology, and Eckert sets down the rules this gathering obeys. The culling is of an immense scale, but it is not haphazard. As Eckert points out, "In order to maintain the real-world appearance, crossovers are incorporated using a set of rules and guidelines."¹³

While Eckert's rules and guidelines are self-chosen and at times seemingly arbitrary (and teeming with noted exceptions), we must still recognize that rules exist and are necessary for such a project. The main trend we can garner from Eckert's guidelines is the attempt at keeping the crossovers consistent and non-contradictory. Also important is maintaining the appearance of the crossover universe's reality. Basically, Eckert wants to make the crossover universe as authentic as possible, in line with the ethos of the project. The existence of and adherence to rules and guidelines in the compilation of a crossover universe indicates the importance of the coherence and

consistency of such a universe. Eschewing contradictions is the element that is paramount if the crossover universes are to have cogency and legitimacy.

Because of the considerations that go into the crossover, as well as the process of its construction, we can see the crossover and its construction as exhibiting the following labyrinthine qualities: complexity, multiple pathways, and therefore dizzying turns. In comparing the dictionary to the encyclopedia, Eco conceives of an encyclopedia as a labyrinth. He delineates three types of labyrinth: the classical ("Structurally speaking, it is simpler than a tree: it is a skein, and, as one unwinds a skein, one obtains a continuous line"), the maze ("If one unwinds a maze, one gets a particular kind of tree in which certain choices are privileged in respect to others"), and the net:

The main feature of a net is that every point can be connected with every other point, and, where the connections are not yet designed, they are, however, conceivable and designable. A net is an unlimited territory. A net is not a tree [...] the abstract model of a net has neither a center nor an outside.¹⁴

Eco envisions this net as a rhizome: "The best image of a net is provided by the vegetable metaphor of the rhizome suggested by Deleuze and Guattari."¹⁵ In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari characterize the rhizome as follows: "any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be. This is very different from the tree or root, which plots a point, fixes an order. [...] A rhizome may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines. [...] The rhizome is [...] a *map and not a tracing*."¹⁶ Deleuze and Guattari further distinguish the rhizome in stating that it "ceaselessly establishes connections."¹⁷ "Multiplicities are rhizomatic," and "the laws of combination [...] increase in number as the multiplicity grows."¹⁸

In qualifying the rhizome, Eco paraphrases Deleuze and Guattari and mentions, among other things, that "A rhizome is not a calque but an open chart which can be connected with something else in all of its dimensions; it is dismantlable, reversible, and susceptible to continual modifications."¹⁹ Later, Eco discusses the eighteenth-century Enlightenment figure of d'Alembert, who "says with great clarity that what an encyclopedia represents has no center. The encyclopedia is a pseudotree, which assumes the aspect of a local map, in order to represent, always transitorily and locally, what in fact is not representable because it is a rhizome, an inconceivable globality."²⁰

Crossover universes bear the qualities of rhizomatic networks. Accordingly, the nodes in crossover universes are the various crossed-over characters, and the connections among the nodes are the connections among the characters or the ways their stories link together. The networks are accomplished by the frequent reappropriation of fictional entities by means of parallel novels, adaptations, and crossover fictions. With crossovers, mash-ups, adaptations, and even marketing, we can expand the fictional universe of the entities in question, and through parallel novels, prequels, and sequels we expand their origins and their destinies. Like the rhizomatic network, a crossover universe is ever-expanding and self-perpetuating. It "ceaselessly establishes connections." If the crossover universe is consistent and without contradictions, "every point [node, character] can be connected with every other point." It is "susceptible to continual modifications."

Viewing crossover universes as rhizomes allows us to understand the tentaculiferous means by which they make connections to ever more nodes, expanding their networks endlessly in every direction, as well as within the network (as when new connections are established among existing nodes, or when node 1 is connected to node 3 via node 2, but perhaps also via node 4). Moreover, viewing crossovers as rhizomes will allow us to envision how at times the mapping of these nodes crosses ontological borders.

The orderly rigor of the crossover universe gives it the appearance of being organic and nature-made. Rhizomes are, after all, naturally occurring structures: roots. This situation is similar to that of the structure of the fractal: fractals appear in nature as trees, coastlines, veins, and so on. The precision, thoroughness, and details of the crossover universe mirror those in natural structures, so the quality of "naturalness" is passed on. The crossover universe appears so organic that it may as well have always been there. This notion is conveyed when authors and compilers go about their crossover universe construction as though they are merely *discovering* and *mapping out* a world that is already there (rather than doing the culling and universe-building). Eckert describes the result of his compilation as follows: "The fascinating thing is, as one reads through the following 1500-plus crossover entries in chronological order, it becomes apparent that the individual stories and characters combine into mini story-arcs in ways that the original writers never could have foreseen."²¹ That is, the bird's eye view of the compiler illuminates a network that is otherwise not perceivable, and it all fits in together so perfectly as if it were fated to do so.

In describing his and Kevin O'Neill's work, Alan Moore also talks of his culled world as one that was already there. In his introduction to Nevins's *A Blazing World*, Moore writes, "As *League [of Extraordinary Gentlemen]* itself has grown more complex and ambitious since its first conception, so too have I become obsessed with expanding the book's remit to include even the most remote and obscure corners of the fictional landscape."²² This makes it sound as though the said fictional landscape is an already established territory, and that Moore is just exploring its recesses. As the master compiler explains,

Even the choice of title for this current volume, *A Blazing World*, seems to sum up the essential nature of what our originally simple idea of a Victorian hero-team has evolved into, with the Duchess of Newcastle's visionary allegorical terrain become a symbol for the entire blazing landscape of the human imagination that *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* is now dedicated to excavating and exploring. This incandescent planet of our species' fictions [...] has been with us as long as its material, terrestrial twin. For many of us, especially here in the leisure-intensive western world, it may be that we will spend significantly lengthy stretches of our actual mortal lives at play in this imaginary territory, will come to know some of its population better than we know our real acquaintances, will have a clearer memory of Arkham, Gormenghast or Barsoom than we have of the real places that we've passed through on our way through life.²³

Moore is describing the blazing world that he and O'Neill have compiled as though it were preexistent, as though it has always existed alongside the nonfictional world. It is as if he and O'Neill are simply writing about what was already there, rather than synthesizing elements so as to produce something new. The crossover universe is referred to as the "landscape of the human imagination" that their culled heroes are "dedicated to excavating and exploring." This implies that it was always there to excavate and explore. In an interview published by Comic Book Resources in 2007, Moore is quoted as having said, "When [*League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*] started, it was purely a 'Justice League of Victorian England.' Within an issue or two, we realized that this was actually a fantastic opportunity to map the entire world of fiction."²⁴ Again, this "world of fiction" is referred to as an already existent entity.

Eckert conveys a similar perspective in his introduction to *Myths for the Modern Age* when he uses the phrase "the latest explosive resurgence of the Wold Newton literary archaeological Game."²⁵ This likewise suggests that there was something already there on which one

can perform the maneuverings of archeology. In the same volume, Peter M. Coogan also uses such terms:

As "literary archaeologists," we map and investigate the unknown history of the literary universe as revealed in novels, pulps, films, comics, legends, myths, epics, and other literary and cultural texts. We treat these texts as archaeologists treat the artifacts they dig up, as clues to a larger understanding of the world that must be guessed at and constructed from incomplete pieces.

Wold Newton scholars seek to create connections between texts in a game that supposes creative works to be merely an archipelago representation of a world more exciting and interesting than the one we live in.²⁶

Once again, this makes it seem as though there already exists a separate universe and the compilers and authors of crossover universes are only the archeologists out on a dig.

We can see, therefore, how conceptualizing crossover universes as rhizomes can help us understand the complex relationships among the expanding nodes, as well as the pathways that connect them. Moreover, since the rhizomatic network is an organic structure, reading crossover universes in terms of rhizomes reveals one of the reasons why the former are treated as though they are naturally occurring and supposedly primordial. The rhizomatic structure emphasizes the orderly nature of the crossover universe: the rigor implies credibility, and, since nature is orderly and elegant, the rhizomatic fabrication is afforded the hue of a naturally occurring phenomenon.

These notions that there was "previously something there" highlight the already present geocritical aspect of the crossover: crossover compilers partake in literary cartography. While typically limited to the realm of fiction, every once in a while the literary cartography of crossovers itself crosses over into the realm of nonfiction. In the instance of crossover universes, rather than isolated crossover cases, the rhizomatic structure explains the universes' ever-expanding nodes, and makes it easier for us to conceive of their expansion across the ontological divide.

In the introduction to the first volume of Eckert's *Crossovers*, Kim Newman notes, "Through some skewed logic rising from [certain] connections, I can now write myself into the crossover universe. [...] Name-checks in other people's novels [...] further cement my phantasmal other self." He concludes, "This may be an area of worthwhile future research, since—as Farmer's *Riverworld* already proved—it means we all get to be inhabitants of the Land of Fiction eventually."²⁷

I suggest looking at this phenomenon from the opposite perspective: fictional characters get to be inhabitants of the Land of Nonfiction. Whether or not the transontological crossovers include fictional entities that could, according to crossover culling rules, exist in the same fictional crossover universe, fictional entities have effectively crossed over into our nonfictional one.²⁸

Transontological crossovers manifest themselves in myriad ways. Geographically, they may do so via plaques and statues. For instance, there exists a plaque in Riverside, Iowa, that indicates the future birthplace of *Star Trek's* Captain James T. Kirk. There is another at Reichenbach Falls, Switzerland, which, in English, German, and French commemorates the vanquishing of Professor Moriarty by Sherlock Holmes. In 2011, efforts commenced to erect a statue of Robocop in Detroit.

The above are examples of accurate transontological crossings: each representation is accurate *vis-à-vis* its home text. There are many more examples of nonaccurate transontological crossings, which replicate fictional entities, but not in the locations indicated in entities' home texts. For instance, in July 2007, a dozen North American 7-Eleven stores were reborn as Kwik-E-Marts. Kwik-E-Mart is a fictional convenience store originally located in *The Simpsons'* city of Springfield, and as part of the promotion of *The Simpsons Movie*, Kwik-E-Mart shed its fictional status and, even if only temporarily, replaced several real 7-Eleven stores. Additional examples include the life-size statue of Yoda in San Francisco, and Google Maps' Google Street View of the Harry Potter series' Diagon Alley.

These examples entail actions that are simple: erecting plaques, remodeling stores, and digitally rendering maps; these are straightforward undertakings. The implications, however, are complicated, because they involve cartography across an ontological divide. As in the case of sentient spaces, mapping transontological spaces is possible, as demonstrated by the existence of the plaques and statues. Therefore, given the two choices mentioned in the previous section, the second option holds again, and we should rethink what mapping can and should accomplish.

CONCLUSION

And so, how are we to reconceptualize literary cartography so that it can include the mapping of absurd, extraordinary spaces and the subjects therein, ones that display cognitive ability or exist across and despite an ontological chasm?

Perhaps we can view mapping—at least, the sort involved in literary cartography—less in terms of fixing an entity in spatiotemporal and ontological coordinates, and more in terms of understanding how this entity fits into our *Weltanschauung*. After all, our experiences, thoughts, and emotions cannot be mapped according to spatiotemporal and ontological coordinates, and literature, among the arts that feed into our experiences, thoughts, and emotions, should not be bound to these coordinates. The spatial play foregrounded by Miéville's narratives and the tentaculiferous crossover game emphasizes the need for this broadening of our conceptions of possible cartography.²⁹

NOTES

1. Jorge Luis Borges, "On Exactitude in Science," in *Collected Fictions*, trans. Andrew Hurley (New York: Viking, 1998), 325.
2. China Miéville, "Reports of Certain Events in London," in Michael Chabon and Michael Mignola, eds., *McSweeney's Enchanted Chamber of Astonishing Stories* (New York: Vintage Books, 2004), 244, 245.
3. *Ibid.*, 245.
4. *Ibid.*, 249, 250, 250, 255.
5. China Miéville, *Embassytown* (New York: Del Rey, 2011), 82.
6. *Ibid.*, 20, 209, 83, 193.
7. *Ibid.*, 179, 335, 266.
8. *Ibid.*, 179.
9. China Miéville, *The City & The City* (New York: Del Rey, 2010), 70, emphasis supplied.
10. Robert T. Tally Jr., *Spatiality* (London: Routledge, 2013), 2.
11. Jess Nevins, introduction to Win Scott Eckert, *Crossovers: A Secret Chronology of the World, Vol. 2: 1940—the Future* (Encino: Black Coat Press, 2010), 7.
12. *Ibid.*
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16. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 7, 9, 12.
17. *Ibid.*, 7.
18. *Ibid.*, 8.
19. Eco, *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language*, 81; Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 12.

20. Eco, *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language*, 83.
21. Eckert, *Crossovers*, 1, 23.
22. Alan Moore, introduction to *A Blazing World: The Unofficial Companion to the League of Extraordinary Gentlemen, Volume Two* (Austin: MonkeyBrain, Inc., 2004), 11.
23. *Ibid.*, 12–13.
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26. Peter M. Coogan, "Wold-Newtonry: Theory and Methodology," in *Myths for the Modern Age: Philip José Farmer's Wold Newton Universe* (Austin: MonkeyBrain Books, 2005), 21.
27. Kim Newman, introduction to Eckert, *Crossovers*, 9.
28. It is interesting to note, however, that if one entity from *the* crossover universe has found its way into our nonfictional universe, all other entities in that crossover universe should "technically" be able to exist in our universe as well.
29. The essay is dedicated to my adviser and mentor, Professor William Moebius. Professor Moebius, thank you for enthusiastically encouraging even the most outlandish ideas. Geographical pun intended.