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Doctoral Dissertation
Fantastic Place and Space in China Miéville's Fiction

Rhetorics of Emancipatory Spatial Changes in the Miévillean New Weird

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1. Introduction

This dissertation analyses urban spatiality in the fiction of China Miéville¹. The perspective of thesis “is [. . .] limited to the mapping of social [and political] spaces through literature and literary theory, rather than extending the argument to the various ways in which spatiality operates outside of cartography” (Tally 2013, 4). The focus on the urban part signifies the differentiation from other sorts of fantastic literature. The dissertation is concerned with identifying key points on which Miéville relies to construct a platform for argumentation on the use of urban space and wish to explore his attempts of different approaches to achieve a successful argument with the help of that platform. I concentrate on questions of the social and political perspectives of New Weird as an approach, as a mode of writing, and its potential to function as a vehicle for political critique. New Weird is a useful tool for that purpose. In my reading, New Weird belongs to fantastic literature which is a pivotal impulse “to human consciousness, in that we can and constantly do imagine things that aren’t really there” (Gordon 2003, 367). It provides a context with which “we can imagine things that *can’t* [be] *possibly* there. We can imagine the impossible” (ibid. emphases in the original). The Miévillian interpretation of New Weird illustrates the importance of fantastic literature as a valid approach to understand consensual reality and delineates the possible emancipatory spatial use from the social and political viewpoint. The thesis shows how Miéville trespasses beyond boundaries of fantastic literature by unique use of space and place.

The dissertation also sets itself the task of framing Miéville’s position in the English-speaking genre fiction. Some studies² have adapted similar interpretive critical framework

¹ China Miéville is a prominent New Weird author and a distinguished Marxist theoretician. His fictional works are labelled as New Weird, an important, yet marginal sort of fantastic literature, in which he explores topics such as politics, ideology, and xenophobia. He foregrounds urban spaces to connect the not-real to the real. In Miéville’s interpretation “[t]he real is shaped by a process of constant reference to the not-real”, therefore, an oscillation can be observed through which issues that are relevant in the not-real can also be identified as important in the real (Newsinger 2000, n. p. emphases in the original). Hence, the possibility of fantastic literature as a platform to form political opinions.

² The dissertation refers to Kai Jerome Thorstad’s MA thesis *Literalized Metaphors in China Miéville’s Ba-Lag Novels* (sic!); Kristen Shaw’s MA thesis *Ruining Representation in the Novels of China Miéville: A Deleuzian Analysis of Assemblages in Railsea, The Scar, and Embassytown*; Peter Owen’s MA thesis *China Miéville: The Work of Mourning*; Catherine Olea Johansen’s MA thesis *Border Theory: A New Point of Access into Literature. A border-theoretical reading of China Miéville’s Un Lun Dun, The City and the City and Embassytown*; Cassandra Ashton’s doctoral thesis *Sympathy For the Orcs: Evil in Urban Fantasy Literature*; Tonje Andersen’s MA thesis *Everywhere and Nowhere: The City as Recorded Text in Neverwhere and Kraken*; Maija Seppänen’s MA thesis *“The Union of Magicked Assistants”: A study of power and subjectivity in China Miéville’s Kraken, Embassytown and The City and the City*; Mary Irene Morrison’s doctoral thesis *Decolonizing Utopia: Indigenous Knowledge and Dystopian Speculative Fiction*; Robert James O’Connor’s doctoral thesis *A Miéville Bestiary: Monsters as Commentary on the Hybridity of Real and Conceptual Landscapes in the Work of China Miéville*; Özlem AKYOL’s doctoral thesis *Ecological heterotopias in Neil Gaiman’s Neverwhere and China Miéville’s Perdido*

focusing on methods Miéville utilises through individual concepts (monstrosities, language, spatiality, hybridity, and post- and transhumanism), yet failed to provide a coherent theoretical framework within which the compositional logic (and the overall aesthetic principles) of the author could be approached. Miéville understands the fantastic (fantasy, science fiction and horror) that it can provide useful point of views for incorporating political critique of ideology into fiction. He considers fantasy to be one of the more appropriate responses to the contemporary situation of global capitalism. As a corollary, in New Weird Miéville sees the most prolific mode to involve and connect “his practice as an activist, his theory as a Marxist and his aesthetic interests as a novelist, because, like the forces of capital, it is concerned with the relationship of a non-rational, imaginary system to the real world” (P. Williams 2010, 274).

The purpose of this dissertation is to synthesize the works on China Miéville’s fiction and I have attempted to show that these works can indeed be interpreted as the centre of the New Weird canon. Miéville reached the status of an acclaimed author³ and distinguished scholar. His works have enjoyed some critical attention ever since the beginning of their publications in the late 1990s, but recently more concentrated critical activity has brought Miéville studies to another level: this is evidenced in important academic journals and publishers’ attention to the subject. *Extrapolation* devoted a special issue to him in 2009, and Gylphi has published a monograph – *Art and Idea in the Novels of China Miéville*, by Carl Freedman - and an essay collection on Miéville - *China Miéville: Critical Essays*, edited by Caroline Edwards, Tony Venezia, Sherryl Vint, Raphael Zähringer, Dougal McNeill, Joe Sutliff Sanders, and Paul March-Russell in 2015, a greater interest in him at conferences and universities, and in his slowly shifting position in both the literary canon and in discussions of the 21st-century literary fantastic.

In his interviews⁴, he is absolutely aware of postmodern literature⁵ and culture⁶, and he even exploits that. He keeps commenting about his influences, whether they are literary or

Street Station; and Mark P. Williams’s doctoral thesis *Radical Fantasy: A Study of Left Radical Politics in the Fantasy Writing of Michael Moorcock, Angela Carter, Alan Moore, Grant Morrison and China Miéville*.

³ He has been awarded with four Locus Awards, three Arthur C. Clarke Awards, two British Fantasy Awards and Hugo, Kitschies, and World Fantasy Awards.

⁴ The dissertation indicates the following interviews: Joan Gordon’s “Reveling in Genre”; Lars Schmeink’s “On the Look-Out for a New Urban Uncanny”; Stephen Shapiro’s “Gothic Politics - A discussion with China Miéville”; Benjamin Noys and Timothy S. Murphy’s “Morbid Symptoms - An Interview with China Miéville”; John Pistelli and Alphonse van Worden’s “A Truly Monstrous Thing to Do: The China Miéville Interview”; Lou Anders’s “An Interview with China Miéville”; David Naimon’s “A Conversation with China Miéville”; Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock’s “Afterworld - Interview with China Miéville”; Tony Venezia’s “Dandelion meets China Miéville”.

⁵ Brian McHale claims about “postmodernist fiction [that it] differs from modernist fiction just as a poetics dominated by ontological issues differs from one dominated by epistemological issues” (McHale 2004, XII).

⁶ The seminal Marxist theoretician, Fredric Jameson observes that “in postmodern culture, ‘culture’ has become a product in its own right” (Jameson 1991, 2). Postmodern culture has become a commodity. Miéville’s (so as other

aesthetic. He lists an incredible array of authors as his influence in the acknowledgement section of his books: such as M. John Harrison and Mervyn Peake in *Perdido Street Station* (2000) (Miéville 2000, n. p.); in *Iron Council* (2004) he refers to William Durbin, John Ehle, Jane Gaskell, Zane Grey, Sembène Ousmane, Tim Powers, T. F. Powys, and Frank Spearman to whom he is indebted to (Miéville 2004, n. p.); in *The City and The City* (2009) alludes to Raymond Chandler, Franz Kafka, Alfred Kubin, Jan Moris, and Bruno Schulz to whom he is grateful to (Miéville 2009, n. p.); in *UnLunDun* (2007) mentions Joan Aiken, Clive Barker, Lewis Carroll, Michael de Larrabeiti, Tanith Lee, Walter Moers, Beatrix Potter, and Neil Gaiman as important influences (Miéville 2007, n. p.); in *This Census-taker* (2016) pays tribute to Mary Butts, Barbara Comyns, John Hawkes, Jane Gaskell, Denis Johnson, Anna Kavan, Edward St. Aubyn, and Roland Topor (Miéville 2016, n. p.). This list reveals his versatile background of influences, when it comes to fiction and his postmodern playfulness to modify his canonisation by listing those names as a meta-gesture of canonisation. He both wants to influence his position in the canon and to stress his trespassing feature in the genres.

Consequently, it poses a problem relating him to a single genre. He can be catalogued along with other contemporary (genre) authors who fall outside of the scope of the conventional idea of genre. Gary K. Wolfe describes this phenomenon, “the term ‘genre’ itself has accrued almost too many meanings to be useful: In one sense, it simply refers to market categories; in another, it refers to a set of literary and narrative conventions; in yet another, it refers to a collection of texts with perceived commonalities of affect and world view” (Wolfe 2011, 53). The radical genre-changes from one novel to another stress the name of the author as an authoritative trademark that connects the books. The transgressions of authors such as Miéville’s point out the futility and the impossibility of policing the genre border. The name begins to function as a genre itself⁷, a rule-bending perspective excludes non-contemporary and non-postmodern interpretation of this field of culture. His fiction blurs the boundaries of genres, it defies marketing categories, and oversteps prescribed literary and narrative conventions as a form of resisting canonisation. It is interpreted as a power mechanism, however, it cannot evade the entirety of capitalist system, and his works become Miévillean.

authors’s who are labelled as New Weird) aim is to avoid that outcome, therefore, he utilises the protean features of fantastic literature to avoid recognition as a genre, therefore, as a commodity.

⁷ Michel Foucault argues in his essay that the author’s name “is functional in that it serves as a means of classification” (Foucault 1969, 304). In the case of Miéville and drawing on Foucault’s argument that “single name implies that relationships of homogeneity, filiation, reciprocal explanation, authentication, or of common utilization”, it is clear that the features of Miéville are versatility and heterogeneity (Foucault 1969, 305).

However, the dissertation still adheres to the presumption that there is a thematic connection among Miéville's novels. One that does not peter out into the details, but remains in the focus of the narratives. The primary texts of the dissertation are six books: five novels and one novella. They imply a common theme: one that remains constant and can be considered flexible enough to be interpreted from many different perspectives which can be connected to subjects, thus, it is both objective and subjective; one that reveals the social and political horizon of subjects toward each other and themselves as group; one that stresses the importance of the subject and its community as it is formed; one that its impact can be explored through the rhetoric of subjects and their community. That is the urban space, where both subjects and their communities differ in their rights of accessing the urban and the possibility of influencing it. Consequently, in my exploration in the dissertation, spatial studies play a significant part as an umbrella approach to the primary texts. In them, Miéville delineates a platform of argumentation for the socially and politically powerless to express their social and political positions and to have them argue themselves in the contemporary urban spatial system that is ruled by the powerful. This viewpoint of interpretation may stem from Miéville's political belief, from Marxism⁸, however, he highlights in an interview by John Newsinger that, “[m]y job [. . .] is not to convince people of socialism – a 700-page fantasy would be a spectacularly inefficient mode of propaganda” (Newsinger 2000, n. p.). The dissertation explores Miéville's changing approach in the negotiations of power struggle in the urban space among characters' themselves and the state system. This changes from book to book and is investigated through the lenses of contemporary narratology, spatial studies, and critical map studies. It explores the platform, established by fantastic literature, where the others' use of urban space is negotiated. Consequently, my intention is to scrutinise these examples to illustrate his realisations in the examined texts.

1.1 Biography

⁸ He confesses in the interview with John Newsinger that “the model I take from Marx differs from the mainstream critics in that the not-real isn't *separated* from the real. The real is shaped by a *process of constant reference to the not-real*. Our conception of what is and is not possible directly affects our transformative capacity. That capacity is generally about an oscillation of consciousness between the real and either the *possible* or not yet *possible* not-real” (Newsinger 2000, n. p. emphases in the original). He stresses that during the “process of cross-reference that Marx describes, change the not-real and that allows you differently to *think the potentialities in the real*” (ibid.). Miéville describes himself as a “revolutionary socialist” (ibid.).

It is tempting to assign China Miéville's upbringing in Willesden to the understanding of the protean background of his fiction. Growing up in north-west London, he describes his early years they lived "in a working-class, ethnically-mixed area" (Gordon 2003, 355). However, these factors play a pivotal part in his works, his advancement in left-wing politics came later. Miéville utilises this biographical inspiration in his fiction and for his characters to provide depth to them by differentiating them from other sort of fantastical fiction⁹.

To illustrate the prolific and heterogeneous nature of his writing, his publications include a trilogy set in a secondary world (*Perdido Street Station*, 2000; *The Scar*, 2002; *Iron Council*, 2004), a coming of age story for younger readers (*Un Lun Dun*, 2007), a police procedural (*The City and The City*, 2009). Furthermore, Miéville has written an adventure book (*King Rat*, 1998), an apocalyptic adventure book (*Kraken*, 2010), a science fiction (*Embassytown*, 2011), and a dystopian¹⁰ fantasy (*Railsea*, 2012). He has written three short story collections: *Looking for Jake* (2005), *The Apology Chapbook* (2013), and *Three Moments of an Explosion: Stories* (2015). He also had three novellas: *The Tain* (2002), which was included in his first short story collection, *This Census-Taker* (2016), and *The Last Days of New Paris* (2016). He conceived comics for DC Comics (*Hellblazer*, *Justice League*, and *Dial H*), had a children's book co-written and illustrated by Zak Smith, *The Worst Breakfast* (2016). He edited with Mark Bould *Red Planets: Marxism and Science Fiction* (2009). In 2010 he participated along with Elaine Cunningham, Chris Pramas, and Steve Kenson in the conception of a *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*, a fantasy game guide. In 2017 he finished a non-fictional book, for the centennial outbreak of the Bolshevik revolution in Imperial Russia, titled *October: The Story of the Russian Revolution* (2017). He "was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 2015" (Royal, Miéville).

China Tom Miéville was born in 1972, was raised with his sister, Jemima, by a single mother, Claudia Lightfoot. When asked to recall their free-time activities in their childhood, he replies they attended "museums, art galleries", and watched a "lot of TV". He remembers his younger self as "a bit of a geek and a bit anxious [...], had plenty of [...] interests, mostly sf-

⁹ I refer to the interpretation of J. R. R. Tolkien's fiction that illustrate others in an unfavourable light. In that context, Miéville's argues against Tolkien's approach that it is "resolutely rural, petty bourgeois, conservative, anti-modernist, misanthropically Christian and anti-intellectual" (Newsinger 2000, n. p.). This does not connote that Tolkien did not have politics, he is considered a conservative author with full understanding of the world. However, the issue emerges from Tolkien's construction of second worlds. He relies on the Manichaeon opposition of good and evil to write characters or entire races. Furthermore, "things are determined by fate rather than social agency. Social threats are pathological, invading from outside" (ibid.). Miéville's fiction deviates from that understanding of fantasy. The tradition from which Miéville emerges from reads the orcs in Tolkien as Cockney working class people. As a consequence of that, orcs are rendered as others.

¹⁰ The term dystopia "denotes that class of hypothetical societies containing images of worlds worse than our own" (Stableford 2020, n. p.).

related – RPGs [role-playing games], reading, drawing, writing” (ibid.). He attended Cambridge University, received a BA degree in Social Anthropology in 1994. He “did a Masters in International Law from the London School of Economics [receiving the degree in 1995], spent a year at Harvard, and then received a PhD in Philosophy of International Law in 2001”¹¹ (Gordon 2003, 355-356). His interest provides a broad pool of ideas from which he can draw thoughts for his fictional output.

The scope of influences on Miéville is enormous. He integrated them and got inspired by them to create his very complex and sophisticated, politically self-conscious texts. Miéville perceives his earlier self as a geek, a claim that is fully realised in his choice of television programs and movies. He mentions that “British children’s TV in the 1970s and the early 1980s was extremely good” (Gordon 2003, 356). These programs included “*Doctor Who* [1963-89], *Chorlton and the Wheelies* [1976-79], *Blake’s 7* [1978-81] and *The Battle of Planets* [1978-79]” (ibid.). He further remarks that he “like[s] most half-decent (and many completely un-decent) monster films” (ibid.). His examples are the *Alien* franchise and *Prince of Darkness*. Furthermore, role-playing game as another segment of popular culture becomes a particularly important factor as an influence on his fiction. He includes it as his first encounter of a method to catalogue the fantastic into a system: a medium which he stresses as a seminal influence the way he constructs stories. He also points out its “weird fetish for systematization, the way everything is reduced to ‘game stats’” (Gordon 2003, 357). He realises that he has adapted the technique “of exaggeratedly precise approach to secondary world creation” in his own fiction (ibid.).

In the interview with Joan Gordon, Miéville talks in great length about his cultural, literary and political influences. As *Perdido Street Station* (2000) became a success, he established himself as a doyen of the literary weird that allowed him to experiment with modes of writings. Both of his positions as author and as theoretician elevate him into a respected position within the community of genre fiction. Surveying the plethora of impacts on his writing, I attempt to shed light on his complex literary output. Consequently, in the following paragraphs I am going to revisit Gordon’s interview with Miéville in an endeavour to contextualise all those cultural products that he considers pivotal for conceiving his fiction.

¹¹ The title of his dissertation is *A Historical Materialist Analysis of International Law and the Legal Form*. He describes it as a “critical history and theory of international law, drawing extensively on the work of the Russian legal theorist Yevgeny Pashukanis” (Gordon 2003, 356). He had his PhD dissertation at the Department of International Relations, London School of Economics and Political Science in 2005. It was published by Brill, its title is *Between Equal Rights: A Marxist Theory of International Law*.

He has always favoured science fiction, fantasy and horror to any other sort of writing. As a child he read pretty much any science fiction he could get his hands on, “so there was a lot of good pulp along with the classics” and that revelling in genre influenced him a lot (Gordon 2003, 358). He expresses his devotion to the “aesthetic of alienation, of macabre and grotesque” (ibid.). He has found that in science fiction and his heroes in that type of writings are Brian Aldiss, Harlan Ellison, Michael Moorcock, Thomas M. Disch, and J. G. Ballard. He is inspired by these authors of the New Wave of science fiction. He benefits from and uses their socially sensitive approach to society, community, and their understanding of the relation between centre and periphery through the lens of political and social perspective. As a consequence, it is clear from that that Miéville’s approach in fantastic fictions is not entirely new.

First, Miéville claims that science fiction and socialism “are the two most fundamental influences” on his life (Gordon 2003, 360). In Marxism, he realised that it “dovetailed perfectly with [his] pre-existing political instincts and commitments” and it “was theoretically all-encompassing: it allowed [him] to understand the world in its totality without being dogmatic” (ibid.). Peter Owen argues that Miéville’s political standpoint subverts this position and pushes the genre radically towards the progressive tradition. He became a “committed political thinker and organiser” (Owen 2018, 11). He entered the race as a candidate “for the House of Commons [...] for the Socialist Alliance in 2001, and until 2013 was a member of the UK Socialist Workers Party. Later in 2013 he became involved in the founding of Left Unity” (ibid.). In 2015 he helped to launch *Salvage*, a “quarterly of revolutionary arts and letters”, “written by and for the desolated Left, by and for those committed to radical change” (*Salvage*, ‘About’), where he became the editor and the art and fiction editor.

Second, Miéville stresses the influence of fantasy on his books in producing secondary worlds. He sees two novels, Brian Aldiss’s *The Malacia Tapestry* (1976) and Tim Powers’s *Anubis Gate* (1983) important and as they are set in an alternative history and take place in a (semi-)urban environment, therefore, they can be interpreted as forerunners for *Bas-Lag* series. Magdalena Maczynska describes Miéville’s vantage point in conceiving his fantastic urban worlds as urban visionary satire “that draws on the interconnected traditions of realist, satirical, and fantastic” (Maczynska 2010, 58). She argues that this sort of fiction rejects the

methods of classical realist representation in favour of imaginative, fantastic departures, visionary-satirical novels retain the desire to portray the personal and collective experience of their subjects, with the goal of offering an iconoclastic, satirical critique of contemporary metropolis (ibid.).

Third, in the context of horror fiction, Miéville's fascination with weird fiction precipitates its long-time examination and his constant need to provide a framework for it in literature. He is captivated by the pulp aesthetic of language

that kind of hallucinatorily intense purple prose which completely breaches all rules of 'good writing', but it is somehow utterly compulsive and affecting (Gordon 2003, 358).

He positions weird fiction at the crossroads of science fiction, fantasy and horror, with which he knowingly sets a place for himself in literature. I find it central for the understanding of his fiction to briefly remark on and later will be elaborated in details the progress of the literary weird. Miéville lists Sheridan Le Fanu¹², and M. R. James¹³ from the British tradition as pivotal exemplars in this development. From the American tradition, Miéville draws on Lovecraft by claiming that

that James had 'invent[ed] a new type of ghost', not 'pale and stately, and apprehended chiefly through the sense of sight' but 'lean, dwarfish, and hairy – a sluggish, hellish night-abomination midway betwixt beast and man – and usually touched before it is seen' (Miéville 2011, 120).

Miéville asserts that the weird fiction he writes is, a chimera, a quite postmodern sort of literature, which defies easy categorisation and can be approached from many perspectives. In another interview in *Gothic Studies* with Stephen Shapiro (2008), however, Miéville designates that there is a common point within these genres of science fiction, fantasy, horror and weird fiction, "the starting point that something impossible is true [...], [the] starting point of radical alienation from actuality" (Shapiro 2008, 64). Miéville's fiction hinges on alienation¹⁴ as a driving force, a concept he borrowed from Bertolt Brecht, a left-wing playwright, theatre critic, and theoretician.

From aesthetical viewpoint, he highlights two filmmakers, the Quay Brothers and Jan Švankmajer as pivotal factors in the construction of his aesthetics. Moreover, he cites the Surrealist movement as a point of reference. Apart from the appreciation of Max Ernst, Yves Tanguy, Hans Hellmer and Paul Delvaux, Miéville admits that modern comics (Burne Hogarth)

¹² The creatures conceived by Le Fanu, by contrast, are "intimations of disaster" (Miéville 2011, 118).

¹³ Miéville develops the argument and points out that "James's ghosts are in fact often not ghosts, but inhuman 'demons' of one sort or another" (Miéville 2011, 120). Therefore, both Le Fanu and James separated themselves from the earlier tradition of ghost stories and unknowingly began to lay the foundation of haute weird fiction.

¹⁴ Viktor Shklovsky constructed the neologism of *ostranenie*, which serves as the basis of the concept of *Verfremdungseffekt* (estrangement). It has been promoted in genre criticism by the left-wing theoretician of science fiction, Darko Suvin. He explicated the idea in his book *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction* (1979). This theoretical standpoint has permeated into Miéville's viewpoint of fantastic literature. Although, he elaborates on the term and realises that in fantastic literature it "is a function of (textual) *charismatic authority*" (Miéville 2009a, 238). Therefore, the genres that are seen as fantastic literature (fantasy, science fiction, and horror) share this idea of estrangement. The dissertation discards the interpretive frame of Suvinian criticism which separates fantasy and science fiction and posits "that there is an inherent aesthetic affinity between SF and progressive thought and between fantasy and reactionary thought" (P. Williams 2010, 4).

and graphic art (David Sandlin, Charles Burns, Kim Deitch, Julie Doucet, and Chris Ware) also play crucial parts.

Although Miéville's ties with fantastic literature are evidently clear, the present thesis will defend fantasy against the accusation of escapism and argue that in certain forms of fantastic literature constructs room for critique from political and social viewpoint. Miéville remarks in the interview with John Newsinger that, "[i]n 'On Fairy Tales' [Tolkien] says '[W]hy should a man be scorned if, finding himself in prison, he tries to get out and go home? Or if, when he cannot do so, he thinks and talks about other topics than jailers and prison walls?'" (Newsinger 2000, n. p.). In his essay, Tolkien adds that "critics have chosen the wrong word, and, what is more, they are confusing, not always by sincere error, the Escape of the Prisoner with the Flight of the Deserter" (Tolkien 2008, 402).

It is pivotal to insert this sentence into the discussion as Miéville clarifies and carries on in the interview with Newsinger. Miéville says that, "[t]he fantasy writer Terry Pratchett puts it very simply: 'Jailers don't like escapism.' The trouble is that, as Michael Moorcock pointed out, jailers love escapism—what they don't like is *escape*" (Newsinger 2000, n. p. emphasis original). Moorcock puts his finger on the pulse of global capitalism articulating this, and understands its inherent working mechanism. It incorporates, engulfs, and commodifies every subversive, non-normative behaviours such as the act of escaping and instead of it, it provides its own version, therefore, escapism instead of escape. This is the epoch in which the repressive state apparatus even encourages subjects to commit the act of escapism¹⁵. However, the act of escaping precisely encapsulates Miéville's attempts in the examined books. In my interpretation, the escape means a potential platform to flatten the political and social hierarchy and to argue subjects with agency into the spatial system to move toward betterment of society.

1.2 Focusing on Approaches

The dissertation locates itself in the monographic approach of writing. It focuses on one single author, China Miéville and his interpretation of the relation of city and subject through six of his fictional works. These are the *Bas-Lag* trilogy: *Perdido Street Station*; *The Scar*; and *Iron*

¹⁵ As soon as the escape feature of New Weird becomes escapism in the context of contemporary capitalism, i.e. commercialises, the leading authors realise that it "has taken on an artistic and commercial life beyond that intended by those individuals who, in their inquisitiveness about a 'moment,' unintentionally created a movement", therefore, in "The New Weird: 'It's Alive?'" Jeff VanderMeer expresses their opinion that, "New Weird is dead. Long live the Next Weird" (VanderMeer 2008, XVIII).

Council; The City and The City; Un Lun Dun; and This Census-Taker. The thesis looks at Miéville's Marxist perspective and involves theories of space and language, and rhetoric in its examination. I argue that it is more than just the exploring the urban through the lens of Marxism – it is the interwoven and occasionally overlapping political and social understandings that partly emerge from the consensual realist approach to the relation between city and subject and partly stem from the fantastic readings of the relation between city and subject. The two of them are connected; however, their results differ.

The thesis builds on earlier works¹⁶, where the authors also attempt to describe the relation of city and subject. The city functions as the alienating environment that conceals the vice of humankind and seduces the youth with its false promises. It constructs and supports the ideological framework of the social hierarchy by establishing the idea of spatial decorum. Maintaining the context of the filthy city by those in power position, they can re-organise the urban environment according to ideological means that are framed as sanitary instructions. Expelling the others¹⁷ to the margin and providing only the bare minimum for survival, they laid the foundations of the contemporary power structure that controls the urban environment. In this framework the idea of others refers to those subjects that politically, socially, gender-wise, sexually, and racially represent the difference from the ideologically established norm. In his texts, Miéville gives voice to Marxists, underclass or poverty ridden individuals, who can be men or women, homosexuals and heterosexuals, and human or partly human.

Ash Amin and Nigel J. Thrift encapsulate “the city as a machine whose surge comes from the liveliness of various bodies, materials, symbols, and intelligences held in relation within specific networks of calculation and allocation, undergirded by diverse regimes and rituals of organization and operation” (Amin-Thrift 2016, 9). They point out that

the arrangements of water, electricity, logistics, communication, circulation and the like, instantiate and sustain life within and beyond cities in all sorts of ways: allocating resource and reward, enabling collective action, shaping social dispositions and affects, marking time, space and map, maintaining order and discipline, sustaining transactions, moulding the environmental footprint. These arrangements are more than a mere ‘infrastructural’ background, the silent stage on which other powers perform (ibid.).

¹⁶ The thesis specifically draws on Robert Alter's *Imagined Cities - Urban Experience and the Language of the Novel*, Ash Amin and Nigel J. Thrift's *Seeing Like a City*, Marlin Coverley's *Psychogeography*, Carl Freedman's *Art and Idea in the Novels of China Miéville*, Henri Lefebvre's works of *The Urban Revolution and The Production of Space*, Doreen Massey's *For Space*, Farah Mendlesohn's *Rhetorics of Fantasy*, Edward W. Soja's *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-imagined Places*. Neither of them focus on Miéville's work, but they provide the theoretical background.

¹⁷ In the framework of the dissertation, the term “other” is interpreted as part of the binary opposition, “where one side is seen as privileged over or defining itself against” the “other” (Felluga 2015, 201-2).

The thesis thinks about the others in the postmodern urban environment and explores their possibilities to change the spatial system, to argue themselves a better political and social position in the fantastical fiction of China Miéville.

In the selection of texts, I wanted to illustrate both the perspectives of Miéville toward different political and social problems within an urban environment and the different solutions that the novels provide¹⁸. Adhering to this systematic approach, I will be able to point out what can be considered one major issue that is at stake in the Miévillean text: the political and social situation of the others within a fantastic literary tradition. Many viewpoints explore this issue, mine is from the relation of the urban spatial system and the individual, because this expresses most elaborately the issues the six books put forward. The remaining five books¹⁹ have wider implications that the dissertation has no space to pursue in its present form.

1.3 Method and System

The dissertation begins to think again about the intricate relation between city and subject from the view point of fantastic literature. In chapter 2, I will explore the label of the literary weird. This sort of approach to writing in which Miéville writes surpasses the idea of genre for their practitioners. The thesis mentions two perspectives that play a pivotal role in Miéville's writing: aesthetical and literary. The concept of the weird expresses the futility of the conventional responses to unutterableness that "is constituted by a presence — the presence of *that which does not belong*" (Fisher 2016, 103 emphases in the original). In chapter 2, I will explain the aesthetical weird. I focus on the Weird Affect, the type of sublime²⁰ that is contextualised in an urban environment, where its protean features are increased leaving no other alternative mode of expression. The Affect is understood as the secondary reading of Nigel Thrift's interpretation of the Spinozan term, affect [*affectus*] that is "defined as the property of the active outcome of an encounter" (Thrift 2008, 62). Brian Massumi, the translator of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* describes it as "an ability to affect and be affected. It is a prepersonal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to

¹⁸ I discuss the form of the approach and the outcome of the book in those chapters where I examine them.

¹⁹ *King Rat* came out in 1998, *Kraken* is published in 2010, a year later *Embassytown* came out, and in 2012 *Railsea*. Miéville published another novella *The Last Days of New Paris* in 2016.

²⁰ The thesis relies on István Csicsery-Rónay's interpretation of sublime in which he writes that "[t]he sublime is a response to a shock of imaginative expansion, a complex recoil and recuperation of self-consciousness coping with phenomena suddenly perceived to be too great to be comprehended" (Csicsery-Rónay 2008, 146). Later I contextualise different approaches to sublime, the Longinian, the Kantian, and the one that Otto Rudolf identified.

another and implying an augmentation or diminution in that body's capacity to act" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, XVI). The Weird Affect refers to the sentiment what Spinoza understands as "affections of the body by which the body's power of action is [. . .] diminished, [. . .] restrained" (Spinoza 2018, 95). Therefore, the meaning is curtailed to the hindering part of Affect as one of the bodies is hierarchically lower than the other one. In that encounter, the perspective changes and allows "us to see the inside from the perspective of the outside" (Fisher 2016, 10). I will examine how Miéville utilises the Weird Affect rhetorically and spatially in his fiction.

Moreover, in this chapter of dissertation, I explore the Miévillean aesthetics and differentiate it from other aesthetic strategies of providing a language for the unexplainable. These are the Freudian *unheimlich*²¹ that is connected in Mark Fisher's writing to hauntology, a concept Jacques Derrida coined, and to the weird and the eerie. According to Fisher, hauntology is "the study of that which repeats without ever being present" (Fisher 2018, 269). Roger Luckhurst realises that the weird "*has no home to start with. No oikos, no pure originary state. Only non-Euclidean folds and refolds. With no origin, no death drive either, that exhausted geometry*" (Luckhurst 2015, 531 emphasizes in the original). Therefore, it is irreducible to anything else. The eerie "is constituted by a *failure of absence* or by a *failure of presence*. The sensation of the eerie occurs either when there is something present where there should be nothing, or there is nothing present when there should be something" (Fisher 2016, 80). My focus is on the weird and I will provide a literary history of the weird to stress its postmodern understanding of canon formation as a retrospective process in which the movement selects texts and antecedents as forerunners of the weird. Daniel Nyikos points out that authors of literary weird from the second decade of the 20th century on the one hand, "consciously developed their own separate literary tradition" (Nyikos 2020, 94) and on the other hand, this endeavour "helped solidify the pedigree and ongoing continuity of the literary respectability of" weird fiction (Nyikos 2020, 103). These are two seemingly different intentions, however, they attempted to frame themselves within the context of literature and their wish to differentiate themselves from others were pivotal. I unravel the process of the literary weird, locate the moments that function as watersheds and describe the changing perspective toward weird. One of the most important indicators is monsters and the relation of humankind to monsters, the metaphorised others. I will briefly talk about the effect of capitalism

²¹ The concept of the *unheimlich* is interpreted by Freud as it "applies to everything that was intended to remain secret, hidden away, and has come into the open" (Freud 2003, 334). Mark Fisher writes that "Freud's *unheimlich* is about the strange *within* the familiar, the strangely familiar, the familiar as strange" (Fisher 2016, 3).

on the literary weird and what methods played an important part in the institutionalisation of weird, a move that can be described as from the margin to the centre of contemporary culture.

In chapter 3, I will discuss this movement in the framework of the theories of space and I utilise them in the interpretation of my primary sources. The two terms that play utmost importance in the exploration are “place”²² and “space”²³. I draw on mainly Marxist theoreticians such as Henri Lefebvre and Edward W. Soja because their works encapsulate and explain the relation between city and subject. I begin to reconceptualise Lefebvre’s idea of production of space as I also interpret it as social, ideological, historical, political, and material context. Moreover, I introduce another concept, “spatial system” that functions as an umbrella term to Soja’s spaces, which can be interpreted as the elaboration of Lefebvre’s ideas about urban space. The spatial system is the platform in which the argumentation of subjects for changing their political and social positions within the urban hierarchy takes place.

Furthermore, I provide a short historical background of the development of urban environment from the middle ages to contemporary times. I scrutinise more the time periods from the Industrial Revolution to the decades after the Great War. As in my interpretation, these centuries reveal a clearer picture of the systematic organisation toward the question of biopower that is a technique “for achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations” through various institutions (Foucault 1990, 224). In these time periods, the organising principle between the subjects and their state became regulatory. This timeframe overlaps with the rise of the national state. Different power techniques that are rooted in language, spatial decorum as ideological practice between different layers of society serve as the foundations of the “citiness of a city”. I also examine the representation of the changing urban environment drawing on literary examples from the 19th century.

In the sub-chapter of chapter 3, I will introduce my viewpoint of the terms, place and space. I provide a historical context in the Western-European tradition drawing on the interpretive framework of Jeff Malpas. I understand the spatial system as the result of negotiations of its participating subjects. They represent places and constantly negotiate to be able to change space that is read as the accepted interrelation between subjects. These debates are “political in every way: governed in favour of particular interests, biased in their affordances and allocations, shot through with calculative logics and mechanisms designed to distribute

²² The dissertation understands place as the interpretation and attachments of subjects toward its surroundings as it provides a vantage point from which one experiences its life.

²³ The thesis interprets the term space as the successful negotiation of places into a site which is accepted by each member of the community.

unevenly, and arenas of considerable power struggle” (Amin and Thrift 2017, 207). This framework operates both in everyday life and in narratives. As I mentioned earlier, I draw on the Lefebvrian and Sojan interpretations to realise the spatial system through which I examine how that functions in Miéville’s books.

In the next chapter, my focus shifts to the rhetorics of fantastic spaces, where I connect narratology with spatiality. The thesis provides a framework for the Miévillean fiction and stresses its connection to different traditions within the British fantasy through the lens of narratology and spatiality. The dissertation locates Miéville’s books closer to those urban fantasies where the urban is explored further with the help of fantasy, a form he develops into his interpretation of New Weird. Moreover, critical map studies help to engage with the thematic approach in these texts as pointing out the pivotal role of maps in Miéville’s examined books as a form of manifestation of power. Maps also signify the power struggle within the narratives. The thesis shows in a detailed representation how spatiality and critical map studies are crucial in the interpretation of Miéville’s works. In the next sub-chapter, the dissertation explores the method Miéville utilises in his narratives to make the urban spatial system work. However, these procedures differ from character to character. They are connected to the political and social matrix and the character’s position in it. Consequently, the access to the spatial system depends on the place the subject renders. Subjects who are unfamiliar with the urban environment experience cognitive estrangement in the narrative space. The thesis points out that with the weird perspective, Miéville “enable[s] us to grasp how this affects our daily lives” (P. Williams 2016, 402). Therefore, the approach of weird offers a new viewpoint, one that could not have been considered valid before in the understanding of the capitalist reality.

In the next sub-chapter, the thesis builds on the findings of the rhetorics of fantastic spaces part and connects it with Farah Mendlesohn’s taxonomy about fantasies. In her book, Mendlesohn focuses on “the way in which a text becomes fantasy or, alternatively, the way the fantastic enters the text and the reader’s relationship to this” (Mendlesohn 2008, 11). The taxonomy Mendlesohn suggests points out the relationship of subjects and spatial system. This connection is through the rhetoric of that subject and its interpretation of spatial systems. The “others” bear different rhetoric devices, hence, their altered understanding of space. As the examined texts of Miéville are packed with “others”, the perspective that exhibits them offers the possibility of investigation of their participation in the spatial systems. With the help of Mendlesohn’s approach the necessary framework explicitly draws out the viewpoint of Miéville to fantastic literature and politics: the constant re-negotiation of “others” for better positions for themselves in the spatial system. The more knowledge an “other” acquires about the spatial

system, the better it understands it through rhetoric. It helps to maintain the connection between spatial systems and rhetoric. She does not explore spatial systems in fantastical texts in her book per se, but points out examples. I draw on her observations and elaborate them in the Lefebvrian and Sojan interpretation of spatial systems. She admits that she “came to this project as a science fiction critic”, and she adds that in SF it is important “how the reader is brought into the speculative world influences the ways in which that world can be described” (ibid.). She argues that there are four categories: portal-quest, immersive, intrusion and liminal fantasy. She explains them as follows: “[i]n the portal-quest we are invited through into the fantastic; in the intrusion fantasy, the fantastic enters the fictional world; in the liminal fantasy, the magic hovers in the corner of our eye; while in the immersive fantasy we are allowed no escape” (Mendlesohn 2008, 13). Finally, I will argue in the close reading sections that through the intricate, theoretical lenses the explored six books render a corollary of a composite framework that formulates Miéville’s agenda.

1.4 The Brief Results - Close readings

The following discussions about the six books reveal Miéville’s approach to the betterment of a society. In his fantastic societies, Miéville untangles his dedication on the website *Crooked Timber* that, “[t]ry again, fail again, fail better. That tension, that process of failing better and better – the very failure, if it’s the best kind of failure – might generate interesting effects that a more ‘successful’ – ie [sic!] aesthetically integrated – work cannot do” (Miéville 2005, n.p.). This perspective is demonstrated and explored in the following close readings.

Miéville never applies the same methodology twice to change the use of space and place. He keeps introducing a difference to it as he writes another book. He alters parts in the hermeneutic model to achieve the goal for a successful change of the spatial system. To follow this constant motion, the dissertation introduces a hermeneutic model. In this hermeneutic model, there are four points along which the primary readings can be categorised and interpreted. These are the following: focalizer-narrator, spatial knowledge (rhetoric), scope (focalizer-narrator or community), outcome (change for the focalizer-narrator; change for the community). In focalizer-narrator, I consider its amount. Knowledge refers to the rhetoric he or she utilises to understand the spatial system, whether or not he or she has any knowledge of it. Scope signifies the position of the focalizer-narrator(s) in the spatial system. The outcome, in a sense, speaks for itself, it reports about the corollary, if there is any, of the negotiation of

the subjects. Moreover, it expresses a will that they negotiate better positions in the secondary world's spatial system either for themselves or for a community they stand for. The last point talks about the change(s) Miéville employed providing better position for negotiation²⁴.

The examined primary readings are further separated into two groups. One group includes all of the novels of the *Bas-Lag* trilogy that highlights the change in the spatial knowledge, *Perdido Street Station* (2000) and *Iron Council* (2004) stress the change in the outcome of the induced spatial change whether its effect on the focalizer-narrator or the community. *The Scar* (2002) underlines the scope of the induced spatial change at the end of its narrative. The other group consists of *The City and The City* (2009), *Un Lun Dun* (2007), and *This Census-Taker* (2016). The common pattern in this category is there is always a change of outcome of the induced spatial change either it effects the focalizer-narrator or the community. *The City and The City* and *This Census-Taker* concentrate on the focalizer-narrator, *Un Lun Dun* on the community. The focalizer-narrator of *The City and The City* and *Un Lun Dun* becomes integrated into the spatial systems presented by the texts.

Perdido Street Station includes two focalizer-narrators. Their knowledge differs from each other, one has full knowledge of the urban spatial system through its linguistic and rhetoric position, the other one has meagre knowledge of the urban spatial system that is articulated through a different linguistic and rhetoric position. The unlikely connection of the two results in the formation of a community that opposes the urban governing power, which is responsible for the spatial system. There is no change for the community, only for the focalizer-narrators. One leaves its spatial system, the other one gets integrated into the spatial system it visits. Their knowledge of the spatial system is changed throughout the narrative. *The Scar* introduces also two focalizer-narrators. Contrary to the previous novel, both of them have no knowledge of the spatial system. One is not integrated into the community throughout the narrative, the other one gets integrated into it. The narrative offers no change for the community, but for the focalizer-narrators in their understanding of the spatial system. Their knowledge of the spatial system is changed throughout the narrative. My interpretation of *Iron Council* focuses on one focalizer-narrator. It has full knowledge of the spatial system, it is integrated into a community. It becomes the leader of this community and changes the spatial system for the community. But this change is postponed and extrapolated into the future.

My examination of *The City and The City* presents also one focalizer-narrator, who is integrated in the community. It obtains knowledge of the urban spatial system throughout the

²⁴ Further details see Appendix 2.

narrative. It gets integrated into every narrative space and its spatial system, therefore, the scope of the change of the spatial system focuses only on the focalizer-narrator. Its knowledge of the spatial system changes, the outcome is that the focalizer-narrator is integrated into its spatial surroundings. In *Un Lun Dun* there is also one focalizer-narrator, who gets integrated into the community. Its spatial knowledge changes from meagre to full, it becomes the leader of this community and changes the spatial system for the community. The focalizer-narrator initiates to adapt the change of the spatial system in a different spatial surrounding. In *This Census-Taker* there is one focalizer-narrator, who remains outside of the community, therefore, it has meagre knowledge of the spatial system. The exploration centres on the focalizer-narrator, its knowledge of the spatial system is changed throughout the narrative. It subverts the spatial system into which it gets integrated.

The dissertation will contribute substantially to Miéville studies and particularly to the interpretation of *This Census-taker* by the composite details it reveals in the texts, which is a novel approach to this important contemporary British author. But it also establishes the framework of a more general theoretical viewpoint than has been produced so far, enabling further work on not only these texts, but also on Miéville's other, perhaps less examined books, *King Rat*, *Kraken*, *Embassytown*, *Railsea*, and *The Last Days of New Paris*. Furthermore, it suggests a feasible explanation of what constitutes the Marxist point of view in Miéville, and identifies the author's central concern as evolving a very intricate depiction of how representations matter even in genre fiction. The stake of the dissertation is to demonstrate that the Miévillean New Weird is not an escapist genre by pointing out its political dimensions with a help of which he argues for emancipatory spatial use of the powerless.

The thesis realises the different relations between the subject and the city that Miéville constructs in the primary texts. The focus is on the literary construction of space. In that interpretive framework, the term subject refers to a character that has agency, therefore, and influence to act according to its interest. Moreover, each subject with an agency can negotiate themselves to influence the spatial systems to change from social and political perspective. The city is a form of living, a platform where its entity is constructed by the subjects with agency who live in it. They provide its history and establish ideological stability. Therefore, the urban becomes "the site of contests of power between varied ideological forces with individual 'users' occasionally developing the ability to subvert the system via creative and irrational practices of walking and art production" (Finch 2016, 28). This viewpoint toward spatial system in the urban by the subjects and their contest of power to form the city connotes Marxist approach. My approach echoes Michel Foucault's, Louis Althusser's, Henri Lefebvre's, and Edward Soja's

perspective on the urban. The dissertation focuses Lefebvre's idea of space production as it presents a theoretical framework through which the investigation can be successfully conducted. Furthermore, his theoretical frame is reconceptualised through Foucault's, Althusser's, and Soja's concepts to form an intricate web of theory. The Foucauldian concept of biopower sheds light on the differences between the characters in the primary readings, therefore, it reveals their relations toward government and the state as Althusser describes them. Lefebvre points out how the state expresses itself on spatial systems through the ideological system; how the ideological system renders and thus defines the social and political system for subjects in the form of spatial systems. Soja's viewpoint reveals how the subjects interpret the urban through their relation to the spatial system which is also telling about the social and the political system.

Narrating spatial systems and the methods of construction of the spatial systems are understood as "constitutive acts of constructing identity, individual and collective alike" (Rohleder 2020, 7). The narrative construction of the urban spatial system stems from the negotiations of the subjects amongst themselves and the methods they relate to power also through forms of negotiations. Their social and political perspectives provide further dimensions to the spatial system as the "space created by a text is always also narrative space: it plays a crucial role in the creation of narrative meaning" (Rohleder 2020, 9). As the subjects narrate themselves and their interpreted surroundings "they construct the city by means of emplotment"²⁵, to borrow Hayden White's term. They do not just tell stories of the city, that is. They establish narrative patterns, making sense of the city in the process" (Rohleder 2020, 11-12). The city becomes a hodgepodge of narratives, therefore, rhetorics connected to the subjects expresses a pivotal part in the interpretation of the urban spatial system.

In the context of the dissertation, the subjects' rhetorics refer to their knowledge of their surroundings in a form of a narrative. Rhetorics mean aspects of the primary text with which it convinces, suggests, and persuades the reader about the focalizer-narrator's understanding of the narrative. The focalizer-narrator is a subject that provides the interpretive framework in the narrative. As the primary texts are positioned within genre fiction, they belong to the subcategory of works termed urban fantasy that take place in a metropolis. Alexander C. Irvine distinguishes two sort of approaches in which authors utilise the urban setting, "those in which *urban* is a descriptor applied to *fantasy* and those in which *fantasy* modifies *urban*" (Irvine 2012, 200, emphases in the original). Although the primary texts have tighter or looser

²⁵ Hayden White defines emplotment as "the way by which a sequence of events fashioned into a story is gradually revealed to be a story of a particular kind" (White 2014, 79).

connection to urban fantasy, I distinguish them further into a new subtype, what Vera Benczik identifies as “the so-called New Weird, which posited a city at its narrative center, and which gave a spatial expression to this polarized relationship between what we conventionally designate as ‘reality’ and the ‘fantastic.’” (Benczik 2017, 162). Later this change of perspective from urban fantasy to New Weird is further investigated.

2. The Weird

2.1 The Weird as Concept

The concept of the weird allows a peek behind the curtain of reality, where the unutterable resides. It connects different levels of culture; it surpasses the previously firm ontological and epistemological beliefs and introduces a new perspective. It overcomes anthropocentrism²⁶ and subverts the established borders with its trespasses. The concept of the weird provides means to express the affect on the subject, which is the futility of the conventional responses in defending against the unutterableness. Contemporary cultural products exhibit its influence in a commodified way. The chapter establishes the framework for the concept of weird and employs it to the fictional output of China Miéville.

In this chapter I focus on the historical emergence, the political framework, and the teratological context of the concept of the weird in literature. The dissertation understands weird fiction as an approach to writing. It applies the concept of the literary concept of weird as a general, non-temporal notion. In this chapter, I unravel the plethora of definitions and attempt to synthesise them in order to contextualise the works of China Miéville within the tradition(s) of the weird. Furthermore, I attempt to stress Miéville's reliance on this tradition and his *novum* to the weird. There are two frames of reference that have to be addressed concerning the concept of the weird: one, the literary viewpoint and two, the aesthetical vantage point. Consequently, establishing the literary weird and initiating its exploration has the priority then the weird as an aesthetical category is to be examined later. The literary discussion maintains Miéville's position within the canon of literary weird and after that the aesthetical analysis follows. The first part focuses on three points, they are the following: first, I discuss the definition(s) of the literary weird and then explore Miéville's interpretation of them. Second, I scrutinise its relation to capitalism, and during this examination, I attempt to point out the preconditions to surface in a society. Third, this results in the drawing of a timeline of the process of the concept of the weird, with which it reveals its literary origin and its relation to other modes of expression. At the end of the chapter, I contextualise the aesthetical weird with neighbouring theoretical terms such as the sublime and the *unheimlich*.

²⁶ In the framework of the dissertation, this concept, however, has a rather more integrated and deeply rooted connection to the interpretation of contemporary capitalist society, has been curtailed only to the centrality of the human from the perspective of ontological understanding.

2.1.1 The Literary Weird

The dissertation draws on sources that explore the conceptualisation and interpretation of the literary weird. Over the decades, its precise identification remains problematic. The chapter follows the changes of the definition of the literary weird and achieves a form of working definition through the prism of Miéville's interpretation. There are numerous attempts to provide a precise interpretation of the literary weird. The definition becomes dynamic as time passes, and as the literary weird begins to be institutionalised through academia. However, the first one is H. P. Lovecraft's when he argues in his seminal essay "Supernatural Horror in Literature" in 1927 that the weird tale consists of

something more than secret murder, bloody bones, or a sheeted form clanking chains according to rule. A certain atmosphere of breathless and unexplainable dread of outer, unknown forces must be present; and there must be a hint, expressed with a seriousness and portentousness becoming its subject, of that most terrible conception of the human brain—a malign and particular suspension or defeat of those fixed laws of Nature which are our only safeguard against the assaults of chaos and the dæmons of unplumbed space (Lovecraft 2005, 305).

Lovecraft's focus is on the Weird Affect, on his characters then on his readers. For example in "The Statement of Randolph Carter", where the "atmosphere of breathless and unexplainable dread of outer, unknown forces" that is told in a confession in a trial, a slowly burning and foreboding development of a narrative (ibid.); or in "The Music of Erich Zann", the Weird Affect is evoked by the mysterious music that is produced by the eponymous character. In 2018, James Machin remarks that, "[i]t seems doubtful that there is any credible definition of weird fiction which is not in some respects a permutation or elaboration of Lovecraft's conceit" (Machin 2018, 2). Although Lovecraft remains in the framework of same poetical tone when he conceives his fiction and becomes the first author of the weird to theorise his own fiction, newer attempts of definitions adhere to a more objective mode of expression. Nonetheless, Lovecraft stays seminal and becomes a genuine source for the literary weird from a fictional and theoretical perspective.

Lovecraft enumerates constitutive elements of the weird fiction. He defines it as "the literature of cosmic fear' [that] undercuts post-Enlightenment rationalism and posits instead the co-existence of other worlds and supernatural forces" (Weinstock 2016, 179). Which as Weinstock argues "unsettles both confidence in the modern scientific method and human pretensions to grandeur" (180). Furthermore, Lovecraft prescribes "[a] certain atmosphere of breathless and unexplainable dread of outer, unknown forces" being the preconditions for the literary weird to operate as such (Lovecraft 2005, 426). His approach concentrates more on the affects that are ensued on the reader, rather than extricating them from his focus. Because he

understands them being entirely dependent on the reader, they become hazy to be judged on a more scientifically, non-biased approach. This condition persists as the central defining aesthetical feature of the weird as Lovecraft understands it.

Between the 1920s to the beginning of the new millennia, different manifestations of weird fiction stress its parts as important, with which differentiation and establishment of periods can be examined that later will be discussed in details. The leap I am taking is in an attempt to demonstrate the road that weird fiction has taken from the pages of the pulp magazines to the mainstream literary magazines to the encyclopaedias and curriculums of university classes. Consequently, for the second definition, S. T. Joshi paves the way, when he introduces the literary weird to academia as a field worth to study in his book *The Modern Weird Tale* in 2001. Therefore, as an act of canonisation, he begins to establish periods and canonise authors, furthermore, defines the “Golden Age” of “horror tale” roughly between 1880 and 1940 (Joshi 2001, 6). Miéville adheres to Joshi’s periodisation of the Golden Age of the literary weird. In 2009, Miéville in *The Routledge Companion to Science Fiction* writes, “[W]eird Fiction is usually, roughly, conceived of as a rather breathless and generically slippery macabre fiction, a dark fantastic (‘horror’ plus ‘fantasy’) often featuring nontraditional alien monsters (thus plus ‘science fiction’)” (Miéville 2009c, 510). This simple and clear explanation suggests that between 2001 and 2009, the weird becomes a pivot of interest in the field of academia that scrutinises popular culture.

The literary weird establishes “a site of new entanglements and destabilizations of the distinction between high and low culture, the literary and the nonliterary, modernism and postmodernism” (Noys 2016b, 119). It occupies a critical position in current culture. Tony Venezia suggests that it “shadows the modernist avant-garde and replicates its autocritique of modernity in crisis” (Venezia 2010, 4). Benjamin Noys and Timothy S. Murphy observe that after the Great War modernism formed a connection between popular and mainstream literature that expressed critique of capitalism. They understand this platform as pulp modernism, a link between the literary weird and modernism. This is what Miéville illustrates as ““a differently inflected statement of the same concerns, the same anxieties, the same attempted solutions”” (Venezia 2010, 5). Mark Fisher elaborates that by pointing out that

Lovecraft is the crucial figure here, since his texts [. . .] emerged from an occulted trade between pulp horror and modernism. Follow the line back from Lovecraft’s short stories and you pass through Dunsany and M.R. James before coming to Poe. But Poe also played a decisive role in the development of modernism — via his influence on Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Valéry and their admirer T.S. Eliot (Fisher 2018, 539).

Furthermore, Noys and Murphy suggest that in developing his interpretation of literary weird, “Lovecraft drew on modern science and on modernism to craft a weird fiction that was

‘nonsupernatural.’ Lovecraft, a keen amateur scientist and an antiquarian, creates an unlikely ‘bridging’ between an idealized past and a traumatic modernity. In the process he figures a strange ‘median’ position that is at once avant-garde and anterior to modernity” (Noys 2016b, 120). Already in Lovecraft, the interstitial situation of the literary weird had been established. Other features that can be traced in the process of the literary weird are modes of expression in the modernist era such as Avant-garde, Dada, and Surrealism. Neither of them provide an explanation of their content, rather they “leave you with many more questions than answers” (Moorcock 2011, 12).

The literary weird remains in strong connection not just with modernist modes, but also with the Gothic. Carl H. Sederholm argues that they “share an interest in overwhelming audiences with situations culled from the religious to the psychological to the frenzied. They also both represent an ongoing effort to understand the ways past actions challenge present hopes, the impact of hidden secrets and the possibility of facing supernatural or monstrous foes” (Sederholm 2019, 164). Furthermore, he points out that “both the Gothic and the weird thrive on themes of excess and transgression” (Sederholm 2019, 165). The overabundance of grotesque bodies²⁷ in Miéville’s oeuvre presents a threat to the dominant hegemony with destabilisation. These threats are realised in changes which occur in one form or another in *Iron Council* and *UnLunDun*²⁸. He adds that “[t]he Gothic and the weird interrogate the world in ways that powerfully demonstrate human limitations both in terms of understanding our place in the world and also how we perceive reality in the first place” (ibid.). Positioning Miéville in the modes of writings, Mark Williams “suggest[s] that his [Miéville’s] fictional project constitutes an attempt to unite or resolve contemporary Weird writing’s uneasy relationships with its historical roots in Modernism and avant-garde writing on the one hand and pulp and Gothic on the other; his writings draw the analogy between this generic shift and the concrete historical shifts of contemporary modernity, thematising historical conditions as *generic modes*” (Williams 2010b, 31).

The weird of the new millennium “embraced weird fiction’s general tendency to interrogate the human experience of the world and the cosmos and added to them an interest in exploring how human beings perceive the world” (Sederholm 2019, 161). It jettisons and subverts the anthropocentric perspective; consequently, the interrogations “point readers toward fundamental problems of representation and reality” (Sederholm 2019, 164). That

²⁷ For instance the Remades in the *Bas-Lag* trilogy, the residents of UnLondon in *UnLunDun*, and the dreamt-up entities in *This Census-taker*.

²⁸ Further details see Appendix 2.

consequence has been drawn by the weird fiction of the new millennia, the New Weird. Before elaborating the notion of New Weird and Miéville's relation to it, it is pivotal to engage with the approaches of the construction of this pseudo-canon within contemporary genre literature. The anthology of *New Weird* compiled by Ann and Jeff Vandermeer pushes the understanding further from the 2009s definition of the literary weird and establishes another one.

New Weird is a sort of fiction that draws on fantasy, horror, and science fiction and is usually set in the urban, where the environment overcomes the established spatial forms of previous traditions of fantastic literature and presents a minutely constructed secondary world. Its tone, style, and effects are the corollary of surrealism and horror that reflect on contemporary societies. As a consequence, New Weird generates an instant instinctual reaction, one that can be ascribed to the influence of New Wave authors and to those who are understood as predecessors of New Weird, such as Mervyn Peake and the French/English Decadents. In this approach, Jeff VanderMeer attempts to map the New Weird and highlights connections of the New Weird toward other genres. Miéville's interpretation of weird fiction absorbs the details mentioned above. What he adds to the literary weird is "the reworking of the past is intended to open up or extrapolate from incipient possibilities residing within what we thought we knew" (Pike 2019, 254). Within the context of the dissertation, my interpretation is that the Miévillean weird locates and understands the city as the prime product of the Anthropocene²⁹, therefore, the (re-)introduction of non-domesticated³⁰ others into an urban context results in revealing possibilities of their utopian emancipation into society. This is his aim; however, the path he follows changes from novel to novel.

2.1.1.2 Mile Posts in the Mist - Historical Background, Timeline, Monstrosity and Process of the Weird (Fiction)

Benjamin Noys observes that one explanation for the emergence of the literary weird is the "deep grammar of cultural trauma" which has been accumulated and converted into fiction (Noys 2016a, 203). The literary weird emerges as a corollary of the dawn of capitalism from the 1820s. Urbanisation plays a significant role in the alienation of subjects. The previously

²⁹ In the context of the dissertation, Anthropocene "marks the time in history when the sum of human actions has a larger influence on the geology, hydrosphere, and biosphere of the Earth than all the naturally occurring cataclysms combined" (Karkulehto et al. 2020, 1-2). In the framework of spatiality, Ash Amin and Nigel J. Thrift observe that, "the history of Anthropocene is predominantly the history of urbanization" (Amin-Thrift 2016, 6).

³⁰ Ljubica Matek argues that, the "Victorian Gothic domesticates Gothic figures, spaces, and themes so as to locate its horrors within the world of the contemporary reader" (Matek 2020, 17).

stable epistemological and ontological framework has been depleted, and social hierarchy is no longer accessible in these urban locations. The pivotal recognition is that loneliness of humankind paves the way for the advent of preconditions of weird: trauma and crisis. The fictionalisation of these experiences is also articulated in the Gothic that ‘moved’ to “the bourgeois domestic world or the new urban landscape” (Punter 2012, 26). Rosemary Jackson understands Charles Dickens’ prose as Gothic with “its elisions, its grotesque images, its sliding from metaphor to metonymy. Nothing is stable, forms merge together, tending towards undifferentiation” (Jackson 2009, 78). By that, he started constructing “a Gothic England relocated within a contemporary city setting” (Punter 2012, 28). The alienated human condition in fiction to question the contemporary situations of life is not only articulated in the literary weird, but also in the Gothic and the Avant-garde traditions.

Miéville endeavours to establish the timeline on which he illustrates the process of the literary weird. The dissertation relies on his interpretation of the timeline. Although it also introduces changes to stress periods. The choice of terminology has to be articulated before carrying on with the argument; therefore, an explanation has to be implemented. Constructing the process for the weird, one has to frame it into a timeline. It is a process, not a development since the *raison d'être* of this mode of fiction is not teleological; it does not digress from the topic; it only alters its saturation of expression. This type of systematisation proves to be an enormous difficulty; therefore, when it comes to designating weird fiction and avoiding terminological confusion, a timeline is introduced as follows: Proto-Weird, Haute Weird, Weird Tale, Post-Weird, and New Weird.

This periodisation is implemented retrospectively; consequently, it is an artificial edifice to examine the process of the literary weird. The common theme of all of the literary weird is that “[w]eird fiction along the Lovecraftian model is thus not about recognising ourselves in the other, but rather the undoing of econcentrism” (Weinstock 2016, 181). Consequently, the weird is never domesticated and normalised. It overcomes anthropocentrism and there are two approaches through which it achieves that. The Haute Weird considers human potential and the human understanding pessimistically, it “is premised on terror” (Luckhurst 2015, 531). The New Weird relies on “the possibilities inherent in boundary rupture” and the “renegotiation with the legacies of history” (ibid.). These two viewpoints also reveal the movement in the politics of weird. It suggests a motion from reactionary political vantage to emancipatory agendas³¹. Therefore, on the one hand, “[i]n Lovecraft, coupling and collapse leads to

³¹ The changes in the political aspect of weird present valuable insights into the process of weird, however, suggest wider implications that the dissertation has no space to pursue in its present form.

pathology, the panic of purification”; on the other hand, “[a]fter Lovecraft, a renegotiation with the legacies of history. Hopeful monsters: regenerative politics: new urban species. The weird bursts out of the chest of the old carcass in liberation, not horror” (ibid.).

Furthermore, the dissertation considers three points that it understands as watersheds. Lovecraft provides the philosophical framework, Barker rejuvenates the aesthetical context, and Miéville incorporates the two approaches in his fictional output and establishes the commercial success and acceptance of weird fiction. The abstractions of the literary weird conceal some parts of cultural products from the scrutinising eye but suit the purpose of the aims of the dissertation. Although Miéville reads H. P. Lovecraft as Haute Weird, the dissertation asserts that the disparate trademarks of him and his circle of friends have to be recognised, highlighted, and distinguished in order to illustrate the process of the literary weird. Therefore, in the dissertation, their literary works are referred to as Weird Tales.

2.1.1.3 Proto-Weird

By shedding light on the props that surfaced from different sorts of water in the middle of the 19th century, Proto-Weird has seen the light. Miéville identifies the “honoured precursors: French writers were early and acute sufferers from Montfort’s Syndrome, an obsessive fascination with the cephalopodic” (Miéville 2011a, 106). Two towering figures of French literature have been mentioned as crucial participants of employing the tentacle, Jules Verne and Victor Hugo – “Verne in *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) and Hugo in *The Toilers of the Sea* (1866)” (Miéville 2011a, 106). Miéville classifies these European Proto-Weird authors and relates Lord Tennyson’s poem “The Kraken” (1830) and H. G. Wells’ short story “The Sea Raiders” (1896) as precursors of the literary weird on the British Isles³².

As all of the Proto-Weird entities are originated from the water, I should signal that the European canon of monstrosity alters with Proto-Weird. The aesthetical manifestation of the weird emerges in the form of the abcanny monstrous. Miéville introduces “[t]he monsters of the abcanny [that] are teratological representations of that unrepresentable and unknowable, the evasive of meaning. Hence the enormous preponderance of shapeless, oozing gloopiness in the abcanny monstrous, the stress on formlessness, shapes that ostentatiously evade symbolic

³² The dissertation does not understand the possible point of inception of the literary phenomenon of weird with the two, above-mentioned French authors, but draws on the Anglo-Saxon literary tradition as a possible source on both sides of the ocean. Edgar Allan Poe and Ambrose Bierce are the American forefathers of the Proto-Weird.

decoding by being all shapes and no shapes” (Miéville 2012, 381). He identifies and categorises the first representation of those abcanmy monsters in

[T]he spread of the tentacle – a limb-type with no Gothic or traditional precedents (in ‘Western’ aesthetics) – from a situation of near total absence in Euro-American teratoculture up to the nineteenth century, to one of being the default monstrous appendage of today, signals the epochal shift to a Weird culture (Miéville 2011a, 105).

The literary weird vitiates monsters of folkloric origin, deeming them inadequate to represent the crisis and the trauma of weird “and looking instead at elements from creatures (largely) unplumbed by the European monstrous canon” (Noys 2016a, 204). Therefore, “insects getting auditioned- and many insectile elements survive in representations of weird creatures- but what makes it to the top (most obviously in Lovecraft and William Hope Hodgson) is the cephalopod” (Noys 2016a, 204). Miéville contemplates the octopus and realises that the

nonpareil iteration of the embodied Weird is the tentacle, and by suspiciously perfect chance, the most Weird-ly mutable – formless – of all tentacled animals is the octopus, the body of which, a bulbous, generally roundish shape distinguished by two prominent eyes, is vaguely homologous with a human skull (Miéville 2011a, 124).

Both traditions can be found in Miéville’s fictional output. In *Perdido Street Station*, he includes the moth (slake-moth) and the spider (the Weaver); in *The Scar*, he writes an avanc, a mythical “sea creature so enormous that it will be able to pull the city through the seas” (Robertson 2016, 70); in *Iron Council*, he reiterates the figure of the Weaver; in *UnLunDun*, he presents a sentient smog (Smog). One, however, should not get ahead of oneself but follow the timeline, and therefore, present the first, thematically conceptualised definition of the literary weird that is connected to the Weird Tale.

2.1.1.4 The Weird Tale - The Lovecraft Event

What Joshi calls the Golden Age of the weird fiction, Miéville, drawing on Benjamin Noys’s essay, separates it into further periods, understands the emergence of H. P. Lovecraft in *Weird Tales* as the watershed, thus, constructs two time spans: before and after Lovecraft. The appearance of the pulp magazine, *Weird Tales* (1923-1954) is generally accepted as the first zenith of the literary weird. However, what should be mooted is that the terminology of the dissertation makes specific note that before the “Lovecraft Event”, these sort of writings are apt for the concept of Haute Weird, a neologism of Miéville. However, after the surfacing of Lovecraft and his circle, the dissertation reads these texts as Weird Tales.

To reiterate the importance of Lovecraft in the process of the literary weird, Miéville pivots on Noys’ argument that the seminal text to realise Lovecraft’s literary strategy is “The

Call of Cthulhu” (1928). In order to investigate the salient features that Noys marks out, the dissertation has to restate his points of reference. Noys maintains that

[A]ccess to the real must be ‘gratified by images forming supplements,’ which is to say through the imaginary at the limits of its distortion or impasse – and Lovecraft forms these supplements one by one with his fictions as singular inventions of a new ‘non-supernatural cosmic art.’ What is particularly important for the ‘Lovecraft event’ is that these fictions function as supplements and not contradictions to the function of the ‘laws’ of the universe – the supplemental function is the suspension of the law and the opening to the re-inscription of chaos within law (Noys 2007, 3).

Consequently, Lovecraft’s innovation of the literary weird lies in the altered frame in which these texts occur. Within his narratives, the boundaries have been drawn as parallels to each other, one is human reality, and another one is where the known rules of reality have been deferred. A fissure through which the unknown of the weird slides into the known of reality functions as a membrane. The newly arrived sensation vitiates familiarity, undermines the anthropocentric vantage point then introduces the feeling of estrangement and awe from fathoming the ineluctable nature of humankind, which is madness in the characters and its sensation in the readers. That is Lovecraft’s novum and ineludible influence to the literary weird.

2.1.1.4.1 The Market, the Role of Capitalism in Weird Fiction

From the points of departure that are signified by Lovecraft’s death in 1937 and the demise of the *Weird Tales* in 1954, I stress that the weird authors have been subjected to the market’s influence especially after the latter date. Keeping in mind that the market of the pulp magazines also presented a competition and observed market’s responses that are articulated in letters to the magazines, the end of *Weird Tales* ushered in a new era. This change involves the idea of standardisation initiated by high capitalism, which stalls the literary weird to acquire media platform because of its shapelessness. From the beginning of the 20th century onward, the literary weird attempted to keep the interstitial status³³ once it was its forte and from the demise of the *Weird Tales* in 1954, in the following decades this feature proved to be a hindrance. Since weird fiction avoids canonisation by high capitalism, it cannot thoroughly imbue literature or any form of expression. Being omitted from the circle of literary life, the literary weird fails to incur its audience, therefore, sporadic publications, occasional apexes and changed readerly expectations featured in the following decades.

³³ Although this attempt was probably not a conscious decision.

The problem of canonisation occurs due to the nondescript nature of the weird. The adjective “weird” as an epitaph to cultural products should be seen as a caveat for the consumer that they differentiate themselves by not fitting into an established form. Categorisation varies and depends on the point of view the reader employs toward the text. The constant borrowing from different sorts of writing imparts indecisiveness, adumbrates formlessness, that hinges exclusively on readers which have resulted in different interpretations of weird fiction. James Machin declares that “even Lovecraft’s fiction has a variety of other adumbrations: ‘cosmic horror’, science fiction, Dunsanian fantasy, etc.” (Machin 2018, 3). Joshi adduces the term dark fantasy as it “was used for certain types of weird writing, mostly involving the quiet and purportedly subtle intrusion of the weird into the mundane world, with an emphasis on indirection and suggestion” to illustrate that the terminology of the literary weird does not exert a well-established apparatus (Joshi 2001, 19).

Furthermore, Michael Moorcock calls attention to the fact in the “Foreweird” of *The Weird* anthology that “the real tensions in literary forms come from that which can be readily commodified and branded and that which cannot” (Moorcock 2011, 11). He writes that when seminal contributors of the *Weird Tales*³⁴ began to publish in mainstream magazines, they faced with the precondition “that literary magazines wanted an approximation of realism and commercial markets needed to know why, forcing you to cook up some sort of rationalization for the events you described” (Moorcock 2011, 7). Previously this was not required in pulp magazines that “unrationalized fiction, having much in common with surrealism or absurdism” needed this sort of explanation (ibid.).

From the 1980s and onwards, it becomes a must that merchandises have to meet some commercial interest in the framework of the Anglo-Saxon market. The validation of the literary weird as a genre still lingers problematic; however, the literary, commercial interest labels it and sells it as a literary product. Consequently, the market inflicts it speciously as a genre, without being depicted as a product that does not bear precise boundaries, thus forcing the consumer to relent and buy it. This type of fiction emerged, as Moorcock gauges it, “when the market found something else it could commodify and then aim at a large specialized market to the extent that a certain type of reader will now attack a story precisely because it doesn’t fulfill the expectations of category” (Moorcock 2011, 10). A once rejected sort of writing after literary success is sought and embraced by the market. The New Weird movement also encounters

³⁴ Such as Fritz Leiber, Robert Bloch and Henry Kuttner.

attempts of canonisation in late capitalism; however, most authors jettison the idea of institutionalised canonisation and of becoming a specific genre³⁵.

2.1.1.5 Post-Weird - The Barker Event

The next term that is positioned as a pivotal point in the timeline and the process of weird fiction is Post-Weird. It lasts roughly from the demise of the *Weird Tales* in 1954 to the millennia, and the watershed event is the emergences of Stephen King (that is Joshi's opinion) and Clive Barker (that is Miéville's position) which have taken place at the beginning of 1980s. China Miéville draws on Barker's approach to construct monsters; these entities are the Remades³⁶ in the *Bas-Lag* trilogy (*Perdido Street Station* - 2000; *The Scar* - 2002; *Iron Council* - 2004). Miéville underlines the idea that in an urban community, such creatures cannot be accepted³⁷ by the majority of the population (*Perdido Street Station*), but stepping outside of the social rigidity of a city may prove to be initially successful for them (*The Scar*), and they might find their leading positions in a newly constructed collective (*Iron Council*). Therefore, the urban location and community play a pivotal role whether the Remades can express their connections to a location by being accepted into it or not. Alterity begins operating as a method of constructing communities, the more accepted the Remades become.

The dissertation rebukes Joshi's viewpoint in which he laments over the absence of "dominant weird writer in America between H. P. Lovecraft and Stephen King" (Joshi 2001, 21). Miéville specifies that in the period termed as Post-Weird the event becomes the appearance of Clive Barker in the 1980s. Miéville convincingly posits Barker as "the horror writer with the best claim since [H. P.] Lovecraft to be an 'event'" (Noys 2016a, 202). However, there is no specific neologism that is attached to Barker's literary emergence. Miéville develops his argument by establishing him as the author who reintroduces the "human body as a locus of horror after the weird's radical rejection of it" (Noys 2016a, 202). Jeff VanderMeer argues that in his fiction Baker writes the "post-Weird radical queer response to the testerially

³⁵ Jeff VanderMeer suggests this opinion when he writes in 2008, "New Weird is dead. Long live the Next Weird" (VanderMeer 2008, XVIII).

³⁶ Human and non-human subjects, who are constructed "via science and magic with machines (pipes, coal engines, cranes, shovels) or parts from corpses (tentacles, claws, a murdered baby's arms), in punishment factories" (Rankin 2009, 241).

³⁷ This argument has been unravelled in details in an interview where Miéville observes that "[I]n *Perdido Street Station* the Remade are obsessively pathologized because *Perdido Street Station* is essentially a viewpoint of a naïve tourist who arrives in the city. In *The Scar*, one of the viewpoint characters is a Remade" (Shapiro 2008, 68).

homophobic cultural abjection and pathologization of the body in the middle of the AIDS panic, with all its disavowed fetishism of ‘transgressive’ sexuality, its somaphobic biotrauma, its putrid moralism” (Noys 2016a, 202). VanderMeer separates the Barkerean horror from the Lovecraftian one by underlining that the former moves “past Lovecraft’s coyness in recounting events in which the monster or horror can never fully be revealed or explained”, thus, identifying that the Barkerean one’s “starting point is the acceptance of a monster or a transformation and the story is what comes after” (VanderMeer 2008, X).

2.1.1.6 New Weird - The Miéville Event

The literary weird maintains its problematic relationship with the genre canon throughout the 1990s. However, when the literary weird resurfaces it becomes a moment in the early 2000s as a response to the crises and traumas implemented by the contemporary, late-capitalist situation. The literary market welcomed it. Jeff VanderMeer sees the shared hindrances of the New Weird, one that emerges on the literary horizon; he points out that after the publication of Miéville’s *Perdido Street Station* in 2000, and New Weird starts to be associated with success, thus, making it easier for weird texts “to find significant publication” (VanderMeer 2008, XIV). Consequently, after the Lovecraft and Barker event, there is the Miéville event that can be interpreted as a watershed. VanderMeer highlights that “‘New Weird’ has been a ‘useful shorthand’ not only when justifying acquiring a particular novel, but also when marketing departments talk to booksellers. Confusion about the specifics of the term created a larger protective umbrella for writers from a publishing standpoint” (VanderMeer 2008, XIV).

The New Weird is seen as a corollary of two impulses as VanderMeer posits in order to distinguish it from other literary modes that possess interstitial features. The New Wave of Science Fiction in the 1960s is understood as the first stimulus, when authors subverted the boundaries between genres, connected the haute culture with popular registers, and attempted to exceed the previous forms in prose. The New Wave authors of 1960s that “provided what might be thought of as the brain of New Weird” (VanderMeer 2008, X) and cultivated a style that “deliriously mixed genres, high and low art, and engaged in formal experimentation, often typified by a distinctly political point of view” (ibid.). What they also shared was a clear political stand. They are epitomised by M. John Harrison, Michael Moorcock, and J. G. Ballard. VanderMeer develops his argument and maintains that the second inspiration stems from “the unsettling grotesquery of such seminal 1980s work as Clive Barker’s *Books of Blood*” (ibid.).

Barker's works as transgressive horror "form[s] the beating heart of the New Weird" (ibid.). VanderMeer identifies Barker as "the starting point [...] [of] the acceptance of a monster or a transformation, and the story is what comes after" in New Weird fiction (ibid.).

2.1.2 The Aesthetics of Weird

The aesthetical dimension of this concept exhibits the same complex features as does in its literary origin. Miéville elaborates on his definition of weird and points out that its "focus is on awe, and its undermining of the quotidian. This obsession with numinosity³⁸ under the everyday is at the heart of Weird Fiction" (Miéville 2009c, 510). He also adheres to its description – like Lovecraft did – by relating it to the feeling of sublime. He stipulates that the difference between the sublime and the Weird Affect is that weird "punctures the supposed membrane separating off the sublime, and allows swillage of that awe and horror from 'beyond' back into the everyday – into angles, bushes, the touch of strange limbs, noises, etc. The Weird is a radicalized sublime backwash" (Miéville 2009c, 511). Lovecraft also refers to the sublime, when he maintains that the experience is "coeval with the religious feeling and closely related to many aspects of it" (Lovecraft 2005, 300).

Moreover, Miéville connects the Weird Affect and the sublime as he argues that they share visceral and overt jouissance with horror. In the case of Weird, it is a "predatory unkenable" (Miéville 2012, 381). The sublime elided with the urban in a contemporary context. The corollary what Carl Freedman suggests is the "urban sublime" (Freedman 2015, 1). He maintains that type of sublime is "the precise and powerful expression of lofty thoughts and intense emotions", then argues that "Miévillian sublime differs from the traditional Longinian model" of sublime³⁹ (Freedman 2015, 2). In the first place, "awe and grandeur of

³⁸ Based on Rudolf Otto's interpretation of his term, numinous, where he adheres its meaning with "the gradual shaping and filling in with ethical meaning" of the holy, he adds that it is "a unique original feeling-response, which can be in itself ethically neutral and claims consideration in its own right" (Otto 1924, 6). This chapter identifies the numinous with a phenomenon that is utterly incommensurable in ordinary language, yet somehow enters into human consciousness. The numinous is connected to the holy, but without the latter's ethical and rational dimensions. Therefore, it is expressed in the linguistic register of the sublime, but to keep the two modes of expression apart and to indicate their differences, Miéville refers to bad numinous, when he talks about the feeling triggered by the concept of weird.

³⁹ Longinus defines the sublime as "wherever it occurs, consists in a certain loftiness and excellence of language" (Longinus 2006, 31). Furthermore, he identifies "five sources [. . .] from which almost all sublimity is derived" (Longinus 2006, 40). They are "grandeur of thought", "vigorous and spirited treatment of the passions", "certain artifice in the employment of figures, which are of two kinds, figures of thought and figures of speech", "dignified expression, which is sub-divided into (a) the proper choice of words, and (b) the use of metaphors and other ornaments of diction", and "majesty and elevation of structure" (ibid.).

sublimity usually give[s] way, [...] to an urban setting”, second, “the urban quality of Miéville’s sublime is [...] part and parcel of its multifariousness and hybridity” (ibid.). Freedman proposes that “the Miévillian sublime strives to incorporate the specifically political (and necessarily multifarious) sublimity of Marxism” (ibid.).

The Weird Affect exceeds the anthropocentric systematisation, Miéville postulates that from the vantage point of affection, the concept of weird is “trinary. At least” (Miéville 2012, 381). As a result of that, the contemporary comprehension of the Weird Affect, as Miéville classifies it, always coincides with the category that can be assigned to knowledge. This set, or ken as he puts it, is framed within the context of the European thinking, which inherently provides Manichaeic⁴⁰ interpretations as in the spatial framework, place is known, space is unknown. A system that is based on binaries does not suffice as a platform for the weird to be considered but is contingent for it to trespass. Mark Fisher asserts that the weird spurs the “fascination with the outside, [...] which lies beyond standard perception, cognition and experience” (Fisher 2016, 7). The Manichaeic opposition has to relent its predilection of the known ontological and epistemological frames, the inside in the framework what Fisher draws, as they are spurred and provoked to be sapped and the corollary of the process is the Weird Affect.

The “Weird Affect, then, works through radical otherness, a counterposing alterity⁴¹. Emerging at the end of the 19th century, this is an enmonstered iteration of a long, strong aesthetic and philosophical tradition, one endlessly obsessed with the questions of the Awesome, a beauty that is terrible and beyond-ken-or-kennableness” (Miéville 2012, 380). Therefore, from the historical perspective, the Weird Affect predates the conceiving of the literary weird by relenting to aesthetic and philosophical conditions of the late 17th century, when “writers like Wollestonecraft (sic!) and Radcliffe [...] have wandered up mountains to where the fabric of language and the symbolic order is thinnest and frayed” (Miéville 2012, 380).

Miéville adduces the aesthetical category of weird as it epitomises the world [i.e. reality] as it “is ripped and unfinished. Moth-eaten, ill-made” (Miéville 2011b, 4447). Through these apertures “things are looking at us” (ibid.). They are in the realm beyond anthropocentric comprehension, there is no complementary distribution of this system of realising reality,

⁴⁰ A dyad is where the two members of the system are antithetical.

⁴¹ John Clute identifies alterity as a “term is used to designate the sense of ‘otherness’ consequent upon the fact that fantasy texts [. . .] violate the ‘ground rules’ of the mundane world, becoming ‘dependent on the internal consistency of their own ground rules’” (Clute 1999, 20).

sanctity is absent, but what remains is that “[t]he Weird is neither holy nor whole-y. It is hole-y” (Miéville 2011b, 4449). Miéville postulates that through the prism of the concept of weird “the world is always-already unrepresentable, and can only be approached by an asymptotic succession of subjective pronouncements” (Miéville 2009c, 512). He adds that in his interpretation “‘Real’ life under capitalism *is a fantasy*” that “is a mode that, in constructing an internally coherent but actually impossible totality – constructed on the basis that the impossible is, for this work, *true* – mimics the ‘absurdity’ of capitalist modernity” (Miéville 2002, 42 emphases in the original). In the case of Miéville, the rhetoric gauges information only about the detail of the particular entity. As a result, the literary weird appropriates the features of the language of the weird text itself. It cannot exceed language, but its constant attempt to realise what is its absence which is both the condition and the effect of this mode of writing. This inherent legacy also haunts the New Weird.

2.1.2.1 The Keys to the Weird Affect: Miévillean Abcanny and Suvinian Cognitive Estrangement

Mark Fisher in his seminal work *The Weird and the Eerie* (2016) encapsulates the *sensation* of weird as it “is constituted by a presence – the presence of *that which does not belong*” (Fisher 2016, 103 emphases in the original). He works with the terms of weird and the eerie⁴² concerning the notion of *unheimlich*⁴³, a concept coined by Sigmund Freud at the beginning of the 20th century. Fisher argues that what both phenomena “have in common is a preoccupation with the strange” (Fisher 2016, 7). This inherently distinct, but on the border to the horrific, approach sheds light on the corollary Lovecraft proposed about the outside⁴⁴. Fisher calls attention to the fact that though both concepts can be read as “a fascination for the outside, for that which lies beyond standard perception, cognition and experience”, the weird and the eerie are not necessarily terrifying (Fisher 2016, 7). He argues for the differentiation of the weird, the eerie, and the *unheimlich*. Furthermore, he claims that, “[t]hey are all affects, but they are also modes: modes of film and fiction, modes of perception, ultimately, you might even say,

⁴² Fisher claims that in the feeling of eerie “we can understand the outside in a straightforwardly empirical as well as a more abstract transcendental sense. [. . .] The perspective of the eerie can give us access to the forces which govern mundane reality but which are ordinarily obscured, just as it can give us access to spaces beyond mundane reality altogether” (6,9).

⁴³ The *unheimlich* has a source of origin, the weird does not. Therefore, its relation to knowledge, which is termed *abcanny*, also does not have a source of origin.

⁴⁴ The dissertation concurs with Daniel Nyikos’ observation that the outside lies “beyond all that is known by human consciousness” (Nyikos 2020, 18).

modes of being. Even so, they are not quite genres”, which is a salient feature in the contemporary comprehension of weird and weird fiction (Fisher 2016, 9).

Pointing out that there is the rupture between the inside and the outside, the known and the unknown, and exists as a driving force of literature was one of the pre-eminent achievements of Lovecraft. Noys underlines that *Weird Tale* and later any literary weird play

with the conventions of fiction to expose us to the ‘shivering void’ and to reveal those conventions as poor and desperate attempts to ward off that void. In so doing, weird fiction generates its own distinctive conventions and its own generic form, but it remains an unstable construction (Noys 2016b, 117).

To reiterate the opposition of inside and outside, Fisher declares that weird allows “us to see the inside from the perspective of the outside” (Fisher 2016, 10). This explanation should be employed on the *Weird Affect* by not imputing it to sensation, but by the change of standpoint. It is a salient deviation from the rules that Lovecraft establishes and maintains throughout his literary career. Lovecraft adheres to the main point of his rules that is how “we must judge a weird tale not by the author’s intent [...]; but by the emotional level which it attains at its least mundane point” (Lovecraft 2005, 307). That is one of the main distinctions between the sorts of literary weird. One interpretation of the weird is Lovecraft’s where he adheres to the sensation derived from affect as the core of the narrative; the other line of understanding is where the core of the narrative is related to knowledge and not just sentiment. This is one difference between Lovecraft’s interpretation of weird and Miéville’s interpretation of weird.

Miéville argues that, “[t]he Weird is the assertion of that we did not know, never knew, could not know, that has always been and will always be unknowable” (Miéville 2012, 380). That is encapsulated in the term of *ab-canny* that is the expression of unknown unknowns. In the concept of *ab-canny*, as Sheryll Vint defines it, “[t]he prefix ‘ab’ means ‘away from’ and so the *ab-real* flees from and refuses the givenness of realism, but without doing so in any particular orientation away from realism” (Vint 2015, 105). The dissertation heeds to the argument Vint puts forward, in which she applies the ‘ab’ prefix to knowledge. Following the train of thoughts Vint develops, the *ab-canny* “contains multitudes, contradicts itself, but is crucially structured according to a fractal logic, more than merely the deconstructive logic of both/and” (ibid.). It “requires a critical vision that can simultaneously encompass perspectives that linear logic would insist have to be resolved into ordered binaries, the rigid constraints of the either/or” (ibid.). Furthermore, it “allows the latitude that from another point of view what appear to be contradictions from our limited perspective need not be resolved into larger and harmonious wholes” (ibid.). The *Weird Affect* points those discrepancies out that are interpreted through the prism of Miéville’s viewpoint of the *Suvinian* cognitive estrangement.

To scrutinise the alienation caused by the Weird Affect, Miéville interprets it through the lens of the Suvinian model, a rationalist approach, which is applied to the radically different in fantastic texts. The original understanding of Darko Suvin's template is developed for science fiction. In his interpretation, Suvin understands SF "whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main formal device is an imaginative framework alternative to the author's empirical environment" (Suvin 1979, 7-8). This model is dated back in the 1980s when Suvin attempted to differentiate science fiction from fantasy and to pass an ethical/aesthetical judgment upon the latter and to favour the prior by deeming it worthwhile to investigate from a Marxist perspective.

Miéville revisits this disparate dyad in order to reconcile the two genres and points out there are more details that connect them than that separate them. Furthermore, he argues that all type of fantastical texts lacks this cognition, but it stems from the "*charismatic authority*" of the author of a particular text (Miéville 2009b, 238 emphases in the original). In *Red Planets: Marxism and Science Fiction* Miéville reveals that the Suvinian cognition can hardly be understood as such, but is closer to, what Carl Freedman sees as cognition effect. Miéville elaborates on this idea and sheds lights on its working method by identifying this tool as a form of "*persuasion*", where "[t]he reader surrenders to the cognition effect to the extent that he or she surrenders to the authority of the text and its author function" (ibid.). This hoodwinking strategy is employed with the literary weird ever since from its conception.

Along with the rift on the Manichaeic opposition of inside and outside, the Miévillian trinary structure for the literary weird is established. Immediately after constructing and developing the concept of the abcanany, Miéville argues that,

The monsters of the abcanany are teratological expressions of that unrepresentable and unknowable, the evasive of meaning. Hence the enormous preponderance of shapeless, oozing gloopiness in the abcanany monstrous, the stress on formlessness, shapes that ostentatiously evade symbolic decoding by being all shapes and no shapes (Miéville 2012, 381).

The Weird Affect stymies language, therefore renders it to collapse under the weight of impossibilities presented by the texts. Consequently, "[t]he weird and its monsters are destabilizing of the craft narrowly instrumentalist 'cognitive' 'rationality' often associated with SF in the Suvinian model: within the stories, in their very quiddity they regularly drive observers insane" (Noys 2016a, 200). The 'either-or' modality is changed in the framework of the literary weird into the modality of 'both/and'.

Miéville explains that what the weird "attempts to invoke is a function of *lack* of recognition, rather than any uncanny resurgence, guilt-function, the return of a repressed" (Miéville 2009c, 512). By that he distances this mode of writing from Gothic fiction.

Furthermore, he applies it “in opposition to that category for thinking through the history-stained present that, after Derrida (1994), has become known as the ‘Hauntological’” (Miéville 2009c, 513). Jacques Derrida, who coins the notion in *Spectres of Marx* (1993), “defines hauntology as the study of that which repeats without ever being present” (Fisher 2018, 269). In hauntology, the returning spectres have a point of origin, although unknown, in the case of the Weird Affect, it “*has no home to start with. No oikos, no pure originary state. Only non-Euclidean folds and refolds. With no origin, no death drive either, that exhausted geometry*” (Luckhurst 2015, 531 emphasizes in the original). On the contrary to that the New Weird proves to be “more self-conscious in genesis and in locating itself within literary traditions, with all their relative autonomy, deploying weird tropes as part of a (then-)burgeoningly confident and exciting geek culture” (Noys 2016a, 203).

The concept of weird both in its aesthetical and literary formats become a pivotal tool to express what is beyond anthropocentric thinking. They consider the impossible, the unutterable as their field. In his chapter, I identified the historical context from which they emerged and explored the process of their literary form in details. I established a timeline where I considered different manifestations of weird fiction in which they stress different parts as important. I examined these variations and identified the features of the Miévillian weird then constructed it.

3. Theories of Space

3.1 Historical Perspective of Theories of Space

Miéville's interest in the urban environment stems from his constant scrutiny and criticism of capitalism⁴⁵. He presents these attempts of influencing and changing the capitalist spatial system by exploring its margins through the lens of peripheral characters. His scope of interest begins at and includes modernity⁴⁶ and modernism⁴⁷. He considers them as driving forces that result in our contemporary societies. He locates his narratives in the social and political formation of modern societies that take place in different time-periods of capitalism. One of the main sources of the experiences of modernism that expresses "the emergence of a new order of urban reality" is the novel (Alter 2005, X). From social and political perspective, Miéville draws on novels that were written in "the late decades of the nineteenth century and [. . .] the twentieth" and relies on the "practice of conducting the narrative more and more through the moment-by-moment experience—sensory, visceral, and mental" to show the overwhelming complexity of capitalist urban spatial systems (ibid.). In *Perdido Street Station*, one of the focalizer-narrators is a new arrival to the metropolis. His sensory, visceral, and mental capacity to comprehend the new urban surrounding has been overcome by "this dusty city dreamed up in bone and brick, a conspiracy of industry and violence, steeped in history and battened-down power, *this badland beyond my ken*" (Miéville 2000, 5 emphases mine). Robert Alter identifies this "general procedure" as "experiential realism, [. . .] when the novelist is [. . .] minutely concerned with social and material realia" (ibid.). This sort of accuracy can also be noted in Miéville's writings. However, his stylistic approach reveals a much more open reality that is not originated in

⁴⁵ Miéville also relies on the Victorian Urban Gothic and the Surrealist Urban Fiction tradition to formulate both his cities and his criticism toward the social and political use of urban space. From the former selection of texts, Charles Dickens provided a Gothic topography of London in his novels such as *Bleak House*, *Great Expectations*, *Our Mutual Friend*. Robert Louis Stevenson's novella *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* also highlighted the urban phenomenon of the Victorian Urban Gothic Fiction tradition. From the perspective of constructing urban environment they are fundamental texts for the Miévillean New Weird. From the latter selection, the following titles are understood as influences to the Miévillean New Weird in its interpretation of the urban: Louis Aragon's *Paris Peasant*, André Breton's *Nadja*.

⁴⁶ Modernity refers to "technological innovation, governance, and socioeconomics" (L. Snyder 2016, n.p.). Sharon L. Snyder argues that it is "associated with individual subjectivity, scientific explanation and rationalization, a decline in emphasis on religious worldviews, the emergence of bureaucracy, rapid urbanization, the rise of nation-states, and accelerated financial exchange and communication" (L. Snyder 2016, n.p.).

⁴⁷ Modernism, on the other hand, suggests philosophical and fine arts framework. It is interpreted as "a break with the past and the concurrent search for new forms of expression. Modernism fostered a period of experimentation in the arts from the late 19th to the mid-20th century, particularly in the years following World War I." (Kuiper 2020, n.p.).

realism. Alter suggests that, “[t]he introduction of new technologies⁴⁸, and the new arrangements of public and private space and of social relations with which these technologies interacted and which they to some degree engendered, changed the ways Europeans experienced the fundamental categories of time and space” (Alter 2005, 3). Miéville inserts new technologies into his *Bas-Lag* trilogy (railways in *Iron Council*), albeit other types of technological developments (undernet and afternet as specific forms of internet that are connected to the spatial system of UnLondon⁴⁹ in *UnLunDun*) are also noted in his texts. In this part of the dissertation, I will explore theories of space in its historical development that Miéville pilfers and inserts into his novels.

The new spatial formation and relations between subjects and space are also attempted to be grasped by Victorian and Modernist authors to describe the new sensation that is simulated by cities. Alter elaborates the historical background, when he writes that “there were waves of migration from the provinces to the cities (Paris, London, Petersburg, Vienna), especially on the part of young males seeking new economic and opportunities” (Alter 2005, 4). There are two periods that can be identified, one that is before the Great War and the other one that is after it. This war has been interpreted as a watershed, not only in the process of the literary weird, but also from the social, political, historical and ideological perspectives. It ushered in a democracy that has never been so ruthlessly hijacked before. The 20th century becomes the age of multitude, where every aspect of life is under constant negotiation between members of societies whether they function as such or not. But before I initiate the condensed discussion of the change of spatial formations and relations, it should be noted that my focus adheres to the time-period of postmodernity and its urban spatial systems.

In the period of postmodernity “fields of literary and cultural studies, sociology, political science, anthropology, history, and art history have become increasingly spatial in their orientation” (Warf and Arias 2009, 1). These approaches “assert that space is a social construction relevant to the understanding of the different histories of human subjects and to the production of cultural phenomena” (ibid.). This reorganisation spearheaded the epoch of space and overshadowed the epoch of time as Michel Foucault argued in “Of Other Spaces”. This change offers “a perspective in which space is every bit as important as time in the unfolding of human affairs” (ibid.). This has been described as the Spatial Turn⁵⁰. Edward Soja

⁴⁸ Alter provides examples such as the “new glass architecture used for the railway terminals” (Alter 2005, 3).

⁴⁹ It is the eponymous UnLondon, a fantastic urban site, a junk-city distinguished by odd architectural constructs and metamorphic inhabitants.

⁵⁰ Foucault, Lefebvre, and Soja studied and expanded the understanding of the Spatial Turn.

reflects on it as it is “fundamentally an attempt to develop a more creative and critically effective balancing of the spatial/geographical and the temporal/historical imaginations” (Soja 2009, 12).

Michel Foucault points out that “space itself has a history in Western experience”, and elaborates that “in the Middle Ages there was a hierarchic ensemble of places” which results in “this complete hierarchy, this opposition, this intersection of places that constituted what could very roughly be called medieval space” (Foucault 1986, 22). In the Middle Ages, every spatial formation served a function for the subject and its relation to it has been re-inscribed. Subjects lacked the opportunity to successfully negotiate themselves into the medieval spatial system. Everyone had its place, thus, Foucault terms this spatial system “space of emplacement” (ibid.). He argues that it was subverted by the argument of Galileo Galilei with “his constitution [of the] infinite, and infinitely open space” (Foucault 1986, 23).

The spatial formations and relations are subjected to modifications during the Industrial Revolution⁵¹ in which the bourgeoisie became the main (re)-distributor. The reason for that is that the Industrial Revolution accelerated material accumulation and “combined economic and technological development, not incidentally, spewed out a vast profusion of manufactured objects together with the waste products of industrial process, with all such objects and waste products then densely crowding the space, both outside and inside, inhabited by city dwellers” (Alter 2005, 56). As a corollary of this accrument, “the metropolis will seem increasingly a theater of perplexity, defying summation, lacking social, political, and therefore thematic coherence” (Alter 2005, 9). The bourgeois ideological framework interprets the urban spatial system that it “was to perceive the modern metropolis simultaneously as a locus of powerful, exciting, multifarious stimuli and as a social and spatial reality so vast and inchoately kinetic that it defied taxonomies and thematic definition” (Alter 2005, 20). This ideological framework for the urban spatial system concerns itself with the attempt to tightly secure its borders with its agencies of the Ideological State Apparatuses, a term I borrowed from Louis Althusser. Althusser suggests that this concept means “a certain number of realities which present themselves to the immediate observer in the form of distinct and specialized institutions” (Althusser 1971, 143). Althusser underlines that “the Ideological State Apparatuses function massively and predominantly by ideology” (Althusser 1971, 145). This ideology controls the urban spatial system, consequently, its logic is the ruling classes’. The corollary of the policing

⁵¹ The term Industrial Revolution is “in modern history, the process of change from an agrarian and handicraft economy to one dominated by industry and machine manufacturing” (Augustyn 2020, n.p.). Its main features “were technological, socioeconomic, and cultural” (Augustyn 2020, n.p.).

is the act of jettisoning attempts of undermining this framework and marginalising the subverting elements in the urban spatial framework as others. Miéville precisely points this out as constructing others the spatial system reacts to them through the Ideological State Apparatuses and positions them accordingly in the urban spatial system. As a result of that, the notion “slum”, as David L. Pike understands it, comes into being, a phenomenon that is beyond the bourgeois ideological framework for urban spatial systems. The slum functions as a location where these others reside, who on the one hand, epitomise the failure of the myth of wholeness in the bourgeois ideological framework in cities, but in that sense, on the other hand, provide the opposing side of the dyad in bourgeois ideological framework. This is the spatial formation from which Miéville’s characters emerge and attempt to change the spatial system that is upheld by the Ideological State Apparatuses.

The defiance of wholeness is attempted to be concealed in the bourgeois ideological framework for the urban spatial system. One of the linguistic means to unravel the issue of representation is borrowed from the language of myths. Alter claims that, “Balzac is more a mythographer of Paris than a realist witness to the experience of the city. He loves to invoke the imagery of traditional mythology in order to suggest the grandeur, the intensity, the conjunction of extremes that he sees in Paris. The terms in which he represents the city are insistently hyperbolic and reflect a fondness for extravagant and symmetrical antitheses” (Alter 2005, 7). This approach suits the unquestionable aloofness of the bourgeois ideological framework and serves the purpose to demonstrate the success of its incorporating project of the world within that boundaries. Alter elaborates that “the fondness for metaphor, always linked with an eagerness to proclaim moral meanings, leads to an allegorization of the city” (ibid.). The other linguistic means to overcome the problem of representation of the city in Balzac’s novels is “[t]he realist catalogue [that] is a literary warranty of descriptive authority, a strategy for creating the illusion of comprehensiveness on the part of an allseeing narrator” (Alter 2005, 19). Miéville refers to pseudo-mythological elements in his works, but these instances are neither elaborated nor drawn on any known mythologies. For instance the origin of the Ribs from *Perdido Street Station*, which is expanded later. Or in *The City and The City*, the origin of Cleavage, a culture that predates the two polises of Beszél and Ul Qoma. The digged up remains are “pretty incomprehensible. You understand we know next to nothing about the culture that produced” them (Miéville 2009, 106). Miéville utilises this technique as a self-referential system.

However, the bourgeois ideological framework for urban spatial system slowly begins to crack, deteriorate then vanish. This illusion kept alive that the ideological interpretation of the

wholeness of the urban spatial system can be incorporated in language. Until another technique emerged then the realisation took place that “[t]he reality of the city is intimated as it impinges on the senses of the characters, and this means that the city is represented not as a whole that can be grasped metaphorically or otherwise but through synecdoche, through bits and pieces that are connected only by implication” (Alter 2005, 15). Furthermore, the “jumble of glimpsed fragments that do not hold together, [. . .] the fragments [that] are kinetic expressions of human energies” express the new sense of urban reality and the new urban spatial system (Alter 2005, 17). An important technique “for representing a character’s point of view” is, as Alter suggests, the narrated monologue⁵² that try to capture both of them (Alter 2005, 6).

The fragmented experience is encapsulated in “new ‘aesthetic of shock’ that Walter Benjamin describes in a memorable passage in his essay on Baudelaire” (Alter 2005, 25). Drawing on Benjamin’s interpretation of Baudelaire and Poe, Alter argues that “the savagery of isolation in the urban crowd [...] [is] [t]he new urban reality, reinforced by its own technological instruments, isolates the discrete moment, flashing it onto the sensorium, then rapidly proceeding to the next moment” (ibid.). The ‘shock’ originates from the understanding of “[t]he perceptual unmanageability of the city, its resistance to totalizing description, [that it] is mirrored and magnified in the roiling political realm, where the looked-for large picture splinters into fragmentary images that discourage a sense of underlying meaning” (Alter 2005, 28). The pulsating and incongruous details are “conveyed as a rapid sequence of fragmentary images and sounds” (Alter 2005, 29). As a corollary, “limited perception of transitory images, which are no more than shards of an ungraspable whole, points toward an ultimate vision of the city as phantasmagoria” (Alter 2005, 30).

This is the point where I refer to psychogeography, an affective attitude to a city’s space, although just briefly, and introduce it as a method of interpretation of the urban phantasmagoria, which “is the exact antithesis of the guidebook representation of the city, in which everything can be mapped out, ordered as a social, architectural, and topographical system” (ibid.). The measured out spatial representation of the city is realised “in the ambitious urban planning of the era, of which Haussman’s sweeping and ruthless Parisian renewal project is an exemplary instance” in the 19th century (Alter 2005, 31). Jeremy Tambling points out that this sort of reorganisation of the city such as “Haussmann’s changes facilitated capitalism: urban development is premised on investment and credit” (Tambling 2016, 7). He elaborates that this

⁵² Alter argues that the term narrated monologue stems from “*le style indirect libre* (following Dorrit Cohn, I shall call it narrated monologue)” (Alter 2005, 6). He adds that this is the technique Flaubert mastered and it “became the instrument for expressing a new sense of reality” (ibid.).

realisation of restructuring the city meant “ripped down medieval houses and streets and [replacing] them with wide boulevards” (Tambling 2016, 6). Examples for this type of reorganisation are Vienna’s Ringstrasse or Budapest’s Nagykörút. There was no renewal projects of the spatial system in London. Different parts of the metropolis were acquired without their integration into the spatial system of London. The Ideological State Apparatuses had not treated London as their continental counterparts had treated the European capitals and big cities. Spatially, London is a labyrinthine hodgepodge. Miéville draws precisely on this tradition and elaborates it in his fantastic cities.

The expenditure of cities results in the incorporation of “the surrounding suburbs into the municipality, thus increasing [. . .] [their] population by another third and doubling the area of the city” (Alter 2005, 4). Henri Lefebvre writes that by that sort of reconstruction of the urban spatial system, the State apparatus “became stipulative, repressive” and as a corollary, urban reality can “be defined not as an accomplished reality, situated behind the actual in time, but, on the contrary, as a horizon, an illuminating virtuality” (Lefebvre 2003, 14;16-7). The reconstruction of the urban spatial system also allows the Ideological State Apparatuses to maintain and keep its parts ideologically blinded. Lefebvre points out that these “blind fields are both mental and social” (Lefebvre 2003, 31). They are where “language fails us, whenever there is surfeit or redundancy in a metalanguage” (ibid.). However, the concept of psychogeography precisely aims at these blind fields and tries to interpret the urban reality and urban spatial system through “the vehicle of fantasy rather than through actual experience” (Alter 2005, 20). Consequently, the “mind of [. . .] [the] new urban man, grasping shards of sensory data and jagged ends of recollected images, becomes a maelstrom in which the centrifugal elements of experience are whirled together in dizzying combinations” (ibid.).

The hodgepodge result of these subjective experiences construct a “phantasmagoria [where] everything is seen as constant disorienting flux, and the lines of division between perception and hallucination, waking and dreaming, blur” (Alter 2005, 30). However, in these phantasmagorias the previously discussed political and ideological exclusions do not operate. Consequently, the urban spatial system opens and expands to elements that lack linguistic methods of expression. These sorts of expressions grasp the meaning of the non-Ideological State Apparatus persona, their experiences of reality and spatial system outside of the bourgeois ideological framework for urban spatial system. In the interpretations of these blind fields within the entire urban spatial system, a person takes the prominent role and tells about its sensations of them in literary format. These people take the role of the “wanderer, the stroller,

the flâneur and the stalker” in “the act of walking [that] is ever present in [. . .][their] account” (Coverley 2012, 7).

In the reports of flâneurs, the urban spatial systems and the provided sensations function as explanations for the differences between their experience and the ubiquitous, quotidian spatial system, are contextualised as visions, dreams, drug-fuelled ramblings, then secret knowledge and occult expertise. These formats serve as “comprehensive description[s] of modern urban experience”, which prove that the “nineteenth-century city could not have been solely a chaos of phantasmagoric fragments” (Alter 2005, 31). All of the frameworks originate from the bourgeois ideological framework to understand the city around themselves. The urban reality from which flâneurs depart and return consisted of “great avenues [. . .] [that] in part devised to facilitate the flow of traffic, brought more traffic, more crowding, more disparate stimuli” (ibid.). Lefebvre remarks that “the State expressed itself through the void: empty space, broad avenues, plazas of gigantic proportions open to spectacular processions” (Lefebvre 2003, 109). The Victorian city affirms its ideological ties to the bourgeoisie by establishing a spatial system that explicitly expresses their colonising nature that cuts across “the urban phenomenon, [that constructs a border] between a dominated periphery and a dominating center” (Lefebvre 2003, 113). The destination of the flâneurs is located beyond “the rationally plotted urban zones [where] there was an ongoing swarm of demographically dense, discordant, brawling life” (Alter 2005, 31).

The spatial system at the second half of 19th century Western European city is explored by the “combination of walking and observation, overlaid with a sense of the fantastic and bizarre” (Coverley 2012, 49). Consequently, it remains within the interpretive framework of a phantasmagoria, so it does not have to operate as an organised spatial system or unit as it is expected from it through the lens of the bourgeoisie. As the great bourgeois ideological “façades concealing poverty and repression” (ibid.) can be expressed in the form of experiential realism, the “intensely kinetic, disruptive reality [that is] intrinsically resistant to coherent comprehension” in that same context, therefore, the expression seeks new forms (Alter 2005, 40). It falls back to the language of the sublime⁵³, where its nucleus is the urban rather than nature. The language of sublime is reserved for occasions in which the experienced phenomena

⁵³ The Kantian interpretation of sublime differentiates three sorts: terrifying, the noble, and the magnificent sublime. The first is understood as the “feeling of it is sometimes accompanied with some dread or even melancholy”, the second as the “[feeling of it is sometimes accompanied] merely with quiet admiration”, the third as the “[feeling of it is sometimes accompanied] with a beauty spread over a sublime prospect” (Kant 2011, 16). In language, this feeling is expressed with the help of strong emotions. Miéville relies on the first and the third sorts of sublime, elaborates them in a rather radical way, and deploys them in an urban framework.

generate awe due to their enormousness. In the urban framework, the language of sublime relies to achieve that on the “sense of being jostled and jolted by an overabundance of sensory stimuli” and the “feeling of being dwarfed by the cityscape and sometimes menaced by the material products of compacted urban existence” (Alter 2005, 46). Alter points out that the urban sublime also displays “an unsettling loss of agency in the rapid transformation of the metropolis” (49). This is also the “age of urban renewal and rampant shady speculation in real estate”, thus, the “messy architectural and functional promiscuity” (Alter 2005, 44) is part and parcel of the urban spatial system and at the same time all of these changes “dwarf the individual, threaten to subvert the exercise of human agency” (Alter 2005, 54). This danger of loss of agency is also exhibited in different shades in the examined texts of Miéville.

Through the focalizer-narrator function of the flâneur as it “immersed in the crowd but [also] isolated by it” (Coverley 2012, 69), the reader notices the mode (psychogeography) and the linguistic register (sublime) as means to interpret the urban spatial system. The bourgeois ideological framework for urban spatial system remained in operation despite its “exposure of hidden sources of power questioning the governance of the city and revealing the plight of the marginalized and dispossessed” (Coverley 2012, 49). After the turn of the century and at the beginning of the 20th century the interpretation of the familiar cityscape has been significantly changed and thus “the city becomes characterised as a jungle, uncharted and unexplored, a virgin wilderness populated by savages demonstrating strange customs and practices” (Coverley 2012, 69). After the Great War, the bourgeois ideological framework for urban spatial system is shattered. The belief that operated it is ruled out, therefore, the city became the field of aimlessness as a result of clash between the old values and the new, developing standards. The city became the manifestation of the ruins of the old civilisations. Yet the phantasmagorias remain to be the specific method of expression for the emerging interpretation of the urban spatial system, but the urge to keep the myth of wholeness of the city in the bourgeois framework vanishes.

Modern cities also facilitate the process to “dissolve older feelings of community and heighten a sense of isolation in the individual” (Alter 2005, 142). This approach is what Miéville initiates to deconstruct. The phantasmagorias of the Victorian and Modernist authors become reality in the fantastical cities of Miéville. His cities are evolved phantasmagorias where the spatial system is heavily influenced by the Ideological State Apparatus. Therefore, Miéville aims to the power struggle for the spatial system and inserts the class-consciousness to the fictional society he presents. He also attempts to overcome the loss of agency by constructing communities through the Marxist term, class-consciousness. Those blind fields

that are excluded linguistically from the bourgeois ideological framework for urban spatial system become centres in his novels.

Globalisation is another element that Miéville incorporates into these examined texts. He points out its dangers as he situates his spatial systems into the globalised space in two of his examined texts. They are *The City and The City* and *UnLunDun*, where the overlapping between the local spatial system and globalisation becomes palpable. The global is not accessible neither to the focalizer-narrators, nor to the readers, but it lurks behind its avatars. In the former novel, it is in the shape of a multinational company, Sear and Core; in the latter novel, it is in the shape of the Smog, a sentient smog, a sign representing our irresponsible behaviour toward nature. The State apparatus and its supporting persona become capitalist avatars and in that sense they are hyperobjects⁵⁴ in a Mortonian sense of the word, therefore, they lose their agencies. They aid capitalism and globalisation with “[u]rbanisation, as Lefebvre saw, [which] means driving workers out from centres to the periphery, so itself destroying urban democracy (Kofman and Lebas 1996, pp. 65-85)” (Tambling 2016, 4).

3.2 Place, Space, and Spatial System

The following chapter of the dissertation explores the urban spatial relations within the context of New Weird fiction. In “The Weird” chapter, I argued that without the urban context the concept of the weird would not have prevailed as a form of expression in literature. Curtailing the scope of scrutiny, the chapter explores the previously provided interpretations and establishes a system through which it examines China Miéville’s six texts. But in this sub-chapter, I turn my focus on the establishment of the main concepts that serve the foundation of the dissertation. That is the relation between place and space which is not a static or closed system, but a constantly ongoing one. Place is subordinated to space and is interpreted as a meaning-making element of space.

Before I initiate my exploration between place and space and then their frame, the spatial system, the origins of the two main concepts and their relation have to be examined. Jeff Malpas writes that “the English terms ‘place’ and ‘space’ are etymologically connected to the Greek [. . .] most directly relevant terms are *topos* and *chora*”, respectively (Malpas 2018, 26 emphases

⁵⁴ Timothy Morton writes in *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology After the End of the World* that he coined “the term hyperobjects to refer to things that are massively distributed in time and space relative to humans” (Morton 2013, 12).

in the original). He draws on “the work of Plato and Aristotle” where “both *topos* and *chora* carry important connotations of dimensionality or extendedness” (Malpas 2018, 27 emphasizes in the original). He concludes that for Aristotle “a *topos* is always the *topos* of some body [. . .] and similarly, for Plato the *chora*, that which provides ‘a home for all created things’, is always understood in relation to the particulars that appear or are received within it” (ibid.). He elaborates on “the concept of space in Western thought” and stresses that “space has been increasingly understood in the narrower terms that tie it to physical extension” (Malpas 2018, 28). He argues that the idea of “*kenon* or void [. . .] through Medieval and Renaissance thinking, and into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, [. . .] plays the more significant role in the development of modern concepts of space” (ibid.). I interpret place “as experiential, or as tied to the human response to environment”, therefore, “place *is integral to the very structure and possibility of experience*” (Malpas 2018, 31 emphasizes in the original). Space and the spatial system are subjected to negotiation as their constituting subjects’ social and political power allows them to be. Otherwise subjects are jettisoned from them and they experience nothing, they are rendered as others.

In my interpretation, the spatial system is the result of the negotiations of its participating subjects. The two terms that play significant roles in the construction of the spatial system are place and space. What I intend to stress in my examination is their social and political aspects. In their relation, I consider the idea of place as a subset of space. Each subject with an agency functions as a place, its position within space has to be negotiated constantly in order to operate as a spatial system. From this arrangement, the subjects construct space that is organised into a spatial system. In the following, I am going to explore the place-space dyad and their relation to the spatial system. I attempt to move from real examples toward literary ones then to focus on the examined texts. First, I will describe the importance of the subject to become the pivotal factor in the understanding of spatiality. Second, I will explain the importance of the difference between subjects that negotiate themselves into space. Third, I will argue that after the successful negotiation into space, subjects have non-identical rights in there. Fourth, I will explore the spatial system through social and political prisms and the rights and privileges through which subjects relate to and change that spatial system.

First, the concept of place is interpreted both as a subjective and an objective category. On the one hand, it is a corollary of a subjective viewpoint. It stems from the subject that repositions part of space through knowledge, therefore it “is understood as framed space” that is “constricted by ritual markings that invest it with meaning and attach to it functions and values” (García 2015, 20). According to Maarja Saar and Hannes Palang, “place provides a

midway between an objective fact and a subjective feeling, which Entrikin (1991) calls the “betweenness of places” (Saar and Palang 2009, 5). On the other hand, it is also objective because places “are constricted by a set of frames that define their physical shape, render them mathematically measurable and allow them to be mapped or localised within a coordinate system” (García 2015, 21). These two perspectives connote “throwntogetherness, the unavoidable challenge of negotiating a here-and-now” (Massey 2005, 140). Patricia García in her book argues that urban space problematises the question of agency, it “has been a function traditionally attributed to human characters or to ‘humanised’ entities, such as talking animals and animated objects” (26). Place is understood as subjects “interpret and develop meaningful attachments to those specific areas where they live out their lives” (Castree 2009, 158). Furthermore, “*place* is a body-centred context that provides a point of view and a reference point for our existence. When we territorialize our setting, this is called ‘place-making’; when we reinforce occupancy, we create a ‘sense of *place*’” (Porter 2005a, 111). Place is a site for “spatial contradictions – that is, political conflicts between socio-economic interests and forces – [to] express themselves in” there (Merrifield 1993, 522). The subject is situated in space and in this framework the outcome of the negotiation is place. This set between objective and subjective is the corollary of the place’s relational understanding within the framework of space.

Before I move on to the second point, the interpretation of the notion of space has to be explained. Doreen Massey puts forward three propositions concerning space and writes that first, “we recognise space as the product of interrelations; as constituted through interaction”; second, “we understand space as the sphere of the possibility of the existence of multiplicity”; and third, “we recognise space as always under construction. [. . .] It is never finished” (Massey 2005, 9). Furthermore, Massey also points out that, space is “the product of social relations, and those relations are real material practices, and always ongoing” (95). As a corollary, my pivot is that space is social and political. Space is a social political construct that has material ramifications, one that the subject finds itself in, i.e. the places that are real (and outside of it) and are subjective (cf: fantasy) as internalized, constituents of subjectivity. The better endowed a subject is in these areas, the better chances it stands to negotiate. The success of the negotiation depends on the shared features between the subject and the spatial system’s constituting subjects.

Second, the success of the negotiations into space depends on the subject’s place. Political and social preconceptions play significant part in the success. Space as a multitude⁵⁵ in a

⁵⁵ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri argue that, “[t]he multitude is composed of a set of singularities—and by singularity here we mean a social subject whose difference cannot be reduced to sameness, a difference that

Hardt and Negri's sense, lacks homogeneity and essential section. As Andrew Merrifield claims "[t]he space of the whole [. . .] takes on meaning through place; and each part (i.e. each place) in its interconnection with other parts (places) engenders the space of the whole" (Merrifield 1993, 520). Places maintain space through subjects. Henri Lefebvre remarks that, "[s]pace and the politics of space 'express' social relationships" (Lefebvre 2003, 15). The social and political discourses of space are negotiated by its constituting subjects. These debates are "political in every way: governed in favour of particular interests, biased in their affordances and allocations, shot through with calculative logics and mechanisms designed to distribute unevenly, and arenas of considerable *power struggle*" (Amin and Thrift 2017, 207 emphasizes mine). Subjects have to be in power position to actually influence the space and then the spatial system. Consequently, the politics of the space depend entirely on the subjects within, which lead to the third point.

Third, manifestations of the spatial politics vary as the scope of the successful negotiation testifies. As space is an ongoing "process, movement, flow relations", the subject has to orient itself in it (Merrifield 1993, 517). Therefore, spatially the corollary is embodied space, place. Place is the production of a body in space, it is subjective space. However, the entirety of space cannot be produced into place, parts of it remain unknown to the subject. Subjects that construct the social space can prevent the newcomer to successfully negotiate and become part of it. They can hinder the access to different sections of the spatial system. I draw on the Lefebvrian and Sojan interpretation of the spatial system to stress Miéville's novum.

Fourth, from the viewpoint of the subject, the spatial system becomes apparent after the successful negotiation of place and insertion into space. The social and the political negotiation reveals the social and political dimension of the spatial system. Lefebvre argues that, "[s]ocial space contains – and assigns (more or less) appropriate places to – (1) the social relations of reproduction [. . .] and (2) the relations of production" (Lefebvre 1991, 32). Merrifield postulates that the spatial system introduced by Lefebvre is understood as an incorporation of "three moments [that are] identified by Lefebvre as: representations of space, representational space and spatial practices" (Merrifield 1993, 523). I will describe the details that maintain the spatial system.

The subject's realisation of the spatial system stems from the change of social and political framework that is identified as representations of space. Merrifield provides the details in which he writes that, "[r]epresentations of space refers to conceptualized space, the

remains different. The component parts of the people are indifferent in their unity; they become an identity by negating or setting aside their differences" (Hardt and Negri 2004, 200).

discursively constructed space [. . .] [that] is always a *conceived* and *abstract* space since it subsumes ideology and knowledge within its practice” (ibid.). Lefebvre describes them as they “are tied to the relations of production and to the ‘order’ which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes, and to ‘frontal’ relations” (Lefebvre 1991, 33). Edward W. Soja in *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* identifies a part of the spatial system with the same functions, he terms it Secondspace. He explains it as it is a “regulatory and ‘ruly’ discourse”, a representation “of power and ideology, of control and surveillance” and “also the primary space of utopian thought and vision, of the semiotician or decoder, and of the purely creative imagination of some artists and poets”(Soja 1996, 67).

This part of the spatial system provides the ideological and political framework through which constituting subjects interpret the entirety of the spatial system. For instance, Secondspace influences spatial practices that is interpreted by Merrifield as they “are practices that ‘secrete’ society’s space” (Merrifield 1993, 524). Lefebvre identifies that, “[s]patial practice ensures continuity and some degree of cohesion. In terms of social space, and of each member of a given society’s relationship to that space, this cohesion implies a guaranteed level of *competence* and a specific level of *performance*” (Lefebvre 1991, 33). Soja coins the notion that fulfils the same purpose, Firstspace, which is “focused on the ‘real’ material” space (Soja 1996, 6). It is “materialized, socially produced, empirical” part of the spatial system (Soja 1996, 66). Moreover, Soja posits that,

As an empirical text, Firstspace is conventionally read at two different levels, one which concentrates on the accurate description of surface appearances [. . .], and the other which searches for spatial explanation in primarily exogenous social, psychological, and bio-physical processes (Soja 1996, 75).

This differentiation is pivotal as the negotiation of place into space may result in partial success. The space-constituting subject may deny spatial explanations in the Firstspace. Perception and knowledge of space is related to the Firstspace, the political power that forms the space is connected to the Secondspace. Therefore, Secondspace “is the dominant space in any society” (Lefebvre 1991, 39).

The ultimate part of the spatial system is the lived space that “is the dominated space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate” (Lefebvre 1991, 40). Lefebvre identifies it as representational space and writes that it is part of “space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols” (ibid.). Representational space “overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects” (Lefebvre 1991, 39). On the one hand, representational space originates from the interpretation of the Firstspace through the lens of Secondspace.

Consequently, it is both material and theoretical. On the other hand, it surpasses this identification and invites, as Soja argues, everything – “all other real and imagined spaces simultaneously” (Soja 1996, 69) – to come together in Thirdspace. My interpretation of Thirdspace is that it is both abstract (imagined) and manifested (real) part of the spatial system; includes “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 unconsciousness, the disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life and unending history” (Soja 1996, 56-7); in the framework of the Miévillean New Weird, it is especially pivotal to add, that it encompasses possibility and impossibility, ‘Real’ and ‘Unreal’; is open and can be subjected to reforms by utopian impulse through realisation and actualisation. Through the prism of the Miévillean New Weird, these oppositions become fluid, and become transparent and subjects to the interpretive frame. It is no wonder that this part of the spatial system is exactly what Miéville seeks to change in his novels. In his fantastical secondary worlds⁵⁶, the thesis differentiates Thirdspace into two sections. One has the same purpose as it originally has in consensual reality and functions, in the context of the dissertation, as the limited manifestation of Thirdspace. The other sort of Thirdspace becomes the unlimited one into which after successful negotiation of those places that seek to change it can be realised and actualised⁵⁷.

The Miévillean New Weird explores the consensual reality further and constructs those Thirdspaces that are possible, yet not realised and actualised toward which Miéville moves his narratives. The common theme of the two sorts of Thirdspaces is the inclusion of everything, but their difference lies in what is realised and actualised. The utopian impulse achieves its form of realisation and actualisation through the focalizer-narrators in the Miévillean Thirdspace. This utopian, emancipatory impulse is the attempt of spatial change in the narrative space for the better. Miéville constructs his focalizer-narrators as albeit their approaches, in their methods, and in their results differ, there is a common theme behind them that is precisely that utopian, emancipatory impulse. This impulse takes many forms⁵⁸ and it is a pivotal part in the Miévillean New Weird. As it presents a spatial system that is interpreted here as the Thirthing, which “does not derive simply from an additive combination of its binary antecedents but rather

⁵⁶ John Clute writes that it “can be defined as an autonomous world or venue which is not bound to mundane reality” (Clute 1999, 847).

⁵⁷ That is also the main difference between Thirdspace and heterotopia. In the former one, knowledge can be expanded due to the Thirdspace’s feature of radical openness. However, in the latter one, knowledge is limited due to the heterotopia’s relational feature to real spaces.

⁵⁸ Further details see the ‘Outcome’ and the ‘Difference’ rows in Appendix 2.

from a disordering, deconstruction, and tentative reconstitution of their presumed totalization producing an open alternative that is both *similar* and strikingly *different*” (Soja 1996, 61 emphasizes mine). These features are reflected in the spatial systems of the Miévillean New Weird.

4. Narratology and Space: The Rhetorics of Fantastic Spaces

4.1 Spatial Relations in Urban Located Genre Fiction

The pre-eminent position of the city in my examination defines and also limits the scope of the scrutiny to a focused and detailed perspective. Miéville's sole interest lies in cities and urban dwellers through social and political prism. In his interpretation, cities become fields of power struggle, where "the conflict is resolved by a progressive and 'forward looking' solution, namely collective class action among previously unaligned subaltern segments of society. They must organize and innovate, and in so doing create the possibility for a better though admittedly indeterminate and unpredictable future" (J. Burling 2009, 332). This explication does not function in all of the examined texts, however, it operates as showcasing attempts of social and political change. Miéville renders them into possibilities that advance from previously still-born ones to those that contain utopian hope.

Miéville's cities are products of capitalism. Whether they are dated in the pre-capitalist, yet industrial time period (*Bas-Lag* trilogy), in a contemporary high capitalist environment (*UnLunDun*), in contemporary centralised, yet marginalised capitalist societies (*The City and The City*), or in a colony of an urbanised capitalist society (*This Census-taker*), the habitat where his characters live is integrated into the urban framework. Miéville "picks up the Victorian fascination with the underbelly of the city, the slums, the sewers, and the scum of humanity, and creates tales of two cities — [. . .] the privileged vs. the marginalized" (Tarr 2018, 251). Therefore, his cities are not ideological representations of capitalism, but its corollary of power struggle. They are slums from the capitalist point of view.

His Marxist position reveals that the conflict originates from the opposition of the centre and the periphery. Although his cities are dubious in a sense that the focus of his books is on the periphery that David L. Pike understands as slum. He defines it as "a modernist invention [. . .] a vehicle and consequence of modernity, it is also a repudiation of it, a sign of its failure or of resistance to its ostensible progress" (Pike 2016a, 199-200). He elaborates that "it defies description and requires the physical act of demolition in order not to represent it but to make it disappear" (Pike 2016a, 200). Two "representational strategies persisted throughout the twentieth century", they are experiential realism and naturalism, "where the slum is consistently if not obsessively present as a sign of an obstruction to the process of modernization or as evidence of its dangerous state of incompleteness" (ibid.). The first one "sought to integrate the

slum into the greater fabric of the cityscape”, the second one “was concerned either to expose its threat to the broader social fabric it impinged upon but was distinct from or to describe in the full horror of its details the plight of those trapped within” (Pike 2016a, 201). Although the root of Miéville’s spatial fascination with the slum can be detected here, his prism breaks the ideological chains of realism and naturalism and initiates his project by joining to the list of authors that reconstruct and deconstruct the urban framework along the lines of fantastic literature to shed new light on the relationship of centre and periphery.

From the centre, the margin cannot be expressed. The capitalist totality that the ideology of realism and naturalism suggest fails to linguistically capture the phenomenon of slum. The slum “becomes what modernism can never name or represent directly, the truths it must only gesture at, because to describe them directly has been rendered impossible by the phenomenon of modernity” (Pike 2016a, 201-2). The unspeakable feature of this urban spatial formation epitomises the horror that the bourgeois ideological framework of experiential realism and naturalism maintains. Miéville’s criticism is clearly aimed at the relation that is established by their ideology. He recreates the slum through the lens of emancipation that stems from Marxism and his interpretation of the fantastic. Consequently, “[t]he city is thus for fantasist Miéville, as it was for realist Dickens, the precise and only setting by which to depict and to critique the unrepresentable capitalist totality, constituting not simply the ‘background’ for the plot but rather the operational terrain out of which the narrative arises” (J. Burling 2009, 333).

Miéville renders his cities as if they were slums to another location, a city that is concealed and also ideologically well-established. That city provides the viewpoint to those characters that represent a centre. This absence can be noticed in all of the examined texts, even in such novels as *Perdido Street Station* and *UnLunDun*. The former novel connotes the lingering, unanswered question about the origin of the Ribs⁵⁹ on which the polis of New Crobuzon built. What the sign refers to is beyond knowledge. This location is outside of the novel’s epistemological and ontological framework. So are the slake-moths, the antagonists of the novel. That is the reason Steve Shapiro defines them as embodiments of “the depredations of

⁵⁹ Miéville writes: “Leviathan shards of yellowing ivory thicker than the oldest trees exploded out of the ground, bursting away from each other, sweeping up in a curved ascent until, more than a hundred feet above the earth, looming now over the roofs of the surrounding houses, they curled sharply back towards each other. They climbed as high again till their points nearly touched, vast crooked fingers, a god-sized ivory mantrap. There had been plans to fill the square, to build offices and houses in the ancient chest cavity, but they had come to nothing. Tools used on the site broke easily and went missing. Cement would not set. Something baleful in the half-exhumed bones kept the gravesite free of permanent disturbance” (Miéville 2000, 40). The “archaeologists had found vertebrae the size of houses; a backbone which had been quietly reburied after one too many accidents on-site. No limbs, no hips, no gargantuan skull had surfaced. No one could say what manner of creature had fallen here and died millennia ago” (ibid.).

an inhuman vampire-capital. [. . .] [They] are an expression, or better an *exudation*, of the self-valorising movements of capital” (Shapiro 2002, 287, emphasis in the original). Miéville’s hoodwinking strategy of world building convinces the reader that New Crobuzon is the centre, the capitalist focal point. Although the latter novel begins and ends in London, the city serves the purpose of the original location for the antagonist. London is excluded from the novel’s epistemological and ontological framework. It is explained on the one hand, by the genre of the book (portal-quest fantasy), where the focus is on the fantastical world, not on the primary one; on the other hand, by the verisimilitude of UnLondon that surpasses the question of relation between centre and margin on the surface.

4.2 Urban Fantasy

The urban location-oriented focus in literature becomes more widespread since the emergence of Gothic fiction and John Clute argues that the same spatial relations can be discovered in urban fantasy. Clute provides shared features that include “claustrophobic containment [. . .]; subterranean pursuit; supernatural encroachment” (Clute 1999, 975). Miéville also relies on Gothic fiction to engage the reader with “[t]he scares, shocks and thrills [that] Gothic provides [which] [. . .] are [. . .] attempts to open the mind to the awe and terror of the genuine sublime. It is a case that has continued to be made [. . .] with Gothic’s generic descendents: science fiction’s ‘sense of wonder’ is in effect a straight translation of the Burkean sublime⁶⁰ into a cosmic, scientific and materialist idiom” (Roberts 2012, 26). Miéville locates his Gothic features in the urban framework.

Alexander C. Irvine identifies “elements common to all urban fantasies – a city in which supernatural events occur, [. . .] the redeployment of previous fantastic and folkloric topoi in unfamiliar contexts” (Irvine 2012, 200). Miéville’s cities as locations do not peter out into the background but buoy the entire narrative world suggesting that the Lefebvrian ‘urban fabric’ cannot be veiled. It is salient to distinguish different sorts of fantasies in order to map the fantasy genre. Therefore, Irvine identifies two sorts of urban fantasy with the emergence of this sub-genre from the 1980s with titles such as Emma Bull’s *War for the Oaks* (1987) and Tim Powers’s *The Anubis Gates* (1983). Irvine argues and suggests that, “[w]ithin those common

⁶⁰ Edmund Burke identifies sublime as the term “excite[s] the ideas of pain, and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror” (Burke 1998, 36). It differs from the Kantian sublime in a way that Kant merely differentiates between the beautiful and the sublime, however, Burke opposes the Sublime and the Beautiful in a rather antithetical way.

elements, there are two fundamental strains of urban fantasy, which might be loosely differentiated as those in which *urban* is a descriptor applied to *fantasy* and those in which *fantasy* modifies *urban*” (Irvine 2012, 200, emphases in the original).

These two varieties differ in their presumptions of the urban fantasy. On the one hand, there are the “[u]rban fantasies of the folkloric type [that] derive more closely from the literary fantasy tradition, from the fairy tale through the Victorian fantasists to the Inklings”, they stem from the “exploration of the folkloric tradition and places it in an urban environment”; and on the other hand, the latter sort “derives from the tradition of exploration of urban existence and uses the devices of the fantastic to continue this exploration” (Irvine 2012, 201). The prior one is clearly related to fantasy tradition, the latter one stems from “a visionary tradition that is best represented by the motif of the imaginary voyage, a journey that reworks and re-imagines the layout of the urban labyrinth and which records observations of the city streets as it passes through them” (Coverley 2012, 9). This tradition takes interest in the urban, where reality ceases to provide explanations⁶¹. Its main location of interest becomes London and it is termed the “tradition of London writing in which the topography of the city is refashioned through the imaginative force of the writer” (Coverley 2012, 15). As a zealous city-dweller and Londonophile, China Miéville belongs to the latter category of authors. His interpretation of a metropolis in his novels results in different manifestations that can be traced back to the English capital.

4.2.1 Psychogeography and Sublime

For Miéville, London as the point of reference remains unchallenged, he re-interprets its tradition of psychogeography and expands the scope to cities in his secondary worlds. What helps more him in his endeavour is, as Carl Freedman argues, that, “[a]ny modern capitalist city is, virtually by definition, a place of nontransparency and hybridity, a place structured more complexly and productive of more different kinds of experience than any single individual can truly take in” (Freedman 2003, 402). Roger Luckhurst points out that “the first megalopolis of the modern era, London becomes a sublime object that evokes awe and evades rational capture” (Luckhurst 2002, 531). Miéville draws on William Blake and Charles Dickens, who “have understood that London is not a city that can be encompassed by the panoptical ambitions of novelistic realism but requires a writing that evokes ‘the ineffability and lack which is always

⁶¹ This tradition exemplifies William Defoe, William Blake, Edgar Allan Poe, Charles Baudelaire, Thomas de Quincey, Robert Louis Stevenson, Arthur Machen, Peter Ackroyd, Iain Sinclair and Alan Moore.

at the heart of London” (Luckhurst 2002, 531). Miéville’s attempt achieving that is to reiterate the urban sentiment from the turn of the twentieth century that “ambivalence toward the city expressed itself in the authors’ tendency to describe the metropolis as a site of terror and wonder, in accordance with Edmund Burke’s definition of the sublime” (Den Tandt 2014, IV). Sublime provides the language through which Miéville constructs his cities.

Miéville’s approach is the amalgamation of his predecessors in psychogeography. He gets access to “the invisible community of the marginalised and dispossessed” (*Perdido Street Station, The Scar, Iron Council*), presents “the city as a dreamscape in which nothing is as it seems and which can only be navigated by those possessing secret knowledge” (*The City and The City*), “creates strange juxtapositions between familiar names and locations and visions of a transcendent city” (*UnLunDun*), employs “the occult to political ends, their exposure of hidden sources of power questioning the governance of the city and revealing the plight of the marginalized and dispossessed” (*The City and The City*) (Coverley 2012, 15-6; 16; 41; 49). He manipulates the “*genius loci* or ‘sense of place’, a kind of historical consciousness that exposes the psychic connectivity of landscapes” (Coverley 2012, 15). In this category of urban fantasy tradition “the city is not a field on which the naturalist and fantastic play out a series of thematic collisions; it is a *genius loci*, animating the narrative and determining its fantastic nature”, consequently, the logical relations in the narrative world stem from the very logic of the secondary world (Irvine 2012, 201). Miéville’s cities radiate “with a vivid sense of place: a physical location with specific geographic, architectural, and infrastructural features, and a community of people” (Siemann 2016, 52).

The content and the framework match and result in the Miévillean sublime. Freedman elaborates that the Miévillean sublime differs from the Longinian tradition: Miéville captures the “urban sublime – the awe-inspiring (if frequently unbeautiful) grandeur of the modern capitalist metropolis, in all its unfathomable heterogeneity and hybridity – has been a frequent effect of literary representation from Blake onwards” (Freedman 2015, 13). To achieve that, Miéville utilises psychogeography that “is [. . .] the point at which psychology and geography collide, a means of exploring the behavioural impact of urban place” (Coverley 2012, 4). The combination of the Miévillean sublime (language) and his interpretation of psychogeography (method) are intertwined with which Miéville harnesses and explores the political perspective of his subjects and his spatial systems in his fiction.

Consequently, Miéville turns to the fantastic which “he considers [. . .] to be the ‘pulp wing of Surrealism’ (Miéville in Marshall 2003)” (P. Williams 2016, 409). Mark P. Williams explains that, “[t]he most powerful innovations of Surrealism into the popular consciousness

are based on a twin insistence: first, that the world we see around us is greater than the sum of the parts we employ for its representation, and, second, that this greatness is material even where it is intangible. Surrealism insists on the materiality of the imagination, and in that sense Miéville's cities are properly Surrealist environments" (ibid.). The *Bas-Lag* trilogy epitomises this perfectly. The narratives are set in a time period in which capitalism has not reached its peak, the spatial relations in those novels demonstrate the urban estrangement in its full capacity and problematise spatiality.

4.2.2 Maps

Secondary worlds also need a degree of verisimilitude that is reinforced through maps. David Pike points out that "mapping (along with the related activity of language invention) is an essential supplement, and often a precursor, to the standard creative process of character development and plotting" (David Pike 2016b, 141). Miéville explores the possibilities provided by the language of sublime in his novels, therefore, another mainstay of his to construct secondary worlds is maps. The secondary belief⁶² becomes more elaborate, they help to bring the secondary world into being. Dennis Wood writes about the power of maps extensively. He observes that, "maps are systems of propositions, where a proposition is nothing more than a statement that affirms (or denies) the existence of something" (Wood 2010, 34). Furthermore, "the ability of the map to figure the new state itself, *to perform the shape of statehood*" (Wood 2010, 31 emphasizes in the original). As such, maps are important components of the paraphernalia of the capitalist system. In *Perdido Street Station*, the map separates the polis from the rest of the secondary world. Pike adds that, "the map of the transport networks converging on *Perdido Street Station* greets the reader with a visual assurance that the *genius loci* of this alien city (albeit an alien city much like London) somehow inheres in those networks, and challenges the reader to use the map somehow to find them" (Pike 2016b, 144). By that he establishes both the sense of existence and the belief that this existence is the centre of that secondary world.

Therefore, to achieve that sense in the reader, maps become a subject to manipulation. Wood argues that "the map through its presentation of the state *as an existent thing* obscures the origins of the state *in history*" (Wood 2010, 32). James Kneale remarks that the "extended

⁶² David S. Bratman writes that "secondary belief [is] being defined as the intense form of readerly acceptance required for proper belief in an autonomous subcreation" (Bratman 1999, 952).

topographical descriptions in print from the eighteenth century onwards were part and parcel of colonial and capitalist conceptions of land: ‘locations are intertwined with ideological explanations for the possession of property’ (Davis 1987: 54)” (Kneale 2009, 427). Consequently, they “are never benign, they are tools of highly edited and focused information that frame a set of prescriptive criteria” (Porter 2005b, 89). They fulfil a pivotal bureaucratic function in the construction of the capitalist totality that the ideology of experiential realism and naturalism suggest and fail to deliver linguistically. Dennis Wood elaborates “that the map was an artefact” of persuasion “that *constructed* the state, that literally *helped* to bring the state into being” (Wood 2010, 32). In *Perdido Street Station*, this is clearly demonstrated on the map of New Crobuzon: the polis floats in the void, the urban entity emerges from the chaos.

As a result of that, it is the most tangible manifestation of a Secondspace in a spatial system. Miéville realises that the totality cannot be achieved, therefore, his narratives deliberately fail to capture even the illusion of totality. Wood claims that, “[a]s systems of propositions, maps are necessarily composed of signs (the propositions are embedded in signs), where signs are unions of signifieds (the subject of the proposition, say the *state*) and signifiers (the marks put down on the paper, say the *lines* supposed to be the borders)” (Wood 2010, 35-6). Only *Perdido Street Station* consists a separate map, however, there are episodes where maps surface to indicate the problematic nature of capitalist totality in different manifestations. Their appearances indicate the opposition between the centre and the margin.

The other two novels of the *Bas-Lag* trilogy express one way to interpret the antagonism between the centre (New Crobuzon) and the periphery (the Armada in *The Scar* and the Iron Council in *Iron Council*). The enmity stems from the fact that these margins bear more information about the secondary world than the centre. Miéville unravels that it is one of the reasons that the centre wages war against the periphery. In *UnLunDun*, the protagonist arrives from the centre and fails to understand the map of the margin that is the secondary world⁶³. In *The City and The City*, the map of the city states (Beszel and Ul Qoma) is mentioned in the text, it is depicted on a same drawing⁶⁴, which attempts to borrow a “unique power to give the elusive idea of the state concrete form” (Wood 2010, 31).

Maps borrow verisimilitude to the secondary worlds, they become manifested Secondspaces, therefore, they are subjects to manipulation. They propose enmity between the

⁶³ Miéville writes: “There were several maps of the abcity in the book, but Deeba couldn’t make much sense of them” (Miéville 2007, 282).

⁶⁴ Miéville writes: “On a wall a large-scale map of Beszel and Ul Qoma. To avoid prosecution the lines and shades of division were there—total, alter, and crosshatched—but ostentatiously subtle, distinctions of greyscale” (Miéville 2009b, 56).

centre and the margin, which become the oscillating power to energise urban fantasy narratives. Miéville expands the power struggle to the platform of maps to demonstrate the engulfing feature of this fight.

4.3 Cognitive Estrangement and Cognitive Effect

The dynamism between cognitive estrangement and cognitive effect drives the urban fantasy narratives in which characters and readers have to interpret the secondary world. In the contemporary framework of urban fantasy, “Miéville makes it clear that capitalism is a powerful component of the urban hyperobject” (Prystash 2017, 283). Furthermore, as Justin Prystash argues that

Miéville makes of the city an ecological object that puts constant demands on the human perception it enfolds. In this sense, his cities are ‘hyperobjects’: ‘things that are massively distributed in time and space relative to humans. . . . they exhibit their effects interobjectively; that is, they can be detected in a space that consists of interrelationships between aesthetic properties of objects’ (Morton, *Hyperobjects 1*; emphasis in original) (Prystash 2017, 282).

Miéville realises those features in his urban spatial systems that Morton writes. These urban spatial systems are incongruous in their spatial relations, different characters get access to different parts of them. Therefore, it comes no surprise that in his cities not only the characters, but also the readers receive the “aesthetic experiences [that] continually beguile [. . .] with strangeness, confront [. . .] with alterity, and ignite a ‘sense of wonder’ with the ‘misplaced familiar’ (‘Cognition’ 244, 247n37)” (Prystash 2017, 278). To realise these differences generated by his cities, Miéville hinges on the Suvinian model, a rationalist approach to the radically different within fantastical texts. The original understanding of Darko Suvin’s template is his interpretation of science fiction “whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main formal device is an imaginative framework alternative to the author’s empirical environment” (Suvin 1979, 7-8). The cognitive estrangement is understood through cognition effect⁶⁵. The cognition effect manipulates the de-familiarized urban spatial system of the secondary world. It invites the reader to embrace the alterity presented by the text that Miéville calls “unreality function” (Miéville 2009a, 244). In that sense, Mark P. Williams’ argument that, “Miéville’s approach to

⁶⁵ “The cognition effect is a *persuasion*. [The] effect is a function of (textual) *charismatic authority*. The reader surrenders to the cognition effect to the extent that he or she surrenders to the authority of the text and its author function” (Miéville 2009a, 238). Rhys Williams argues that “[t]he cognition effect is the production of a verisimilitude to contemporary norms of what is considered reasonable and realistic and is thus, as Miéville claims, an ideological effect” (Williams 2014, 621).

fantastic fiction: that reality is also predominantly hidden from our perspective and it takes weird cognitive estrangements to enable us to grasp how this affects our daily lives” proves that Miéville’s discourse here is about the intrinsic failure of alterity as a verisimilitude of fantasy (P. Williams 2016, 402). Miéville postulates that the quotidian contaminates alterity, because otherwise “true alterity would be inconceivable, thus imperceptible” for human cognition (Miéville 2009a, 248). Miéville explains it

[W]e grasp not just at the strangeness but at the misplaced familiar within it. Class analysis here might include, among other projects: conceiving the (always-already failing) fantastic as a combined and uneven development of a conceived totality as reality and its rebuke; articulating the sublime and the numinous as a misspoken emancipatory telos; a Benjaminian/Beckettian attempt to fail better and better at thinking the unthinkable (Miéville 2009a, 248).

In this framework, the cognition effect becomes a utopian impulse by offering the opportunity of change. Focalizer-narrators realise throughout the narratives that the secondary world is open, only the ideological constraints are the boundaries in the cognition effect. They challenge it, their aim is the change of the spatial system through rhetorical means.

4.4 Language and Rhetoric

Language formulates different sorts of spatial relations in New Weird fiction and mediates everything through them. In her book, *Rhetorics of Fantasy* (2008), Farah Mendlesohn identifies and then concentrates on “the means by which the fantastic enters the narrated world” (Mendlesohn 2008, 13). The platform for these processes is language. Mendlesohn argues that there are four categories that are determined by that method. These are the portal-quest, the immersive, the intrusion and the liminal fantasy. She explains them as follows: “[i]n the portal-quest we are invited through into the fantastic; in the intrusion fantasy, the fantastic enters the fictional world; in the liminal fantasy, the magic hovers in the corner of our eye; while in the immersive fantasy we are allowed no escape” (ibid.). In her book, she extends what she terms science fictional approach to fantasy by claiming salience of “how the reader is brought into the speculative world influences the ways in which that world can be described” (Mendlesohn 2008, 11). Mendlesohn’s rhetorical strategies introduce another mode to comprehend fantasies. Consequently, in the dissertation I interpret “rhetorics” in her sense of the word, which is a narratological viewpoint, a specific locatedness through which the focalizer-narrator attempts to interpret the fictional reality of the narrative. In his narratives, Miéville constructs a language where the novum unsettles the reader’s framework of interpretation, the strange world materialises through the cognition effect. In the following paragraphs, I will explore the main

points of the Mendlesohnian system. This approach provides the necessary framework to my investigation and helps to establish the connection between spatial systems and rhetoric. Mendlesohn does not examine spatial systems in fantasy in her book per se, however, she points out examples in her interpretations. I draw on her observations and elaborate them in the Lefebvrian and Sojan interpretation of spatial systems.

4.4.1 Portal-quest Fantasy

Mendlesohn argues that in a portal-quest fantasy “[t]he language [...] is often elaborate, but it is the elaboration of the anthropologist or the Pre-Raphaelite painter, intensely descriptive and exploratory rather than assumptive” (Mendlesohn 2008, 24). This strategy attempts to reveal the mysteries of the fantastical world or the secondary world and explains their *modus operandi* to make it more comprehensible for the reader through the prism of the focalizer. The reader is closely adhered to the focalizer. The cognitive estrangement does not hinder the cognition effect to an extent as it does in other cases. Familiarity is almost tangible. Portal-quest fantasies “lead us gradually to the point where the protagonist knows his or her world enough to change it and to enter into that world’s destiny” (Mendlesohn 2008, 24).

Portal-quest fantasies curtail the scope of possible rhetorical strategies, as Mendlesohn notes that, “[t]he portal-quest fantasy by its very nature needs to deny the possibility of a polysemic discourse” (Mendlesohn 2008, 62). As a result of that, one dominating rhetorical strategy prevails in these novels. Miéville follows this rhetorical strategy in most parts of *UnLunDun*, albeit it should be noted that the “uninterruptible and incontestable” feature of the linearity of portal-quest fantasies is to be subverted in that novel (Mendlesohn 2008, 49). Mendlesohn postulates a tendency where the portal-quest fantasy follows the rhetorical structure of a club narrative that

is diegetic, a denial of discourse, an assertion of a particular type of Victorian masculinity, a private place uninterrupted by the needs of domesticity or even self-care (there are always servants in the club), combined with a stature signaled by the single-voiced and impervious authority (Mendlesohn 2008, 49).

In *UnLunDun*, Miéville subverts precisely this rhetorical manoeuvre to construct space for his focalizer-protagonist and utilises the rhetoric of “intrusion fantasy [...] to encourage the protagonist to break out of the monologue” (Mendlesohn 2008, 52). On the level of the narrative, the club narrative is expressed in a constant negotiation between the female focalizer-protagonist and an allegedly male book that contains the tale supposed to be told about the process of that particular narrative she participates in.

4.4.2 Intrusion Fantasy

Intrusion fantasy relies on explanation and description, where “the language reflects constant amazement” (Mendlesohn 2008, 30). It is never expected from the focalizer and the reader to “become accustomed to the fantastic” (ibid.). Mendlesohn describes this rhetorical strategy as it depends on the “distrust of what is known in favor of what is sensed” on part of the focalizer (Mendlesohn 2008, 293). This is a negotiation that is mediated in and through language. The rhetoric strategy “of the intrusion fantasy is from denial to *acceptance*”, therefore, it suggests that the focalizer has to concur with the narrative space in which the fantastic emerges (Mendlesohn 2008, 293). Consequently, in a spatial system, the relations between space and place precipitate “existential angst” by overwhelming the focalizer with the details of the spatial system that are beyond the ontological and epistemological framework (Mendlesohn 2008, 346). The focalizer expunges parts of its control over language to situate itself in the narrative space. By being disoriented, the chaos on the loose that is intrusion fantasy restrains the body and mind of the focalizer. These instances surface in *Perdido Street Station* and *The Scar* and are mediated through this sort of rhetoric in one of their subplots.

In *Perdido Street Station* the intrusion is manifested in the creatures of the slake-moths. They spread inexplicable fear and suck out the dreams of their victims. In the novel, two ab-human entities, the Weaver and the Construct Council, provide the opportunity to counterweigh the intruding party of slake-moths. From spatial perspective, this is the power struggle among places to affect the entirety of space. The political rivalry about the spatial system of the narrative space is expressed in the confrontation between the perspectives of the Weaver, of the Construct Council, of the residents of New Crobuzon and of the slake-moths.

In *The Scar*, Mendlesohn postulates it as “an anti-quest novel” (Mendlesohn 2008, 167). However, this assertion may not justify some parts of the narrative. Mendlesohn claims that the “suspension of the intrusion fantasy does not seem to be constructed in the same way as the estrangement or knowingness of the liminal fantastic” and adds that it “constructs its suspension through escalation” (Mendlesohn 2008, 298). If we read Bellis Coldwine as the focalizer-protagonist then it can be noticed that her place is still New Crobuzon that cannot be affected by the different intrusions that are taking place during the narrative. She closes herself into her place and Mendlesohn highlights her adamant separation from the Armada, therefore, suggesting a hybrid rhetoric structure for the novel. Mendlesohn points out that in “those scenes

in which neither Tanner Sack nor Bellis Coldwine appear that are written most like those of the classic quest fantasy” (Mendlesohn 2008, 160). Therefore, it can be read as it follows the rhetoric of portal-quest fantasy. There is neither amazement, nor adaptation to her surrounding spatial system due to Bellis’s repudiation towards it. She hardly grasps the complexity of the Armada, consequently, she cannot play or negotiate her part of place into that space. To refer back to Mendlesohn, she identifies that the dynamic tension of intrusion fantasy is “push-pull rhythm” (Mendlesohn 2008, 388).

4.4.3 Immersive Fantasy

The language of the “immersive fantasy *must* take for granted the fantastic elements with which they are surrounded; they must exist as integrated with the magical (or fantastic) even if they themselves are not magical” (Mendlesohn 2008, 28). Therefore, immersion fantasy formalises linguistically everything into hypothetically (non-)estranged. Mendlesohn claims that in immersive fantasies “the actors must be able to engage with their world; they must be able to scrape its surface and discover something deeper than a stage set” (Mendlesohn 2008, 180). The rhetoric structure “sees knowledge as argued out of the world, by breaking it open” (Mendlesohn 2008, 182). In relations between space and place, the method attempts to re-inscribe the character into the spatial system which provides an opportunity for the character to negotiate its position in the spatial system. Miéville utilises this strategy in the main plotlines of *Perdido Street Station*, *Iron Council* and in *The City and The City*.

The first and the ultimate novels of the Bas-Lag trilogy reveal that their protagonists trawl then achieve a revision of the spatial structure of their narrative spaces. Both Isaac Dan der Grimnebulin and Judah Low realise that they have to negotiate their places into the spatial system to change it. Furthermore, they are the only ones, who are allowed to do that by their knowledge as scientists. The difference between them is that the former one does not look deliberately for it, but encounters it and acts accordingly; the latter one is more conscious of this possibility, therefore, actively seeks it. After noticing it, he seizes it. Isaac “discovers [...] physics: he makes the transition from alchemist to scientist within the bounds of the novel, even if that science studies forces that do not exist in our world” (Mendlesohn 2008, 182). Judah literally intervenes into the narrative space and its spatial system by conjuring golems.

In *The City and The City* immersive fantasy’s rhetoric prevails. As solving the mystery comes to an end, the focalizer-protagonist, Tyador Borlú successfully negotiates his place into

the seemingly incompatible narrative spaces that have different spatial systems. In his home space, Beszel contains estrangement for the reader, but as he enters into Ul Qoma, double estrangement surfaces subjecting the reader and Borlú. He negotiates his rhetoric structure and attempts to inscribe himself into the Ul Qoman side of the narrative space as he connects the already obtained rhetoric structures: Besz, Illitan – that is Ul Qoman version – and English with a heavy “Austrian accent” as he imitates Arnold Schwarzenegger, “I’ll be back” (Miéville 2009b, 257). In *Breach* the already established rhetoric structure is annulled, therefore, a novel re-negotiate his place into the new spatial system. It affects the rhetoric and the spatial structure by introducing a new language to Borlú and by overcoming the previous barriers between city-states. The corollary is the entirely novel rhetoric and spatial structure which enriches the narrative space from the viewpoint of focalizer-protagonist.

4.4.4 Liminal Fantasy

In the case of liminal fantasy, language diverges into two areas of influence, it does not provide the same affect on the reader as on the focalizer. Mendlesohn describes the separation of the two affects as “[w]hile liminal fantasy casualizes the fantastic within the experience of the protagonist, it estranges the reader. The situation is odd, and it is our reaction to oddness that is being exploited” (Mendlesohn 2008, 35). The rhetoric structure of liminal fantasy functions as a dual process. Mendlesohn classifies these two as the knowingness and “the *construction* of the fantastic” (Mendlesohn 2008, 450 emphasis in the original). She suggests that language mediates the uncertainty that is expressed by irony and by “equipoise”, “the term Clute suggests in his essay in *Conjunctions* 39 and that is essentially a more positivist construction of Todorov’s concept of hesitation” (Mendlesohn 2008, 449). In conceiving *This Census-Taker* Miéville utilises the rhetoric structure of liminal fantasy to construct his text.

Establishing the position of the presumably focalizer-protagonist in the narrative space, Miéville begins his novella with an imbalance, the boy witnessing a murder, his mother has killed his father. He attempts to escape from the event. His disorientation persists throughout the narrative, the two spatial systems cannot really be investigated as there are only rare occasions when the focalisation changes. On the one hand, his rhetoric structure echoes immersive fantasy, not questioning and presenting almost everything ordinary. On the other hand, the arrival of the census-taker undermines this position and amazement and inquiry come forward which indicate features borrowed from intrusion fantasy. Details surface that shed

different light on his parents thus truth conditions cannot be decided. The uncertainty that is seen as the main condition of this sort of fantasy for the focalizer-protagonist and for the reader cannot be mediated through the rhetorical device of irony. In *This Census-Taker* this position is reserved for trauma.

The hybrid rhetoric structure hinders the understanding of the spatial system of the novella. It also conveys uncertainty. As a traumatised child focalizer-protagonist mediates most of it in the narrative, this condition hampers him being inscribed in the different spatial systems. In this narrative space, the focalizer-protagonist remains on the level of dread that impedes his rhetoric structure to construct a spatial system. The absence of negotiation between his place and his surrounding space is allocated precisely to the lack of rhetoric structure.

4.5 Conclusive Remarks

Miéville's cities are products of capitalism, but not its ideological representations, rather its corollary of power struggle, consequently, they are interpreted as slums. In his interpretation, cities become fields of power struggle through social and political prism, where "the conflict is resolved by a progressive and 'forward looking' solution, namely collective class action among previously unaligned subaltern segments of society" (J. Burling 2009, 332). The conflict originates from the opposition of the centre and the periphery. The root of Miéville's spatial fascination with the slum stems from the realisation of the urban breaking the ideological chains of experiential realism and naturalism. This makes them impossible to grasp the urban experience. Consequently, he initiates his project by joining the list of authors that reconstruct and deconstruct the urban framework along the lines of fantastic literature to shed new light on the relationship of centre and periphery. The capitalist totality that the ideology of realism and naturalism suggest fails to linguistically capture the phenomenon of slum. The unspeakable feature of this urban spatial formation epitomises the horror that the bourgeois ideological framework of experiential realism and naturalism maintains. Miéville's criticism is clearly aimed at the relation that is established by their ideology. He renders his cities as if they were slums to another location, a city that is concealed and also ideologically well-established. Therefore, Miéville's hoodwinking strategy of world building convinces the reader that his cities function as centres and not peripheries.

To provide a framework of interpretation, Miéville's cities as locations do not peter out into the background but buoy the entire narrative world suggesting that the Lefebvrian 'urban

fabric' cannot be veiled. Two cases of urban fantasies can be understood, the latter sort "derives from the tradition of exploration of urban existence and uses the devices of the fantastic to continue this exploration" (Irvine 2012, 201). It stems from "a visionary tradition that is best represented by the motif of the imaginary voyage, a journey that reworks and re-imagines the layout of the urban labyrinth and which records observations of the city streets as it passes through them" (Coverley 2012, 9). As a zealous city-dweller and London-phile, China Miéville belongs to this category of authors.

His cities radiate "with a vivid sense of place: a physical location with specific geographic, architectural, and infrastructural features, and a community of people" (Siemann 2016, 52). Miéville's realisation of "London is not a city that can be encompassed by the panoptical ambitions of novelistic realism but requires a writing that evokes 'the ineffability and lack which is always at the heart of London'" (Luckhurst 2002, 531) is to reiterate the urban sentiment from the turn of the twentieth century that "ambivalence toward the city expressed itself in the authors' tendency to describe the metropolis as a site of terror and wonder, in accordance with Edmund Burke's definition of the sublime" (Den Tandt 2014, IV). Miéville captures the "urban sublime – the awe-inspiring (if frequently unbeautiful) grandeur of the modern capitalist metropolis, in all its unfathomable heterogeneity and hybridity – has been a frequent effect of literary representation from Blake onwards" (Freedman 2015, 13). The Miévillean New Weird relies on the combination of the sublime (language) and Miéville's interpretation of psychogeography (method). It is an encompassing way of writing with which Miéville harnesses and explores the political and social perspective of his subjects and his spatial systems.

He explores the possibilities provided by the language of sublime in his novels, therefore, another mainstay of his to construct secondary worlds is maps. But he seeks another degree of verisimilitude for his secondary worlds that is reinforced through maps. With the establishment both of the sense of existence and the belief that this existence is the centre of that secondary world, Miéville aims to achieve the sense in the reader that maps become subjects to political and social manipulation. Maps fulfil a pivotal bureaucratic function in the construction of the capitalist totality that the ideology of experiential realism and naturalism suggest and fail to deliver linguistically. As a corollary, they are the most tangible manifestations of Secondspace in a spatial system. The enmity stems from the fact that these margins bear more information about the secondary world than the centre. Miéville unravels that it is one of the reasons that the centre wages war against the periphery.

His urban spatial systems generate cognitive estrangement and are understood through cognition effect, which is “persuasion. The effect is a function of (textual) charismatic authority. The reader surrenders to the cognition effect to the extent that he or she surrenders to the authority of the text and its author function” (Miéville 2009a, 238). Rhys Williams argues that “[t]he cognition effect is the production of a verisimilitude to contemporary norms of what is considered reasonable and realistic and is thus, as Miéville claims, an ideological effect” (Williams 2014, 621). In his narratives, Miéville constructs a language where the cognitive estrangement unsettles the reader’s framework of interpretation, the strange world materialises through the cognition effect. The system that Farah Mendlesohn provides is the necessary framework and helps to establish the connection between spatial systems and rhetoric. I utilise Mendlesohn’s system to explore the differences between focalizer-narrators and shed light on their constructed positionality within the spatial system, which is based on their social and political power in it.

Before the start of the exploration of the primary texts, it is pivotal to specify the previously provided theoretical background and to establish a hermeneutic model. Miéville categorises his focalizer-narrators into two groups, others and non-others. This also determines their linguistic and rhetoric approach toward spaces, whether they would be able to experience the wholeness of the spatial system or not. In most cases, the Miévillean spatial system is similar, yet strikingly different to the Sojan spatial triad. This connotes that the two spatial systems differ in their Thirdspaces. The thesis signals if there are differences between the interpretive framework of Soja and Miéville. Therefore, the Sojan Firstspace has two parts, on the one hand, where the subject experiences space, on the other hand, the subject understands how and why the space functions as it does. In the case of Firstspace the two interpretations (Sojan and Miévillean) do not differ. The Sojan Secondspace is a complex system of rules and regulations that determines the corollary of what and how can be experienced in the Firstspace. It is also regulated in Secondspace in what way, if in any, the subject can change the spatial system. The Secondspace is controlled by the Ideological State Apparatuses, thus, subjected to the ideology of the ruling class.

In my understanding, the focus of Miéville’s narratives is to have his subjects change the Secondspace. Miéville, being a Marxist, focuses first on the subjects and considers what that subject can do, then stresses the community that is formed by subjects. Therefore, the Miévillean Secondspace is interpreted as the platform for perpetual negotiation between two major factors: subjects, who function as focalizer-narrators in the narrative space, and the Ideological State Apparatuses. The Ideological State Apparatus renders subjects into two

groups: those who have access to Secondspace and those who do not, who are excluded from it. The latter formation becomes the others. The Sojan Thirdspace is an all-encompassing abstract and manifested spatial formation. It is abstract as it conveys the amalgamation of First-, Second-, and Thirdspace together and goes beyond that, however, the regulated experiences with all those possibilities that may become reality, but they are never realised and actualised. The exclusions of what can and cannot be realised and actualised are contained in and by the Secondspace and its governing Ideological State Apparatus. The manifested Sojan Thirdspace provides the same amalgamation as the abstract one without the possibilities as it is lived space in the Lefebvorean sense of the word. The possibilities have to be first realised, then actualised by those subjects who oppose the ideology posited by the Ideological State Apparatus.

The Miévillean Thirdspace is similar, yet strikingly different. In it, subjects attempt to have these possibilities realised then actualised in both sense of the term, the abstract and the manifested. Therefore, the aim of Miéville's focalizer-narrators is spatial emancipation through negotiation. The criticism toward the Ideological State Apparatus is envisioned as subjects as places are negotiated to space. Consequently, first, it is Secondspace that has to be changed and has to have its horizon broadened by successful negotiations. Second, these changes can be experienced in both understandings of the Miévillean Thirdspace. Miéville's focalizer-narrators function in these acts as initiators, although their vehemence in this role changes from book to book. Moreover, the scope in these negotiations also differs from book to book: self and community. In their outcome the primary readings also vary: successful and unsuccessful.

5. Perdido Street Station: The Unsuccessful Change of the Urban Spatial System for the Forming Community, but a Changed Spatial System for a Focalizer-narrator

In the first book of the *Bas-Lag* trilogy (2000-2-4), Miéville establishes a method to change the spatial system of his novels. This formula has already been demonstrated in his previous novel, *King Rat* (1998), where the protagonist, Saul Garamond, subverts the spatial system of the narrative space, by moving from monarchy to republic⁶⁶. In *Perdido Street Station* (2000), Miéville creates two focalizer-narrators and it is through their perspectives that I am going to examine the change of the spatial system in the secondary world. This change, however, differs in its direction, it is changing back to the status quo. The two focalizer-narrators vary in their knowledge about the space of city-state of New Crobuzon. The two viewpoints belong to Isaac Dan der Grimnebulin and Yagharek. The prior one is a human and is native to the metropolis; therefore, he is read as a non-other. The latter one is a garuda⁶⁷, he used to have wings, but due to punishment, they have been removed. He arrives in New Crobuzon at the beginning of the narrative. He is interpreted as an other. Their spatial knowledge is conveyed through their rhetoric and linguistic register they use. They experience the First-, Second-, and Thirdspace of the city-state differently. Albeit both of them are in the same polis.

The *Perdido Street Station* sets in the fantastical, pseudo-Victorian city of New Crobuzon on the continent of Rohagi within the secondary world of Bas-Lag. The city-state is governed by an elected local government that is apt to apply autocratic methods of ruling. New Crobuzon exhibits features of an industrial capitalist, imperialist and colonialist power that attempts to acquire and exploit every means to enrich its upper echelon and ruling class. This class-based system favours humans because proportionally they provide the majority of the residents of New Crobuzon. The metropolis also accommodates distinct sorts of entities. The non-human races are termed xenians⁶⁸ in the *Bas-Lag* trilogy. They take positions on the verges of the urban community, they can be found in ghettos and slums. There is another stratum of society, on the margin of the social matrix; they are the Remades. They are subjects of the criminal justice

⁶⁶ The spatial system of the monarchy is interpreted as a construction of one subject, which suggests a rigid hierarchy. In a republic, negotiations of places to be inserted into the spatial system are more flexible, the spatial system is a corollary of negotiation of subjects.

⁶⁷ The garudas are flying humanoid creatures, feared desert warriors from the desert of Cymek. They are borrowed from the Indian folklore.

⁶⁸ There are the borrowed amphibian creatures from the Russian folklore, the water-residing vodyanoi; the golem-like plant-people from the Jewish folklore, the humanoid cacti, Cactacae; and the humanoid scarab beetle creatures from the Egyptian folklore, a community where females have human bodies and a beetle head, males are exclusively non-sentient.

system of New Crobuzon. Their crimes are processed in punishment factories where the amalgamation of magic and biology alters their bodies according to their crimes. They are shaped into docile and useful slaves for the Crobuzan society.

In this chapter, I explore Miéville's change of the Thirdspace through the prism of the two focalizer-narrators' rhetoric and spatial systems. The argument is twofold. First, in a crucial episode, two focalizer-narrators are taken from their familiar urban space and forced to visit the location known in the novel as the worldweave, where a creature, the Weaver, dwells. I begin the investigation with connecting the focalizer-narrators' rhetorics, based on Farah Mendlesohn's taxonomy of the rhetorics of fantasy, to the spatial system of New Crobuzon. Throughout the thesis I interpret "rhetorics" in her sense of the word, which is a narratological viewpoint, a specific locatedness through which the focalizer-narrator attempts to interpret the fictional reality of the narrative. My contribution to that approach is that I deploy this to the spatial understanding of the focalizer-narrators. The corollary sheds light on the differences in constructing urban spatial system between the two strategies of the focalizer-narrators. Second, I investigate the changes of the Crobuzan spatial system through the lens of the rhetoric of the two focalizers in the manifested, Miévillean Thirdspace, the worldweave and the political power struggle for the domination of the Crobuzan spatial system in the Firstspace. I conclude that travelling of the two focalizer-narrators to the worldweave reveals the origin of the problem and paves the way for the possibilities to change back the Crobuzan spatial system.

5.1 Focalizer-narrators, Rhetorics, and Spatial Positions

Both of the two focalizer-narrators are social outcasts in the Crobuzan society. Isaac Dan der Grimnebulin is a human renegade scientist who pursues any scientific means to earn money. His approach to hierarchical institutions is anarchical. He disdains his previous workplace, the Crobuzan university. He prefers to work alone. Yagharek is from outside of the New Crobuzon and arrives on a boat to the city-state. Being a foreign garuda, his appearance differs from the local garudas; his aim is to find Grimnebulin and to convince the human to restore his ability to fly as his wings have been sawed off due to a punishment he committed in his homeland. Grimnebulin describes Yagharek his methodology as unorthodox⁶⁹; therefore, in the attempt of unravelling the mystery of flying, he follows his earlier practice of obtaining materials he needs

⁶⁹ "I'm not a chymist, or a biologist, or a thaumaturge...I'm a dilettante, Yagharek, a dabbler. I think of myself... [. . .] 'I think of myself as the main station for all the schools of thought. Like Perdido Street Station'" (Miéville 2000, 63).

for his experiment. He asks an associate to distribute his call to employ people on the street that he collects every sort of wing for examination in the form of dissection. One of his received specimens is a slake-moth from which a boss of the criminal underground has a matter extracted that serves as a foundation of a hallucinatory drug. Both sides of the law support the lucrative business. Robert Wood summarises the reason of profit for both parties that, “[t]he slake-moth has interest for both the government, who is investigating it as a weapon, and the druglord Motley because of the powerful narcotic effect the moth’s milk has on sentient creatures. It connects the user of the drugs to the dreams of others” (Wood 2017, 3). However, the slake-moths let loose by the specimen got and fed by Grimnebulin; therefore, in order to prevent New Crobuzon to become the hunting ground of the slake-moths, the members of magistrate seek help from the Weaver as they realise that they alone cannot defeat the slake-moths. The negotiation with the entity becomes seemingly successful, however, in the first confrontation between the group of Grimnebulin and the militia of the magistrate, the Weaver helps the outcasts⁷⁰ and takes them to its home, the worldweave.

The focalizer-narrators’ understanding of space is mediated through their rhetorics. The focalizer-narrator situates itself in the spatial system and attempts to express its place⁷¹ by producing it into a coherent rhetoric form. The difference between the rhetoric perspectives of the two focalizer-narrators connects with their spatial knowledge in their approach to New Crobuzon. In the case of Grimnebulin, Miéville utilises the rhetoric of the Mendlesohnean immersive fantasy; the character is fully integrated into the fabric of New Crobuzon. Grimnebulin understands the Crobuzan Firstspace and Secondspace. As a human, he belongs to the majority of the city dwellers; he has the opportunity in New Crobuzon to apply changes on its Secondspace by running for office. In the case of Yagharek, Miéville practises the rhetoric of the Mendlesohnean intrusion fantasy, the character is an outsider in the city-state, and everything appears new to him. Yagharek gets access to the perception part of the polis’ Firstspace, but he does not bear the knowledge of the Firstspace, and he is also excluded from the Secondspace. However, he has verbal access to the worldweave, a feature that Grimnebulin is bereft of. By that, Miéville establishes a connection between Yagharek and the Weaver. They are rendered as others in the Crobuzan spatial system.

⁷⁰ Influencing the Weaver is possible, as Sandy Rankin observes that, “[t]he Weaver has sided with the slake-moth fighters because the slake-moths are destroying the worldweave by hypnotizing and drinking the dreams from the brains of sentient beings” (Rankin 2009, 252-3). In my spatial interpretation, the slake-moths attempt to change the Thirdspace of New Crobuzon.

⁷¹ Maarja Saar and Hannes Palang write that, “[p]lace [. . .] is socially constructed and operating, including interaction between people and groups, institutionalized land uses, political and economic decisions, and the language of representation” (Saar & Palang 2009, 7).

5.1.1 Rhetoric and Spatial Understanding of Grimnebulin

The rhetoric of Grimnebulin is identified as the Mendlesohnean immersive fantasy that “presents the fantastic without comment as the norm both for the protagonist and for the reader”, and it omits “an explanatory narrative” (Mendlesohn 2008, 34). However, for Grimnebulin the worldweave proves to be an abspace. In that context, abspace is the monstrous, manifested, Miévillean Thirdspace. This concept is “expressed in the awesome language of the sublime, help[s] to spatialize what can otherwise not be thought or represented” (Pike 2019, 262). The abspace “is a fundamentally antihumanist form” of space (ibid.). It remains concealed and unspeakable for Grimnebulin. He, who bears the knowledge of the urban First-, Second, and the abstract, Miévillean Thirdspace, does not belong to the manifested, Miévillean Thirdspace. During his stay in the worldweave, the sense of weird, as Mark Fisher describes it – “the presence of *that which does not belong*”, – is reversed (103 emphases in the original). Grimnebulin becomes this non-belonging presence in the worldweave. Consequently, Grimnebulin passes out during the travel to the worldweave, later he attempts to collect his memories, but fails: “Impossible images assailed him. Silk strands a lifetime thick. Living things crawling insidiously across interlocking wires. Behind a beautiful palimpsest of coloured gossamer, a vast, timeless, infinite mass of absence” (Miéville 2000, 499).

His rhetoric, that relies on his ability to engage with the Crobuzan spatial world and to “be able to scrape its surface and discover something deeper than a stage set”, fails to, as Farah Mendlesohn writes, argue the “knowledge [. . .] out of the world” in the worldweave (Mendlesohn 2008, 178; 181). He is bereft of the knowledge of the worldweave; therefore, he also lacks the language to articulate the worldweave. The rhetoric of immersive fantasy collapses under the impossibility of the verbalization of the worldweave. The excess of knowledge overcharges and shatters the language and rhetoric Grimnebulin uses to interpret the spatial system he is surrounded by. The linguistic abundance trespasses the ontological and epistemological boundaries and renders the manifested, Miévillean Thirdspace monstrous. In the framework of monstrousness, the Weird Tale’s interpretation diverges from the New Weird’s. In the former case, any sort of common ground among focalizer-narrator and the monstrous entities is excluded. Weird Tale relies on the Manichaeic opposition in constructing a narrative. In the latter one, Miéville reiterates the point of difference concerning the Post-Weird, the Barkerean horror, respectively, in which the “starting point is the acceptance of a monster” (VanderMeer 2008, X). Therefore, in the understanding of the monstrous manifested, Miévillean Thirdspace Miéville utilises a monster that is also an other. Consequently, due to

their common feature of otherness, the Weaver and Yagharek can express the monstrous, manifested, Miévillean Thirdspace, the abspace, the worldweave.

5.1.2 Rhetoric and Spatial Understanding of Yagharek

Yagharek recalls and verbalises his experience of the worldweave, and concludes that all of it “becomes a dream and then a memory”, but “cannot see the edges between the three” (Miéville 2000, 487). These three beings are the following: the experience of the worldweave, the dream about it and the memory of it. The rhetoric of Yagharek is understood as rhetoric described in the Mendlesohnean intrusion fantasy, in which “language reflects constant amazement” and the focalizer “and the reader are never expected to become accustomed to the fantastic” (Mendlesohn 2008, 39). Mendlesohn highlights that this “form appears to depend both on the naïveté of the protagonist and [the] awareness of the permeability of the world – a distrust of what is known in favor of what is sensed” (Mendlesohn 2008, 294). Yagharek experiences difficulties in his linguistic, rhetoric and spatial knowledge of orientation upon his arrival to the polis. Although he provides “accurate description of surface appearances” in the Firstspace that is the “indigenous mode of spatial analysis”, he is bereft of the knowledge of the Miévillean Firstspace that “searches for spatial explanation in primarily exogenous social, psychological, and bio-physical processes” (Soja 1996, 75). His rhetoric hinders him in the understanding of the Miévillean Firstspace in its entirety.

Furthermore, the Crobuzan Secondspace also cannot be unravelled to him. Consequently, following this logic, he cannot have influenced or even understood the abstract Crobuzan Thirdspace in the Sojan sense of the word. However, in the Crobuzan manifested, Miévillean Thirdspace, in the worldweave, Yagharek’s otherness provides him linguistic, rhetorical and spatial understanding, thus influence and access. The worldweave is conceived and expressed for him through the rhetoric of dream-poetics⁷². The rhetoric of intrusion fantasy and the rhetoric dream-poetics concur on the formation of spatial system provided there is a precondition of knowledge. This knowledge stems from Yagharek’s rhetoric that incorporates

⁷² Miéville draws on the idea of surrealist interpretation of the “unconscious [that] is the place of dreams, intuitions, socially repressed urges, drives, and opinions; it is pre-moral, unregulated, uncivilised, and irrational” (Stockwell 2017, 39-40). The surrealists along with Freud “regarded the unconscious as a definite object”, however, the former ones, albeit drawing on the latter one, understand it as a “real psychic location. [. . .] It is a place where the pre-verbal, pre-pictorial, pre-plastic, pre-eventful surreal image is to be found” (Stockwell 2017, 40). Dream-poetics is an “ideological and political uses of language [which] have powerful effects below the level of everyday conscious awareness”, therefore, realising and actualising those social and political issues that have been repressed by the Ideological State Apparatuses, result in subversion, which has been connected both spatially and linguistically to the others (Stockwell 2017, 46).

the spatial system of the Thirdspace: he draws on his home, Cymek to represent the worldweave. He also relies on this previous knowledge about the Weaver, “[i]n the Cymek we call it [the Weaver] furiach-yajh-hett: the dancing mad god” (Miéville 2000, 487). Furthermore, in connection to the spatial system of the worldweave he convinces himself that

I saw, or thought I saw, or have convinced myself I saw a vastness that dwarfed any desert sky. A yawning gap of Leviathan proportions. I whined and heard others whine around me. Spread across the emptiness, streaming away from us with cavernous perspective in all directions and dimensions, encompassing lifetimes and hugenesses with each intricate knot of metaphysical substance, was a web. Its substance was known to me (Miéville 2000, 488 emphases mine).

The gap and the web represent different sides of the abspace, the monstrous, manifested, Miévillean Thirdspace. They are interpreted as the home of the others. The gap reminds Yagharek of the spatial system of his home, Cymek. It signifies the nomad thought in a Deleuzian sense of the word. Thus, this spatial system cannot be enclosed “in the edifice of an ordered interiority”, it connotes a gap, an absence from the perspective of the Crobuzan spatial system (Massumi 2005, XII). The web is translated, as Gaston Bachelard describes it, as “a center of being a sort of unity of time, place and action” (Bachelard 2014, 309). It reveals the connections among the possibilities that here are realised and actualised, which is monstrous for the Ideological State Apparatuses of the Crobuzan spatial system. Both spatial formations suggest that the possibilities are realised and actualised in the abspace. Therefore, the abspace is understandable for Yagharek as both of them contain the idea of spatial emancipation.

In the abspace, Miéville harnesses Yagharek to give voice to otherness, the shared feature of Yagharek and the Weaver. The prior one does not have the same right for accessing the spatial system of the worldweave, which the Weaver has. Yagharek has spatial understanding of the worldweave which stems from his rhetoric and he draws on his knowledge of the spatial system of his home. In the first encounter of the manifestation of the Miévillean Thirdspace, Yagharek realises that he is in another space, but they “moved in a direction I had never known existed” (Miéville 2000, 487). For him, the other two parts of the Sojan triad vanish, the Miévillean spatial system begins to operate. That is the abspace, the monstrous, manifested, Miévillean Thirdspace that functions as an illusion of a new spatial system, the Miévillean one. In the parts of Firstspace and Secondspace, it overlaps with the Sojan triad. From the viewpoint of rhetoric, Miéville employs the same approach to language as he does in the metropolis with exception of the worldweave. Miéville does not construct another, full spatial system for the worldweave, but a pseudo-spatial system.

The language of the Firstspace in the worldweave is limited, Yagharek admits that, “I beheld nothing but a fraction, the edge of an aspect” (ibid.). What he can grasp in the

worldweave through language decreases. In New Crobuzon, Yagharek has access to the description of its Firstspace, but cannot understand the other two parts of the spatial system. However, experiencing the Crobuzan Firstspace he still has a spatial understanding in the city-state. In the wordweave, he immediately has access to the manifested Crobuzan, Miévillean Thirdspace. The language and the rhetoric of the worldweave are the dream-poetics which refer to, what Farah Mendlesohn reads as, the “‘inner world’ that must acquire a grandeur in order to communicate a sense of the otherness” (Mendlesohn 2008, 338). The shared otherness of Yagharek and the Weaver guarantees a method in which Yagharek can encapsulate the spatial otherness through his rhetorics. The Secondspace in the worldweave follows in its operation the aesthetical opinions of the Weaver. It is not accessible to Yagharek. He depicts two spatial systems, his home, Cymek and New Crobuzon to which he refers back as fixed points. The visit of the two focalizer-narrators to the worldweave reveals Miéville’s spatial politics.

5.2 Maps of New Crobuzon, the Power of Influence

Apart from the interpretive framework through language and rhetorics to acquire knowledge about the Bas-Lag, there is another point to understand the secondary world of Bas-Lag that is spatial. The investigation begins with critical map studies⁷³. Miéville draws on Mervyn Peake’s *Gormenghast Trilogy*, where the eponymous castle casts a long shadow of influence on the spatial system presented in the narrative space that cannot be overcome or questioned. New Crobuzon spreads its spatial influence in a similar way: any means necessary and cannot be challenged. This is demonstrated, when Miéville establishes the fixed point in secondary world of Bas-Lag, the city-state of New Crobuzon by providing a map to it. Stefan Ekman points out by that act the “secondary world is divided into the known, on the map, and the unknown, off it” (Ekman 2013 128). The spatial system accessible to the focalizer-narrators differs from Crobuzan urban space that is portrayed on a map. This opens another approach to situate the focalizer-narrators spatially. Grimnebulin is in the metropolis, therefore, he possesses the rhetoric, linguistic, and spatial knowledge of the Crobuzan spatial system, but Yagharek originates outside of the map included in *Perdido Street Station*. Consequently, he and the Weaver, which is also omitted from the map of New Crobuzon, have rhetoric and spatial access to the manifestation of the Crobuzan Thirdspace, the worldweave.

⁷³ Miéville relies on Mervyn Peake’s *Gormenghast-trilogy*, where Peake constructs a spatial system to the eponymous castle that cannot be overcome and its spatial influence cannot be questioned. Miéville adapts this technique in the *Bas-Lag* trilogy, consequently, New Crobuzon spreads its spatial influence in any means necessary and cannot be challenged.

Ekman argues that fictional maps “reinforce the impression that the fictive space exists and thus enhance the credibility of the text”, yet the narrative space incorporates terrae incognita for the focalizer, thus contradicts the postulation that those who own a map become omnipotent of the spatial system (Ekman 2018, 71). Therefore, with the inclusion of a map of New Crobuzon into *Perdido Street Station*, Miéville demonstrates that the Crobuzan Ideological State Apparatus anticipates an outer struggle between political powers, therefore, it annuls them spatially by refusing them to appear on the map⁷⁴. Furthermore, the map focuses on Crobuzan districts, stops of skyrails and railways, and bridges. It does not really reveal any other information than that. As such, it is an act of power, the map provides the picture of the Crobuzan Secondspace in its sole ruling position of the spatial knowledge of the continent of Rohagi. Moreover, Ekman identifies that the map of New Crobuzon plays also a significant role in its spatial system by separating what is on the map into two readings: known and unknown. The departure of Grimnebulin of New Crobuzon denotes the shift from the known to the unknown. The struggle for the total influence of the abstract Crobuzan Thirdspace differs in its participant from the fighting sides for the manifested Crobuzan Thirdspace.

5.3 The Political Struggle for the Domination of the Crobuzan Spatial System

Miéville focuses on telling the story in *Perdido Street Station*, when the Crobuzan Ideological State Apparatus lost control over its Secondspace and consequently, the influence on the urban Thirdspace and its manifestation, the worldweave. Therefore, the emphasis is on the inner power struggle that manifests itself between political powers. They are the following participants: the Weaver, the Council Construct and the slake-moths. Only the Council Construct is on the map of the city-state, the other two arrive from terrae incognita. The worldweave as the manifested Thirdspace⁷⁵, as Sandy Rankin points out, becomes “a patterning potential in motion that includes the past, present, and future of Bas-Lag as well as including the spiralling threads of time and space dimensions that Bas-Lag people [. . .] cannot see” (240). But the participants realise that, therefore, the struggle for the total influence of the manifested, Sojan Thirdspace in New Crobuzon differs in their approaches to achieve that. The manifested, Miévillean Thirdspace is accessible through dreams for the focalizer-narrators. The visit of the two focalizer-narrators to the worldweave reveals Miéville’s spatial politics. These

⁷⁴ See Appendix 3.

⁷⁵ From a spatial perspective, this sort of manifestation also occurs in *The City and The City* as the protagonist has access to the unification of spatial systems of the novel, which is Breach.

interpretations concur with the influencing parties, who struggle for the political influence over both the abstract and the manifested Thirdspace⁷⁶. The danger the slake-moths pose is solved by the cooperation of the Weaver and the Construct Council and Isaac's crisis engine. The viewpoints of the Weaver, the Construct Council, and the slake-moths on the Miévillean Thirdspace differ from the Sojan Thirdspace.

First, the Weaver has been interpreted as species "evolved from virtually mindless predators into aestheticians of astonishing intellectual and materio-thaumaturgic power, superintelligent alien minds who no longer used their webs to catch prey, but were attuned to them as objects of beauty disentangleable [sic!] from the fabric of reality itself" (Miéville 2000, 406-7). Miéville stresses that they "think aesthetically" (Miéville 2000, 407). This claim is pivotal because, during the visit of the two focalizer-narrators of the worldweave, the reason behind the Weaver's help is revealed to Yagharek: the slake-moths mar the worldweave, the manifested Miévillean Thirdspace. In there the "little localized tangle of metareal gossamer [that is] New Crobuzon" and the tear that "spread out and split the fabric of the city-web, taking the multitude of colours and bleeding them dry" prove to be enough for Yagharek to comprehend the Weaver's interpretation of the Thirdspace (Miéville 2000, 489). The Weaver thinks

in a continuous, incomprehensible, rolling stream of awareness. There were no layers to the Weaver's mind, there was no ego to control the lower functions, no animal cortex to keep the mind grounded. For the Weaver, there were no dreams at night, no hidden messages from the secret corners of the mind, no mental clearout of accrued garbage bespeaking an orderly consciousness. For the Weaver, dreams and consciousness were one. The Weaver dreamed of being conscious and its consciousness was its dream, in an endless unfathomable stew of image and desire and cognition and emotion (Miéville 2000, 769).

The Weaver expresses itself in dream-poetics, therefore, by definition, it overcomes in language the repression or the organising principle of the Crobuzan Secondspace, the Ideological State Apparatuses. It has already been considered as other both linguistically and spatially. Along the line of this logic, on the one hand, linguistically the Weaver uses dream-poetics that is not the koine in New Crobuzon, on the other hand, spatially there is no spatial differentiation, no Thirling, and there is only one space, the Miévillean Thirdspace. Consequently, survival is its main reason to fight against the slake-moths.

⁷⁶ During his stay in the worldweave, Yagharek remarks that, "[a]round me was a little localized tangle of metareal gossamer . . . *New Crobuzon*. And there rending the woven strands in the centre was an *ugly tear*. It spread out and split the fabric of the city-web, taking the multitude of colours and bleeding them dry. They were left a drab and lifeless white. A pointless emptiness, a pallid shade a thousand times more soulless even than the eye of some sightless caveborn fish. As I watched, my pained eyes wide with insight, I saw that the rip was widening. I was so afraid of the spreading rent" (Miéville 2000, 489 emphases mine). The turning up of the slake-moths also affects both versions of the manifested Thirdspace in New Crobuzon.

Second, the Construct Council is “violently against them [slake-moths]” (Miéville 2000, 513). It is “born of random power and virus and chance”, “an interstitial existence” (Miéville 2000, 555; 561). It reports that it was born “in a dead space where the citizens discard what they do not want” (ibid.). It explains its reason of taking the side of the two focalizer-narrators: it is “the repository of construct history. [. . .] the data bank. [. . .] the self-organized machine” and as such “[e]very experience is downloaded and shared. Decisions are made in my valve-mind. I pass on my wisdom to the pieces of me” (Miéville 2000, 557). It sustains on information⁷⁷ that is located in abundance in the abstract Thirdspace⁷⁸ of the city-state. It continues its justification by adding that if “the city comes to a stop, the variables will ebb almost to nothing. The flow of information will dry. I do not wish to live in an empty city” (Miéville 2000, 561). As an opposite to the interpretation of the Weaver, the Construct Council offers an

extreme contrast to [the Weaver’s] the anarchic viral flurry that had spawned it, the Construct Council thought with chill exactitude. Concepts were reduced to a multiplicity of on-off switches, a soulless solipsism that processed information without the complication of arcane desires or passion. A will to existence and aggrandizement, shorn of all psychology, a mind contemplative and infinitely, incidentally cruel (Miéville 2000, 770).

Furthermore, there is an essential difference between the Weaver and the Construct Council. The former one does not dream; it is “a calculating machine that has calculated how to think. I do not dream. I have no neuroses, no hidden depths. My consciousness is a growing function of my processing power, not the baroque thing that sprouts from your mind, with its hidden rooms in attics and cellars” (Miéville 2000, 582). The Thirdspace serves the Construct Council as a hunting ground. Everything is data for it; consequently, it annuls the differences, the chaotic nature of the Thirdspace⁷⁹.

Third, the slake-moths also prey on both versions of the Thirdspace, they destroy it. As a corollary they eliminate the other two parts of spatial thirds, the First- and the Secondspace. They possibly originate from “one of the southernmost of the Shards” (Miéville 2000, 455).

⁷⁷ These sorts of information are interpreted as a term for the amalgamation of the knowledge collected in Thirdspace. For the Weaver, that is the worldweave, for the slake-moths, it is the dreams of the city dwellers. Both interpretations are radically open spatial formations that incorporate everything.

⁷⁸ It differs from the manifested Thirdspace. The abstract Thirdspace is accessible to those who can change the First- and the Secondspace, but the manifested Thirdspace is only accessible with the help of the Weaver.

⁷⁹ In *Iron Council*, it is revealed that twelve years before the events of that book, there was a war against the sentient constructs, where even the children “had joined in the purge of the city’s constructs, the panicked hounding of the clockwork and steam-powered cleaners suddenly deemed enemy. Mobs cornered and destroyed the welded, soldered things. Most of the constructs could only stand patient while they were torn apart, their glass trod into dust, their cables ripped. There were some few that fought. The reason for the war. Infected with viral consciousness, programmes that should not be, that had infected New Crobuzon’s constructs, the gears of their analytical engines turning in heretic combinations to spin a cold machine sentience” (Miéville 2004, 94-5). Consequently, New Crobuzon does not share its Thirdspace.

They “drink the peculiar brew that results from self-reflexive thought, when the instincts and needs and desires and intuitions are folded in on themselves, and we reflect on our thoughts and then reflect on the reflection”, that is “the fine wine of sapience and sentience itself, the subconscious. ‘*Dreams*’” (Miéville 2000, 457, emphasis in the original). They are devoid of language and their expression of place is a powerful shift in the Crobuzan spatial system. The elimination of the Crobuzan First- and the Secondspace has taken place in the slake-moths’ language as these parts of the Sojan triad are unutterable. There is no rhetoric through which Miéville makes them comprehensible for both the reader and the characters of the secondary world. Steve Shapiro provides detailed scrutiny and interpretation of them, when he writes that “[t]he slake-moths are alien beings, creatures of sheer excess; this is how they embody the depredations of an inhuman vampire-capital. [. . .] [They] are an expression, or better an *exudation*, of the self-valorising movements of capital” (287, emphasis in the original). Carl Freedman elaborates on Shapiro’s argument and points out that,

The real, underlying reason that the forces of Rudgutter and Motley, for all their apparent advantages, cannot possibly defeat the slake-moths is that Rudgutter, Motley, and the slake-moths are, in the end, all on the same side. The authorities of the semi-fascist capitalist state and the functionaries of illegal capitalism cannot effectively attack the capitalist monsters with whom they are, fundamentally, at one (35).

The difference between the two parties lies in the sphere of their spatial influence and its effectiveness. On the one hand, the representatives of the local government want to gain total control over the Thirdspace. They aim for the total power of the ruling class, its hegemony⁸⁰ in the Gramscian sense of the word. They do not want to eradicate it, but the slake-moths consistently wane it. The representatives want to reconstruct the First- and the Secondspace; therefore, they can affect the Thirdspace accordingly. On the other hand, the slake-moths appear in the Firstspace, but they cannot be subjected to the influence of the Secondspace, a spatial third that is under the hegemony of the Crobuzan ruling class. The aim of the slake-moths is to devour the Thirdspace and as a result of that, the entire Crobuzan spatial system. The main difference between them is that the latter ones can eradicate the former ones which is not true vice versa. But from the point of view of those who are not in governing position of the spatial system, the representatives of the local government and the slake-moths are equal.

From the side of the representatives, there were ineffective attempts to manage the situation of the escaped slake-moths in the Secondspace. The following examples illustrate

⁸⁰ Gramsci claims that there are “two levels [that] correspond on the one hand to the function of ‘hegemony’ which the dominant group exercises throughout society and on the other hand to that of ‘direct domination’ or command exercised through the State and ‘juridical’ government” (Gramsci 1971, 13).

what Andrew Merrifield writes about the Secondspace⁸¹, where “the discursively constructed space of professionals and technocrats such as planners, engineers, developers, architects, urbanists, geographers and those of a scientific bent” operate (523). Eliza Stem-Fulcher, Mayor Rudgutter’s assistant, tells to his superior that, “[w]e’re also having several of the scientists who worked on the project work on detecting the moths”. Furthermore, she adds that, “[w]e’re plotting a map of the nightmare hotspots, see if we can’t see some pattern, track the moths in some way” (Miéville 2000, 497). The attempts to contain the slake-moths prove to be futile, therefore, as a solution to the threat the slake-moths pose, the Weaver and the Construct Council join forces with Grimnebulin’s crisis engine to generate a Thirdspace simulation in order to lure the slake-moths into a trap to destroy them.

Miéville illustrates the Sojan triad as rather arbitrary and acutely distinguished spaces and as a system that is dynamically negotiated in a human brain. The three struggling sides construct the simulated, but abstract Thirdspace for the slake-moths. This simulated Thirdspace refers to the Crobuzan First- and Secondspace originally, however, the description of the Firstspace is the waves provided by the Weaver: endlessly pouring, uncontrollable rhetoric and spatial impressions. The knowledge of the Firstspace stems from the Construct Council that provides the framework to comprehend the incomes of the Firstspace. The Secondspace is Grimnebulin’s crisis engine that controls the waves of the Weaver and the Construct Council. “Andrej’s mind as referent, the combination of the Weaver’s and the Construct Council’s waves” serves as the framework of the simulated Thirdspace (Miéville 2000, 795). The amalgamation of these three serves the excessive amount of dreams to the slake-moths. As a corollary, they overdose themselves with that made food. In that moment, Miéville constructs a phenomena that is more monstrous than the slake-moths. At the end of the novel, the threat the slake-moths pose is prevented, however, the spatial status quo remains for the community.

In this chapter of the dissertation, I explored Miéville’s attempt to change the Thirdspace in the novel through the prism of the two focalizer-narrators’ rhetoric and spatial systems; how their places change the spatial system and the Thirdspace of the city. At the beginning of the novel, Grimnebulin is part of the Crobuzan spatial system, however, he gets rejected at the end of it, and thus, he leaves the metropolis. In the case of Yagharek, he arrives as a foreigner to the metropolis, at the end of the narrative, he is included by the spatial system of New Crobuzon as he remains in the city-state. The three different rhetoric systems are non-negotiable among

⁸¹ In the article of “Place and Space: a Lefebvrian Reconciliation”, Merrifield concludes the Lefebvrian spatial system and thus identifies it as Representations of Space. Edward Soja reads Representations of Space as Secondspace in *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-imagined Places*.

each other. Grimnebulin's rhetoric approach to the Crobuzan spatial system stems from the immersive fantasy of the Mendlesohnean understanding. He has access to the metropolis' First-, and Secondspace, but not its manifested Thirdspace. Miéville demonstrates, however, that he only has access to the abstract Thirdspace, not to its manifestation. In the case of Yagharek, his rhetoric approach to the Crobuzan spatial system stems from the intrusion fantasy of the Mendlesohnean understanding. He only has access to the description of the Crobuzan Firstspace, but cannot understand the Firstspace. He is excluded from the Secondspace as he is an other. As he is understood as an other in the Crobuzan spatial system, he has rhetoric system and spatial understanding in the Crobuzan manifested Thirdspace, in the worldweave. He successfully negotiates his place into the worldweave and at the end of the novel, into the Crobuzan spatial system.

6. The Scar: The Unsuccessful Change of the Spatial System of the Secondary World, but a Change in the Communal Spatial System for the Focalizer-narrators

In the first book of the *Bas-Lag* trilogy, Miéville starts presenting attempts to change the spatial system. *Perdido Street Station* provides a protagonist, who seeks the aid of entities that are connected to the Thirdspace, and argues the case of influencing the spatial system. Three opposing sides of Thirdspace entities struggle against each other to rule the Thirdspace, then through it the spatial system. The protagonist's, Isaac Dan der Grimnebulin's, direct attempts to change the spatial system prove to be futile. From the two opposing parties, the one that he is a member of overcomes the other and seizes the power position in the Thirdspace, thus, follows the change of the entirety of the spatial system. However, this protagonist efforts to change the spatial system result in his expulsion from that system; therefore, he leaves the city of New Crobuzon. In *The Scar* (2002), Miéville provides an example where the protagonists realise that a mistake has been made with that particular attempt to change their spatial system. The Scar that shatters the secondary world of Bas-Lag represents another ontological and epistemological construct and a different spatial system. It has a different First-, Second-, and Thirdspace. Consequently, the characters abandon their project to have theirs changed with the help of the Scar. In *Iron Council* (2004), Miéville introduces a different approach, where the attempt of the protagonist to change the spatial system proves to be successful. The main character changes the Thirdspace of New Crobuzon by constructing the idea of utopia⁸² and inserting it into the spatial system. Miéville shows in *Iron Council* the recognition of the need to change the spatial system. His approaches to achieve that goal alter in every book of the trilogy. The close-readings of the primary texts identify and scrutinise his methods of influencing the spatial system of his secondary worlds.

The Scar is the second instalment in the *Bas-Lag* trilogy. It is set in the same secondary world of Bas-Lag as the events of *Perdido Street Station* (2000). Two focalizer-narrators travel from the metropolis of New Crobuzon to its colony, Nova Esperium. One of them fears for her life and flees from the authorities; the other one is a Remade. On the way their ship is hijacked by naval marauders. They are taken back to a pirate flotilla that functions as a city-state, called Armada. They are subjugated to the naval laws of the Armada in order to become free and equal

⁸² Brian Stableford and David Langford describe “[t]he concept of a utopia or ‘Ideal State’ is linked to religious ideas of Heaven or the Promised Land and to folkloristic ideas like the Isles of the Blessed, but it is essentially a future-historical goal, to be achieved by the active efforts of human beings, not a transcendental goal reserved as a reward for those who follow a particularly virtuous path in life” (Stableford and Langford 2018, n.p.).

“sailors and citizens” of this city-state (Miéville 2002, 100). In this chapter of the dissertation, I am going to argue that the attempt to change the Thirdspace in the novel fails to achieve its promise: the change in the spatial system of the secondary world. This was promised by the Lovers, the leaders of the politically most dominant ship, Grand Easterly. The pair has deceived the citizens of the Armada who only realised that at the end of their journey. Miéville underlines that the Lovers’ aim is first to undermine then to overcome the power of New Crobuzon. This understanding is connected with the comprehension of the different ontological and epistemological system generated by the Scar in the form of the lost and returned influential person of the Armada, Hedrigall. His disorientation proves to be the last push in the direction of leaving the Scar and ceasing the pursuit of the ambition to negotiate a better position for the Armada in the spatial system of Bas-Lag.

6.1 Focalizer-narrators, Rhetorics, and Spatial Positions

One of the focalizer-narrators is Bellis Coldwine, a linguist, who suffers from homesickness. She deplores Armada and is adamant about preventing her incorporation, or, in the novel’s words, being press-ganged, into the Armadan society. The other focalizer-narrator is Tanner Sack, an ex-convict, a Remade, who wholeheartedly accepts the Armada and begins to perceive this moving location as his home. On the board of the Armada, their difference of perspective is even more highlighted. The politics in the secondary world suggests that in New Crobuzon, Bellis who is a female human, is understood as a free citizen of the polis. She belongs to the majority of the population of the city, thus, a non-other. Consequently, her explanation of the Firstspace of New Crobuzon is whole and corresponds to the explanation of the majority of the city. As a human, she might vindicate rights to apply changes on the Crobuzan Secondspace by running for office. Consequently, she can also change the Thirdspace⁸³. Tanner, on the other hand, does not have access to the same spaces as Bellis has. In his situation in New Crobuzon, he is a Remade, an other, a slave without rights. He is a punished criminal, a prisoner of the state. He has explanation of the Firstspace of the city, but he is excluded from the arena of influencing the Second- or the Thirdspace. This status quo is turned upside-down by their kidnapping of the Armada. In the following paragraphs, I am going to connect an interpretation of maps in the framework of the *Bas-Lag* trilogy and adhere it to a power relation that is between border and centre. Moreover, I am going to establish Miéville’s method of

⁸³ In *Perdido Street Station* the Thirdspace is the home of the Weaver, it is a manifested space.

constructing the spatial system of the Armada; interpret it as a complex spatial system; examine its parts and identify the perceived connections between the parts of the Armada through the lens of the two focalizer-narrators.

The spatial system of the Armada is twofold. Firstly, I am going to examine the urban part of the spatial system and the understandings of Bellis Coldwine and Tanner Sack about it. The difference between them demonstrates the two approaches of Méville toward the attempt of change in the spatial system of Bas-Lag. Secondly, I am going to investigate the water part of the spatial system and the relationship of the two focalizer-narrators towards it. Thirdly, I am going to explore the two sorts of spatial systems together and the reason for the failure of the change.

6.2 Maps, Verisimilitude, and Imperialism of New Crobuzon

In the secondary world of Bas-Lag, Méville establishes a fixed point, the city-state of New Crobuzon by providing a map to it in *Perdido Street Station*. Stefan Ekman argues “that fantasy maps [. . .] *portray* fictive spaces” (Ekman 2018, 71, emphasis in the original). However, a portrait is subjected to ideology, and as such, the map of New Crobuzon is prone to differ as it is the self-perception of the city itself. Ekman cites “Denis Wood [who] suggests that fictive maps can be used ‘to lend credence to imaginary places’ (2010: 36), and, according to Piatti, such maps have a ‘*Realisierungseffekt*’ (realisation effect): they reinforce the impression that the fictive space exists and thus enhance the credibility of the text” (ibid.). Consequently, having a map of New Crobuzon produces a fictive space that attempts to overcome their counterparts⁸⁴ politically. Through the inclusion of a map of New Crobuzon, Méville demonstrates the struggle between political powers for space and highlights the efforts of the demeaning attempts of New Crobuzon towards its rivals. The character of Silas Fennec, the spy of New Crobuzon, embodies this political competition, he is the representative of New Crobuzon as a colonising, imperialist power.

The sole purpose of his journey to the grindylows was “a *feasibility study*” (Méville 2002, 717, emphases in the original). Drawing a map from the perspective of New Crobuzon is understood by the grindylows as an act of spatial violence into their Thirdspace. A plethora of information with which “you have access to all manner of information, places, goods, and

⁸⁴ Such as “the island of the Anophelii [. . .] of the Kettai people of Gnurr Kett”, “Liveside, the ‘ghetto’ of the ‘quick’ (Scar 354), the living minority of High Cromlech, the city of the thanati. There is Salkrikaltar, the mostly submerged city of the half-human, half crustacean Cray, and its Topside where the human minority lives” (Pike 2019, 251).

services that no one else has. That's why I've . . . an arrangement with Parliament. That's why that pass, giving me powers to commandeer vessels, in certain circumstances; giving me certain rights. I'm in a position to provide information to the city that they can't get from anywhere else" (Miéville 2002, 165). Fennec's confession to Bellis includes "maps and the information. We can offer insights like no one else. We can trade them with the government—that's my commission. There's no such thing as exploration or science—there's only trade" (Miéville 2002, 166). Miéville identifies the point of view of Fennec as the gaze of the coloniser. Later in the novel, Miéville clarifies that when Bellis realises the reason for the presence of the grindylows and the reason for their pursuit to capture Fennec. The content of Fennec's book opens "[a] constellation of places that were so far little more than myth would open to New Crobuzon. With trade, colonies, and all that they entailed" (Miéville 2002, 716). Furthermore, "Bellis remembered the stories she had heard about Nova Esperium, the riches and the brutality" (Miéville 2002, 716). This movement in the context of imperialism produces a space for the colonising power at home, the slum.

6.3 Armada, the Slum and Abcity

David L. Pike connects the idea of the slum with the abcity, a notion coined by Miéville. In Pike's interpretation, the abcity "is the abcanny slum to that city's proper urbanism. The abcity as a slum is simultaneously 'the defiantly fantastic—the never-possible—[that] will never go away' (Miéville, "Editorial Introduction" 45) and a 'never-possible' unfolding of one very specific space-time into another" (254). Miéville also coins the concept of abcanny, that is "an off-handedly predatory unkennable, a bad numinous, manifesting often at a much closer scale, right up tentacular in your face, and casually apocalyptic" (Miéville 2012, 381). In Pike's reading, "the abcanny, like the imagined slum, is both 'right up tentacular in your face' and always just out of reach" (252). Pike focuses on the slum imaginary that

encompasses related urban spaces such as ghettos, rookeries, shantytowns, favelas, and peripheral villages. It also includes the complex and contradictory web of metaphorical values and physical effects of modernity located primarily and often exclusively in slums: dirt and disease, crime and immorality, poverty and suffering, informality and community, subversion and revolution (251).

Pike argues that for Bellis in the slum imaginary New Crobuzon exemplifies "the aboveground—the middle-class zone, an area of wealth and commerce—is visible, describable; its ideal mode of representation is realism, which defines the world in terms of what is knowable and comprehensible" (252). The hierarchical position of Bellis in the Crobuzan society renders her middle-class from the perspective of class-consciousness. The Armada presents Bellis the

embodiment of the city that she interprets as the slum of New Crobuzon. Tanner Sack as a Remade⁸⁵, on the other hand, is positioned spatially into the slum part of New Crobuzon. His interpretation of Crobuzan Firstspace remains more nostalgic⁸⁶ than objective; his adaptation to the spatial system of the Armada is fast. The Armada has attempted to subvert the previously established spatial positions in New Crobuzon.

As they are setting foot on the board of the Armada, both focalizer-narrators experience complete disorientation. Their status is unclear, they have been living on a continent up to the moment of their kidnapping, and they still try to find a fixed point from which they can build their point of reference. Their spatial system has just been annihilated, and they are adapting to their new one. According to the legal code of the Armada, both of them become “not distinguished”, “free. And equal” (Miéville 2002, 100). This egalitarian distribution of rights echoes differently in them. Their self-perception has been altered. They become non-others. On the one hand, Bellis understands herself as a prisoner, who is hindered in its movement on the Armada, and always observed. On the other hand, Tanner seems to enjoy the life of a fRemade⁸⁷, an ex-Remade, who has been liberated. Tanner attempts to adapt to his new surroundings, then starts to belong to a group where he earns the respect of the community. His change culminates at the end of the novel when he seizes power as a leader of the opposition to the reigning political power.

6.4 Armada, the Moving Spatial System

Armada, as a moving spatial system, is continuously renegotiated by its members. “Human, cactacae, hotchi, cray . . . *Remade*” consist of its motley crew (Miéville 2002, 100). The political system on the board of the pirate flotilla provides the crew with the possibility to change the First-, Second-, and Thirdspace by their places. They can change the spatial system if they are not satisfied with the current one. *The Scar* identifies that the capitalist system in New Crobuzon alienates the subjects from each other. Consequently, on the Armada, the crewmembers are connected by their belief that they can overcome their feeling of alienation by their change on their spaces. The political method to carry this out is class-consciousness. Sherryl Vint points out that “Armada is an active and ongoing attempt to create an alternative

⁸⁵ It is interpreted as he is hierarchically the lowest member of the working class.

⁸⁶ His help proves to be pivotal to get Bellis’s letter to the cactacae sailors, who later deliver it to New Crobuzon.

⁸⁷ Sherryl Vint describes the concept of fRemade as a “modification of the term Remade is used by those on Armada to mark their embrace of a new society which includes their modified bodies as full citizens” (292). Later this term is embodied in Tanner Sack in *The Scar*. In other books of the trilogy, different entities belong to this category.

to the social alienation of New Crobuzon and as such it functions as a site of scarring, that is, of healing the wounds caused by alienated existence” (278). Therefore, the difference between the two spaces stems from their cores: Armada provides a platform to negotiate, and New Crobuzon eliminates even the possibility of negotiation. The two focalizer-narrators’ places prove to be problematic to insert into the space of the Armada.

First, it is essential to separate the two examined focalizer-narrators. Both of them are homodiegetic⁸⁸ and limited intradiegetic⁸⁹ focalizer-narrators. Miéville demonstrates that making a difference in the spatial system of Bas-Lag has to be known then supported by the majority of a particular community. The reason why the knowledge is pivotal stems from the idea of electoral democracy, where the delegates have to be informed about the decisions that involve the community. In *The Scar*, the collective multitude⁹⁰ on the board of the Armada is governed by class-consciousness and by their residence⁹¹. However, only one of the focalizer-narrators accepts this approach as a form of cooperation and that is Tanner Sack. Tanner “identifies with Armada as home, explaining to Shekel that the Lovers ‘gave [him] a job that pays money and told [him] they didn’t give a cup of piss that [he] was Remade. . . gave [him his] life’ and thus he now is ‘a Garwater man’ ([*The Scar*] 94)” (Vint 2009, 281). He begins to understand Armada as his Heimat. To demonstrate that fidelity, “he chooses to undergo further Remaking and become amphibian, something that *belongs* only to the culture of Armada” (Vint 2009, 282, emphasis in the original). However, Miéville hinders the explanation of Tanner of the Armadan Firstspace and also limits him in Secondspace. At the end of the novel, Tanner begins to change the Secondspace, thus could have changed the Thirdspace of the Armada.

6.4.1 Heimat as Full Access to the Spatial System

In this part of the argument, I rely on Vint’s essay and use her argument of the term Heimat. In that essay, she cites Jamie Owen Daniel, who discusses Ernst Bloch’s two interpretations of Heimat. In Daniel’s definition, Bloch refers one of the definitions of Heimat

⁸⁸ “A narrator [...] who takes part in it [the story], at least in some manifestation” (Rimmon-Kenan 2002, 98).

⁸⁹ “if the narrator is also a diegetic character in the first narrative told by the extradiegetic narrator, then he is a second-degree, or intradiegetic narrator” (Rimmon-Kenan 2002, 97).

⁹⁰ Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt write in *Multitude* that, “[t]he multitude is composed of innumerable internal differences that can never be reduced to a unity or a single identity—different cultures, races, ethnicities, genders, and sexual orientations; different forms of labor; different ways of living; different views of the world; and different desires” (11).

⁹¹ Miéville introduces the various governmental systems of the Armada that the “*Council’s Call* was a political publication, carrying arguments between proponents of the various ridings’ governmental systems: Curhouse’s democracy, Jhour’s solar queendom, the “absolutist benevolence” of Garwater, the Brucolac’s protectorate” (Miéville 2002, 307).

“to our nostalgic desire for an unalienated existence, an alternative social existence often believed to have existed in the past” (Vint 2009, 280). That connects it to the past, which, as Vint argues, is a relatively “reactionary ideology, looking to purify things into some ideal, imaged state in the past” (281). The other interpretation postulates that “Bloch re-articulates the term to mean ‘an anticipated state of reconciliation with conditions of possibility that do not as yet exist, and indeed will not exist until present conditions have been radically reconceptualized so that they can be transformed into something yet impossible to define’ (Daniel 59)” (Vint 2009, 281). This understanding points toward the future. Nevertheless, I am going to highlight and argue that Heimat is also essential in a spatial sense, that its forming participants acquire the right to negotiate their places into the new spatial system. They have knowledge of the First-, Second-, and Thirdspace, and they can also change them. Vint points out that, “[m]uch of *The Scar*’s strength is utopian form that requires us to imagine the break via characters invested in the old social order, who struggle over what *heimat*/home should mean” (281). This utopian impulse provides the new citizens of the Armada Heimat with the possibility to negotiate and change their way in the spatial system of the Armada. In my argument, the two sorts of interpretations of Heimat are embodied in the two focalizer-narrators. Tanner Sack has been identified as a future-oriented Heimat seeker; however, Bellis Coldwine is going to be examined through the lens of Heimat as a spatial system.

Bellis mourns the loss of her Heimat, New Crobuzon. Her experience of the Armada is incongruous. She neither accepts the form of cooperation provided by class-consciousness, nor the possibility of Heimat provided by the Armada. Therefore, she cannot negotiate her place into the space of the Armada. She has been offered a position as a librarian in the local library, due to her linguistic expertise, she is being paid for her work there and a location to sleep. She could have carried on with her life without fearing from the Crobuzan militia. However, she fails to see the possibilities provided by the Armada; she adheres to the polis she has fled from. The space where she believes she can negotiate the First-, Second, and Thirdspace. Her yearning to her Heimat “connects to a nostalgic and backward-looking sensibility rather than to a future-looking anticipation of possibilities yet to come, as does Tanner’s concept of *heimat*” (Vint 2009, 283).

The Armada as a spatial system represents a break from the previous spatial system that is New Crobuzon. Consequently, Armada is “utopian in form, then, is not merely based on its focus on the radical break from existing society rather than upon any particular model of the ideal” (Vint 2009, 283). This openness of a governing power proves to be fatal because of “the creeping despotism of the Lovers”, who are at the helm of the political life of the Armada

(Freedman 2015, 52). They lead the Armada to the Scar in a hope to “challenge New Crobuzon only on its own terms, in competition between rival imperialisms” (Freedman 2015, 64). They do not want Armada to remain a pirate utopia with an egalitarian political system; their aim is to become powerful enough to be able to change the spatial system of the novel. They challenge the Secondspace of Bas-Lag by negotiating their place into the spatial system. The members of the Armada decide against this plan; therefore, the spatial systems of the Armada and Bas-Lag remain untouched.

6.5 Armada, the Moving Terrain Surrounded by Water

I have provided the spatial system of the Armada for the close-reading. However, there is a change to be considered: from terrain to water. The spatial system is constructed differently on the water than on terrain. Philip Steinberg and Kimberly Peters identify that, “[t]he character of the sea [. . .] is a space not moved on, but *through* [as Anim-Addo et al (2014) note], and also *under*” (Steinberg-Peters 2015, 253 emphases in the original). Therefore, there is a spatial system of the water that differs from the urban spatial system in the Armada. Steinberg and Peters continue their argument by pointing out that,

volume is the amount of space occupied by a three-dimensional object or region, as expressed in cubic units. Volume is the capacity of a container, and the classic ‘container’ of political theory is the state (Giddens, 1985, page 120; see also Taylor, 1994). This state ontology, however, is profoundly terrestrial (Steinberg-Peters 2015, 254).

The totality of the spatial system of the Armada is conceived as an urban pirate flotilla. It encapsulates both approaches of the spatial systems, the urban and the water. The water provides a non-anthropomorphic, non-urban perspective. To integrate water into the spatial system of the Armada and not to separate the water from the terrain, Doreen Massey proposes that “space [is recognised] as the product of interrelations; as constituted through interactions” (9). Therefore, in the investigation of the Armada’s spatial system, water is considered to be a salient factor in the construction of the spatial system of the Armada.

Jolene Mathieson argues that the novel epitomises “the ways oceanic weird geographies and the critical framework of wet ontologies [that] can be mutually enhancing” (114). She presents the oceanic weird as

a mode of writing that conceptualizes water, the ocean and the slime materials born from it as mundane matter—but as matter whose wet ontologies are so radical, so alien, that they enact and constitute a hypermateriality—a materiality that touches and configures the human but, paradoxically, can seemingly only be accessed speculatively through the metonymic and metaphoric paradigm of the mythological and the unreal (114).

In that sense, Miéville echoes the monstrous nature of water as it stemmed from authors of the Proto-Weird, such as Verne, Hugo, and H. G. Wells and peaked in Lovecraft's texts (e. g. "The Shadow over Innsmouth"). Consequently, the oceanic weird practices complete change on the Firstspace and partial change on the Secondspace of the Armada. It subverts the spatial system conceived on the terrain. In the Firstspace, it frequently disorients the characters with its perpetual movement, it reshapes, reconfigures, and shoves together incongruous parts of the secondary world. In the Secondspace, the oceanic weird does not surpass the urban spatial system of the floating polis. To illustrate that, Miéville opens with the description of his flotilla city-state from below that

the city was an archipelago of shadows. It was irregular and sprawling and hugely complex. It displaced currents. Jags of keel contradicted each other in all directions. Anchor chains trailed like hair, snapped and forgotten. From its orifices billowed refuse; faecal matter and particulate, and oil eddying uneasily and rising in small slicks. A constant drool of trash fouled the water and was swallowed by it. Below the city there were a few hundred yards of rapidly thinning light, then miles of dark water (Miéville 2002, 95).

Miéville elevates the oceanic weird, and it becomes the main initiator of subversion of power politics known in the novel⁹². The par excellence of the oceanic weird is the Scar. The Lovers realise the power of subversion in the oceanic weird and their hubris they attempt to alter the established spatial system of the Armada by raising

an avanc, a sea creature so enormous that it will be able to pull the city through the seas at rates previously impossible, thus granting the city the ability to determine its direction and allowing it to enter history and conflicts thereof. Specifically, the avanc will help Armada to reach the Scar, where the world itself has been fractured and a magical energy, Possibility, can be mined. The power of this Possibility [. . .] will cause a paradigm shift: Armada will be a world power to match New Crobuzon (Robertson 2016, 70).

6.5.1 Spatial System on Water and Terrain, Heimat Armada?

The water is incorporated into the new Heimat concept of the two focalizer-narrators. Bellis faces the problem of refusing to be press-ganged that is to accept Armada as her Heimat. Even the rhetoric supports this, "*How did I get here?* The question was constant in her" (Miéville 2002, 97, emphases in the original). She is on board "against her will" (Miéville 2002, 99). The urban Firstspace for her has elusive materiality. The detailed view of the Armada seen by her is worth citing at length:

Across many hundreds of ships lashed together, spread over almost a square mile of sea, and the city built on them. Countless naval architectures: Stripped longships; scorpion galleys; luggers and brigantines; massive steamers hundreds of feet long down to canoes no larger than a man. There were alien vessels: ur-ketches, a barge carved from the ossified body of a whale. Tangled in ropes and moving wooden walkways, hundreds of vessels facing all directions rode the swells (Miéville 2002, 100-101).

⁹² Putting the Armada on the water is the moment for Miéville to subvert the status quo of the spatial system in Bas-Lag.

[...]

Armada moved constantly, its bridges swinging side to side, its towers heeling. The city shifted on the water. The vessels had been reclaimed, from the inside out. What had once been berths and bulkheads had become houses; there were workshops in old gundecks. But the city had not been bounded by the ships' existing skins. It reshaped them. They were built up, topped with structure; styles and materials shoved together from a hundred histories and aesthetics into a compound architecture (Miéville 2002, 101).

[...]

There was no winter in the city, no summer or spring, no seasons at all; there was only weather. For Armada it was a function not of time, but place. [...] Armada tramped the oceans of Bas-Lag in patterns dictated by piracy, trade, agriculture, security, and other more opaque dynamics, and took what weather came (Miéville 2002, 147).

The denial of the urban and water Firstspaces results in complete disorientation in Bellis. She confesses to Johannes Tearfly that she has “no interest in the *sea*. Freezing, sickening, filthy, repetitive, stinking . . . ‘I’ve no interest in this city” (Miéville 2002, 129). Consequently, the Secondspaces of the Armada remains also unknown to her. Edward Soja explains about the Firstspace that it is “conventionally read at two different levels, one which concentrates on the accurate description of surface appearances, and the other which searches for spatial explanation” (Soja 1996, 75). What she fails at is the explanation part of the Firstspace. This failure stems from her alienation of the Armadan spatial system and is expressed in her rhetoric. Farah Mendlesohn highlights that the “alienation enables Miéville to give to Bellis the role of describing the world she can never take for granted because she cannot engage with it” (Mendlesohn 2008, 164). Furthermore, Mendlesohn argues that by choosing Bellis Coldwine and Tanner Sack focalizer-narrators, “Miéville can mostly avoid the conversations that explain the landscape or the politics of Armada [. . .] and instead present it in negatives, the things that Bellis encounters and is repelled by or does not understand” (Mendlesohn 2008, 164). In this framework, Bellis cannot even begin to form the Heimat through language spatially.

However, this failure does not hinder her involvement in influencing the spatial system of the Armada; her role remains pivotal though not central. Her contribution to the urban Armadan Secondspace throughout the novel is significant: her linguistic knowledge, her betrayal and her persuasiveness. As she arrives at the Armada, her understanding of the Secondspace of the

Armada, she [Bellis] thought, must be ordered by maritime discipline, the lash. But the ship-city was not the base brutocracy that Bellis had expected. There were other logics at work. There were typed contracts, offices administrating the new arrivals. And officials of some kind: an executive, administrative caste, just as in New Crobuzon. Alongside Armada's club law, or supporting it, or an integument around it, was bureaucratic rule. This was not a ship, but a city. She had entered another country as complex and organised as her own (Miéville 2002, 104).

Firstly, she provides her knowledge as a linguist to advance the conceited plan of the Lovers by translating between them and Krüach Aum, who is the bearer of vital information on how to raise an *avanc*. They raise the sea creature, and the speed of the flotilla increases rapidly. The initiators of the plan, the Lovers, obtain more the influence on the Armadan Secondspace. Secondly, she reveals the whereabouts of the Armada to the Crobuzan navy. Not only her betrayal but also her unknowing and unwilling participation assist the change of the Secondspace of the Armada. As the attack of her former home develops, Miéville makes it clear that by her act, she has upset the balance of the Armadan Secondspace. After the defeat of the Crobuzan navy, the Lovers initiate the plan to sail straight to the Scar. Bellis realises that, “[t]hat was the moment, [. . .] that everything changed” (Miéville 2002, 595). Thirdly, after the return of Hedrigall possibly from the Scar⁹³, Bellis tells Tanner Sack that she agrees with Tanner about his right to hear what Hedrigall has to say. Therefore, she takes Tanner to a room beneath the Lovers’ quarter to eaves-drop. After the disoriented eyewitness testimony of Hedrigall, Tanner decides to organise a mutiny against the Lovers. Tanner as the leader of the mutiny takes control of the Armada, turns the flotilla around and shouts into the face of the Lovers, that

All we know is that one of the best fucking Garwater men I ever knew is down there in your jail, warning us that if we go to the Scar we’ll die. And I believe him. This ends here. We say what happens now. We’re taking control. We’re turning around; we’re heading home. Your orders to proceed . . . are in-fucking-validated (Miéville 2002, 767-8).

Tanner Sack, however, finds it not challenging to emerge into the Armadan spatial system without entirely understanding either of the First- and Secondspace. Making him a focalizer-narrator, Miéville can illustrate not only the urban part spatial system of the Armada but also its water part. This twofold division allows both the oceanic weird and urban weird to operate in tandem through and on him. In the Firstspace of the urban part, he tells about himself to one of his friends, Shekel, “I was going to be a slave in the colonies, Shekel” (Miéville 2002, 120). His priority lies on the possibility of whether he is convinced that he can change the Armadan Secondspace. Since he understands that he has the possibility to access and influence it, he omits to question other parts of the Armadan spatial system. He accepts the Armadan Secondspace by admitting that, “[t]he Lovers gave me my life, Shekel, and a city and a home. I tell you that *whatever* they fucking want to do is *alfuckingright* by me. New Crobuzon can kiss my arse, lad” (Miéville 2002, 120, emphases in the original). He recognises the power of the Lovers as the organisers of the urban Secondspace then at the end of the novel; he seizes it from them. On the Firstspace of the water, it “made very little sense to Tanner Sack”,

⁹³ Miéville leaves this occurrence open to interpretations whether Hedrigall went beyond the Scar and returned or not.

furthermore, “He did not understand why the brine was healing his tentacles” (Miéville 2002, 115). He admits to Shekel that the Firstspace of the water is

[D]ark but . . . luminous. Massive. You’re just surrounded by massiveness. There are shapes you can only just see, huge dark shapes. Subs and whatnot—and sometimes you think you see others. Can’t make them out properly, and they’re guarded, so’s you can’t get too close (Miéville 2002, 118).

The Firstspace of the water disorients him the same way as the urban Firstspace does. Both focalizers are deprived of the explanation of the Firstspaces. On the Secondspace of the water, his fear of the unknown still keeps him close to the surface even though he has been through with his operation of becoming an amphibian, “he turned his face to the sunless water below him his stomach pitched at its implacable hugeness, and he turned quickly and made back for the light” (Miéville 2002, 230). Moreover, his thoughts about the Secondspace of the water point toward the realisation of the oceanic weird, “*I’m damn small*, he thought, hanging like a mote of dust in still air, *in a sea that’s damn big. But that’s alright. I can do that*” (Miéville 2002, 231, emphases in the original). He successfully negotiates himself into the Secondspace of the water. However, only the grindylow proves to be the most successful negotiator in the water by being able to change the Thirdspace of the water.

In *The Scar* Miéville illustrates a spatial system that is read by its main character, Bellis Coldwine, an abcity. Bellis rejects the abcity of Armada and its sudden manifestation as for her it is a spatial absence. Therefore, it remains in its prior place in her spatial system. She cannot comprehend the Armada as a different spatial system. However, she can change the urban Armadan Secondspace, and through Tanner Sack, she has an indirect influence on the urban Armadan Thirdspace. Though the Armada offers her a Heimat, she adheres to her firm belief that her Heimat is New Crobuzon. Her relation to the water part of the Armada takes the form of spatial disorientation. Tanner Sack successfully incorporates himself into the spatial system of his new Heimat. Both parts of the spatial system (terrain and water) include him. The urban and the watery Thirdspace excludes him from influencing it.

7. Iron Council: The Successful Change of the Urban Spatial System by a Community to Themselves That is Postponed for the Future

In the third instalment of the *Bas-Lag*-trilogy, *Iron Council* Miéville provides the successful attempt to change the spatial system, particularly the Thirdspace. In the novel, Miéville writes a focalizer, Judah Low who can change the Crobuzan Thirdspace. Judah Low is a more than life character even in the secondary world of Bas-Lag. He represents the Iron Council, the rebellious company of railway workers that pilfer a train run by a railway trust whose aim is to cross the world meanwhile exploit the surrounding space and its workers. Throughout the book, the Iron Council becomes first, the primary operating utopia as it crosses the Rohagi continent and defies to obey to the Crobuzan authorities; and second, the theoretical idea of utopia as a time golem summoned by Low devours it. Consequently, this renders them perpetual, which is supported by the form of “We were, we are, we will be” a reverberation of Rosa Luxemburg (Miéville 2004, 611). Low also becomes a martyr of the Iron Council in a sense that he predicts that it is not the right time for revolution or social change in the Crobuzan spatial system. Low tells another character that the emergence of the Iron Council is postponed “till things are ready” (Miéville 2004, 593). Therefore, he is aware of his role in the Iron Council and bears the knowledge of the Crobuzan First-, Second-, and Thirdspace. He is a human and local to the city-state; therefore, he is read as a non-other. He perceives and can provide explanations of the urban Firstspace. As a member of the majority of the city dwellers, he has rights in New Crobuzon to apply changes on the urban Secondspace by running for office.

In this novel, Miéville also envisions the Iron Council as a cooperative social formation that favours the flat hierarchy⁹⁴, but has to struggle for its existence. Therefore, it is not surprising that the other two political powers begin to involve them in their game of thrones. As a corollary, three political powers are competing for the power position in the spatial system in New Crobuzon: Tesh⁹⁵, the Transcontinental Railroad Trust and the Crobuzan Militia as two representatives of New Crobuzon, and the Iron Council. In the latter political formation, the

⁹⁴ The thesis relies on the understanding of Levi R. Bryant’s concept of flat ontology, where he interprets “flat ontology [as it] rejects any ontology of transcendence or presence that privileges one sort of entity as the origin of all others and as fully present to itself” (R. Bryant 2011, 245). Consequently, the paper connects the idea of flat hierarchy to flat ontology as the latter one “argues that all entities are on equal ontological footing and that no entity, whether artificial or natural, symbolic or physical, possesses greater ontological dignity than other objects” (ibid.). The formation of the flat hierarchy is a radical democratic form for an institution that governs life. Miéville presents one in *Iron Council*.

⁹⁵ Tesh is another city-state that wages war against New Crobuzon.

others, the Remade play an important role: they are no longer others, but become fRemade, indicating the change in the politics of Iron Council.

In this chapter of the dissertation, I am going to explore and unravel the web of participants and their relation to the spatial system from the spatial perspective understood by Edward Soja. In the book, Miéville shows that the only method to change Crobuzan Thirdspace is the concept of utopia. In *Iron Council*, he establishes and develops the idea of utopia in front of the reader. That will be discussed later in the chapter and before that the participants of this spatial struggle have to be introduced and explored. Three political powers are competing for the position of the sole influencer of the Thirdspace in New Crobuzon: Tesh, the Transcontinental Railroad Trust and the Crobuzan Militia as two representatives of New Crobuzon, and the Iron Council.

7.1 Competition for the Position of the Sole Power in New Crobuzon

First, Tesh is another city-state that wages war against New Crobuzon for political supremacy on the continent of Rohagi. The Tesh smuggles an infiltrator into the city-state of New Crobuzon, Spiral Jacobs. He leaves “marks of a hecatombist” on the polis that “will take your city and, and will *wipe your city clean*” (Miéville 2004, 470, emphases in the original). This entity “was making the city itself a predator, rousing the hunt instincts of the metropolis” and “was coming out of its burrow into the real, it was unfolding into more and more impossible conjunctions. The dimensions of the bricks and the edges of the walls strained as it came close. Architecture stirred” (Miéville 2004, 526-7).

Second, New Crobuzon is an experienced participant in this struggle. It overcomes the slake-moths in *Perdido Street Station*, its navy obstructs the Armada in *The Scar* that could have become an opponent to the city-state. *Iron Council* features a more eloquent solution, betrayal to remain in its political position as the sole of influencer of the Thirdspace of the secondary world. The Transcontinental Railroad Trust encapsulates the industrial capitalist, imperialist and colonialist power in New Crobuzon. Miéville identifies the owner of the company, Weather Wrightby⁹⁶ as “a visionary of money and engineering who will not let geography or climate or politics block him” (Miéville 2004, 226). Wrightby’s man infiltrates the Iron Council and uses his influence for the return of the Council to the city of New Crobuzon. The Crobuzan Militia represents the power of the Foucauldian biopolitics

⁹⁶ This corresponds to the presumed picture of the unstoppable ambitious capitalist of the 19th century.

throughout the trilogy of *Bas-Lag*. In this novel, a group of militias pursues the Iron Council through the continent of Rohagi in order to execute the power of Crobuzan government over the Council.

Third, the Iron Council exemplifies those individuals who are oppressed and repressed by the Crobuzan government and its representatives, such as the Transcontinental Railroad Trust. Furthermore, the members of this community become politically active, thus opposing those in power. This Iron Council becomes the representation of utopia, then at the end of *Iron Council* the notion of utopia. The latter concept is achieved in the narrative world as one of the protagonists, Judah Low constructs a time golem that swallows the Iron Council. Thus, by that, he interrupts the Crobuzan Thirdspace and inserts the idea of utopia into it. This act remains to be the most successful attempt for the politically powerless multiplicity to change the Crobuzan Thirdspace. This chapter of the dissertation explores this successful attempt that overcomes the hegemony of New Crobuzon in its spatial system, especially in its Thirdspace.

The reception reads the novel as one of the most politically embedded books of the trilogy. I am going to rely on this interpretation and argue that one of the indicators of a political novel is a nondescript protagonist. Judah Low is the epitome of it as he becomes the representative of the entities he stands for. He is not a well-rounded character⁹⁷, but an embodiment of the dream of the Iron Council. He is elevated to a higher ontological level, where he loses all of his distinct features as a person and becomes one with the community. This recalls chapters from the history of Marxism, where the leader dissolves into the group it represents. Carl Freedman argues that Miéville writes Low as “being a revolutionary of saintly unselfishness – and one who, like most saints (and perhaps most revolutionaries), has a touch of detachment and a touch of megalomania in his personality” (75). Furthermore, Miéville writes about Low that, “[h]is actions were never what they were, but were mediated always through otherworldly righteousness” (Miéville 2004, 141).

7.2 The Utopian Impulse

The attempt to change the Crobuzan Thirdspace stems from the utopian thought, and it emerges in two social situations in the novel. The first case is called Collective, a community of manual labourers in the polis of New Crobuzon. They aim to cease the war effort with Tesh and to decrease the oppression of the war economy on the city-state. They organise a failed riot

⁹⁷ Compared to Isaac Dan der Grimnebulin from *Perdido Street Station* or Bellis Coldwine from *The Scar*.

against the Crobuzan authorities. The second case also epitomises the unfortunate circumstances of the exploited and oppressed working class. They are employees of a railway company. The members of the Iron Council differ along the lines of the concept of alterity⁹⁸ that is social, racial and gender differences, but they are united in their developing class-consciousness. They are left without their wages, a situation that culminates in an unsustainable affair, where only the lowest stratum of the workforce, the sex workers and the Remades have the strength to stand up for the rights of the working community. The class-consciousness is achieved through solidarity and comradeship that surface as the only mode to provide a communal sense for them.

Miéville achieves a sustainable utopia in *Iron Council* by moving the foundational form of the community from masses to multitude, from a vertical social system to a horizontal one. First, the phenomena that are applied in the examination of a sustainable utopia have to be explained. Paola Spinozzi and Massimiliano Mazzanti propose a definition of sustainability and argue that their explanation presupposes “a quadripartite structure that includes economics, ecology, politics and culture” (Spinozzi and Mazzanti 2018, 1). Moreover, they point out that the goal of sustainability is “to increase the quality of life, to be assessed according to the quality of the environment (air, soil, water), the level of security, safety, health, the availability of essential social services, the possibility to appreciate intangible values and spiritual aspects of life” (Spinozzi and Mazzanti 2018, 1-2). Second, John Clute identifies the concept of utopia “as a fictional narrative or presentation, a Utopia can be defined as a rendering in bodily form of an argument about society” (Clute 1999a, 976). Third, Mark P. Williams contextualises the ideas of masses and multitude and relies on “Hardt and Negri’s conception of the multitude [that] denotes a collective, politically-charged identity which is not reduced to a unitary, homogeneous and singular identity such as ‘the people’, but neither is it an undifferentiated, uniform collective like ‘the masses’” (476). Miéville changes the social system to a horizontal one in *Iron Council* to a different social organising principle, mateship. Joan Gordon explains mateship as “an interactive conversation among its members: mutually helpful, concerned, and interested” (Gordon 2003, 468).

7.3 The Utopias and the Road to Construct Them

⁹⁸ John Clute identifies alterity as a “term is used to designate the sense of ‘otherness’ consequent upon the fact that fantasy texts [. . .] violate the ‘ground rules’ of the mundane world, becoming ‘dependent on the internal consistency of their own ground rules’” (Clute 1999b, 20).

Miéville makes it clear that in Bas-Lag to conceive utopia one needs at least two components: one, willing entities to change their political circumstances and two, a tool in their hands to achieve that. The prior one is the railway workers of the Transcontinental Railroad Trust; the latter one is golemetry. The Councillors construct a manifested spatial system that is a utopia, where every member of the society have access to the First-, Second-, and Thirdspace and can argue their place. Miéville illustrates the argument that, “[t]here was a time, which the Councillors described briefly in shame—The Idiocy, they called it—when the train itself had been ripped by civil war, over strategy, over how to continue. The generals of the caboose and those of the foremost engine had lobbed grenades at each other over the long yards of train between, a week of guerrilla actions on the roofs of the cars, butchery in corridors” (Miéville 2004, 376-77). The Councillors establish a sustainable utopian community within the time-frame of twenty years outside of the Crobuzan spatial system. Miéville illustrates that the Crobuzan Secondspace is still in operation during the early days of the work, “New Crobuzon does not claim the plains. It does not yet want them; it does not despatch militia here: it cedes the rights to policing and its spoils to the TRT, to Weather Wrightby and his monopoly railroad. The TRT gendarmes are the law here, but they are mercilessly liberal: their gunners guard only some mines and bartertowns” (Miéville 2004, 202). The change of the Crobuzan Secondspace is tangible as the followings exemplify that is worth citing at length to observe the process of the formation of the Iron Council:

Crews work in cadres, all convict Remade or all freemen, no mixing (Miéville 2004, 235).

[. . .]

It is common for the wages train to be delayed. A day or two and there are only grumbles, but sometimes as long as a week goes without money. Three times when this happens there is a strike. By some chaos of democracy the track-layers put down their tools and block the train until they have their shekels in their pockets (Miéville 2004, 238).

[. . .]

In response to the picketing, the Remade are worked hard. The foremen assure the strikers once that every effort is being made to expedite the money, and then they turn to the Remade, who are made to make up for the strike (ibid.).

Free entities segregate the Remade “as if the iron link to New Crobuzon conducts its prejudices” (Miéville 2004, 248). The “potential to suggest strategies of resistance against those hegemonic forces seeking to maintain an oppressive status quo” of the spatial system of the polis evolves in the circles of the Remade and the sex workers (Newell 2013, 498). The prior group defends the strike of the free railway workers, and by that, they support and develop the concept of the Iron Council as a different manifested spatial system of utopia. The latter group

takes side with the Remade as Ann-Hari, the leader of the sex workers, says that “*they*, they Remade, wouldn’t scab. They *wouldn’t*. They took beating for you. To not break *your* strike. And they did it for us. For *me*” (Miéville 2004, 267, emphases in the original). Moreover, Ann-Hari underlines her decision and “reaches out and grips Uzman and pulls him to her, he acquiescing with surprise. She kisses him on his mouth. He is Remade: it is a vivid transgression” (ibid.). When it is pointed out to the soon-to-be Iron Councillors that “New Crobuzon’s full of [. . .] Whole-and-Remade fucking” (Miéville 2004, 272) and that “you ain’t supposed to admit it. These women . . . your women . . . they’re letting us see”, she replies that, “[c]ity guilds can’t help us here, she says. —This is new” (Miéville 2004, 273 ellipses in the original). Thus admitting that they no longer comply with the Crobuzan Secondspace, but they establish their own spatial system, where such acts are not condemned by social stigmatisation, but becomes an integral part of Councillor Secondspace.

The Councillor spatial system becomes well-established and sustainable. The Iron Council develops a collaborative system of governmentality as Michel Foucault identifies it as “the reasoned way of governing best and, at the same time, reflection on the best possible way of governing” (2). Miéville illustrates the working method of that government that, “[t]here were vicious arguments, methods of persuasion [. . .], a hinterland of democracy, patronage and charisma” (Miéville 2004, 377). But he also stresses that though these people are “arguing, voting, disagreeing” with each other, they are “making things work” (ibid.). As a manifested spatial system, the Iron Council provides all sort of facilities, such as “the abbatoirs, the bunks, the guntower, the library, the mess hall, the work-cabs” (Miéville 2004, 366). There are also locations for “flatbeds [. . .] filled with kitchen gardens full of herbs” (ibid.). The Councillors live in a utopian democracy, where the “town and its government were one. Its delegates, its committee were voted on by catchments based on work and age and random factors” (Miéville 2004, 377).

The tool in the hand of the Councillors is golemetry, the method of argument that Judah Low applies with the Councillors that can interrupt the Crobuzan Thirdspace and insert the Iron Council as the theoretical idea of utopia in there. The act of golemetry plays a significant part in the development of the concept of utopia. Golemety is twofold. On the one hand, it embodies another spatial system that is a manifested spatial system. On the other hand, golemety is a political act to interrupt and then insert the Councillor spatial system into the Crobuzan Thirdspace. By that, they achieve the aim of changing the Thirdspace of New Crobuzon for a

group of people that is described as they belong to the oppressed and politically powerless⁹⁹. Therefore, golemetry is instrumental for the Council with which they protect the community from attacks. Miéville clarifies that, “[g]olemetry is matter made to view itself anew, given a command that organises it, a task” (Miéville 2004, 222). In this interpretation, the soon-to-be Iron Councillors are this matter from which class-consciousness and Judah Low construct a new entity. As “Pennyhaugh lectures Judah from his notes:

The living cannot be made a golem—because with the vitality of orgone, flesh and vegetable is matter interacting with its own mechanisms. The unalive, though, is inert because it happens to lie just so. We make it meaningful. We do not order it but point out the order that inheres unseen, always already there. This act of pointing is at least as much assertion and persuasion as observation. We see structure, and in pointing it out we see mechanisms and grasp them, and we twist. Because patterns are asserted not in stasis but in change. Golemetry is an interruption. It is a subordinating of the static IS to the active AM (Miéville 2004, 222).

Furthermore, the representative of the Crobuzan Secondspace outside of the metropolis, which regulates the life of the railway workers, is the Transcontinental Railroad Trust. The Crobuzan spatial system can no longer operate as a sustainable society for these workers. Judah Lows realises and accepts the destiny of the Iron Council as an unsustainable utopia and as an unsustainable spatial system in practice. However, the unsustainability of utopias in the secondary world, cannot affect the theoretical idea of utopia itself. Miéville shows this solution as an opportunity that allows the oppressed to convey their wishes and desires for a better life into the spatial system of the Iron Council. By constructing a time golem Judah Low not only saves the members of this train utopia but by putting them out of the linearity of time, he also provides access to it for the future generations by interrupting the Crobuzan Thirdspace.

7.4 The Crobuzan Response

The Crobuzan spatial system relies on and stems from the amalgamation of industrialist, capitalist, imperialist and colonialist ideas. Miéville expresses this in the Transcontinental Railroad Trust and the owner of the company, Weather Wrightby. I interpret the railway as a form of Crobuzan spatial system that is ready to be imported as an argument against other spatial systems. The primary method of convincing is twofold. On the one hand, there is a brutal force against other spatial systems. On the other hand, there are two more methods of explanations that have ideological origins. The first one is the way to import the spatial system that is expressed in language. The second one is the map of a territory, which I will discuss

⁹⁹ The change is also achieved in *The City and The City* for the focalizer-narrator, in *Un Lun Dun* for the community of a city, and in *This Census-Taker* for the focalizer-narrator.

later. The prior one is deemed as holy work in the framework of rhetoric. Miéville writes that to persuade urban citizens to explore unknown territory, Wrightby has to come up with a story. He provides a rather captivating one¹⁰⁰ and as a result of that “University boys, clerks’ sons, the adventurous rich and aspirational young men like Judah, Dog Fenn and Chimer apprentices bored by their work, fired by children’s stories and travelogues” decide to join the railway company as scouts (Miéville 2004, 186). Wrightby admits to Judah Low that he is “[a]lways [present], when we break new ground. This is holy work” (Miéville 2004, 174). Their conversation reveals the nature of the Crobuzan spatial system. Judah tells him that there are people in the way of the railway, but Wrightby replies that he is aware of that and “[t]hat’s why I’m telling you this is holy work we’re doing. I’m trying to save you sorrow” (ibid.).

7.4.1 “The holy work” of Expansion of the Crobuzan Secondspace

In the capitalist logic, nothing can stop the importation of the Crobuzan spatial system. The company owner adds that, “[e]very one of us here, and every one coming, the dustiest navy, each clerk, each camp whore, each cook and horseman and each Remade, every one of us is a missionary of a new church and there is nothing that will stop holy work” (ibid.). Consequently, the construction of the Crobuzan spatial system is entwined with and elevated into the transcendental. The Crobuzan spatial system becomes a spatial formation that only those can change that have access to the Crobuzan Secondspace. Judah is not one of them, but what he sees in this trailblazing work, this newly formed Firstspace is that, “[a]t the end of a no-man’s-land of empty rails, he saw the work. New Crobuzon reaching so far. The leviathan unfolding of metal, the greatest city in Bas-Lag rolling out its new iron tongue, licking at the cities across the plains” (Miéville 2004, 189). This rhetoric proves that Judah has access to the Firstspace and can explain what is happening.

The holy work culminates in the argument where the capitalist infiltrator, Drogon a whispersmith¹⁰¹ has won against the Councillors. Drogon leads the Iron Council back to New Crobuzon. In this situation, the Crobuzan spatial system overcomes the Councillor one.

¹⁰⁰ “I have wanted this for decades, Wrightby said. He was compelling. The recruits were respectful of this man nearly three times their age. His money did not diminish him. —Twice I went west finding routes. Twice, sadly, I had to come home. There’s a crossing that’s still to be done. That’s the big task. This that we do now is only a start. A little tinkering southerly. A thousand miles of track. Through rottenstone, forests and bog. Judah was cowed by Wrightby’s fervour. This undertaking is so vast it could bankrupt even such a wealth as his. Wrightby had felt him, sounded his chest like a doctor. Handed out commissions, put teams together” (Miéville 2004, 186).

¹⁰¹ Miéville writes concerning this entity that, “subvocalurgy [. . .] [is] the science of furtive suggestions, a rude footpad technique” (49).

Miéville illustrates this by revealing Wrightby's articulate plan that, "I've the route across the continent. By the cacotopic stain. The way you made out of your bodies and your need", "[t]his continent will be made again, Remade, it'll be made beautiful" (Miéville 2004, 572). Wrightby as someone who successfully argued his place into the Crobuzan spatial system and as a representative of this spatial system, he declares the Councillor spatial system Crobuzan's. That is the reason why the railway owner uses the Remade metaphor: a form of subjugation over the non-Crobuzan spatial system. The Remade entity is the subaltern¹⁰² in a capitalist society, one of the forms of the overpowering from a spatial perspective is a map.

Maps have a pivotal role in the *Bas-Las* trilogy. In *Perdido Street Station*, the inclusion of the map of the polis provides an ideological portrayal of the urban space of New Crobuzon; those change it in power position. In *The Scar* the Armada goes off-map to the Scar and returns with a realisation that they cannot change the spatial system of Bas-Lag by magically arguing themselves into a better position to claim that the hegemony of the spatial system of Bas-Lag is theirs. They cannot obtain anything powerful enough outside of the spatial system of the city-state to overcome New Crobuzon. *Iron Council* proves the belief of the seeming firm spatial hegemony of the city-state wrong. The expansive politics of New Crobuzon relies heavily on the imposing method of its Secondspace that is represented by constructing a map of unknown territories. Consequently, the maps are interpreted as portable Secondspaces with which claims can be made over territories.

7.5 Rivalling Spatial Systems

The Crobuzan Secondspace and thus the city itself does not tolerate opponents. There are three rivalling spatial systems: New Crobuzon and the Transcontinental Railroad Trust, the Iron Council, and the city-state of Tesh. First, in the Crobuzan Secondspace the Transcontinental Railroad Trust puts out "maps of the newly opening lands" to reveal the knowledge that from that moment on that territory belongs to New Crobuzon (Miéville 2004, 188). Second, the Iron Council rebuts the Crobuzan Secondspace, then forms the Iron Council and travels around the continent of Rohagi. During their time on the road, the Councillors develop maps. Miéville stresses the difference between the Councillors and the railway company in their politics

¹⁰² The concept of subaltern is conceived by Antonio Gramsci, who writes that, "subaltern, which has not yet gained consciousness of its strength, its possibilities, of how it is to develop, and which therefore does not know how to escape from the primitivist phase" (Gramsci 1971, 160). In the chapter, I utilise it to point out the disempowered feature of certain group(s) within the community, these entities are on the margin within the spatial system.

towards others, who were already living there when the Councillors arrived: “They [Councillors] had mapped and made peace with the neighbours they found. ‘We got more maps than the New Crobuzon Library’” (Miéville 2004, 377). The differentiation between the Iron Council and New Crobuzon in possession of the number of maps is also a *casus belli* for the city-state as the polis expands its Secondspace by obtaining maps of previously unknown territories. The power and knowledge that stem from the Secondspace are also used in a more quotidian sense that is the orientation of a new location on a map. When it is revealed to Judah that Ann-Hari does not know about Myrshock¹⁰³, he draws a map to Ann-Hari as he realises that she “knows nothing of the railroad’s shape, or its future” (Miéville 2004, 221). Third, the city-state of Tesh also has a different spatial system. As it is in war with New Crobuzon, Tesh attempts to achieve advantages to win the conflict. Their man infiltrates New Crobuzon and leaves marks, spirals, hence the name Spiral Jacobs, portable Secondspaces of Tesh. Through which Tesh can release an entity that annihilates the Crobuzan Thirdspace. That void left by that entity can be filled with the Teshi Thirdspace.

7.5.1 Struggles in the Crobuzan Firstspace

Miéville integrates the Teshi infiltrator into the Crobuzan society by persuading¹⁰⁴ Ori that Spiral Jacobs belonged to the group of the fReemade folk hero Jack Half-a-Prayer, who is perceived in New Crobuzon as “a symbol of resistance and revolution” (Newell 2013, 505). Jonathan Newell remarks that, “[b]y the time of *Iron Council*, decades later, Jack has been executed by the New Crobuzon government and so ascended to become an immortal icon for anti-authoritarianism and progress” (ibid.). Newell draws a parallel between Jack Half-a-Prayer and Judah Low and points out their political commitment that “Judah’s vision for Iron Council mirrors Jack Half-a-Prayer’s vision for New Crobuzon; committed to a non-teleological, perpetually evolving revolution, a train without a final destination, Judah embodies the same spirit of flux and anti-authoritarian progress” (506). Ori begins to perceive the Teshi infiltrator

¹⁰³ Myrshock is another city-state, Miéville describes the arrival of the travellers to the city the following way: “It was an ugly port. They were wary. This was not their territory. The architecture looked thrown together, chance materials aggregated and surprised to find themselves a town. Old but without history. Where it was designed, its aesthetic was unsure—churches with cement facades mimicking antique curlicues, banks using slate in uncommon colours, achieving only vulgarity. Myrshock was mixed. Human women and men lived beside cactaceae, the thorned and brawny vegetable race, and garuda, bird-people freebooters from the Cymek over the water, who dappled the air as well as the streets. Vodyanoi in a canal ghetto” (Miéville 2004, 23).

¹⁰⁴ “Spiral Jacobs white-bearded, looking old even then, wearing the same madman’s grin. And beside him a man whose face was turning and hazed, who raised his arms to the camera, stretched the fingers of his left hand. His right arm was unfolding, was a brutal and massive mantis claw” (Miéville 2004, 95-6).

as a revolutionary, who is extraordinary; thus, in a sense, resembles Jack and Judah. Spiral Jacobs begins to change the Crobuzan spatial system, when he gives Ori a bag full of money as a “*contribution*, said the note enclosed. *To help with a Good Plan. In Jack’s memory*” (Miéville 2004, 109 emphases in the original).

Jacobs sets the Teshi war plan in motion as Ori earns his membership to Toro’s gang, a group of manual labourers in the polis of New Crobuzon that is loosely connected to the Collective, the attempt to change the Crobuzan Thirdspace. The group murders the mayor of New Crobuzon “and her lover, the magister who sentenced” Toro to be remade (Newell 2013, 506). As a seemingly political act turns out to be personal for the gang leader. An act that, Newell interprets that, “New Crobuzon achieves a kind of city-wide [. . .] revolution akin to the Iron Council’s: a coalition of revolutionary groups bands together into a Collective that directly opposes New Crobuzon’s government through force of arms” (Newell 2013, 507). In this riot, Ori realises that “*Spiral Jacobs is trouble. He’s the cause of something*” (Miéville 503 emphases in the original). Jacobs cannot release “the thysiac, the murderspirit”, the citykiller that could wipe the Crobuzan Thirdspace out, because the member of Judah’s team, another Teshi, Qurabin prevents him doing that (Miéville 2004, 523).

Miéville constructs another character that changes the Thirdspace in Bas-Lag, who is not the protagonist. He includes the Weaver in *Perdido Street Station*, Uther Doul in *The Scar*, and “Qurabin. Eighth-ring red monk of Tekke Vogu” in *Iron Council* (Miéville 2004, 147). Miéville writes concerning the character that, “[e]very monk of Tekke Vogu was enfolded within the Moment, but it was a bargain. They would learn the hidden, and how to find the lost. But Vogu’s sacrament was sold, not given. The price for the Moment’s protection was something made lost, something hidden from the devotee, given to Vogu” (Miéville 2004, 147-8). I interpret it as a rough form of negotiation, where the two parties aim for a balance between them. Furthermore, to simple-minded people in the novel, Miéville identifies that “Qurabin was a god become suddenly interventionist and earthly” (Miéville 2004, 154). Qurabin is an entity in power position to interrupt the Thirdspace of Bas-Lag as a golemist does, and he is also a refugee in the Tesh-New Crobuzon war. His monastery has been destroyed, his fellow monks have been killed, therefore, as Cutter realises that, “[t]he monk was displaced, renegade, renounced by history and home” and the “journey was Qurabin’s protracted suicide” (Miéville 2004, 159). Miéville connects Qurabin to the team of Judah through the idea of mateship as Joan Gordon notes that it “is an interactive conversation among its members [. . .] [and] it suggests a complex feedback relationship” (468). Miéville writes that “Qurabin made a sound of pleasure, no more supportive of New Crobuzon than of the Tesh who had betrayed the monastery, and impressed

by the Councillors and their welcome. Qurabin was glad to be part of whatever exertion this would be” (385). The two figures of a golemist, Judah Low and Qurabin, interrupt the Thirdspace of Bas-Lag. The prior one saves the Iron Council and conceives the idea of utopia, an interruption of the Crobuzan Thirdspace. The latter one saves the Crobuzan spatial system from total annihilation by the Teshi war effort.

7.5.2 The Birth of the New Crobuzan Thirdspace

Miéville establishes the new Crobuzan Thirdspace as a corollary of the outcome of the clash between Spiral Jacobs and Qurabin, and then it is interrupted by Judah Low. Qurabin understands the spirals as portable Teshi Secondspaces in the Crobuzan spatial system:

The things that are coming in your city, the haints—they aren’t attacks, they’re ripples. Of an event that hasn’t yet come. They’re spots in time and place. Something’s coming, dropped into time like water, and these have splashed back. And where they land, these little droplets come like maggoty things to suck at the world. Something’s coming soon, and these, these, these spirals, these curlicues are bringing it (Miéville 2004, 469-470 emphasis in the original).

Consequently, Spiral Jacobs is someone who successfully argued his place into the Crobuzan spatial system and as a representative of the Teshi spatial system, he attempts to claim the Crobuzan spatial system through “the incoming of whatever the thing was, the purveyor of the coming hecatomb: the massacre spirit, the massenmordist, the unswarm” (Miéville 2004, 508). Qurabin relies on the help from the pantheon of the Moment and argues with it. The argument of the monk in the Teshi spatial system is successful, as a result of that “Qurabin let loose hidden knowledge and the thing was snatched back down toward the nothing it had come from. It strained to emerge” (Miéville 2004, 527). Jacobs’s claim is no longer successful, and the argument for the hegemony of the Crobuzan Thirdspace takes its toll on Qurabin: “Qurabin reached out and gripped Jacobs the ambassador and whispered what must be the last word left to the renegade Tesh, stepped back into a true secret, a hidden place, into the domain of Tekke Vogu. The air winked behind them, and they, and in a swallowing of space the Urbomach, were gone” (Miéville 2004, 528).

Miéville realises the construction of the concept of utopia by Judah’s last interruption of the Crobuzan spatial system that is the insertion of the spatial system of the Iron Council. The Councillors won the struggle to change the Crobuzan spatial system. They overcome their Crobuzan and their Teshi counterparts. Although the change in the spatial system is postponed for the future, the idea remains in the Crobuzan Thirdspace from which it can be developed into a new spatial system.

In this chapter of the dissertation, I explored Miéville's attempt to change the powerful Crobuzan spatial system. His approach is the construction of the idea of utopia, which in the novel proves to be successful. Three political powers compete for the position of the sole influencer of the Thirdspace in New Crobuzon: Tesh, the Transcontinental Railroad Trust and the Crobuzan Militia as two representatives of New Crobuzon, and the Iron Council. The utopian thought is developed from Miéville's emancipatory politics that I read through the interpretation of Mark P. Williams reading of masses and multitude, who connected the notions with "Hardt and Negri's conception of the multitude [that] denotes a collective, politically-charged identity which is not reduced to a unitary, homogeneous and singular identity such as 'the people', but neither is it an undifferentiated, uniform collective like 'the masses'" (476). I illustrated how Miéville constructs a sustainable utopia for his Councillors and how this utopia turns into an unsustainable one through the lens of rhetoric and spatiality. The focus of the *Bas-Lag* trilogy never misses its fixed point that is the metropolis, New Crobuzon. Its spatial system is saved by those who neither spatially, nor rhetorically connected to it, but fight for the betterment of the community, such as the Teshi monk, Qurabin and the renegade golemist, Judah Low.

8. The City and the City: The Successful Change of the Urban Spatial System by a Focalizer-narrator to for Itself

China Miéville's novel *The City and The City* is a hybrid fusion of weird fiction, urban fantasy, and noir police procedural. In this dystopian world, Inspector Tyador Borlú, a detective for the Extreme Crime Squad from the fictional Eastern European city of Beszél, is called to an incident. A young woman, a foreign student, has been found dead. First impressions suggest a routine case, but they are soon proved wrong. The clues lead Inspector Borlú to a situation where borders, spaces, power, and ideologies are put on trial, and even his own identity becomes threatened. The novel takes place in a world where two cities, the decaying Beszél and the prosperous Ul Qoma, share the same geographical area, but are perceived by their citizens as different states with individual cultures and mutually incompatible, exclusionary existences. While nationalists want to destroy the neighbouring city, unificationists dream of dissolving the two cities into one realm. The odd liminal realm guarantees the separation of the two cities and secret power structure called Breach, a Foucauldian heterotopic region located both in-between and within the two cities, a tertiary 'inside-outside' transcending the cities' binary division through prerogatives which serve as a controlling mechanism over the strictly isolated two parts with which it lives in fusion. Places in Breach appear in both cities, and citizens exist alongside one another, although they remain invisible for citizens of the other cities.

The dualistically 'divided' geographical space ontologically locates the characters inhabiting Beszél and Ul Qoma, which unite into a whole that consists of three parts: Beszél, Ul Qoma, and Breach. In order to fully understand the spatially ambiguous notion of Breach, however, vital semantic distinctions have to be made. Firstly, breach(ing) can refer to an active verb's agency, denoting an illegal crossing of the borders between Beszél and Ul Qoma, or a self-conscious neglect of the deed of "unseeing," an expression describing when citizens of either country are forced by the law of their home-countries not to take notice of persons who are occupying the same space but are not citizens of the same city they are. Secondly, in line with its punitive dimensions, Breach also functions as an institution that protects the borders of the two cities and takes legal steps against trespassers. Breach is also a space that behaves exactly the same way, from a topographical vantage point, as Orciny, the "third, the pretend-existing" city that is "ensconced, secreted between the two brasher city-states" (Miéville 2009, 62) and is ruled by a "community of imaginary overlords, exiles" (62). The peculiarity of the fictitious world and the ordinary qualities of a city as such connect entirely; therefore, a

completely new conglomerate must be investigated. This part of the dissertation explores this entirely new composite, the presented City, the manifestation of the Thirdspace: how it comes into being, in what way it helps Borlú to evolve into a post-human, and what its ontological role in the construction of spatial system may be.

8.1 Spatial and Narratological Orientation

The immersive fantasy is experienced by a homodiegetic narrator: the story is told from the point of view of Borlú whom we assume to be a reliable narrator. He is also a character-focalizer, the “vehicle of [internal] focalization,” “the agent whose perception orients the presentation” and who invites us inside the represented events (Rimmon-Kenan 2002, 76). Through his focalization, the narrative space – the storyworld made up of “the physically existing environment in which characters live and move” (Buchholz & Jahn in Ryan 2014, 2) – is constructed in a heterogeneous way. While Borlú is in Beszel, Ul Qoma remains for him a mere potentiality, bordering on an ‘impossible/imaginary world’ prohibited by the fictitious ideologies which constituting cornerstones of the storyworld and an entirely different spatial system¹⁰⁵ from spatial viewpoint. The novel’s world is a composite of incompatible parts. The spatial frames of the fictional reality’s actual events are divided into three irreconcilable worlds, Beszel, Ul Qoma, and Breach, which “are hierarchically organized by relations of containment” (Ryan 2014, 2). Beszel and Ul Qoma are subspaces of Breach as well as mutual exclusion. The spatial frames also function in themselves as spatial systems. These worlds share the same narrative space, but occupy different fictional settings circumscribing the “socio-historico-geographical environment in which the action takes place” (Ryan 2014, 3). Spatial frames develop separately and evoke a variety of settings: Beszel and Ul Qoma, for instance, took “opposing sides in conflicts, such as during the Second World War” (Miéville 2009, 73), and fought “two brief and disastrous open wars against each other” (74), hence historically have been positioned as enemy sites. Yet with shifting scenes of action spatial frames might also flow into one another.

The “story space,” defined by Ryan as most “relevant to the plot,” “consists of all the spatial frames plus all the locations mentioned by the text” (3). In Miéville’s novel it builds a fractured space split into the familiar, contemporary world (Borlú visited some parts of our known world) and three fictitious sections (two completely different city-states and a space that

¹⁰⁵ That contains a First-, a Second-, and a Thirdspace.

is policing the other two). While the City is the ur-space, which consists of Breach, Ul Qoma, Beszel, and the disputed no man's lands, the dissentris [sic] which are all sub-spaces of the City, Orciny is not a real sub-space, but rather a possible world that remains on the level of abstract Thirdspace. At the beginning of the novel, Detective Tyador Borlú regards Breach not as a “blending” of Beszel and Ul Qoma, but as a sovereign country on its own right; and eventually will be the one who “actualizes the City” for himself. As a result, he will understand it as a manifested Thirdspace. The act of manifestation has a prerequisite, a condition from the character who attempts to manifest the Thirdspace, that feature is otherness. Borlú learns through spatial and linguistic lens to differentiate between parts of the City as distinct entities yet parts of a unified whole, and hence will acquire a posthuman¹⁰⁶ identity, duly marked by a new name, Tye. A homonym for “tie”, the new name indicates a subjectivity situated in connectivity, endowed with an interpretive agency that brings into being a city transcending the binary mode of thinking.

The urban space follows the Miévillean spatial system. Miéville's triad is distinguished by the unity of the three narrative spaces: Beszel, Ul Qoma, and Breach. From narratological perspective, Beszel denotes a place, where Borlú has access to the parts of the spatial system, to the knowledge of the Firstspace and Secondspace. Or as Lefebvre puts it, they are “places of identity, identical places, neighboring order” (Lefebvre 2003, 128). This is the location from which Borlú perceives another spatial system, “the other place, the place of the other, simultaneously excluded and interwoven; distant order” (ibid.) represented by Ul Qoma and Breach. Both of them present different spatial systems. The perception of the Ul Qoman Firstspace is hindered by ideology: the governing principles of the city-state make it in-visible, obediently understood as un-real. All of Miéville's narrative spaces trouble the understanding of the spatial systems, when Borlú crosses the borders of the city-states. The border-crossing that renders a spatial disorientation provokes in Borlú an epistemological crisis that advances his detective work. He realizes that only through a certain “fascination for the outside, for that which lies beyond standard perception, cognition and experience” can he solve Mahalia Geary's murder (Fisher 2016, 7). A preoccupation with the outside and with the strange constitutes the very *modus operandi* of weird and eerie.

¹⁰⁶ The dissertation posits that this posthuman condition connotes a post-ideological position, which allows the avatars of Breach to perceive its radically different spatial system. Moreover, the posthuman condition is interpreted from the perspectives of the two polises as it realises and actualises all of the spatial systems of the narrative spaces at the same time. This feature cannot be achieved unless one becomes a member of the Breach. This is the position, when the Foucauldian trialectics of heterogeneous sites entwine – space, knowledge, and power – and construct the post-ideological position of the posthuman.

Although Borlú is a reliable homodiegetic narrator, his factual report on the effect of strangeness (on the implied reader) “confronts a set normative system [. . .] with a point of view or look implying a new set of norms” which construct an alienated fictitious space, as Darko Suvin opined in his *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre* (6). Borlú has to master each spatial system in order to overcome its strangeness and establish a metaperspectivism through which space and place can be distinguished by recognizable semantic features. He must manifest the spatial system by becoming a post-human whose “look of estrangement is both cognitive and creative” (6) and hence can understand the City and its parts. By the end of the novel, the narrator-protagonist is no longer Tyador Borlú but Tye, who has ‘earned’ his new name on account of having fully discovered the novelistic space, and having ‘actualized the City’ beyond the Lefebvrian reconciliation. However, the change only takes place from the vantage point of Tye, but not from the perspective of the reader.

8.2 The Experiential Understanding of Spatial System(s)

At the beginning of the novel Tyador Borlú is human, and not a post-human being. The detective, who is also an avatar of Breach, has the authority to see the complete complexity of the City, unlike everyone else. To find Mahalia Geary’s murderer, Borlú realises that he must violate the laws of Breach by situating himself in the space in the City in a way that allows him to notice, observe, and understand the borderline between various parts of the spatial systems of Beszel, Ul Quoma, and Breach. He understands that in order to find the suspects of Mahalia Geary’s murder, he has to situate himself differently in the space of the City. As Dylan Trigg points out in his *The Memory of Place*, “being-in-the-world means being placed” (4). Accordingly, Borlú must move from his homely space (Beszel) to other spaces (Ul Quoma and Breach), and experience the familiarly unfamiliar/ unfamiliarly familiar *unheimlich*, to confirm the spatial systems of the other city-states. Understanding, in an ontological sense, the “locat[ion] in a particular place, specific to the bodily subject experiencing that place” (Trigg 2012, 7) can only be grounded in an experiential methodology. Borlú’s tactic demonstrates that even if a place “are constricted by a set of frames that define their physical shape, render them mathematically measurable and allow them to be mapped or localised within a coordinate system” (García 2015, 21), people experience them in affective ways. After Borlú visits every narrative space (Beszel, Ul Quoma and Breach), he overcomes his ontological boundaries by

shattering his actualized human-self and gradually metamorphosing himself into a post-human being endowed with a unique kaleidoscopic sight, a feature of otherness.

In each city-state law-abiding citizens must constantly negotiate presence and absence if they want to be recognized as inhabitants of that particular Firstspace of the city-state. The sense of strangeness is conditioned by ideologies that govern the city-state, indoctrinating citizens to ‘unsee’ people from the other city even if they occupy the same location. The immersive fantasy novel forces its readers to observe and experience the strange fictitious space of *The City and The City*, and by inviting audiences to identify with the narrator-focalizer, allows “us to see the inside from the perspective of the outside,” as Fisher argues (10). He posits two questions in relation to the eerie which perfectly encapsulate the affective reactions of the reader of Miéville’s book: “*Why is there something here when there should be nothing? Why is there nothing here when there should be something?*” (15). According to Fisher, the dyad of presence and absence separates weird and eerie. The former one “is constituted by a presence,” whereas the latter one “is constituted by a failure of absence or by a failure of presence” (103). Borlú learns to overcome the binary opposition (between presence and absence, between weird and eerie) and gains a post-human status/logic through understanding that both presence and absence are realized at once in the city-text. The experiential understanding of the fictitious spatial system(s) of *The City and The City* cannot be manifested, only through Tye, the post-human, the avatar of Breach, the detective.

8.3 Becoming Detective: Language, Rhetoric, and Space

In the transformation of human to post-human, language plays a pivotal role, as it is closely correlated and entwined with space, seeing and experiencing. Throughout the experiential understanding of the spatial system that later leads to the manifestation of the City, walking, breaching, and using language itself constitute vital parts of the ontological process of the discovery of the whole fictitious world of the novel. Every single city-state has its own official language with its individual meanings, concepts, and signs. A particular sign can be understood only in a particular city-state; meanings, ideas, concepts cannot be deciphered in the same way in another city-state as in their ‘home.’ Yet there is an *unheimlich* connection between the Besz language and the Illitan (Ul Qoman) language, which Borlú describes when highlighting their common historical phonetic origins: “the languages [Besz and Illitan] are closely related – they share a common ancestor” (Miéville 2009, 51). About his native tongue, he says: “Besz is in Besz: thirty-four letters, left to right, all sounds rendered clear and phonetic,

consonants, vowels and demivowels decorated with diacritics—it looks, one often hears, like Cyrillic . . . Illitan uses Roman script.” (Miéville 2009, 50) However, he underlines that:

Illitan bears no resemblance to Besz. Nor does it sound similar. But these distinctions are not as deep as they appear. Despite careful cultural differentiation, in the shape of their grammars and the relations of their phonemes (if not the base sounds themselves), the languages are closely related—they share a common ancestor, after all. It feels almost seditious to say so. Still (Miéville 2009, 51).

The limitation of understanding slackens as Borlú carries on with his walks and keeps constructing Ul Qoman meaning by a peripatetic experiential perception of space. It is not by chance that his English speaking is stressed, a foreign language in the novel’s fictional universe, first in Beszel, with the parents of the murdered young woman. Every language he comes in contact with loosens the grip of language a little on space, vision and contributes to his post-human development. Later in the novel, Borlú even jokes about impersonating Arnold Schwarzenegger from *The Terminator*, repeating the catch-phrase of the movie “in an Austrian accent” – “I’ll be back” (Miéville 2009, 257). In this precise moment, he steps out of the Ul Qoman spatial system and looks inside from the outside. With that change of perspective, Borlú’s understanding of reality starts to evolve via the proliferation of contact languages and the gradual fading of the eerie presence. Borlú reclaims the concealed alternate form of reality when he decides to understand space not in terms of the presented hyper-reality, where each and every city-state can exist independently, but via his movements in the City. Consequently, the language of Breach provides the possibility for Borlú to leave behind his native tongue and home(ly) reality and become an avatar of Breach. In Breach he “heard conversation in both languages [Besz and Illitan] and a third thing, a mongrel or antique that combined them” (301). He does not precisely define this third language, though other characters refer to it throughout the novel as the “root language.” The root language is depicted as what the Besz and Illitan languages might have sounded like before their development into separate languages. Though it is forbidden in both city-states, it is known by certain communities. It marks identity and knowledge and reports about political affiliations. Therefore Borlú assumes that it is either the Unificationists who claim to have command of the root or researches whose purpose is to try to make sense of the findings in the diggings of Bol Ye’an¹⁰⁷. When he asks a group of Ul Qoman Unificationists whether “anyone speak old Illitan or Besz? Root-form stuff?” (Miéville 2009, 197), they reply “all of us” because they “live in the city and it’s the language of the city” (ibid.).

¹⁰⁷ A site of excavation where unearthed objects exhibit “physical misbehaviour and unlikely effects” (Miéville 76). Later in the novel it is revealed that Mahalia Geary stole from these objects, therefore, these deeds become one of the reasons of Mahalia’s death.

8.4 Negotiating Spatial System from the Breach

After Borlú masters the language of the Breach and is successfully initiated into Breach as its avatar, Borlú's human form is left behind. He has the power to grab by the scruff David Bowden – an archaeologist who once published a now-illegal book about Orciny called *Between the City and The City* – turn him, march him away and pull “him out of either town into neither, into the Breach” (Miéville 2009, 363). The avatar of Breach is a post-human who understands the border between the city-states of Beszel and Ul Qoma and the disputed no man's land. The avatar is not hindered by vision, not bound by language, and not related to any other place than the manifestation of the Thirdspace that is the City. Moreover, the post-human possesses the knowledge of “how to walk between” Beszel and Ul Qoma, “first in one, then the other, or in either, but without the ostentation of Bowden's extraordinary motion – a more covert equivocation” (Miéville 2009, 368). The knowledge that Borlú obtains during his stay in Breach reveals the openness of the space he comes into contact with.

Yi-Fu Tuan points out in his book *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* that “Open space has no trodden paths and signposts,” it “is a common symbol of freedom [. . .]; it suggests the future and invites action” (54). If their home city-state actually acquired an independent spatial status, subjects in Beszel and Ul Qoma would be unable to negotiate the Firstspaces, Secondspaces, and Thirdspaces without the compass of state ideology to direct them. Therefore, space implies a threat and a temptation to ideologically governed and conditioned individuals confined by the limits of place. In *The City and The City*, residents of each city-state cannot fathom the notion that what they experience as space in their everyday life is in reality a place, determined and restrained by political ideologies and cultural scripts. Maarja Saar and Hannes Palang write that, “[p]lace [. . .] is socially constructed and operating, including interaction between people and groups, institutionalized land uses, political and economic decisions, and the language of representation” (7). Just like identity provides a framework to the heterogeneous I, place delimits the infinitely changeable space¹⁰⁸. Borlú realizes that the constricting political and ideological boundaries established and maintained by the city-states must be challenged.

As Borlú steps out of each place that represents a city-state, he discovers the freedom of the outside (the reality around and beyond the cities), in the space of Breach, without submitting

¹⁰⁸ Doreen Massey proposes that “space [is recognised] as the product of interrelations; as constituted through interactions” (9).

to its control. His metaperspective can realize and disclose the constructed nature of the city-spaces' places; he is an ideological marauder unwilling to subject himself to its power mechanisms. Like in the case of David Bowden who revolted against the city states' ideological apparatuses, "Maybe it took an outsider to really see how citizens mark themselves, so as to walk between it" (Miéville 2009, 368).

8.4 The Manifested City, the Non-divided Spatial System

As Borlú manifests the notion of Thirdspace as the City, it becomes a non-divided place, a city-state. His deeds bring space into being by means of human consciousness; intellectual manoeuvres, including ambiguous reactions like cognitive estrangement, provide the framework of the City. He alters the creed of the city-states in order to evolve it into the ideology of the City. The two city-states are *unheimlich* from different aspects: in Beszel Ul Qoma looms over Borlú's home as a presence, whereas in Ul Qoma the absence of Beszel is tangible. The familiarity of Beszel guarantees Borlú access to the constitutive features of place, but he can only cope with the unfamiliarity of Ul Qoma upon realizing the "ritual markings that invest it [as a place] with meaning and attach to it functions and values" (García 2015, 37). Borlú recognizes a "neon" (Miéville 2009, 171) light in Ul Qoma that reminds him of the instance when he "was lit by foreign orange light" (24) in Beszel. As Borlú leaves the Copula Hall, he immediately recognizes "these streets [in Ul Qoma that] shared the dimensions and shapes of those I knew" (Miéville 2009, 162) and the twofold *modus operandi* of the *unheimlich* is initiated. They are familiar and unfamiliar at the same time, and as a result, at that precise moment, the surrounding of Borlú is the yet unknown Firstspace of the City. The perception of the Firstspace is present, however, he is bereft of the knowledge of the Firstspace. Borlú cannot obtain the spatial explanation of the Firstspace, since there are no unambiguous signs that indicate meaning, function, and value.

8.5 The Crossroad between the Spatial Systems

Copula Hall is a special part of the city-states existing simultaneously both in Beszel Old Town and in Ul Qoma Old Town. Copula Hall, a spatial point that hosts or rejects visitors of the state, recalls Michel Foucault's cultural historically significant topographical category of heterotopic sites that "always presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable" while preventing them from being "freely accessible like a

public place” (26) or fully secretive like a private one. Borlú describes Copula Hall as a liminal, heterotopic locus, as “one of the few places that has the same name in both cities,” “not a crosshatched building,” yet situated “externally in both cities; [while] internally, much of it is in both and neither” (Miéville 2009, 72). Borlú describes it as a “navel between the cities” (Miéville 2009, 86), a threshold between the distant realities of the two city-states.

The process of familiarization, related to the construction of place, begins as soon as Borlú leaves his hotel to stay in Ul Qoma. He reports about his walk and the recognition that Ul Qoman presence turns into a Besz absence. He recognizes

the neon. All around me in knots and coils, effacing the weak lights of my far-off home. The animated yammering in Illitan. It was a busier city than Beszel at night: now I could look at the figures at business in the dark that had been unseeable shades until now. I could see the homeless dossing down in side streets, the Ul Qoman rough sleepers that we in Beszel had had to become used to as protubs to pick our unseeing ways over and around (Miéville 2009, 171).

While the explanation provided by the concept of Firstspace in Ul Qoma gradually increases, the perception of Firstspace related to Ul Qoma is formed experientially in opposition to the concept of Firstspace in Beszel. The outsider perspective surfaces in Ul Qoma to initiate another viewpoint as soon as the protagonist commits breach.

8.6 Realisation and Actualisation of Breach as the City

Breach as a state always impends on the horizon of the two city-states. Borlú’s major problem, provoking a veritable ontological crisis, is that he cannot manifest Breach as the City itself. It is only by reaching a posthuman condition that Borlú – by learning its characteristics from his avatar-mentor, Ashil – can finally manifest Breach as the City. Breach is the most outsider perspective the protagonist can achieve without effacing the totality of the narrative space. With the Suvinian “estrangement” accomplished, cognition no longer signifies the same as in the city-states. Borlú’s disorientation peaks on his leaving the premises of Breach, where he has been detained:

““Where are you?” Ashil said. [. . .]
“Are you in Beszel or Ul Qoma?”
“... Neither. I’m in Breach.”
“You’re with me here.” We moved through a crosshatched morning crowd. “In Breach. No one knows if they’re seeing you or unseeing you. [. . .] You’re not in neither [sic]: you’re in both” (Miéville 2009, 304).

The twofold characteristics of the *unheimlich* start to fade away, as the detective reports that “We [Ashil and Borlú] went by foot through either city. The feeling of Beszel familiarity was replaced by some larger strangeness” (Miéville 2009, 304). From the ontological point of

view, presence and absence can no longer be told apart in Breach, since it evolves into the manifested Thirdspace, the City. From the vantage point of Borlú, in here there is no cognitive estrangement, the prerequisites of weird and eerie dissolve into the experientially recognized narrative space and spatial system. Neither of them are available in Breach for humans. They disorient city-dweller individuals because they are bound by the political ideologies that maintain the narrative space of the novel. Yet posthumans, people who at one time breached and became avatars of the Breach, can establish the spatial system of the City, the manifested Thirdspace of the city-states of Beszel and Ul Qoma. Therefore, they realize both presence and absence in the city-text. Borlú still admits that even the avatars of Breach “debate among many other things the question of where it is that we live” (Miéville 2009, 373). The actualization of the City comes at the point in the narrative when David Bowden meets Borlú in Copula Hall, (dis)located as a “Schrödinger’s pedestrian” as Miéville puts it (354). Bowden points out that

If you [Borlú] were in one place or the other they might come for me, but you’re not. The thing is, and I know it wouldn’t work this way and so do you but that’s because no one in this place, and that includes Breach, obeys the rules, their own rules, and if they did it would work this way, the thing is that if you were to be killed by someone who no one was sure which city they were in and they weren’t sure where you were either, your body would have to lie there, rotting, forever (Miéville 2009, 356).

Bowden is taken by the authorities of Breach; Borlú only could have arrested him if he had managed to manifest the City earlier. As a new conglomerate the City comes into being through the manifestation of the avatars of Breach. They construct a place that functions as a new spatial system for the city-dwellers of the two city-states, yet it remains a place for the avatars who cognitively manifest all parts of the City’s narrative space. The otherness, in the novel as a posthuman feature, surpasses the cognitive estrangement of the ontological spaces (Beszel and Ul Qoma) and annuls the differentiation among the places of the narrative space.

In the end, all parts of the City have been reconciled into one place through the (mock)Bildungsroman development of the post-human detective narrator, Tye. For him, Breach has lost its place- and space-like features, while other characters of the novel still see it as space that remains outside, ideologically speaking. The City exists for the reader and for Tye as a place only by virtue of actualizing signs of a limited availability. Borlú questions the authority of his own cognition, challenges the culturally-defined geographical notions that situate Beszel, Ul Qoma, and Breach in the narrative space as places, and, by these gestures, accelerates his progress towards a post-human spatial perception.

9. UnLunDun: The Successful Change of the Urban Spatial System by the Focalizer-narrator for the Community, which Will Be Adapted

In all of his novels, China Miéville demonstrates a method through which he attempts to change the spatial system of his novels. His portal quest fantasy young adult novel *UnLunDun* guides us to the eponymous UnLondon, a fantastic urban site built up by substances that are “[M]ildly [O]bsolete [I]n [L]ondon”¹⁰⁹, a junk-city distinguished by odd architectural constructs and metamorphic inhabitants (Miéville 2007, 64). In *UnLunDun*, Miéville provides an example of a protagonist who successfully establishes a method of influencing and changing the spatial system, then attempts to adapt it to another spatial system. She arrives from London to UnLondon, constructs a new spatial system to UnLondon, then realises the potentiality of that change thus begins to apply it to her city, London. This change is pivotal because it is the first example, where the protagonist not only successfully changes the spatial system for a community but also attempts to spread this by adapting it to another one.

The narrative of *UnLunDun* revolves around two girls (Deeba Resham and Susanna Moon - referred to as Zanna) who go through a portal in London and discover that there is a nonsensical parallel world, UnLondon. They begin their adventures together in that fantasy land. A local boy, Hemi, recognises Zanna as the “Shwazzy,” a prophesied chosen one who is destined to redeem UnLondon from the Smog - the evil, sentient cloud of pollution. Zanna is defeated in the first fight against the Smog, Deeba rescues her and takes her back to London. However, the magical ability of UnLondon that makes its visitors forget about that place does not function on Deeba. She keeps recalling the place and begins to question every details she has been given about UnLondon. She starts to investigate and finds out that the UnLondoners misheard the names of the magical artifacts that suppose to save them. She decides to return to UnLondon to continue her investigation and realises that the Smog has benefited every decision she has made so far. She initiates negotiations characters whom she had talked to during her first visit. They are convinced and join her cause to defeat the Smog. She obtains a book in which all of the adventures of Zanna have been foretold and her role is depreciated to “funny sidekick”. She struggles to get out of that pigeonhole and takes the role of the deconstructed protagonist. She subverts the prescribed order of the narrative to achieve the goal of defeating the Smog.

In this chapter of the dissertation, I am going to explore how the focalizer-narrator attempts to change the spatial system of UnLondon successfully. In *UnLunDun*, Miéville shows

¹⁰⁹ If you “[t]hrow something away [in London] and you declare it obsolete” (Miéville 2007, 64).

that the focalizer-narrator successfully changes the spatial system of UnLondon for the community. She understands this success as a potentiality that can be adapted to London. The book differs from Miéville's other examined novels in the idea of the adaptation of the method of changing the spatial system. Contrary to the previously examined texts, there are instances where the spatial system for the community remains untouched, such as in *Perdido Street Station*. In *The Scar*, the attempt to change the spatial system for a community fails due to the machinations of characters. In *Iron Council*, the spatial system for a community is changed; however, this act has temporal hindrance, thus resulting in its outcome to be postponed to the future. In *The City and The City*, the spatial system for the communities does not change, only for the focalizer-narrator. In *This Census-taker*, the spatial system for the community does not change; the spatial system includes the focalizer-narrator.

9.1 The Beginning of Change

The novel follows the adventures of the focalizer-narrator, Deeba Resham. *UnLunDun* has two significant parts that differ in their central characters. The first part focuses on Zanna, where Miéville pushes the other girl, Deeba into the background; the second one on Deeba, where Zanna is absent. Deeba and her friend, Zanna begin their descension into the magical realm of UnLondon by a turning of a steering wheel. Zanna's importance is deconstructed as Miéville shatters the topos of the chosen one from portal quest fantasies. He writes about the failure of Zanna¹¹⁰, the prophesied saviour of UnLondon. The chosen one as the defender of the spatial status quo of UnLondon is an integrated part of its Secondspace. Consequently, after the defeat of Zanna, a disruption opens within the spatial system of UnLondon. Although the girls return to London, Deeba becomes restless as she discovers that UnLondon is still in danger. She returns to the abcity, but faces the problem that she cannot help UnLondon unless she changes the spatial system. She stands up for herself and becomes the "un-chosen One", a person who argues a place for herself, where the attempts of influencing and changing the spatial system of UnLondon prove to be successful. As the new spatial system of the abcity emerges through the changed rhetoric of the narrative, she realises its potentiality to be adapted to London.

¹¹⁰ She is called Shwazzy by the UnLondoners. The word has French origins; the girls realise that during their French lesson, when the teacher explains the meaning of the sentence, "Vous avez choisi. Vous: you plural. Avez: have. Choisi: chosen" (Miéville 2007, 15 emphases in the original).

The chapter aims at the exploration of the struggle for the domination of the spatial system of the abcity through the lens of rhetoric changes. In *UnLunDun*, Miéville provides changes in spatial systems that affect UnLondon. First, there are two rhetoric strategies in the book. In the first part, the language through which Deeba and Zanna interpret is rhetoric of portal quest fantasy which is connected to the spatial status quo. As this is destroyed, what succeeds it in the second part, as I argue, is the rhetoric of intrusion fantasy. This is through which Deeba changes the spatial system of the abcity. Second, there are also two spatial systems in the novel; one belongs to the consensual reality¹¹¹ of the reader that is London (fictive), the other one to the fantastic reality¹¹² that is UnLondon (fictitious). Most of the novel's plot takes place in UnLondon. In UnLondon, two approaches struggle for the domination of its spatial system, one is capitalist (Smog's) and another one is democratic (Deeba's). The former one constructs a spatial system in which subjects are suppressed by the Ideological State Apparatuses. The Smog's spatial system is authoritarian, one entity controls the spatial system, and negotiation is excluded. The latter one focuses on the subjects' negotiations and establishes the spatial system according their will. The Ideological State Apparatuses do not suppress the subjects as much as in the Smog's spatial system.

9.2 UnLondon, the Heterotopia of London

Before focusing on the spatial domination of the UnLondonean spatial system, I argue that Miéville constructs UnLondon that it echoes heterotopias in its operating methods. Michel Foucault introduces the term and differentiates two sorts of heterotopias, one for crisis and another one for deviation. The concept itself refers to

real places—places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society—which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. (Foucault 1986, 24).

The former term, as Foucault refers to it, is part of a spatial system that “are privileged or sacred or forbidden places, reserved for individuals who are, in relation to society and to the human environment in which they live, in a state of crisis: adolescents, menstruating women, pregnant women, the elderly” (ibid.). The latter term is understood as part of a spatial system into which “those [. . .] individuals whose behavior is deviant in relation to the required mean or norm are placed” (Foucault 1986, 25).

¹¹¹ That is understood as a non-fantastic narrative space.

¹¹² It is interpreted as a fantastic narrative space.

Both types of heterotopias can be identified in the urban space of UnLondon. It is the abcity, the weird junkyard for London. It is built by everything that loses its function and material value in London. Miéville illustrates this when the two girls look around in UnLondon: “[t]he entire three-floor building was mortared-together rubbish. There were fridges, a dishwasher or two, and hundreds of record players, old-fashioned cameras, telephones, and typewriters, with thick cement between them” (Miéville 2007, 55). First, I examine UnLondon from the perspective of crisis heterotopia. In *UnLunDun*, the 1952 smog of London becomes a sentient being and poses a threat to the city. The talking book reveals the origin of the smog that,

‘Back in your old queen’s time,’ the book said, ‘London filled up with factories, and all of them had chimneys. In houses they burnt coal. And the factories were burning everything, and letting off smoke from chemicals and poisons. And the crematoria, and the railways, and the power stations, all added their own effluvia’ (Miéville 2007, 109).

The book continues that,

There were so many chemicals swilling around in it that they reacted together. The gases and liquid vapour and brick dust and bone dust and acids and alkalis, fired through by lightning, heated up and cooled down, tickled by electric wires and stirred up by the wind—they reacted together and made an enormous, diffuse cloud-brain. ‘The smog started to think. And that’s when it became the Smog’ (Miéville 2007, 110).

It became a crisis when “[f]or five days, half a century ago, it assaulted London. It killed *four thousand people*” (Miéville 2007, 111 emphases in the original). The Londoners stepped up and “with magic and a secret war, [. . .] drove the Smog away, but they didn’t manage to kill it. It got away. ‘By coming here [to UnLondon],’ the book” adds (ibid.). The crisis posed by the Smog has been sent “elsewhere” and “nowhere” (Foucault 1986, 24), to prevent its existence within the framework of the bourgeois city of London.

Second, the version of heterotopia of crisis that Miéville envisions as the graveyard of product is repurposed in UnLondon. This results in the construction of heterotopia of deviation. Used materials put together UnLondon; therefore, it deviates from the norm that is set by London. A spatial system where “[t]he streets were mostly red brick, *like* London terraces, *but* considerably more ramshackle, spindly and convoluted. Houses leaned into each other, and stories piled up at complicated angles. Slate roofs lurched in all directions” (Miéville 2007, 54 emphases mine). Miéville indicates both the similarity and the difference between the two urban spaces. As the heterotopia of deviation, UnLondon operates as a junkyard for London, a place that is out of sight in postmodern urban societies. This “elsewhere” where the rubbish is being taken serves as the graveyard of products, as the meaning of MOIL suggests. This evokes dirtiness, disease and illness in the bourgeois imagination; therefore, it has to be outside of the city.

9.3 The Welcoming Abcanny Slum

Miéville demonstrates his reading of heterotopia in connection to UnLondon and London. He relies on the terminology of talking book that, “[a]bcities have existed at least as long as the cities,’ it said. ‘Each dreams the other’” (Miéville 2007, 109). The term of abcity is coined by Miéville to highlight the difference between UnLondon and London, but still shedding light on their link. Edwards and Venezia elaborate on this concept and point out that the “‘abcity’ is littered with the recycled detritus from the ‘real’ London and is described as the city’s dream other” (Edwards and Venezia 2015, 51). In that light, spatially in the UnLondon, the two perspectives (as heterotopia and as slum) converge into the abcity, the weird junkyard.

Concerning the difference between the two spatial systems of London and UnLondon, David L. Pike links the term “slum” and explains the connection between them. He writes that

by “slum imaginary” I mean the full range of material, ideological, and imaginary associations invoked by the umbrella term “slum.” This range encompasses related urban spaces such as ghettos, rookeries, shantytowns, favelas, and peripheral villages. It also includes the complex and contradictory web of metaphorical values and physical effects of modernity located primarily and often exclusively in slums: dirt and disease, crime and immorality, poverty and suffering, informality and community, subversion and revolution (251).

The relation between the slum and the weird junkyard lies in its shared abcannines. For Pike, the imagined slum is abcanny from the perspective of “city’s proper urbanism”, it “is both ‘right up tentacular in your face’ and always just out of reach” (Pike 2019, 254; 252). In this interpretation, the abcanny is UnLondon; the “proper urbanism” is London. Sherryl Vint discusses the term abcanny that the “prefix ‘ab’ means ‘away from’ and so [. . .] [it] flees from and refuses the givenness of” knowledge (103). UnLondon, the weird junkyard, is abcanny for Deeba, as she arrives at its urban space through a portal from London, her knowledge of the abcity is scarce. It echoes similarities to London, but her firm knowledge of a spatial system evaporates in the first part of the narrative. After her return to UnLondon, she learns and subverts the weird junkyard; the abcity is no longer abcanny for her.

9.4 Deeba’s Spatial and Rhetoric Knowledge in UnLondon

In the spatial system of UnLondon, mundane urban activities are no longer the same as in London. Deeba is human, non-native to the city of UnLondon, and she is interpreted as an other. In UnLondon, her spatial knowledge is conveyed through her rhetoric established by what Farah Mendlesohn identifies as the rhetoric of portal quest fantasy. Language is

defamiliarised, it “is necessary in order to justify the explanation of the world to the reader, and prepares us for the process of familiarization that takes place throughout the novel” (Mendlesohn 2008, 51). Miéville makes Deeba aware of her position in UnLondon, as she is from London, a non-local to the abcity thus bears no knowledge of the UnLondonean First-, Second-, and Thirdspace. She perceives the Firstspace of the abcity, but cannot provide explanations of its origins when she arrives. This later changes, as familiarisation takes place. The rhetoric of the novel moves from portal quest fantasy to the rhetoric of intrusion fantasy. Deeba’s position changes throughout the narrative; she becomes the heroine for UnLondon by arguing and negotiating her place into its spatial system. As she becomes the heroine of UnLondon, she changes the spatial system for the abcity. Her emancipating actions put her in the same league with other Miévillean protagonists such as Judah Low. But her effort becomes successful immediately; she saves the abcity, then she attempts to reorganise the spatial system of London at the end of the novel.

The first part of *UnLunDun* follows the rhetoric strategies of the portal quest fantasy. The rhetoric of the portal quest fantasy, as Farah Mendlesohn argues, relies on the technique of the club narrative. That is “[i]n the club story, the storyteller, whatever his designation, is possessed of two essential qualities: he is uninterrupted and incontestable; and the narrative as it is downloaded is essentially closed” (Mendlesohn 2008, 47). It “is diegetic, a denial of discourse [. . .] combined with a stature signaled by the single-voiced and impervious authority” (Mendlesohn 2008, 47-8). Mendlesohn points out that “it is the *unquestionable purity* of the tale that holds together the shape of the portal-quest narrative” (Mendlesohn 2008, 50 emphasizes in the original). In the novel, the storytellers are the talking book and the Propheseers, who function as its interpreters. The leader is the talking book that contains the fixed opinion of “UnLondon. The history, the politics, the geography. The past...and the future. Prophecies” (Miéville 2007, 92). From a spatial point of view, they are “the spatial representations of power but [also] the imposing and operational power of spatial representations” (Soja 1996, 68). Consequently, the UnLondonean Secondspace is manifested in the book.

As the two girls leave their portal, they attempt to understand UnLondon, the different, new spatial system. Everything appears to be familiar but also different. Miéville shows that the UnLondonean Firstspace includes

people in all kinds of uniforms: mechanics’ overalls smeared in oil; firefighters’ protective clothes; doctors’ white coats; the blue of police; and others, including people in the neat suits of waiters, with cloths over one arm. All these uniforms looked like dressing-up costumes. They were too neat, and somehow a bit too simple. There were other shoppers in hotchpotch outfits of rags, and patchworks of skins, and what looked in some cases like taped-together bits of plastic or foil. [. . .] Here and there were the strangest figures.

People whose skins were no colours skin should ever be, or who seemed to have a limb or two too many, or peculiar extrusions or concavities in their faces (Miéville 2007, 38-9).

The two girls interpret everything according to their Londonean understanding, yet they realise that they are no longer in London. The mutual features of the two Firstspaces are immediate for the girls, but their disorientation stems from the fantastic that the UnLondonean Firstspace evokes. The spatial understanding is even more disorienting for them with

squat tower blocks, arches of brick and stone, the hotchpotch slopes of roofs. There were stranger things, too: skyscraper-high chests of drawers in polished wood, spires like melting candles, houses like enormous hats and bats. Deeba pointed at gargoyles and pigeons on some of the houses, then started: some of the gargoyles were moving (Miéville 2007, 63).

As they are shown around the abcity, they learn that “UnLondon’s terrain was difficult. There were thin tangled streets, sudden steep hills, deep pits, patches where roads seemed to be made of something too soft for wheels, on which pedestrians bounced” (Miéville 2007, 67).

9.4.1 Negotiating with the Manifested Secondspace through the Change of Rhetoric

The position of the talking book and the Propheseers is that through Secondspace they can control the spatial system of the abcity. This error, however, led to the collapse of the rhetoric strategy of portal quest fantasy and the rearrangement of the UnLondonean spatial system. The predicted outcome of the arrival of the Shwazzy was that Zanna overcomes the Smog, but when the Smog defeats Zanna, the problems become explicit. The book remarks that “‘I can’t believe this,’ said the book miserably. ‘For centuries I’ve known what was supposed to happen. Ins and outs. And with that whack on the back of the Shwazzy’s head...that was all gone. Turns out I don’t know anything” (Miéville 2007, 143). As Zanna has been overcome, the Secondspace can no longer provide a rhetoric and spatial framework for the girls; consequently, both of them have to leave UnLondon. In the second part of the narrative, Deeba breaks “out of the monologue” maintained by the storytellers of the rhetoric of the portal quest fantasy and reinterprets the UnLondonean spatial system (Mendlesohn 2008, 53).

Before Deeba’s second arrival, Miéville begins to break down the rhetoric limits established by portal quest fantasy. However, the victory of the Smog and the defeat of Zanna have been interpreted by Deeba as the restoration of portal quest fantasy rhetoric. After the return of Zanna and Deeba to London the spatial system of the abcity remains intact because Miéville shows that the reason of the spatial status of the saviour of the abcity is assigned to “Brokkenbroll. Head honcho of the Parraploey Cassay tribe. The Unbrellissimo. The boss of the broken umbrellas”, who “takes our side. He’s always been one of UnLondon’s protectors”

(Miéville 2007, 116; 117). Miéville uses Brokkenbroll¹¹³ only to ease the problems caused by the failure of Zanna. In London, Deeba keeps convincing herself that “with Brokkenbroll and Unstible¹¹⁴’s plan, the UnLondoners might win. It was their fight now. They had no Shwazzy, but they’d made their own plans” (Miéville 2007, 160). Miéville connects the introduction of the rhetoric of intrusion fantasy with the failure of the saviour of the abcity and not with the Smog and its schemes to change the spatial system of UnLondon. As Miéville introduces the rhetoric of intrusion fantasy, the restlessness of Deeba grows. Mendlesohn argues that the “trajectory of the intrusion fantasy is from denial to acceptance” (Mendlesohn 2008, 297).

Furthermore, Mendlesohn also points out that “the intrusion fantasy requires faith in the sub-surface, the sense that there is always something lurking. We might call this latency: the withholding, not of information, but of visuals or events” (Mendlesohn 2008, 299). Miéville shows that Deeba wants to trust in the knowledge that there are obscure sources from which she can obtain information about the abcity. Therefore, she starts to search on the internet and one by one; she proves every detail wrong that she has heard about the methods of defending UnLondon against the Smog. She unravels the mysteries around Benjamin Unstible, the Armets and Klinneract the secret weapon of Londoners from 1956 that “really sorted out the problems of the smog” (Miéville 2007, 171). She accepts her faith then decides that she has to go back to UnLondon to save the abcity.

The second part begins with the return of Deeba to UnLondon. The reconstruction of the spatial system of UnLondon begins in front of the reader. Her second stay proves to be more difficult to her because “she has to spend a tremendous amount of time proving herself to enough other residents simply to gain the allies she needs to begin her quest” (Sanders 2009, 300). She overcomes the label “funny sidekick” as the talking book had identified her. She successfully questions its authority about UnLondon, thus shatters the rhetoric of the portal quest fantasy and moves towards the rhetoric of intrusion fantasy. The rigidity of the UnLondonean Secondspace crumbles by her approach. She is democratic, discusses and asks others’ opinions about the situation.

The driving force of the rhetoric of intrusion fantasy is the argument between Deeba and others, which are parts of the previous spatial system and want to maintain that in some form. The most important participant in that group is the book, the manifestation of UnLondonean

¹¹³ He is a lackey of the Smog, who is responsible for the deception of the UnLondoners by convincing them that he helps them against the Smog.

¹¹⁴ He is also a lackey of the Smog, who is responsible for the deception of the UnLondoners by convincing them that he develops a weapon against the Smog with which the UnLondoners can defeat it.

Secondspace. The push and pull rhythm, as Mendlesohn writes, generates the dynamic of the intrusion fantasy with which Deeba “succeed by challenging the rules or changing them—usually in the face of the pessimism of their colleagues from the fantastical lands” as she is “outside the club story of consensus reality” (Mendlesohn 2008, 373; 305). The book also functions as a guide to Zanna’s prescribed journey through UnLondon. The quest Miéville writes to Deeba differs from the previous one and he achieves this through the rhetoric of intrusion fantasy, and by continually comparing the quest of Deeba to what Zanna should have done.

9.4.2 The Struggles of Deeba’s Reconstructing Team

Therefore, Deeba’s first step is to recruit a side-kick, Hemi, the half-ghost boy from Wraithtown. As negotiation is part of the rhetoric of the intrusion fantasy, Deeba peeks into the book whether it can provide help, but

[I]t was the first time she’d seen what was inside. It was chaotic and confusing, different page to page, an extraordinary patchwork of columns, pictures, and writing, in all sizes and colours and countless scripts, including English. Deeba could hardly imagine how anyone would learn to make sense of it (Miéville 2007, 274).

This disclosure of the collage-like Secondspace represents another diversion from the approaches in other examined texts. Miéville shows to the intended audience that Secondspace itself does not convey any organising principles that have to be obeyed or followed. Instead of highlighting this difference, he illustrates that Secondspace is subjected to power relations; thus, it can be questioned, challenged and reformed. Miéville offers this opportunity to the intended audience to seize, and with it achieve the adaptation of the utopian impulse for the betterment of the community. This possibility is encapsulated in shattering of the firm belief in Zanna’s devoid of failure as the saviour of UnLondon and Deeba becoming a self-made saviour of the abcity.

The Smog is the manifested Thirdspace of the fantastic reality. It tries to achieve the spatial domination of the entire UnLondonean spatial system by two steps. First, its followers (stink-junkies, smombies, and smoglodytes¹¹⁵) start fires to feed it. They represent the Smog in the Firstspace. The residents of UnLondon flee from and stop frequenting the Firstspace that have been changed by the Smog. Deeba realises that when one of the characters expresses that, “these are empty,” Jones said. “The Smog took over only a few streets away. It’s not safe.” “So why we here?” Deeba said, alarmed. “People don’t come here now” (Miéville 2007, 230).

¹¹⁵ They are neologisms of Miéville.

Second, it achieves that by destroying the previously consensual Secondspace. It follows the strategy of ‘divide and conquer’. It has associates, such as Brokkenbroll, Benjamin Unstible, and Murgatroyd¹¹⁶. Brokkenbroll “wants people to be scared of it [the Smog], so they’ll trust him to protect them,” Deeba said. ‘When they realize he’s in on it, he’ll already be in charge’” (Miéville 2007, 349 emphasis in the original). The Smog successfully achieves that by “[s]eparating us into camps. Easier to control”, consequently, one of the leaders of the UnLondonean resistance suggests that, “to make orderly retreats. Into designated ‘safe’ zones” (Miéville 2007, 350). Benjamin Unstible occasionally serves as the avatar for the Smog and provides the scientific credibility to its side. Murgatroyd is the middleman between the Smog and the authorities of London. They “control over knowledge, signs, and codes: over the means of deciphering spatial practice and hence over the production of spatial knowledge”, consequently, they produce the new Secondspace and impose it on the UnLondonean spatial system (Soja 1996, 67). The Smog affects the UnLondonean Thirdspace through fire and smoke as it begins to “know everything in all the smoke I breathe into me” (Miéville 2007, 250-1).

The Smog’s concept of the UnLondonean spatial system emerges through its Secondspace. Its associates adjust the UnLondonean spatial system through their prism. These changes establish two different Firstspaces, one that belongs to the Smog and another one that is independent of it. Spatially they operate parallel with each other, but the latter one loses its territory as the Smog begins to develop a violent method with which it can overtake the whole Firstspace. It absorbs every subject in the Firstspace by burning them and then consuming them as smoke. Miéville writes that, “[a]nd fire will spread, and all UnLondoners and all their houses and their lovely books and all their lovely minds will float in smoke and come and be in me” (Miéville 2007, 480). The greed of the Smog incorporates everything. In this spatial system, the UnLondonean First- and the Secondspace lose their function, the whole spatial system becomes Thirdspace in the interpretation of the UnLondonean spatial status quo. This movement is an authoritative dream as it begins to annul the differences among the spaces and advocates the formation of equality for the subjects – “And I’ll know everything. And be everyone. No one will end. I will be all of you” –, where it can distribute access to the spaces (ibid.).

¹¹⁶ Miéville writes that “Unstible’s not Unstible, he’s *Smog*. And the Unbrellissimo and the man from the MP’s office are in on it. [. . .] ‘The Smog wants to burn everything,’ [. . .]. ‘Murgatroyd’s boss is putting smoke from London down here. Feeding it. And Brokkenbroll—’ ‘When you’ve all got umbrellas, Brokkenbroll runs things,’ Deeba said. ‘You have to obey him or he can just let the Smog kill you. They’re partners. Brokkenbroll can’t force you straight off, so he has to make you think he’s on your side.’” (Miéville 2007, 255).

9.4.3 The Struggles of Deeba

As Deeba arrives at the abcity, the resistance of changing from the rhetoric of portal quest fantasy to intrusion fantasy emerges from the Propheseers, the bearers of Secondspace knowledge of the UnLondonean spatial status quo. One of them points out to Deeba that, “[t]he thing is, it’s no surprise if you make a mistake. I mean, you’re not the Shwazzy. *You don’t have any destiny here*. Perhaps you got the wrong end of the stick” (Miéville 2007, 258 emphases mine). It argues that she only understands the “surface appearances” of the Firstspace in the abcity and cannot have access to the other “social, psychological and biophysical processes” (Soja 1996, 75). Miéville writes that “Deeba could see the Propheseers listening to the man they knew, blaming the ghost they had never trusted, for misleading her, the girl who was not the Shwazzy” (260). The Propheseer follows the prior rhetoric, which puts Deeba into the position of a passive receiver of the narrative. She responds that she annuls that point of view and initiates the rhetoric of intrusion fantasy by running away from the Propheseers with the talking book and Hemi.

Miéville highlights this change by having Deeba and her travelling companions arrive “at a crossroads. No landmarks were visible. They were surrounded by nondescript houses, without even any moil buildings or strangely shaped dwellings evident” (268). The unclaimed space signifies the meta-gesture of the changing of spatial systems. This act of tabula rasa leaves the protagonist confused and disoriented – “She didn’t have a plan: she just ran to get off the bridge as fast as she could” (Miéville 2007, 262). Nevertheless, Deeba realises that she has to convince everybody to accept her as the UnChosen One.

Farah Mendlesohn writes that the “modern intrusion fantasy is a narrative of convincement” (Mendlesohn 2008, 370). Deeba starts to argue with the manifestation of the UnLondonean Secondspace and her side-kick to convince them that, “[s]omething has to stop the Smog, or I can’t go, and I...*we*’re the only ones that can’ [. . .] Book, we know you got it wrong about the Shwazzy. That prophecy went wrong, right? But you still must have all the details of what it was she was *supposed* to do” (Miéville 2007, 272 emphases in the original). First, by using the collective pronoun, Miéville stresses the difference between the approaches of the Smog and Deeba. The prior one is exclusive; the latter one is inclusive. Miéville argues here that the power of the Secondspace stems from its ability to include everyone. This method guarantees the political hegemony for the new UnLondonean Secondspace, which has the broadest support from the residents of the abcity. In order to achieve that she has to convince them that she can finish the quest. Second, Deeba keeps parts of the quest; she picks tasks from

the “standard Chosen One deal” (276). These choices have to be argued for and convince her travelling companions, the book and her side-kick that she has made the right decision. Consequently, in the following, I am going to explore first, how she convinces the residents of the city to see the problems in the UnLondonean spatial system and second, after realising that to join her against the fight of the Smog.

Deeba has to overrule one of the most important rules of the UnLondonean Secondspace, the phlegm effect. This organising principle means that as the Londoners arrive at UnLondon, they have nine days to return to their city before they are forgotten there. This can be overruled by calling London on the telephone. One location where she can call home is in the Talklands, where Mr Speaker rules, who does not allow calls without his permission. In the Talklands, Mr Speaker modifies the UnLondonean Secondspace¹¹⁷, and attempts to force Deeba and her travelling companions to obey the rules there. This modification entails that, “WORDS MEAN WHATEVER I WANT. WORDS DO WHAT I TELL THEM”, which is precisely what an authoritative Secondspace looks like (Miéville 2007, 296). Deeba challenges that by pointing out that, “some words that mean something but they’ve got like a feeling of something else, so if you say them, you might be saying something you don’t mean to. Like if I say someone’s really *nice* then I might mean it, but it sounds a little bit like they’re boring” (ibid.). Her speech convinces the creatures of Mr Speaker to dethrone him.

In the second episode, Deeba outwits another source of the UnLondonean Secondspace. It is Parakeetus Claviger whose featherkey is the first collectible for Deeba in her quest. Using reversed psychology, she persuades the bird to give her the headgear. It is an essential episode in the change of the Secondspace, because it shows to Deeba how time passes in UnLondon. This results in arguments between the book and Deeba, and as an outcome of that, she rejects the demand of the book to follow the rules of Secondspace described in it. Deeba concludes that they “skip the rest of the stuff. Save us some time. We’ll go straight to the last stage of the quest” (Miéville 2007, 334). Deeba’s stubbornness to follow through her idea proves to be the only method to establish a new Secondspace for UnLondon.

The third episode incorporates two parts in which Deeba demonstrates her approach toward the UnLondonean Secondspace. First, Miéville writes an encounter to illustrate her understanding of the UnLondonean spatial system that is designed by the Smog. Deeba argues that,

¹¹⁷ Miéville describes that, “[w]ith each word, another strange animal-thing seemed to coalesce and drop from behind his [Mr Speaker’s] teeth. They were small, and each a completely different shape. They flew or crawled or slithered into the room” (Miéville 2007, 291).

The Smog's working with Brokkenbroll. They want to make everyone rely on umbrellas, 'cause that means on Brokk. Then they can rule UnLondon together. They're going to make everyone work in factories, burning stuff to make the Smog stronger. [. . .] And it's already getting stronger because Rawley, his boss in London—' Deeba pointed at Murgatroyd. '—she's been feeding smoke straight into UnLondon (Miéville 2007, 341).

Deeba's insight convinces the characters she meets; consequently, they join her effort. Second, she persuades two firm believers of the UnLondonean Secondspace that they should abandon obeying it. She does not comply with it but offers an alternative in which she says that "your purpose is to make sure no one ever brings you the crown. Your purpose in life is to make sure you don't find out who won" (Miéville 2007, 364). Third, she sets a trap to the container¹¹⁸ of the last collectible. This indicates her understanding of the spatial system and her ability to establish a new Secondspace. The collectible is the UnGun, an item that helps her maintain the new spatial system for UnLondon. It draws solutions from the Thirdspace and affects the Firstspace by eliminating different elements of the Firstspace presented by the Smog.

9.5 Victory in Sight and its Attempt of Adaptation

Deeba confronts with the emerging Firstspace of the Smog in the spatial system. Smombies and smoglydtes attack the UnLondoners, she pushes back with the help of the UnGun. These creatures are the products of the Smog with which it builds its spatial system. Before the acquisition of the UnGun Deeba's subversive ideas only affect the Secondspace. It proves to be pivotal for her because she has established the First- and the Secondspace from her concept of the spatial system. Against the struggle of the Smog, Miéville shows that the residents of UnLondon become Deeba's troops, the representatives of her Firstspace.

Deeba is the representative of Miéville's perspective that is the dynamism of influencing and changing the spatial system of the abcity. She changes a sentient, but enslaved umbrella (an *unbrella*) that is changed by the Smog's associate and gives back its freedom, consequently, constructs a new entity out of it. She argues for a place in the Firstspace to this creature by sewing up the split that has ruined its canopy. She establishes an idea in the Secondspace that she changes that sentient umbrella by sewing. That results that, "[t]he instant Deeba had put the last stitch into the *unbrella*, and closed the tear, it quivered. It trembled, and something changed" (Miéville 2007, 469). In the Thirdspace she frees it from the changes of the Smog's associate. Miéville writes that,

It's free! It doesn't have to do what Brokkenbroll says! [. . .] It's not an 130mbrella at all, anymore. It's something else. When it was an umbrella, it was completely for one thing. When it was broken, it didn't do

¹¹⁸ It is a window that became alive and predatory. Behind its glass lays the UnGun.

that anymore, so it was something else, and that's when it was Brokkenbroll's. His slave. But if it's fixed...It's not unbroken—then it would be an umbrella, just a dumb tool again. But now it's not broken either, so it's not his anymore. It's something new. It's not an umbrella, and it's not an *umbrella*. It's... [. . .] '[a] rebrella' (Miéville 2007, 470).

The UnLondonean spatial system envisioned by the Smog differs from the status quo of the spatial system. Deeba's approach overcomes the Smog's. She fires the UnGun and fills its chambers with the Smog. Deeba realises that the optimistic change of the spatial system affects the UnLondonean community; therefore, she attempts to adapt this to another spatial system.

In this chapter of the dissertation, I explored Miéville's attempt to change UnLondonean spatial system. His approach results in both rhetoric and spatial change. The focalizer-narrator, Deeba aims to adapt the successful methods to her own spatial system. She subverts the abcity's abcannines and familiarises the urban space of UnLondon. In my interpretation, I connected Michel Foucault's concept of heterotopia with David Pike's slum and his interpretation of the abcity to stress Miéville's method of constructing urban space. I illustrated how Miéville's rhetoric change plays a pivotal part in the spatial rearrangement of UnLondon. The portal quest fantasy young adult novel highlights and makes accessible for the reader those significant changes that are changed for the betterment of the community of UnLondon and then London.

10. This Census-Taker: The Successful Change of the Urban Spatial System by the Focalizer-narrator for Itself

Miéville's novella, *This Census-Taker* is a source of mystery in his oeuvre. It sets in a village, where a boy escapes his home as he discovers that his father has killed his mother. The villagers begin to investigate, but the violent act is never proven; meanwhile, the mother disappears from the life of the family. The boy gets acquainted with urchins of the village and starts to wander around with them. He remains with his father in their house on the hill. Official policemen from the coastal city visit the two of them to examine the case of the murder. One day a census-taker arrives from the former home of the father to talk to him. During the conversations between the census-taker and the boy, the former one begins to explore the details of the events the child has told. However, uncertainties emerge and begin to organise the narrative and hinder the process of interpretation. At the end of the novella, the census-taker recruits the boy as his assistant, then the two leave the village.

My interpretation is that Miéville applies a limited and possibly unreliable focalizer-narrator to visit his secondary world, Bas-Lag. As the organising principle of the narrative is uncertainty, the rhetoric functions as liminal fantasy. In it, language oscillates between certainty and uncertainty. That is the two-way process between the reader and the author through the lens of focalizer-narrator, "in the liminal fantasy, it is central to the *construction* of the fantastic" (Mendlesohn 2008, 449 emphasis in the original). Miéville plays with the reader whether it would interpret the *This Census-Taker* within the spatial system of Bas-Lag or not. Thus, deeming it fantastic or realistic. The reception of the novella also stresses this observation. Although there are also readings that explain it as a self-referential, ironic meta-gesture toward Miéville's oeuvre, I am going to understand it as it sets in the secondary world of Bas-Lag. Moreover, I am going to explore Miéville's methods to change the interpretation of the focalizer-narrator's spatial system. Miéville reiterates his method partly from *The City and The City* and partly from *Iron Council*. The difference among the three is that in *This Census-Taker* the focalizer-protagonist's inclusion into the new spatial system infiltrates the Secondspace; consequently, the slow change initiated in *Iron Council* continues and develops.

Two approaches define my exploration of the novella, linguistic and spatial. First, I am going to identify, based on the taxonomy of Farah Mendlesohn, how the features of the narrative fall in line with her interpretation of liminal fantasy. Utilising that, I connect and explore how Miéville applies uncertainty as the driving force of the novella. He also relies on it as a form of manipulation in the interpretation of the spatial systems. He presents two spatial systems in

which the more powerful one (the city) overcomes the lesser powerful one (the village). Their aim of the struggle is to influence the focalizer-narrator, a seven-year-old boy. Peter Owen reads him as he already has an inherent desire to control his place through which he understands it. Consequently, his character traits are there to be encouraged by the city's, the more powerful spatial system. This encouragement results in his inclusion into that system at the end of the novella. He becomes a representative of the Secondspace of that spatial system. Although Méville writes three chapters in which this position is both strengthened and undermined, his resistance to the Secondspace becomes less apparent.

10.1 Narratology of Liminality

In the narrative of the secondary world, language operates along the lines of, what Farah Mendlesohn describes as, the rhetoric of liminal fantasy. Mendlesohn claims that it “depends on *knowingness*” (Mendlesohn 2008, 450 emphasis in the original). She interprets it as it

relies on Wayne C. Booth's construction of stable irony, “a reconstructing of implied authors and implied readers [that] relies on inferences about intentions ... [that] often depend on our knowing facts from outside the poem” (Irony 133). Or it relies on “*equipoise*,” the term Clute suggests in his essay in *Conjunctions* 39 and that is essentially a more positivist construction of Todorov's concept of hesitation (*The Fantastic* 25) (449).

In *This Census-Taker*, Méville utilises the construction of *equipoise*. John Clute understands *equipoise* as “sustained narrative negotiations of uncertainty, without coming to any necessary decision as to what is real” (424). Therefore, the novella never reveals the truth condition of the events; it leaves the decision to the reader whether to recognise something true to be fantastic or not. The *knowingness* of the focalizer-narrator and the *knowingness* of the reader differ, but neither of them obtains more information than the other. The corrections of focalizer-narrator in the text serve the purpose of shifting the narrative toward some certainty. Méville utilises these shifts for the initiation of *knowingness* in the boy and the reader. These hints drive at the possible reading of the narrative as fantastic. Because as Mendlesohn points out about liminal fantasies that, “[w]hat all of these fantasies share [. . .] is that they rest on the firm belief that the reader will recognize that which is merely hinted at. They rest on *knowingness* or genre expectation, without which neither of the two dynamics of liminal fantasy is possible” (Mendlesohn 2008, 487).

What further entangles the *knowingness* of the boy is that the narrative is a Club Story. As a format, it excludes possibilities to undermine or even question the presented narrative itself. Clute defines it, “it is a tale [. . .] recounted orally to a group of listeners forgathered in a venue safe from interruption” (421). This “form enforces our understanding that a tale has been

told” (Clute 2002, 422). Three occasions indicate the frame of that tale. In them, Miéville constructs recollections that reflect on the fabrication of the club story and reveals the nature of the relation between the assistant of census-taker and the institutions of Secondspace. His method of telling the tale encapsulates *This Census-Taker* is a vague diary format, which supports the club story idea as being highly subjective, thus, unquestionable. As the boy recalls the incident when his mother was teaching him correct pronunciation, Miéville stresses that “[t]his was in another language than the one in which I write now” (Miéville 2016, 7). The relationship is established: the focalizer-narrator, the assistant of the census-taker, and the implied author of the recollection is the same person from different time-periods of his life. The language- and code-change result loss of meaning and that also hinders the process of interpretation; however, it supports the unquestionable quality of the storyteller as it lacks outside sources to compare it to.

10.2 Rhetoric of Liminality

This Census-Taker represents another approach of Miéville to change the spatial system of his novella. That is the inclusion of the subject into the Secondspace of the representation of the power within that secondary world, but that subject begins to corrupt that Secondspace from within. The acrostic¹¹⁹ of the ‘catechism’ of the census-taker’s former assistant unravels this viewpoint that is shared by the future self of the focalizer-narrator toward his work. The catechism reads in its entirety:

The Hope Is So:
 Count Entire Nation. Subsume Under Sets. -
 Take Accounts. Keep Estimates. Realize
 Interests. So
 Reach Our Government’s Ultimate Ends (Miéville 2016, 139 emphases mine).

This Census-taker is rogue. He receives this position without doubt, without questioning its intention: “You don’t have to know: you can go along with things” (Miéville 2016, 54). The narrative leaves it to the reader whether the focalizer-narrator meant that he falls in line with the Secondspace of the representation of the power or with the position of the rogue census-taker. In my reading, I favour the latter one. This uncertainty, this lack of knowingness remain the main fixed point throughout the narrative. The rhetoric does not reveal any acquired knowledge that helps the boy to understand his place and the surrounding spatial system.

¹¹⁹ Chris Baldick writes that acrostic is “a poem in which the initial letters of each line can be read down the page to spell either an alphabet, a name (often that of the author, a patron, or a loved one), or some other concealed message” (26). In this case, the concealed message is the relevant reading.

The rhetoric limit also marks that the change of village's spatial system only affect the boy. The focalizer-narrator is subjected to the changes in the village's spatial system, but he is excluded from the social space in which these shifts take place. His place is affected and taken into another spatial system, where he becomes a census-taker, a manifestation of that spatial system's Secondspace. In *This Census-Taker*, Miéville shows his method to change the individual's place, which demonstrates a new perspective in his approach to the connection between an individual and its spatial system. That point of view is the limited rhetoric knowingness which results in hindered spatial knowingness; however, this discourse still allows the form of resistance to the including spatial system.

10.3 Spatial System of Liminality

The novella presents two spatial systems, the same way that Miéville has already done in his previous works. The difference between the novella and the rest of the examined texts is that in the prior one only the descriptive part of the Firstspace is accessible for the focalizer-narrator throughout the whole narrative discourse. I am going to summarise and provide the frames in which I interpret the two spatial systems then later I am going to elaborate on in details. First, the village has a spatial system that includes First-, Second- and Thirdspace. The focalizer-narrator has only access to the descriptive part of the Firstspace; he does not understand its operating methods. He obeys the Secondspace, as any six or seven years' old would. The census-taker applauds for his behaviour and remarks, "You're good at rules" (Miéville 2016, 131). The reader does not get any information about the village's Thirdspace at least from the perspective of the focalizer-narrator. Second, the city from which the boy's father is from intrudes the spatial system of the village. There are manifestations of its Firstspace that appear in the Firstspace of the village, but they are later dismissed as either hallucinations or dreams. They are uncertain references to creatures to the secondary world of Bas-Lag. The city provides services to the village through the coastal city that are interpreted as manifestations of Secondspace. The village does not have constabulary that is a significant part of the enforcement of Secondspace, therefore, "[e]very few weeks a uniformed delegation would arrive from the coastal city to deal with whatever disputes the hill people had stored up, to process what paperwork the occasionals, the volunteer officers, had incurred" (Miéville 2016, 51). The Thirdspace of the city appears in the revolt of the boy as the census-taker's assistant.

The spatial system of the village where the boy lives with his parents echoes the ways colonies work. The unknown village where the family lives is in Nova Esperium, the colony of New Crobuzon from the *Bas-Lag* trilogy. The whole situation reflects the historical events of the colonisation of the Australian continent. In this context, I interpret the concept of a colony as a Foucauldian heterotopia of deviation. Miéville does not reveal many details about Nova Esperium in the trilogy. Although the knowledge about it is scarce, some hints have been scattered in two books of the *Bas-Lag* trilogy. In *Perdido Street Station*, there is no information about the Crobuzon colony; the novel focuses solely on the metropolis. In *The Scar*, Miéville refers to the colony's "unstudied fauna" and its hunger "for new citizens" (Miéville 2002, 28; 30). The novel's protagonist dreams about it as "a little blister of civilisation in unknown lands. A home from home, New Crobuzon's colony. Rougher, surely, and harder and less cosseted—Nova Esperium was too young for many kindnesses—but a culture modeled on her city's own" (Miéville 2002, 30). The colonialist and imperialist history lurks in its background as a character remarks in *The Scar* that, "[a]sk some of those who've been to Nova Esperium and seen what happened to the natives" (Miéville 2002, 276). This has been confirmed in *Iron Council* in the form of "stories of Nova Esperium and the carnage of the natives" (Miéville 2004, 237).

10.4 Characters of/in Liminality

However, the uncertainty decreases about Nova Esperium as the protagonist of *The Scar* begins to add precise information about the colony. She says that, "on the shoreline of an unmapped continent, is the colony of Nova Esperium. Is it the small, bright, glittering city of which I have seen pictures? I have seen heliotypes of its towers, and its grain silos, and the forests that surround it" (Miéville 2002, 605). She dreams of "looking down at the settlement from the slopes of the mountains I can see in those pictures (washed out by distance, out of focus). Learning the languages of the natives" is possibly what the newly-arrived refugee from New Crobuzon, the boy's father, did (ibid.).

10.4.1 Position of the Father in the Liminal Spatial System

First, I explore the position of the father within the spatial system. Although it is uncertain how many years have passed since the events told in *Iron Council*, it is fair to assume that it is within the generation; therefore the participants of the revolution both in the metropolis and outside of it are still alive. The father of the focalizer-narrator has been called councilman by

one of his customers. That is telling as it suggests a reason behind the family's marginality within the community. He tries to cut his association with the Iron Council and sails to the colony. He arrives as a foreigner to the shore of the Crobuzan colony, gets acquainted with a local woman, who later becomes the mother of his child. She tells the boy that, "[h]e used to think in a different language. He came to the port where I was working. He came by boat; he had to leave his own place, which is a bigger city a long way off, because of trouble there" (Miéville 2016, 37). The two of them move to the village from the coastal city. Furthermore, the focalizer-narrator remarks that his native tongue differs from his father's.

10.4.2 Position of the Mother in the Liminal Spatial System

Second, I examine the position of the mother in the spatial system. The mother of the boy provides a taciturn description of the coastal city where she used to work. She was an office clerk, and in her monologue, she shares little details about the city that, it "was mostly all broken down in a circle around it" (Miéville 2016, 37). It is clear from the quote that she has access to both parts of the Firstspace, and she also has some influence on the Secondspace. She laconically remarks "[I] don't know why they took me. They were training me" (Miéville 2016, 36). This suggests that those who are in charge find her trustworthy, even though she is a native. Furthermore, there is some antagonism between the two groups. In *The Scar*, the protagonist lists "Nova Esperium's workforce [as] peons, indentured labourers, and Remade" from New Crobuzon (Miéville 2002, 30). The mother of the boy, in her self-reflection, describes herself to her son as "a southtownner", which part of the village "and the people seemed different to me [the boy]. That half of the town felt closer to a source of entropy" (Miéville 2016, 36). That indicates that the mother's social status in the village also deems her to the periphery of the community. The boy identifies "the law of this town" that was "though we lived in a house as far from the streets as it could be", they are still subjected to the Secondspace of the village (Miéville 2016, 4).

10.4.3 Position of the Boy in the Liminal Spatial System

Third, I scrutinise the position of the focalizer-narrator, the boy in the spatial system. The narrative is told from the perspective of its very limited point of view. Thus, it is expected from the reader to construct the narrative from the viewpoint of a boy, whose knowingness of the

setting and events is ambivalent. Consequently, uncertainty becomes the narrative's driving force; the Miévillean liminal fantasy relies on the construction of equipoise.

The focalizer-narrator claims that “the law found me” when he asks the help of the villagers (Miéville 2016, 4). I interpret this as the Secondspace of the village in its abstract form. He is initiated into it when he learns from her mother the letters and numbers that are used in the village. Later this knowledge proves to be useful that, “[w]hen he met the man who became his line manager the boy was a child and naïve but not quite ignorant, at least in letters, because of his mother's lessons” (Miéville 2016, 24). He also tells about the habit of his mother that she “would bring home from the town new things to read” that was written, “in the formal voice of the language I grew up speaking” (ibid.). Nevertheless, his mother omits those “folded cuttings from foreign newspapers [. . .] which *were* in this language” he is writing on (ibid. emphasis in the original). The practice of the mother suggests that she introduces the Secondspace of the village to her child. The first breaking point in the initiation is the confusion he felt when his mother “separated this sloping garden into *seemingly formless plots* with boundaries she marked with stones” claiming “she was *following contour lines*” (Miéville 2016, 7 emphases mine). The natural space versus man-made space contradiction stems from here, where the prior one is represented by the mother and the latter one by the son. Peter Owen argues that Miéville connects this to “the desire for total knowledge to the desire to control” (Owen 55). Owen writes that,

This brief moment neatly establishes the connection between the narrator's (small, but perhaps important) desire to understand and the resulting desire to control. Rather than, for example, tracing the contours of the space himself and in that way defusing his anxiety, the narrator's implied desire is to draw cleaner, more regular lines and in that way divide the space himself — to control it rather than observe it (ibid.).

The second breaking point is when he and his mother pass before the huts in the village. In one of them lives a haggard man, who “looked like a failed soldier”¹²⁰ (Miéville 2016, 30). This man is the first encounter of another spatial system that the boy experiences. The boy continues the story and says that, “[b]eside him was a green gallon bottle, and something twitched within [. . .] a saggy grey lizard bigger than my hand ran suddenly in crazed circles at the bottle's bottom” (Miéville 2016, 30). This occasion is the first manifestation of the Secondspace¹²¹ of the city. Although Drobe, an urchin from the bridge provides an elaborate explanation that “they put them in the bottle when they're newborn or even eggs and they put food and water in for them, and they shake it out carefully to clean out their shit, and they grow

¹²⁰ It can be read as another refugee from New Crobuzon. Even perhaps another councilman from the Iron Council.

¹²¹ The reason why I interpreted it as Secondspace is that man controls the life of the entity what is inside of the bottle.

in there till they get too big to leave”, the boy remains captivated (Miéville 2016, 82). This practice fascinates the child and keeps changing what is drawn inside of the bottle. “He drew a lizard in a bottle”, then “next day and, beside it, he drew a cat in another bottle and a fox in a third. He drew a fish in a bottle, a crow in a bottle, a mountain lion in a big bottle” (Miéville 2016, 42). Miéville shows the boy’s desire for control and order as

[H]e drew corks tight in the bottles’ necks. He cramped his drawings together to keep them a secret, and he saw that without intending it he’d drawn his bottles as if neatly lined up in some strange cupboard. So he drew a shelf beneath them, and while daylight reached them and cast across them the shadows of his own reaching hand, he put down the lines of a house around the bottles, to contain them, and he drew a house to either side (Miéville 2016, 42-43).

Then Miéville hints at “small women wearing masks, some people squat as if they lived underwater” as they are khepris and vodyanois from the *Bas-Lag* trilogy (Miéville 2016, 43). The Firstspace of New Crobuzon appears in the Thirdspace of the village. The boy itemises women, men, and children as someone who whole-heartedly accepted and immersed into the abstract idea of Secondspace. In connection to that, Owen points out that, “[t]he sense is of living people constrained within rigid categories and thus reduced to objects. The note about the mountain lion, too, suggests something of the motivation behind the narrator’s action; his fear of the thing is what makes trapping it so ‘fascinating’” (Owen 56).

This immersion into the abstract idea of Secondspace changes into the manifestation of the Secondspace of the city as the “real policeman, from the coast” arrives at the village (Miéville 2016, 83). He has his pistol with him and the boy “could see the official sigil on his breast” (ibid.). These are symbols of the Secondspace; therefore, it is not surprising when Miéville illustrates the power of the city’s Secondspace by having the protagonist beaten by the police without any consequences. Moreover, he stresses the insufficiency of the village’s Secondspace when the father and the other adults visit the cave; they carry the law books to determine the outcome. The Secondspace of the village cannot affect the spatial system of the village in the same way as the city does, but the former Secondspace surfaces in connection with subjects. Miéville sheds light on the organising principle of the village Secondspace as the hunter “put his hand on him, not cruelly but removing hope of escape” (Miéville 2016, 69).

10.5 The Manifestation of the Urban Secondspace, the Census-taker

The manifestation of the city’s Secondspace is associated with the character of the census-taker. Owens argues that the “role of the state in producing coherent, closed systems of knowledge. As Ruppert notes, it is through ‘a variety of practices such as censuses, surveys, birth registrations, and school attendance and tax records that governing authorities know

populations and create a ‘legible people’ (219), a process which allows for control” (Owen 56-7). Before the arrival of the census-taker, the focalizer-narrator achieves a better understanding of the Secondspace as an abstract idea. He reports that, “[t]he animals I drew looked different now. I added faces and stood them upright” (Miéville 2016, 110). This is the last step that precedes the uncanny shift toward the complete change of his Secondspace. The turning up of the census-taker influences him. At first, the boy exhibits restraint toward the census-taker, who has a “big rifle over his shoulder, a box in his left hand, a clipboard in his right” and “used my language well but I could tell it wasn’t his own” (Miéville 2016, 111). When the census-taker tells the boy that “I came here now because he [the father] isn’t here”, the boy becomes privy to the fact that the census-taker has access to the city’s Secondspace. He realises that he might learn from that powerful figure; consequently, he changes his opinion – “His accent was familiar to me” (ibid.).

The census-taker begins to explain his work to the boy: “I have to make a record,” he said. ‘I’m here because I need information from certain people in town. Your father’s one of them, because of where he was born. So I need to know things’ such as “[w]hat money he makes,” he continued. ‘How long he’s been here’ (Miéville 2016, 112). These are the details from which he constructs and controls the father and establishes the subject from the received information. The census-taker reflects on the way Secondspace operates and says that,

I’m putting things in sets. My job’s just to count the people who were born where I was, or whose parents or grandparents were. Then I write down what I’ve counted. That’s my job. I started years ago, when we decided we had to take stock of things. After troubles. We needed to know where we were. Where we all were. So I go all over counting people from my home (Miéville 2016, 114 *emphases mine*).

The connection is the city of New Crobuzon. The influence of its Secondspace expands to its colony, Nova Esperium. The census-taker demonstrates that knowledge of Secondspace to the boy by claiming to know “why your father ran here in the first place” (Miéville 2016, 115). He also wants to know about the whereabouts of the mother “so I can get all my details right” (ibid.). Nothing remains outside of the knowingness of the manifestation of the city’s Secondspace.

10.6 The Conflict between the Urban Secondspace and the Village’s Secondspace

There is, however, a liminal zone, where the boy does not obey the city’s Secondspace but obeys the Secondspace of the village. Miéville describes the operating principles of the latter one as harsh. It is a community in which living on the periphery leaves one marked. They tend to receive biased judgment more than any other members of the community. However,

before the exploration of this liminal zone, I am going to examine the spatial system of the village. First, I focus on the boy, then on the parents.

At the beginning of the narrative, it becomes clear that even those children, who live on the bridge between the sides of the mountain, can call the focalizer-narrator “uphillier” as a sort of insult which is reserved for those who are further from the centre than the speaker. Another indication of the position of the boy within the spatial system of the village is that one of the leaders of these children, “Samma would click her fingers for me to follow and walk me” (Miéville 2016, 33). This act incorporates two approaches: one, an older child attempts to control the younger one, and two, she knows her spatial position in the village; consequently, she is allowed to control the boy the way she does. Another example is when “the officers investigating my gasped allegation [. . .] wearing the temporary sashes that granted them authority” try to convince the boy that what he saw was “your mother and him [the father] were having an argument” (Miéville 2016, 51; 59). This position undermines the boy’s claim about the killing, and he tries to argue against it. The temporary manifestations of the city’s Secondspace, on which they base their judgement upon the incident, rely on law books. The manifestation of the village’s Secondspace is reflected in the temporary officer. It affects the whole family, when “the hunter put his hand on him [the helping child from the bridge], not cruelly but removing hope of escape” (Miéville 2016, 69). This reaction of the village’s Secondspace begins to influence the access of the family to the spatial system of the village.

In the world of adults, the boy tells that, “[t]he sellers who knew her treated my mother with a cautious courtesy” and “they’d greet her carefully” (Miéville 2016, 27). The position of the boy’s parents in the spatial system of the village is dubious. For the father’s services, they are thankful; the villagers also trade with the mother. As the investigation of the alleged murder becomes complex, one of the officers with “ribbons of temporary office on his shoulder and a revolving pistol in his hand” appears on the doorstep of the family to demonstrate the village’s Secondspace. By the time the policemen from the coast release the father and his son from the school, the village’s Secondspace falls in line with the unexpressed command of the city: the family is socially excluded from the village. When the father “went to a bread-maker’s and called for a loaf but the woman shook her head. ‘No bread,’ she said, and turned from him. There was plenty visible through the flecked window” (Miéville 2016, 85). As they move through the village, the focalizer-narrator notices that every “vendor refused my father’s custom” (Miéville 2016, 86). The boy adds that “the law had said I was his and they had a lot of respect and fear for the law in that town” (ibid.). This suggests this knowledge has been

included in the boy's knowingness. Certainty comes back to verify parts of the village's spatial system that remain untouched by the influence of the city's Secondspace.

There is also the place of the house where the family lives in which a slightly different spatial system operates. I focus on the rules and laws that maintain the family's Secondspace to connect it to the boy's future inclusion into the city's Secondspace. The boy claims that he "rarely disobeyed my parents. When either of them discovered me in any transgression I would shake, or I would freeze as still as a wax boy" (Miéville 2016, 41). It is central to notice that the reaction to the boy's wrongdoing reflects the Secondspace of the parents but without their presence. This suggests that the boy is included in that Secondspace; he accepts it and applies to himself. Another example is that the prohibition on entering the mother's room which reveals "an angle that was new to" him that results in the confession to her mother about a sight of a tree that was walking¹²² (Miéville 2016, 44). This is the first instance when the Firstspace of New Crobuzon (in this case anthropomorphic cacti who live in the metropolis) intrudes the village's Firstspace. The novella's reception mainly relies on examples of the Firstspace to illustrate the connection between the *Bas-Lag* trilogy and *This Census-taker*. Although in this case, the mother dismisses as "[m]aybe you only thought you saw something", she later corrects herself as "[m]aybe [. . .] it was someone from your father's city" (Miéville 2016, 45). Later I am going to discuss briefly these hints that have been read as proofs of the novella's relation to the trilogy. After the meeting with the census-taker, the boy keeps referring back to the rules of his home. The repetitions and the obsessive behaviour to control the situation return to the mantra-like rules: "'You can't go in,' I whispered. 'It's not allowed'" and "[y]ou can't come in" to the house (Miéville 123; 131). The addressee is always the census-taker. The basis of the home's Secondspace is rules and the law set by the parents. Consequently, these occasions prove to the census-taker that the boy follows and makes others observe the rule. Therefore, his claim that, "[l]aw goes through the blood a bit" points out that following and applying the Secondspace of a spatial system becomes an inherent trait to the focalizer-narrator.

10.6.1 The Outcome of the Conflict between the Two Spatial Systems

Miéville shows the knowingness of a traumatised child with which the author manipulates the framework of certainty in the novella. The city's Firstspace that is New Crobuzon intrudes the spatial system of the village. This influence develops gradually. There are three types of

¹²² The chapter omits the fact that the symbol of the walking tree has been used at least two occasions to illustrate something improbable (William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy).

influences. First, there are instances, where these influences stem from the Thirdspace of the village, but those who have access to it believe them to be manifestations of its Firstspace. Such as the ranting spider that is read as the Weaver from the *Bas-Lag* trilogy. The focalizer-narrator also remarks that he has “spoken of the trash head in my ruminations” (Miéville 2016, 57). This refers to the Council Construct that is the hive mind built from the rubbish and the sentient machines of New Crobuzon from *Perdido Street Station*. Drobe supports this reading by adding that people “were scared of all the engines and they smashed them all up” (ibid.). This event is reported in *Iron Council*. Then Drobe mentions

rumours of distant insurrection had meant the ordering of destruction, the gleeless dismembering of all such geared constructed figures. One of a sequence of imbricated catastrophes our town had imported from the little coast city, which had itself succumbed to the anxiety, as we all did with so many, as a contagion from a vast other country (Miéville 2016, 58).

These instances are interpreted as hazy, uncertain knowledge about what has happened in New Crobuzon during the time of the *Bas-Lag* trilogy.

The knowingness is the crucial factor in the understanding; therefore, the second sort of influence is the Firstspace to Firstspace relation, which also surfaces as a shift toward certainty. The father asks his son whether he has heard “the gun today? That loud shot” (Miéville 2016, 74). He confesses that he “used to hear that all the time,” he said. “When I was in a war. In a city.” Not the nearest one, I knew” (Miéville 2016, 75). He finishes his remembrance that, “[h]igh town against low?” the boy’s father said at last. ‘Street against street? Who won?’ He looked at his son without expression. ‘They won. That shot? That’s the kind of shot you use to kill a man’” (ibid.). The events he describes are the struggles of the civil war from the viewpoint of the Collective, a community of manual labourers in the polis of New Crobuzon in *Iron Council*. Third, the boy follows the practice of the mother dismissing Firstspace into the Thirdspace, although he recognises that

there were none of the true succulents of the desert, that I knew from pictures, that I’d once imagined walking. But there were spined trees, various clotted-looking things serrated as if with claws along the ridges of their bark. They surrounded the dark path and I peered between their spines. Deep in a clag of them, I saw a human shape. The figure seemed to approach me like someone rising out of water, a hulk of shadow with a box and a gun. It seemed to surveil me, and move without moving. I hollered and I ran. (Miéville 2016, 77).

In this situation, the focalizer-narrator relives the traumatic encounter with the anthropomorphic cacti. This time the boy sees its weapon, the rivebow. That is an enormous crossbow that fires chakras and “could sever a cactus limb or head [. . .] and slice savagely some way beyond that” (Miéville 2000, 625). The census-taker provides certainty to the child and exploits the focalizer-narrator’s inherent trait for the Secondspace of the city. The subordination emerges between the lines; consequently, the idea of utopia that is interpreted in

Iron Council as interruption of the Crobuzan Thirdspace is no longer postponed but intrudes the city's Secondspace.

In the chapter, I explored another approach of Miéville in which he attempts to change the spatial system of his secondary world. *This Census-taker* is a story of a traumatised child who has been subjected to the struggle of two spatial systems. He is the limited focalizer-narrator of the novella. The focus is on an alleged murder; the father has killed the mother. I examined the opposition of the village and the city from two viewpoints: linguistic and spatial. In my interpretation, both points of view rely on the concept of equipose, the idea that John Clute defines, which is driven by the question of certainty. In the novella, Miéville sets up a vertical relationship between the two spatial systems. I interpreted this connection as coloniser and colonised, with which I contextualised the novella in his secondary world of the *Bas-Lag* trilogy. The family members' understanding of their spatial position within the spatial system of the village differs from each other which provides the opportunity to explore it and point out the linguistic and spatial operating principles of the parents to include their child in the village's spatial system. The turning-up of the census-taker hinders their act and initiates the inclusion of the boy in the city's spatial system. The boy becomes the manifestation of the city's Secondspace by accepting the census-taker's offer of becoming his assistant. However, the obedience the boy exhibits toward his parents and the village's spatial system becomes an organising principle on the surface, he intends to corrupt the city's Secondspace concurs with Miéville's ideas presented in *Iron Council* that are changes of the spatial system of New Crobuzon.

11. Conclusion: Towards the Next Weird?

As the thesis demonstrated, China Miéville employs different approaches to express his methods of constructing a platform of argumentation for the socially and politically powerless; articulating their social and political positions and attempting to insert them into the contemporary urban spatial system that is ruled by the powerful to illuminate his work as a series of interlocking debates over the connections of the Miévillean New Weird and consensual reality. They point out the significance that in the context of the consensual reality, the Miévillean New Weird bears relevance on. The former one introduces a new perspective to consider these issues that can be related to the latter one. Miéville views his approach as a valid, similar, yet different perspective to reveal the non-escapist nature of fantastical literatures into which New Weird belongs, and underlines the opinion that fantastic “is good to think with” as a relevant perspective to explore the contemporary urban spatial system (Miéville 2002, 46).

He formulates contemporary global capitalism as “a grotesque ‘fantastic form’”, therefore what can be more adequate to express its inconsistencies than fantastic literature (ibid.). The dissertation forms an addition to Miéville studies and a novel understanding of his works. The examined six books exhibit a gradual change in Miéville’s approach to constructing this above-mentioned platform in a following fashion: from *Perdido Street Station* to *This Census-taker* there is always, however small, change in the spatial system; in *Perdido Street Station* he points out the improbability of characters to form a coalition against the governing power by realising that it is their only method to change the spatial system, which attempt fails at the end of the novel, in *The Scar* he uses the hubris of characters to mislead the community to believe that they can change the spatial system of the secondary world, which attempt also fails, in *Iron Council* he forms and strengthens a community to struggle for its spatial emancipation, which attempt is a successful one, albeit it takes a form of a promise for the future, in *The City and The City* he applies a focalizer-narrator, who changes the spatial system for himself, in *UnLunDun* he constructs a focalizer-narrator, who forms a coalition against the governing and also usurping power, then successfully attempts the spatial emancipation that she would like to adapt to another spatial system, in *This Census-taker* Miéville creates focalizer-narrator, who becomes part of the Ideological State Apparatus then subverts it to prepare the spatial emancipation in the urban spatial system.

In chapter 2, I explored the label of the literary weird. This sort of approach to writing in which Miéville writes surpasses the idea of genre for their practitioners. The thesis describes two pivotal perspectives in Miéville’s writing: the aesthetical and the literary. Focusing on the

aesthetical weird, I identified the Weird Affect, the type of sublime that Miéville employs to express the urban spatial system to the reader through its focalizer-narrators. It is contextualised in an urban environment and its protean features are increased leaving no other alternative mode of expression. Therefore, the meaning is liberated because of the Weird Affect as the perspective changes and allows “us to see the inside from the perspective of the outside” (Fisher 2016, 10). Furthermore, in this chapter, I examined the literary Weird through the prism of Miévillean aesthetics and differentiate it from other aesthetic strategies. My focus is on the Weird as an aesthetical category and I provided the literary history of the weird to stress its postmodern understanding of canon formation as a retrospective process in which the movement selects texts and antecedents as forerunners of the weird. I pointed out that authors of literary weird attempted to frame themselves within the context of literature and their wish to differentiate themselves from others were pivotal. I unravel the process of the literary weird, locate the moments that function as watersheds: Lovecraft Event that provides the philosophical framework, Barker Event that rejuvenates the aesthetical context, and Miéville Event that incorporates the two approaches in his fictional output and establishes the commercial success and acceptance of New Weird fiction. This process illustrates the changing perspectives toward literary weird and its connection to aesthetical weird. One of the most important indicators for that is monsters and the relation of humankind to monsters, the metaphorised others. I talked about the effect of capitalism on the literary weird and in what methods played an important part in the institutionalisation of weird that is a move that is described from the margin to the centre of contemporary culture.

In chapter 3, I discussed the theories of space and utilised them in the interpretation of my primary sources. I drew mainly on Marxist theoreticians as their focuses overlap mine: encapsulating and explaining the relation between city and subject. I provided a short historical background of the development of urban environment from the middle ages to contemporary times. I highlighted the time periods from the Industrial Revolution to the decades after the Great War. This timeframe reveals a clearer picture of the systematic organisation of spatial system. Its organising principle is the question of biopower, a technique “for achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations” through various institutions that are seen as the Ideological State Apparatuses (Foucault 1990, 224). Furthermore, this timeframe overlaps with the rise of the national state. Different power techniques applied by Ideological State Apparatuses are rooted in language and spatial distancing as ideological practice between different layers of society become the foundations of the “citiness of a city”. I also explored the representation of the changing urban environment drawing on literary examples from the 19th

century as Miéville draws on them but revisits them through the lens of aesthetical weird. The corollary became the Miévillean New Weird, this similar, yet different approach to urban spatial system. In the sub-chapter of chapter 3, I introduced the terms, place and space. I provided a historical context in the Western-European tradition drawing on the interpretive framework of Jeff Malpas. I interpreted the spatial system as the result of negotiations of its participating subjects. They represent places and constantly negotiate to be able to change space as the accepted interrelation between subjects.

In the next chapter, my focus shifted to the relation of narratology and space through the rhetorics of fantastic spaces. The thesis traced the framework for the Miévillean fiction and stressed its connection to different traditions within the British fantastic literature. It located Miéville's books closer to those urban fantasies where the urban is explored further with the help of fantasy, a form he elaborated on as his interpretation of New Weird. In the following sub-chapter, I drew on terms of psychogeography and sublime. Both concepts are used to interpret the Miévillean urban spatial systems within the framework of the literary and aesthetical weird. The former one provides the concept that focuses on "the invisible community of the marginalised and dispossessed" (*Perdido Street Station*, *The Scar*, *Iron Council*), presents "the city as a dreamscape in which nothing is as it seems and which can only be navigated by those possessing secret knowledge" (*The City and The City*), "creates strange juxtapositions between familiar names and locations and visions of a transcendent city" (*UnLunDun*), employs "the occult to political ends, their exposure of hidden sources of power questioning the governance of the city and revealing the plight of the marginalized and dispossessed" (*The City and The City*) (Coverley 2012, 15-6; 16; 41; 49). Moreover, it helps to integrate, yet also differentiate Miéville into the group of authors who employed psychogeography for literary means. The latter one stresses the aesthetic aspect of the weird. Miéville captures the "the awe-inspiring (if frequently unbeautiful) grandeur of the modern capitalist metropolis, in all its unfathomable heterogeneity and hybridity" (Freedman 2015, 13). The Miévillean urban sublime and Miévillean psychogeography become what Miéville harnesses to signify the social and political perspective of his subjects in his spatial systems.

Critical map studies help to pinpoint the power struggle within Miévilles's narratives as a form of manifestation of power. The thesis shows in a detailed exploration how spatiality and critical map studies play a crucial role for the Ideological State Apparatus in the interpretation of spatial systems. Maps fulfil a pivotal bureaucratic function in the construction of the capitalist totality that the ideology of experiential realism and naturalism suggest yet fail to deliver linguistically. They are the most tangible manifestation of the power of the Secondspace

in a spatial system. Therefore, in the next sub-chapter, the dissertation explored the methods Miéville utilises in his narratives to make the urban spatial system work. However, these procedures differ from character to character. They are connected to the political and social matrix and the character's position in it. Consequently, the access to the spatial system depends on the place the subject renders. Subjects who are unfamiliar with the urban environment experience cognitive estrangement in the narrative space. The thesis pointed out that the approach of the weird offers a new viewpoint with the perspectives of psychogeography and sublime to reveal a different, yet similar capitalist reality.

The next section dealt with the cognitive problems put forward by the Miévillean New Weird. Through the lens of the focalizer-narrators, the oscillation between the cognitive effect and the cognitive estrangement drives the interpretation of the secondary world. Although they appear to be two opposing sides, cognitive estrangement is also understood through cognition effect. By the realisation of the differences generated by his cities, Miéville hinges on the Suvinian model, a rationalist approach to the radically different within fantastical texts. The cognition effect manipulates the de-familiarized urban spatial system of the secondary world. Miéville argues that “cognition effect is a *persuasion*. [The] effect is a function of (textual) *charismatic authority*. The reader surrenders to the cognition effect to the extent that he or she surrenders to the authority of the text and its author function” (Miéville 2009a, 238). Rhys Williams adds that “[t]he cognition effect is the production of a verisimilitude to contemporary norms of what is considered reasonable and realistic and is thus, as Miéville claims, an ideological effect” (Williams 2014, 621).

In the next sub-chapter, the thesis built on the findings of the rhetorics of fantastic spaces part and connected it with Farah Mendlesohn's taxonomy about fantasies. In her book, Mendlesohn focuses on “the way in which a text becomes fantasy or, alternatively, the way the fantastic enters the text and the reader's relationship to this” (Mendlesohn 2008, 11). The taxonomy Mendlesohn suggests points out the relationship of subjects and spatial system. This connection is through the rhetoric of that subject and its interpretation of spatial systems. The “others” bear different rhetoric devices, hence, their altered understanding of space. As the examined texts of Miéville is packed with “others”, the perspective that exhibits them offered the possibility of investigation of their participation in the spatial systems. With the help of Mendlesohn's approach the necessary framework explicitly traced out the viewpoint of Miéville to fantastic literature and politics: the constant re-negotiation of “others” for better positions for themselves in the spatial system. The more knowledge an “other” acquires about the spatial system, the better it understands it through rhetoric. It helps to maintain the

connection between spatial systems and rhetoric. Mendlesohn did not explore spatial systems in fantastical texts in her book *per se*, but points out examples. I drew on her observations and elaborate them in the Lefebvrian and Sojan interpretation of spatial systems and inserted it into my previously established interpretive framework. Mendlesohn claimed that there are four categories: portal-quest, immersive, intrusion and liminal fantasy.

The following six chapters are the close-readings of the primary texts. Miéville's cities are the field of power struggle through social and political prism. The conflict originates from the opposition of the centre and the periphery. Yet he constructs his cities as if they were slums to another location that city remains concealed. But Miéville's hoodwinking strategy of world building convinces the reader that his cities function as centres and not as peripheries. Moreover, it also convinces the reader that these proposed emancipatory spatial uses can be realised and actualised in the consensual reality.

Appendices

1) Timeline of the Weird

Property/Weird Types	Proto-Weird	Haute Weird	Weird Tale	Post-Weird	New Weird
Key Authors	Jules Verne, Victor Hugo, Lord Tennyson, H. G. Wells, Lautréamont	M. P. Shiel, Eric, Count Stenbock, Oscar Wilde, Hanns Heinz Ewers, E. F. Benson, William Hope Hodgson, Algernon Blackwood, M. R. James, Sheridan Le Fanu	H. P. Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, Robert E. Howard, C.L. Moore, Frank Belknap Long, Robert Bloch	J. G. Ballard, Charles Beaumont, Jorge Luis Borges, Mervyn Peake, Clive Barker	Michael Cisco, China Miéville, Jeff VanderMeer, Felix Gilman, M. John Harrison, K. J. Bishop, Kathe Koja, Thomas Ligotti, Jeff Noon
Key Titles	Jules Verne: <i>20,000 Leagues Under the Sea</i> , Victor Hugo: <i>The Toilers of the Sea</i> , Lord Tennyson: "The Kraken", H. G. Wells: "The Sea Raiders", Lautréamont: <i>Les Chants de Maldoror (The Songs of Maldoror)</i>	M. P. Shiel: <i>The Purple Cloud</i> , Of Kings and Things, Oscar Wilde: <i>The Picture of Dorian Gray</i> , William Hope Hodgson: <i>The Night Land</i> , Algernon Blackwood: "The Willows", M. R. James: "Casting the Runes", Sheridan	H. P. Lovecraft: <i>The Shadow over Innsmouth</i> , Clark Ashton Smith: "The Colossus of Ylourgne", Robert E. Howard: "Pigeons from Hell", C.L. Moore: "Shambleau", Frank Belknap Long: "Hounds of Tindalos", Robert Bloch: "The Shambler from the Stars"	Mervyn Peake: <i>Gormenghast</i> - trilogy, Clive Barker: <i>Books of Blood</i> anthology	Jeff VanderMeer: <i>Southern Reach</i> -trilogy, M. John Harrison: <i>Viriconium</i> -sequence, K. J. Bishop: <i>The Etched City</i> , Thomas Ligotti: <i>Songs of a Dead Dreamer & Grimscribe</i> , Jeff Noon: <i>Vurt</i> -series

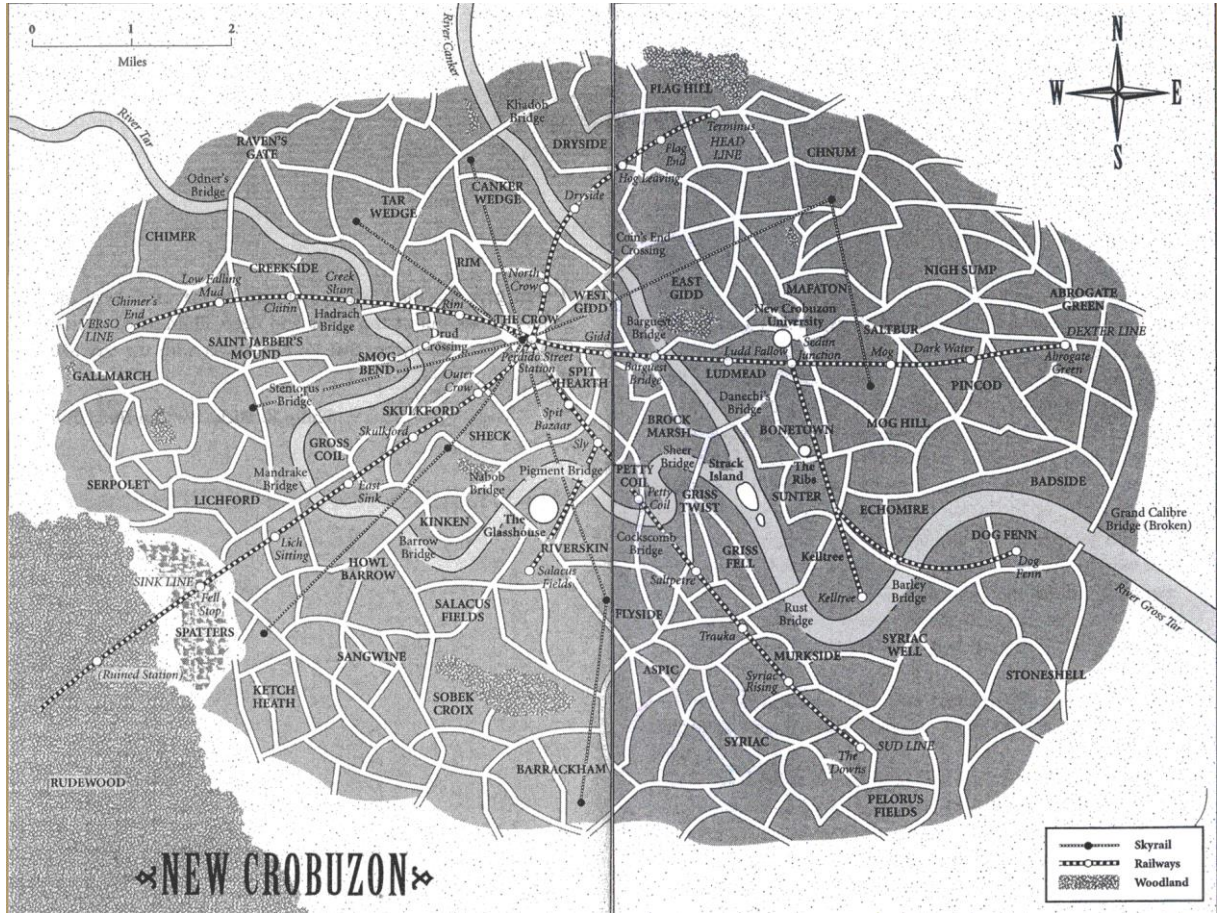
		Le Fanu: “Green Tea”			
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2) Spatial Hermeneutic Model

Property/Titles	<i>Perdido Street Station</i>	<i>The Scar</i>	<i>Iron Council</i>	<i>The City and The City</i>	<i>UnLunDun</i>	<i>This Census-Taker</i>
Amount of number of the focalizer-narrator	Two (Isaac Dander Grimnebulin and Yagharek)	Two (Bellis Coldwine and Tanner Sack)	One (Judah Low)	One (Tyador Borlú)	One (Deeba Resham)	One (unnamed boy)
Knowledge	meagre (Yagharek) and full (Isaac Dander Grimnebulin)	zero	full	Obtaining (from one citystate to another one)	Obtaining (about UnLondon)	meagre
Scope	forming community	one is outside (Bellis Coldwine), one is within the community (Tanner Sack)	communities (Iron Councillors and the Collective)	the focalizer-narrator	Community including herself (She gets integrated in the urban community of UnLondon.)	the focalizer-narrator
Outcome	No change for the community, change for the characters (Isaac Dander Grimnebulin leaves the city of New Crobuzon, Yagharek gets integrated in the urban community.)	No change for the community, change for the characters (Both got better integrated in the urban community.)	change for the communities for the future	change for the focalizer-narrator	change for the community (for the UnLondoners), adaptability (to London)	change for the focalizer-narrator (infiltrating the urban spatial system)

Difference	knowledge, outcome	knowledge and scope	knowledge, outcome	knowledge, scope, and outcome	scope, outcome	outcome
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3) Map of New Crobuzon



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