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Introduction

About his first two books, *Remainder*, which was published first, and *Men in Space* (in the following *MiS*), which he wrote first but was only published second, Tom McCarthy himself said in an interview that “[b]oth books could be called ‘Men in Space,’ in the most literal, phenomenological sense: they’re both about how we inhabit space and its geometries, the circuits we cut through it, the way it inhabits us and repeats itself in us, and how we repeat ourselves in it” (“Author Q & A”). Referring by my title, “Men in Space/Space in Men,” which incorporates one of McCarthy’s titles, to all—up till now—four of his novels is meant to suggest an extension of what he says about the first two to the latter two of his fictional works, to *C* and *Satin Island* (in the following *SI*).¹ The second part of my title, which introduces “spatial resignifications,” should, then, indicate that the approach taken in this thesis investigates not only how the phenomenological implications of space for its occupants, and vice versa, that McCarthy speaks about are represented in his novels but also how this interaction can lead to a redefinition of the meaning that is attributed to specific spaces.

Space in fiction has been investigated in the larger context of culture in literary studies ever since a number of scholars, such as Ernst Cassirer, Jurij Lotman, and Mikhail Bakhtin, became interested in it as more than a static setting, the description of which narratologists generally treated in opposition to the narration of dynamic events moving a story along its arc, as Wolfgang Hallet and Birgit Neumann summarize in their introduction to a volume on space and movement in literature (16-19). Affirming the importance of the notion of making meaning of space as a culturally created and constantly renegotiated and recreated phenomenon for literary studies, Wolfgang Hallet has argued in an essay that, as contributions to this cultural process, narrative spaces should be investigated as elements in a “a chain of cultural (re)semioticization” (108, my translation). This chain encompasses, as he explains, “cognitive processes of perception and signification of spaces [...] [,] their resemioticization in the form of linguistic-discursive signs in narration [...] [and] the mental concepts of the spaces of the textual world generated by the readers, which

¹ As I explain this part of the title, it is necessary to address at this point the sexist formulation, which results from the incorporation of McCarthy’s title *Men in Space*. While this is unfortunate, I chose it nevertheless because of the reference to McCarthy’s quoted thoughts on space in his novels. In addition, the title is accurate in that the protagonists, whose perceptions and interpretations of spaces are at the center of the thesis, are in all four books male.

are ultimately compared to empirical reality and lead there to a redefinition of spatial concepts” (Hallet 108, my translation). In this thesis I am concerned with the first elements of the chain, with how McCarthy’s novels narrativize cognitive processes of spatial perception and how these in turn influence characters’ interpretations of spaces. It is in this sense that I use “spatial resignifications” or resignifications of spaces throughout the thesis as a term that forms a part of Hallet’s quoted “(Re)-Semiotisierungskette” (108).

The approach outlined above through an explication of the title of the thesis entails bringing narratological terms describing space in fiction into contact with concepts from the cognitive sciences and cultural studies. This is necessary to account for manifestations in the narratives of the reciprocal influence that spaces and their perceivers have on each other—that McCarthy speaks about—and of the production and reproduction of the meaning of specific spaces, respectively. As certain terms for narrative space are relevant to the analysis of all four books, and consequently recur in all chapters, whereas the concepts from other fields that they are brought into connection with depend on the concrete examples, and thus change from chapter to chapter, it is prudent to define the former at this point and to define the others as they become relevant.

A result of the intensified interest of literary studies in space in fiction throughout the last decades is that overarching terms such as ‘setting’ are being integrated into ever more detailed lists of terms referring to narrative space, whereby they attain slightly different but partially overlapping meanings for the makers of the different lists. This is why it is especially important to note in which sense the terms are used. I have chosen to adopt three of the terms offered by Marie-Laure Ryan in her entry on “Space” in the online publication *the living handbook of narratology* because it is a recent and detailed list of definitions relating to narrative space. Out of these the most relevant to my line of inquiry is the one that refers to the most immediate space surrounding the characters, as is it the space the perception of which by characters is usually narrated. Ryan calls this space the “spatial frame,” which, as she mentions, overlaps with Ruth Ronen’s definition of “setting” (“Space” 423-425) and Gabriel Zoran’s “fields of vision” (324). She defines spatial frame as “the immediate surroundings of actual events, the various locations shown by the narrative discourse or by the image” (“Space” n.p., ch. 2.1 (a)). The next relevant term is that of “story space,” which Ryan defines as “the space relevant to the plot, as mapped by the

actions and thoughts of characters [...] consist[ing] of all the spatial frames plus all the locations mentioned by the text that are not the scene of actually occurring events” (“Space” n.p., ch. 2.1 (c)). The space that the term story space refers to is of importance because it encompasses the spaces that are usually (re)interpreted by characters. The last of Ryan’s terms that I use is “story world,” which is “the story space completed by the reader’s imagination on the basis of cultural knowledge and real world experience” (“Space” n.p., ch. 2.1 (d)). The story world is relevant here because it encompasses the whole space that a narrative evokes.

Mentioning one last term, which is not about narrative space, but about the characters that perceive and interpret it, is useful here because it recurs throughout the thesis. It is Alan Palmer’s “fictional consciousness” that he uses interchangeably with “fictional mind” and whereby he means to account for “characters’ thought in terms of their motives, intentions, and resulting behavior and action” (12). Understanding the characters that perceive spaces as such functioning fictional consciousnesses is necessary to account for their capability—or, to put it into a narratological framework, how the narration suggests such a capability of the characters—to interpret and reinterpret the spaces that they perceive.

In my four main chapters, which each deal independently with one of the four novels in the order that they have been written, I argue that all books prominently feature resignifications of spaces by narrating cognitive processes that contribute to fictional consciousnesses’ perception and interpretation of their surroundings. The chapters on *MiS* show how characters resignify spatial frames as their thoughts are influenced by the powerful impressions that a story within the story and an icon painting make on them and, finally, how this is exemplified in the description of a video show. The part on *Remainder* focuses on the spaces of the reenactments that the main character meticulously organizes. The chapters analyze the role that space plays in the emergence of the idea of the reenactments, its significance during the reenactments, and, lastly, how it affects actions carried out in it. The section on *C* is concerned with how the change in the perception of space that technology brought about at the beginning of the twentieth century is portrayed through the experiences of the protagonist. Finally, the last part investigates how *SI* highlights contributing factors, including the influence of digital media, to the resignification of spaces.

Men in Space

The plot of *MiS*, which loosely revolves around the smuggling and forging of an icon painting, focuses on what Wolfgang Hallet calls “spatial practices [...] and significations” (108, my translations), as the spatial connotations of smuggling and forging a painting illustrate: the first suggests a meticulously planned transportation of an object through space, and the second involves studying, interpreting and recreating a painted space. As such, the effect that Hallet contributes to the incorporation into a narrative of “spatial practices,” namely that “space [...] [is established] as a narrative-constituting, plot-driving dimension” (108), is in force in *MiS*. In addition, the novel qualifies as a “fiction of space,” a “model[...] for the semiotic constitution of space” (Hallet’s title, for a definition of the concept cf. Hallet, esp. 108) because on the discourse level it focuses on the resignification of the story space. This thesis is concerned with this recoding, which is achieved through the introduction into the description of story spaces of elements of embedded, ontologically different spaces, such as that of a story within the story and that of the icon painting.

A man in space

In *MiS* there is a story within the story that illustrates the helplessness of individuals when they are affected by a cultural—which includes a political—recoding of the “culturally handed down and historically changeable spatial encoding” (Hallet Neumann 11, Hallet 89, my translation) of the spaces that one inhabits. The story that a group of characters discusses is about the precarious situation that a Soviet cosmonaut, who was launched into space just before the end of the Soviet Union, finds himself in when no Newly Independent State wants to spend their resources on bringing him back down to earth. After the central administration and the clearly locatable responsibility for the space program of the Union cease to exist, the question of the redistribution of responsibility in the topographically unchanged but now to be culturally recoded space that the Union previously encompassed is easily avoided. The Newly Independent States can refrain from taking responsibility in the uncertain time when the symbolic remapping, in this case accompanied by a more immediately tangible political reconfiguration, of their territories is happening.

“The Russians say he’s not their problem,” Hájek explains.

“He set off from the Ukraine, so they say he should go back there.”

“Fair enough,” says Jan.

“The Ukrainians don’t think so,” Hájek tells him. “They’re saying, *Fuck off! This was a Soviet space project, and Soviet means Russian.*”

“This is true,” Jan concurs. “What nationality is the cosmonaut?”

“That’s the thing,” says Hájek. “He’s from Latvia or somewhere. So the Ukrainians and Russians are both turning to the Latvians saying, *You can foot the bill for all this.* Millions of dollars, you see.” (*MiS* 42-3, emphasis in original)

The story of the cosmonaut not only demonstrates how crucially one can be affected by changes in the values ascribed to certain territories but it also emphasizes that the attribution of new values to spaces is not instantaneous but rather a process. This means that during the recoding of spaces, spaces themselves attain a quality of uncertainty until the new values that will replace or be added to the ones previously associated with them are being determined. The unsettled question of which itself now redefining country should take the responsibility for the cosmonaut illustrates this state of flux. It is this uncertainty that, when taking into account the plural in the title *Men in Space*, allows the reading of the cosmonaut’s story as a device that cancels out ontological boundaries: the quality of uncertainty that is linked to the cosmos can be transferred to the changing Europe after 1991, so that the title of the book can be understood to refer both to the cosmonaut in outer space and to the characters in the story proper and the spaces that they inhabit.

The boundary between the ontologically different spaces is canceled out but not transgressed. The canceling out is implicit, it happens on the discourse level and is left to the reader to infer. The characters themselves are not directly stated to be aware of the analogy between the cosmonaut’s and their situation which is based on being affected by the spatial recoding taking place in the wake of the Union’s fall. Although the reader is not left without an immediate implicit reference on the discourse level to the direct effects on the characters that discuss the story of a new ideology, that of capitalism, already spreading in their city: just after having discussed the quoted story a character asks another for drugs who “[b]efore the revolution [...] wouldn’t have charged anything” but now wants money in return because “now it’s business” (43).

The discourse first relates the cosmonaut in explicit terms to the spatial recoding happening in Central Europe in the form of thought report, which Alan Palmer defines as “the equivalent of indirect speech, in which narrators present characters’ thoughts in narrative” and which “can present thought as mental action”

(54). The narrator informs the reader that while walking around and “[l]ooking across the city, Ivan [the painter who is later tasked with copying the icon] pictures Hájek’s cosmonaut gazing down from his spaceship onto familiar land masses he no longer recognizes: whole blocks wrenching apart, accelerated continental drift, a jigsaw in reverse” (*MiS* 49). The “wrenching” and “drift[ing]” that are still happening highlight the timely dimension of the continually ongoing spatial recoding process. More specifically, they indicate the delay that occurs in ascribing new values to spaces following an abrupt cultural change that affects a territory when the values that will be ascribed to the spaces are not quite fixed yet and everything is, as a result, in a state of flux, “familiar” but “no longer recogniz[able].” Thus the notion of space as a “neutral grid on which cultural difference, historical memory, and societal organization is inscribed,” which the anthropologists Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson investigate (34) is problematized by stressing in the character’s thoughts that in the case of a recoding, of re-inscription, the “grid” is not “neutral” and that the determination of the new values to be inscribed and the erasure of the existing values takes time. While the process lasts, while “the familiar landmasses [...] [are] no longer recogniz[able]” (*MiS* 49), the perceivers experience a similar sense of being lost as Fredric Jameson attributes to the postmodern hyperspace. He describes this as a “mutation in space [...] [that] has finally succeeded in transcending the capabilities of the individual human body to locate itself, to organize its immediate surroundings perceptually, and cognitively to map its position in a mappable external world” (44). The important difference between Jameson’s hyperspace and the recoding process happening in *MiS* is that, as the character’s thoughts highlight, in the latter a mutation occurs not in the “familiar” spaces themselves but rather in the values ascribed to them, in what they mean to members of a certain culture.

The cultural coding of spaces, which makes possible the utilization of “spatial constructions [...] as markers of human memory and of social values in a world of rapid flux and change,” which Tim Woods attributes to the postmodern novel (107-8), is dependent on the workings of national memory. Aleida Assmann defines national memory as “a dynamic force that drives both action and self-interpretation” and “underpin[s] all cultural constructions,” which includes the meaning of various spaces (73). A policeman’s perception of the physical changes at the offices of the central police and the interpretation of these as effects of the end of the Soviet Union on the organizational structure of the police introduces again into *MiS* the notion

that culture, as an overarching term that includes politics, becomes tangible in space—a notion of space that echoes the philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre’s thoughts (410-11).

Passing through the floors above my own en route to the meeting, I was able to observe the extent to which the entire organization of the Central Criminal Police is being reconfigured. I saw stacked-up files from Organized Crime being transferred onto Criminal Intelligence shelves, Photo-Fit Department boxes merged with Modus Operandi ones, Fingerprinting slides inserted into Scene of Crime Department records. In one corridor I saw rows of cabinets containing pre-lustration STB files waiting to be accommodated somewhere within the new structure. The Slovak section was being disbanded; a whole storey had been designated as a dumping ground for files relating to that portion of our country soon to become independent Slovakia; yet records from the Slovak regions of Košice and Bratislava were still coming in by fax, telex and computer, to be filed, copied and indexed. [...] The thin plywood partitions separating various offices were being torn down and repositioned. This is the price of realignment: old attachments must be severed, new ones formed. Everything must have its place. (*MiS* 53-54)

The description of the changes that the office space undergoes, which can be read “as the character’s perception of the physical event,” or in this case of the space, and his “experience of the psychological implications of the event,” or, again, in this case of the space (Palmer 49), presupposes an understanding of space as having “the capacity [...] to register and embody physical changes and conditions brought about by or through the passage of time,” which Jan Joost van Baak (21) and also Mikhail Bakhtin stress (250). This makes it possible for cultural “significance” to be “bestowed upon [...] the surrounding world” (van Baak 37). Spaces of official nature, such as the described offices of the police, have to undergo and thus “embody” changes when political changes are happening as they are meant to reflect the nation’s identity and the resulting structure of the government. During a recoding, however, space is no “neutral grid” (Gupta and Ferguson 34) but has already values associated with it—the “old attachments” that “must be severed” (*MiS* 54)—the inscription or coding has to be preceded by an erasure of the previous codes, for which there exist established strategies.

Assmann discusses legitimization, delegitimization, and distinction as “tasks” of functional memory in a spatio-political context (128-9). These are utilized by politics as strategies to guide the recoding process. The Prague of *MiS* is shown at a time when delegitimization, as a strategy for the deletion of inscribed values during the resignification of spaces, has transformative effects on it. Legitimization, which, according to Assmann, is basically the utilization of the national-identity-shaping

power of national memories for the justification of one's own newly attained power through the establishment of marked connections between select national memories and oneself, so that a transferal of symbolic values from the former to the latter is suggested, happens usually when a political leadership is establishing itself (128). As the story is set at a time when changes are still undergoing and the new leadership of the country has not been settled yet, legitimization affecting the spaces of the city looms in its future, outside the scope of the narrative, which is rather concerned with how the way for it is paved through delegitimization, through the "driving out [of] any unofficial remembrance" before distinction, the identification and utilization of "all symbolic forms of expression that help to create the profile of a collective identity" (Assmann 129), can lead to effective legitimization.

The narration is interspersed with descriptions of changes affecting the spaces of Prague that are brought about by delegitimization. At one point, a character's perceiving construction workers "holding gas blowtorches to the buildings' plasterwork, stripping off old names" provides grounds for the narrator's remarks that "[i]t's happening all over Prague: as the state signs on plastic boards that must have covered the tops of shopfronts for more than forty years come down, the names of pre-war traders are emerging from beneath them, only to be burned off again" (*MiS* 104). The process that is described is an example of delegitimization effecting spatial change. A similar effect of delegitimization on the city is the act of "slowly taking down from every street in Prague" the mounted speakers that in the communist era "must have been for warning of impending nuclear war, announcing news of increased import-export surpluses, national sporting victories" (33) and are implied to have been perceived by the inhabitants as symbols, visible signs dotting the city, for that era. The state signs and speakers that are stripped down have been thus identified as contributing elements to "the profile of a collective identity" (Assmann 129) and now, as they have lost their official status because the collective identity has changed, are destroyed.

Because the cultural recoding of spaces is not instantaneous but a continually ongoing process that involves deleting or transforming the values that are being replaced in the process and determining and inscribing the new values, it becomes marked by uncertainty when the first step, delegitimization happens before distinction and legitimization are defined enough to be carried out. The man in space, the cosmonaut stranded in space, thus becomes an allegory for the characters

that are stranded in a rapidly delegitimized but not yet distinguished or legitimized Prague.

Petit lac-ing

The canceling out of borders between ontologically different spaces, which is introduced by the embedded story about the cosmonaut, returns as a feature of the discourse when the process of the copying of the icon painting is narrated. In the painter's mind the painted space of the icon flows over into, and thus resignifies the spatial frame that he inhabits. This is similar to how in the course of the painting technique of petit lac-ing small puddles of wet paint are placed in close proximity to each other so that with time they flow into each other, allowing the painter to cover a surface more quickly, as the narration explains (*MiS* 123). The painted space is constructed to have features that resemble the painter's atelier, who copies the icon, and is presented in such a way on the discourse level that the similarities are emphasized, while on the story level the painter's actions aim at canceling out the boundary between the ontologically different spaces by altering his appearance to resemble the painted saint: in order "to get a *real* sense" of the painted scene during the process of the reproduction of the icon, he alters his clothes and hair so that they approximate to the figure of the saint (123).

The construction of the painter's studio and of the space represented in the icon is similar because it features a comparable basic composition that is characterized by a figure being suspended in the respective spaces, in mid-air, below the sky, which is visible. The icon, which depicts an ascension, "*show[s] a human figure floating above a sea, beside a mountain*" (120, italicization in original). The figure in the air has in both cases Christian connotations, being in the icon a saint, as signified by its halo, and in the painter's flat there is a wooden angel hanging from the ceiling, "dangl[ing] from the bar beneath the skylight," which affords a view of the sky despite the figure hanging in an interior space (53). In addition to the structural similarities, which are not explicitly stated to be such and are left to the reader to be identified as parallels, a description of the icon by a character features associations with the apartment, strengthening and making explicit the blurring of the boundaries between the built and painted spaces: a letter by the character Joost van Straten, a Dutch art dealer interested in the painter's work, includes a brief description of the icon that likens the "*blackened windows*" of a building in the

painting to the painter's "*own skylights, which are filthy*" (120-121, italics in original). The following two sentences illustrate how the boundaries between the space of the icon, the city of Prague, and the artist's apartment are blurred in the description of the copying process by jumping from one to the other:

At this point Ivan's finished detailing the ships and sailors and is putting the bird figures on the side of the mountain, thinking of the seagulls under Palackého Most, the moment as they take off at which they're neither airborne nor resting on the water's surface but suspended between the two, in some vague halfway state. His angel hangs behind him, still gazing upwards and away. (126)

The birds in the icon activate in the character's memory the image of the birds that he has recently seen in Prague, in the narrative space that he inhabits. The indefinite state that both the painted and remembered birds are in is the link that establishes the connection in the painter's mind. Then the narrator goes on to continue this series of images featuring suspended figures by adding that while the painter is remembering the seagulls the angel is hanging in the air behind him.

Thus a spatial impulse from the past, a memory of a space and of a state—of the seagulls being for a fraction of a second suspended in air as they rise from under the bridge—, is introduced into the description of the character's perception of a spatial constellation—of the painted space—in the form of thought report, and is so brought to bear on the spatial cognition that is described. Then in the last sentence a relatable spatial element from the perceiving character's current surroundings is mentioned to the reader, who will certainly make the connection to the immediately preceding narration of the character's consciousness perceiving an element of the painted space in terms of the similarly suspended figures in the spaces. The reader does so in the process of "actualization," which Ansgar Nünning defines as "the constitution of narrative spaces in the course of the reception of a text [by the reader] in the process of the creation of aesthetic illusion" (38, my translation).

Although there is no explicit indication of the painter being aware at the moment of the hanging angel, which is brought to the reader's attention, based on the fact that it is in the painter's immediate vicinity the sentence can be read as free indirect perception. Alan Palmer says of this mode that it "emphasizes that events in the physical story world are aspectual: they are experienced by characters" (160). Accordingly, by the use of it "the whole consciousness of characters can be expanded to include descriptions of aspects of the story world that are seen from their perceptual, cognitive, and evaluative point of view" (Palmer 49). So reading the

quoted description as free indirect perception entails interpreting it “as the character’s perception of the physical event [in this case rather object] and [...], by extension, the character’s experience of the psychological implications of the event [here, again, of the object]” (ibid.). The narrative technique of combining the speech categories of thought report and free indirect perception, as is done in the quoted passage, effects, as Dorrit Cohn has observed, that “there is no clear borderline between the external and the internal scene [...] and psycho-narration can then no longer be clearly differentiated from scenic description,” which results in a “dovetailing between the inner and outer realms of fictional reality” (49; see also Palmer 79-80). The narration thus “present[s] a consciousness as fully as possible while conveying the surroundings within which it is placed” (Palmer 80). In addition to these effects that contribute to the creation of fictional consciousnesses and their positioning in a story world, the narrative technique of linking the “inner and outer realms of fictional reality” puts into practice the general understanding that thoughts and memories are brought to bear on the perception of spaces during the cognitive process, which Wolfgang Hallet (90), Birgit Neumann (Hallet and Neumann 25), and Natascha Würzbach (193-213) all point out. Furthermore, the linking of fictional consciousnesses, which are conditioned by their memories, to their surroundings reflect the geographers Mike Crang and Penny Travlou’s assertion that “[m]emories are organised and called up by attention to the present and future” (168), or, as McCarthy puts it the other way around in an essay, “space and matter inscrib[e] themselves on consciousness, whose task, reciprocally, is to accommodate space and matter” (“Geometry” 173). The linking, then, allows the implementation in a narrative of Gilles Deleuze’s observation that “perception and recollection, the real and the imaginary, the physical and the mental [...] continually follow[...] each other, running behind each other and referring back to each other around a point of indiscernibility” (69): “[d]istinct, but indiscernible, such are the actual and the virtual which are in constant exchange” (70).

An analysis of the initial introduction into the narrative of the memory that the thought report in the quoted passage refers to is worthwhile to undertake at this point, as it offers further insights into how the processes of the evocation of memories and the perception of spaces are interrelated. The innate evocative power of spaces was already recognized and utilized in Roman mnemotechnics, which structured memory into “images and places (*imagines et loci*), with images being

used for the affective imprinting of particular forms of knowledge, and places for their order and their recoverability” (Assmann 282). It is this effect of places that is utilized in the narration of *MiS* in the introduction of the memory of the birds taking off from under the bridge, as it is first referred to as already being a memory: it is embedded into the narrative by being brought to the painter’s mind when he crosses the same bridge and is reminded of what happened “[t]wo, three nights ago, walking across this bridge” (*MiS* 45). This compositional technique of making the embedding of background information plausible at that point in the narration on the basis of the current spatial frame—in this case the bridge—being identical to the space where what is remembered has happened makes use of the same strategy of “focus[ing] on space and filter[ing] out the dimension of time” that Assmann contributes to mnemotechnics (17). The identity of the places brings back what has already happened to the mind of the one who remembers, as if it was happening and perceived at the present, thus seemingly erasing the time that has passed since when the remembered events took place.

Since such flashbacks are intuitively and out of personal experience known to the reader, they have the effect of making the characters more real, more believable, while enabling the author to develop the characters as consciousnesses and at the same time to introduce embedded narratives, which Marie-Laure Ryan defines as “any story-like representation produced in the mind of a character and reproduced in the mind of the reader” (“Tellability” 320, see also “structure” 108), without breaking the illusory effect and the cohesion of the narration. The utilization of the understanding that the perception of spaces evokes and in turn is conditioned by memories thus achieves the same effect of developing the story world. This is because embedded narratives are understood to do so by “bring[ing] a universe to life and convey[ing] to the reader the sense that at the center of this universe there resides an actual or real world, [...] [which] is understood by the reader to be inhabited by intelligent beings who produce a variety of mental representations” (Palmer 188). These subjective mental representations of spaces that blend memories with optical impulses necessarily amount to a resignification in the process of perception. When the painter is reminded of a bridge in Prague as he is painting the icon his concept of the painted space at that instant includes the bridge, although the painting actually depicts no bridge.

Returning to the painting process, the fusion of the painted space with the story

space reaches its climax on the story level when the painter alters his own appearance, functioning, in the vein of a self-portrait, himself as a model for the figure of the saint. By making himself resemble the painted figure he adds to the compositional similarity between the space that he paints in and that of the icon. This similarity is based on both containing a floating or hanging figure under the sky and on the marked resemblance between the occupants of these spaces: the painter puts on “a sheet himself to get a *real* sense of how the body’s articulation points define folds and creases” (*MiS* 123, emphasis in original) and imitates the saint’s hairstyle (125). The following sentence emphasizes the canceling out of the border between the ontologically different spaces by reporting that “[t]o think that his corrupt flesh should be invading this image of piety makes him first laugh, then shiver” (123). This suggests an ability of the painter to traverse between the atelier and the landscape shown in the icon. The invasion is not one-directional though, as the painted space penetrates the painter’s mind to such an extent that even “his dreams consist entirely of saints, mirrors and mountains, of pools of colour flooding gessoed landscapes” (124) and when he is awake and someone is talking to him “he zones out, loses himself in the contours of the two identical landscapes he’s creating, their brown-white mountains and blue seas” (125). The transgressions, however, occur only on the discourse level, in reporting the painter’s thoughts and dreams. On the story level the painter’s actions amount merely to a playing down—as much as realistically possible—of the boundary between the ontologically different spaces. This way the narration does not abandon a realistic approach to perception.

This does not change when the boundary-defying effects of the painter’s transformation are presented as still being confined to his consciousness:

It gets so that he can *feel* the saint’s way from the original on to the two new boards, channel the multiplication not just through his hands but through his entire body. His mind too: he lets his eyes glaze over so that the atelier’s reflection blurs, and pictures himself floating in the sky over an ocean, up above a mountain streaked with white, the world and its dark windows and its people and the lower areas of sky draining away from him like egg white through fingers as his own yolk is pinched upwards, elongating, waiting for the final, divine prick that will release it from its skin to let it mix with purified liquid, with the pigments that lie behind sky, earth, people, everything... (125-6)

The painter’s appearance is altered so that it matches, as closely as possible, that of the icon’s saint thus replicating, in a space with a holy figure suspended in mid-air below the sky, an image of a figure suspended in the sky. His semblance to the saint

and that of his surroundings to the composition of the ascension puts the character into a trance-like state of mind, in which his immediate surroundings—the spatial frame of the atelier—“blurs,” and, in Cohn’s terms, the “inner realm of fictional reality” (49) comes into focus. The space of this inner reality is vast and extends over physical boundaries in the story world, jumping from the atelier in Prague to “the sky over an ocean,” and, through an ecstatic transformation of the experiencer, ultimately encompasses “everything.”

In addition to including the whole story world, the scene in the fictional mind includes among its referents the ontologically different space of the painting, because in the context of Ivan being lost in the copying of the icon, “the sky over an ocean” and the “mountain streaked with white,” above which he imagines himself floating, bring to mind the topography of the icon that is described to include just these elements: it “*show[s] a human figure floating above a sea, beside a mountain*” (*MiS* 120, italics in original). Ultimately, the quoted thought report confirms the notion that consciousnesses’ thoughts and memories influence their perception of spaces, during which the culturally determined coding of spaces can be recoded, resignified, as Paul Bouissac (18), Wolfgang Hallet (83, 85-6, 90) and Brigit Neumann (Hallet and Neumann 11, 25, 27), and Natascha Würzbach (204) have underlined. In this case the resignification leads to the perceived space, the spatial frame of the atelier losing its significance for the fictional consciousness.

This transgression of boundaries in the character’s mind, which, it is important to stress once more, stays there and thus does not lead to a transgression of ontological borders neither on the story nor on the discourse level, justifies an extension of the following description of the space of icons to include the quoted inner scene: “They conceive space metaphorically, as a series of levels leading into the world of the spirit. They narrate transcendence” (*MiS* 110). Thus when his atelier fades before his eyes, the painter effectually enters in his imagination the space of the painting. Because this happens only in the character’s mind, there occurs no metalepsis in Gérard Genette’s sense since there comes about no actual “intrusion [...] by the diegetic characters into a metadiegetic universe” (234-35). Werner Wolf’s more inclusive definition that allows not only for “transgression” but also for “*confusion between, (onto)logically distinct (sub)worlds*” (“Metalepsis” 91, italicization in original) comes closer to describing the passage from *MiS* but an even more precise framework is offered in Erwin Feyersinger’s application of “[Gilles] Fauconnier and

[Mark] Turner's theory [...] [of] conceptual blending [that] is a powerful mental operation that human beings use to combine differing concepts located in various mental spaces" to the concept of metalepsis in narratology (174, cf. Fauconnier and Turner). The most relevant to the blending in the painter's mind of the painted space and the spatial frame of his atelier is Feyersinger's point of departure and summary of the mental operation of conceptual blending, before he explicates the theory to accommodate for the transgression that in this case is not fitting but is vital to metalepsis:

Our species is able to establish *counterpart connections* between the elements and structures in these mental *input spaces* and able to *selectively project* to another mental space, the *blended space*, where these elements are integrated. The connections and projections are governed by several kinds of *vital relations* between the input spaces and their subsequent *compression* in the blended space. Counterpart connections and blends also conform to a *generic space*, which contains shared abstract concepts. In the blended space, we will find *emergent meaning*, meaning that is not present in the input spaces. In the *integration networks*, all spaces are active and accessible all of the time, and the major goal of all these operations is to achieve *human scale* in order to understand, learn, and to be creative. (174, italics in original)

Connecting and understanding the passages as a narration of the fictional consciousness's conceptual blending, then, allows for a more specific analysis of the imagined space: the painter connects in his mind, this way producing a blended space, the input spaces of the painted space of the icon and the space that surrounds him. As he is copying the saint's hair "the atelier's reflection blurs, and pictures himself floating in the sky over an ocean, up above a mountain" (MiS 125) so that his immediate surroundings, his atelier, do not feature in the blended space that is dominated by the input space of the painted space that is elsewhere described to feature the same topographical elements of a sea and mountain (120). Later when he "is putting the bird figures on the side of the mountain" it could be argued that he enters the same blended space, which is then connected to two additional input spaces, one being a space in Prague because he is "thinking of the seagulls under Palackého Most [...] [being] the moment as they take off [...] suspended" and—reading the next sentence as free indirect perception—is reminded, on the basis of the vital relation of being suspended in mid-air, of the suspended statue in his atelier, of "[h]is angel [that] hangs behind him" (126). The emergent meaning in the blended space, however, is not communicated; it is left, just as the figure of the saint and the angel-sculpture, hanging in the air as the paragraph that describes the

blended space ends with an ellipsis so that a concretization of its meaning is markedly avoided (126). The painter alters his appearance “to get a *real* sense” (123, italics in original) of the figure so that the goal of the blending remains “to understand, learn, and,” as the understanding is required to aid the copying that is here represented as a creative act, “to be creative” (cf. Feyersinger 174).

The connection between the input space of the painted space and of the atelier, connected by the painter’s body that is made to look as close as possible to that of the painted saint is implied once more by a description of the studio. When the copying process is completed the painter is reported to look at a reflection of him surrounded by the original and copied icons in a mirror. The description of the reflection in the mirror places the painter’s body on the same ontological level as the paintings because it refers to both it and the icons as images: it is reported that the painter “doesn’t want to take his eyes off the three images [the icon and the two copies just finished by the painter] - four if you count the mirror in which he’s framed, standing, wrapped in a sheet stained the same crimson as the saint’s robe, with his grooved, waxed hair, his gaping mouth” (*MiS* 128). The overflowing of ontologically different spaces into each other in the perception of a mirror image that the passage implies brings to mind Deleuze’s description of how the mirror exemplifies the “continual exchange” between the virtual and the real in cognition (70). His observation that “when virtual images proliferate,” as the three paintings and the image in the mirror in *MiS*, “all together they absorb the entire actuality of the character, at the same time as the character is no more than one virtuality among others” is applicable to the passage in which the character is referred to as another figure in an image in the mirror (Deleuze 70). Michel Foucault’s interpretation of the mirror as a heterotopia stresses the same exchange between the virtual and the real that Deleuze describes and the passage in *MiS* suggests. He points out that the mirror “makes this place that I occupy at the moment when I look at myself in the glass at once absolutely real, connected with all the space that surrounds it, and absolutely unreal, since in order to be perceived it has to pass through this virtual point which is over there” (Foucault 24).

The painter entering in his mind the painted space implies that the character is completely absorbed in the copying of the image so that the creative process defines his being for the moment and does not leave any room for conscious actions: his feelings that are described present him as functioning as a medium. His rights to

being the ultimate creator of a work of art, as already problematized by him making copies—although an icon is already “the copy of another icon” and according to the semi-fictional avant-garde society, the International Necronautical Society (in the following INS), of which McCarthy is a founding member and the general secretary, “[a]rt is not about originality, but about the repetition of the copy” (McCarthy and Critchley et al. 223; cf. Barthes’s same idea specifically for literature as qtd. in McCarthy “Get Real” 63)—, are thus similarly ceded to Roland Barthes’s author (Barthes 142-3). As spatial concepts play a major role in the narration of the painter’s losing himself in his work, it is a further connection to Barthes’s notion of authorship that he defines writing as “that neutral, composite, oblique space where our subject slips away, the negative where all identity is lost, starting with the very identity of the body writing” (142). During the copying of the icon in the novel, which can be read as another creative process that produces works of art, as writing, it is not only the creative act itself that is a “space where our subject slips away,” but the space where the act takes place aids the act of “slipping away.” In other words, the adjustment of the space to correspond more closely to that of the painting that is to be copied contributes to the emergence of a space where the artist’s subject can fade away by him “stepping into the right rhythm and inhabiting it, letting it move you” (*MiS* 127). The painter becoming more like the saint in the icon through the alteration of his appearance aids him in being able to “slip away,” which corresponds to what the saint appears to be doing in the course of his ascension, according to a description of his golden halo: “*it was like a hole into which he was disappearing head first*” (121, italics in original).

The narration—explicitly or implicitly—referring to similarities in the composition of the spatial frame—meaning the painter’s apartment—and the painted space of the icon that is embedded into the narrative shows that the first is composed and constructed by the author just as the latter is on the discourse level. This is because thus the reader is reminded of the workings of the author’s mind, which is responsible for introducing into the narrative these associations or, at any rate, selecting and including elements that can be brought into connection with each other. The introduction of other instances of thought reports describing the connection of spatial frames with elements of the painted space in characters’ fictional consciousnesses during the process of the perception of spaces strengthens the reader’s awareness of the fictionality of the narrative. For instance, the inclusion

of the painted saint's halo as a remembered element into the Dutch gallerist's correspondence, detailing his impressions of a white, snow-covered coastal landscape, strengthen the cohesive role of the icon that it fulfills as the object around which the plot revolves: the view to the sea is described in the letter as

otherworldly, shapes and movement all becoming abstract as they open out to white infinity. The land segues seamlessly into the sea, the sea into the sky, which is white too. I've just spent the best part of two hours sitting on a bench looking for a hinge: a line to the horizon, some kind of limit. But I couldn't find one. There's just space, and then it kind of disappears into itself. I keep thinking of the ellipse into which Maňásek's saint gravitated - anti-gravitated, rather. (216, italics in original)

The ellipse returns once more at the end of the letter that Joost signs by replacing the two "o"s in his name with an elliptical shape: "J \bigcirc st" (217). While on the one hand the recurring reference to elements of the painted space stresses the fictionality of the text, on the other the establishment of links between "the remembered past [...] [and] interpretations of the present"² (Assmann 73) is a phenomenon that readers have personal experience with and the inclusion of which into the fiction thus strengthens its illusory effect. In other words, the recurrence of such elements in the thoughts of characters while perceiving various spaces that contain relatable elements is based on legitimate cognitive processes. At the same time, it strengthens the cohesion of the text, as it resignifies otherwise irrelevant spatial details by endowing them with relevance in the "configurational arrangement," whereby Nünning—relating Paul Ricoeur's original concept on time to narrative space—means the reader's assembling of spatial elements that are presented throughout a narrative "into a coherent fictional spatial model" (42, my translation). This way these otherwise irrelevant spatial details can be related to more central elements of the plot: the horizonless coastal scene, the space of which "*kind of disappears into itself*" brings to the reader's—and arguably to the perceiving character's—mind the saint's ellipse, into which he is described to be seemingly disappearing as well, and, by extension, the icon painting, which features prominently in the plot. Simultaneously, however, a side-effect of this resignification's cohesive effect is that it draws attention to how the story is fabricated by the author by prompting the readers' minds to

² Albeit the distance in time between the perception of the scene and its interpretation and narration in the letter is ignored when the description in the letter is taken to represent the perception, links are still established between the past and the present the same way—with the recollection during the writing process making the remembering more deliberate and pronounced.

return to central plot elements and thus reminding them that there is a constructed plot with elements around which it is consciously organized. Defining the structure of the plot is thus not, in Lotman's terms, "the crossing of [...] [a] border" (*Structure* 238, see also "metalanguage" 111) or "frontier" ("Origin" 167) on the story level but the canceling out on the discourse level of borders between ontologically different input spaces by narrating the blended spaces created in the perceiving fictional consciousnesses. This is used to periodically reintroduce to the plot central elements as recurring input spaces, which enables the connection in the resulting mental blended spaces of initially unrelated spaces to such spaces that are relevant to the plot.

The effects of emphasizing the made-ness of the narrative by strengthening its cohesion and at the same time realistically portraying the perception of spaces is preserved in the case of fictional consciousnesses' interpretations of spatial frames by referring to—and thus evoking in the reader's mind—simultaneously elements of the painted space and of the embedded story about the cosmonaut. When one of the main characters, Nick, is passing by a dance school on the street in Amsterdam and looks in through the windows, the dancers' practicing reminds him of "astronauts space-walking - with the mirror, six rows of astronauts and two elderly mission commanders [...], advancing from both sides towards the black hole of the mirror's surface, the flatness into which, eventually, they'll all be swallowed up and disappear" (*MiS* 232-233). The link to the story within the story is established through the character's interpretation of the scene by referring to the dancers as "astronauts space-walking." Nick's association of the dancer's practicing in front of mirrors with them being "swallowed up and disappear[ing]" into the reflective surface echoes the painted saint's "*disappearing head first*" (121) into his halo. This way, on the basis of not being affected by gravity when "space-walking," a relation is established between the story about the cosmonaut to the icon painting through the interpretation of the saint's ascension as "*anti-gravitat[ing]*" (216). The blending and resignifying of the objectively unrelated scene—the in a studio in front of mirrors practicing dancers—through the subjective perception of the fictional consciousness, which is conditioned by memories, to previous scenes enhances the cohesion of the text. This happens by reintroducing through the character's memories central motifs of the narrative into the process of the perception of spaces. At the same time, the blending utilizing known spatial elements as input spaces captures the relevance of

memories in the process of perception.

The narration thus successfully conveys the blending of ontologically different and/or remembered spaces with currently occupied and perceived spaces, which happens during the process of perception in the perceiving characters' minds, and simultaneously utilizes it for the organization of the plot around key spatial elements.

Video killed the real

The blending of the ontologically different spaces of the cosmonaut-story, of the icon painting, and of Prague is most directly represented on the story level in a video that is played in a disco. The video is a further example of a projection of various ontologically different spaces onto a spatial frame—the club—and onto the setting of Prague. In this case, however, the projection is not a mental one that constitutes a blended space in a fictional consciousness but an actual video projection. The video, which mixes images from the story within the story and the icon with depictions of Prague's landmarks, is projected onto the dancers and onto the walls of the dance floor. The narration stresses the intermediality that is inherently involved in such a complex scene that combines the ontologically different spaces of the disco and the ones shown in the video, which itself combines spaces 'really' existing in Prague with such that recall the story about the cosmonaut and the icon showing the saint's ascension:

The images Roger's been gathering and mixing over the last two weeks are being fired up at them [at dancers wearing spacesuits] from a U-shaped flight panel of dials and knobs and screens [...]. Trams and metro carriages ride vertically over the performers, shuttling up an enormous screen above them before flattening across the ceiling. Sometimes the stage and screen become a grid; then the grid becomes a map of Prague; then it's back to trams and metro carriages again. The sequence fades out, giving over to old footage of a huge scaffold-mounted rocket's engines firing up just seconds prior to lift off. Roger alternates this picture with an image of the Žižkov television tower beneath which Mladen and Nick Boardaman once shared a flat, and another image showing one of Ivan Maňásek's sketches of the saint in that icon painting he was copying, suspended in the sky amid a web of intersecting lines. Across all these images the words LIFT OFF are flashing. On the main dance floor swathes of young Czechs are holding their arms up. Their index fingers cast small silhouettes onto the screen: hundreds of shadow-fingers pointing upwards, urging the rocket, the sketched saint, the city, the whole country up towards the stratosphere, beyond, out into orbit... (*MiS* 128-129)

The transgression of borders between various distinct types of media that is intrinsic to intermediality (cf. Wolf "Intermedialität" 167) is stressed in the quoted passage by

the description of the space of the dance floor in such a way that spatial elements or inhabitants of the space in the disco are not explicitly distinguished from the spaces and objects projected onto them. The implicit intermedial reference that “[t]rams and metro carriages ride vertically over the performers” does not make it explicit that these are only projected images and that “over” refers to the previous explicit intermedial, or, more specifically, as it refers to the projection technique characteristic of the entire cinematic medium, system reference (cf. Wolf “Intermediality” 254) of the narrator telling the reader that they are being *projected* on the dancers, “fired up at them.” It is thus the context and the unlikelihood of trams and metro carriages passing through the indoor space of a disco that imply that these incongruous elements have to be part of the sequence of images that are being projected on the dancers. Similarly, the expression that “the stage and screen become a grid” implies by the verb phrase putting the spatial elements of the club as subjects that it is these parts of the dance hall that themselves undergo a change and it is only the context—and the unlikelihood of inanimate spatial elements changing of their own accord—that makes it clear that this change is brought about by different images being projected over them. The last sentence of the quoted passage aids the expression of the blurring of boundaries between what is—on the story level presented as—real, meaning present in the space of the dancehall, and what is a projected image because the fingers of the dancers are referred to as projections, as “shadow-fingers,” as well. The shadows of the dancers’ held up hands and fingers that are cast onto the screen, onto which the images are also projected, can on this shared surface interact with the projections so that the shadows can be “urging the rocket, the sketched saint, the city, the whole country up towards the stratosphere.”

These instances of bringing in the description projected elements that preside on a different ontological level into contact with the spatial frame—the disco—and with the characters present in it make them appear as real as the scene in the club. This, however, as when the painted space became so “real” for the painter that he could not perceive his surroundings simultaneously, comes at the price of what is presented as real on the story level losing its significance, its—fictional—reality. The dual effect of the discourse heightening the illusory effect of embedded elements at the cost of the illusory effect of what they are embedded into is reminiscent of Jean Baudrillard’s understanding of *trompe l’oeil* as “hypersimulation” (“Seduction” 156). He points out that “nature is not represented in the *trompe-l’oeil*. [...] Everything

here is artefact. A vertical backdrop creates, out of pure signs, objects isolated from their referential context” (155). In *MiS* the narration presents in the quoted passage the stage and the screen, the surfaces onto which the images are projected, as a “backdrop” in Baudrillard’s sense, on which the projected elements and the revelers’ shadows can, “isolated from their [...] context,” be put into a new context so that they can interact with each other: on the plane where the projected images and the projected shadows meet the “shadow-fingers” can be “urging the rocket, the sketched saint, the city, the whole country up towards the stratosphere, beyond, out into orbit” (*MiS* 129). The reality-defying effect that Baudrillard attributes to the trompe l’oeil, which “produces a simulacrum by mimicking the third dimension, questioning the reality of the third dimension, and by mimicking and surpassing the effect of the real, radically questioning the principle of reality” (Baudrillard “Seduction” 156), thus paves the way for the appearance of the new reality that emerges on the discourse level.

The video that connects Prague with the cosmonaut and the saint makes explicit that the “governing aesthetic metaphor for medial and political ontology in the space of the post-Soviet void is,” as Justus Nieland observes, “assemblage” by bringing together the key elements through which “*Men in Space* [...] explores the Cold War’s end in a form of post-totalitarian, democratic drift [...] [in the] condition of suspension [that] is figured in the novel’s stranded cosmonaut, bereft of a state to recognize him; in the non-transcendent flight path of its central, forged painting; and in the novel’s fragmented collection of émigrés, exiles, and expats” (575). This assemblage, the pronounced blending of various input spaces, results in a resignification and a downplaying of the prominence in the narration of the perceived measurable, Euclidean—or objective—, spaces, in favor of the mental blended spaces.

Remainder

The plot of *Remainder* is driven by spaces, as it centers on its protagonist's staging of elaborate reenactments the spatial component of which he is just as specific about as the actions that are to be carried out in them. Furthermore, the very idea of the reenactments is evoked by a space, as well. The following chapters focus on how the connection between spaces, memory, and authenticity is represented as the idea of the reenactments is born, and then during them, and how the relationship between spaces and actions performed in them, which can potentially lead to resignifications, is investigated by the main character throughout the reenactments.

Ground zero

The spaces of the reenactments in *Remainder* are characterized by an application of codes representing authenticity to the imaginary, instead of to—what is represented as—the real, because these are constructed copies of spaces that take the place of originals as spaces in which reality can emerge. In his endeavor to reconnect with the world after the trauma of an accident, the anonymous protagonist creates spaces based on his actual or imagined memories and immerses himself in them. He thus “locate[s],” as Daniel Lea points out, “the authentic [...] primarily as a spatial paradigm” (465) when he tries to “reconnect with the object world as if it contains an immanence of remembered attachment” (470), which suggests that for him “the coincidence with self can only be articulated through the confluence of material and immaterial realms” (465). He strives, as Joakim Wrethed observes, for “an accurate match between the memory and the representation [...] [; however,] [i]f he desires the actual memory or the actual past, he cannot know exactly what he desires. Thus the desire partly shifts towards the representation. He clearly covets being *inside* the re-enactment” (n.p.). The protagonist strives for authenticity in the process of desperately trying to make inaccessible imagined spaces accessible through the reenactments, which are inherently inauthentic, and which for him, however, become authentic. This amounts to the story space, “the space relevant to the plot, as mapped by the actions and thoughts of characters [...] [,] consist[ing] of all the spatial frames plus all the locations mentioned by the text that are not the scene of actually occurring events” (Ryan “Space” n.p., ch. 2.1 (c)), where the narrator is still

connected to his actions in a way as he remembers to have been before the accident, overflowing into spatial frames, “the immediate surroundings of actual events” (Ryan “Space” n.p., ch. 2.1 (a)).

After his accident that “had blown” a “crater” into his memories (*Remainder* 3) and had damaged “the part of my brain that controls the motor functions of the right side of my body” (17), the protagonist has had to relearn controlling his body. This results in him having “to think about each movement I made, had to understand it. No Doing without Understanding: the accident bequeathed me that for ever, an eternal detour” (20). It is this “detour” that makes him feel disconnected from the world—not from the world as an abstract concept but from the perceivable world manifested in the spaces that he inhabits. As Lea puts it, “[t]he concomitance of materiality and experience of self here situates the authentic as a phenomenological quintessence, a compacting of the space between self and thing” (465).

Specific sites, which host or are rebuilt to host reenactments, represent the general concept of the world that the protagonist wants to feel connected to through the performance of fluid actions in space. In addition, they are relevant to overcoming another damage caused by the accident, namely the partial memory loss, through their evocative powers that facilitate the surfacing of—possibly merely imagined—memories (cf. Lea 470). The evocative power of spaces is activated for the narration when the sight of a specific house in the protagonist’s neighborhood brings back to him memories of its history, and, more importantly, motivates him to think “about that memory of just before the accident, being buffeted by wind” (*Remainder* 9). Here the perception of empirical spaces through the episodic memory system, which, as the cognitive neuroscientist Endel Tulving says, “enables individuals [...] to remember experienced events as embedded in a matrix of other personal happenings in subjective time” (841) and which is “a catalyst for the acquisition of knowledge of the world [...] through its capability of encoding and storing information about similar events at different times” (842), is made fruitful for the narrative by utilizing an element of the narrative space, the house, to prompt the inclusion of background information on the protagonist in the form of the evoked memory. The narration thus puts into use the effect of the episodic memory system on perceiving consciousnesses, which Paul Bouissac summarizes as “landmarks [...] [being for them] loaded with meaning in as much as they are associated with past events which are constitutive of an individual’s subjective life narrative” (20). Space, then,

becomes for the perceiving, in this case fictional, consciousness a “theatre of memory,” the workings of which the geographers Mike Crang and Penny Travlou define as “seeing space as a receptacle for discontinuous [sic] and equivalent pockets of time” (164). The narration accounts for the house being “loaded with meaning” (Bouissac 20) for the protagonist’s consciousness by detailing its effect on him: it

sent a tingling from the top of my legs to my shoulders and right up into my neck. It lasted for just a moment - but while it did I felt not-neutral. I felt different, intense: both intense and serene at the same time. I remember feeling this way very well: standing there, passive, with my palms turned outwards, feeling intense and serene. (*Remainder* 9)

It is this feeling of serenity, not having to actively think about all the different steps that each action consists of, that he wants to achieve. The memories evoked by the spatial element of the house thus introduce the notion of being able to induce specific feelings through the perception of specific spaces that the re-enactments are a conscious and goal-oriented implementation of.

Carrying out actions in a seemingly authentic way in specific spaces is introduced into the narrative and brought to the attention of the protagonist by watching the movie *Mean Streets* starring Robert De Niro: “Every move he made, each gesture was perfect, seamless. Whether it was lighting up a cigarette or opening a fridge door or just walking down the street: he seemed to execute the action perfectly, to live it, to merge with it until he was it and it was him and there was nothing in between” (21). The protagonist reasons that the perfectness of the actor’s moves is a result of him not having “to think about them, or understand them first. He doesn’t have to think about them because he and they are one. Perfect. Real. My movements are all fake. Second-hand” (21). He talks about this with a friend that he watched the film with and the friend’s contributions to the discussion emphasize the unusualness of the protagonist’s impressions that take a perfectly executed and perfectly filmed sequence for real and, as the devaluation of his own movements as fake suggests, authentic, without considering the conscious effort and thinking, on part of the actor and the whole film crew, that resulted in the creation of the inauthentic scene in a calculated way that makes it seem authentic (cf. Huber and Seita 262). For him, acting and interacting with the film set is resignified as more authentic than just being on the basis of the film projecting a more unified picture of movements and their executors. Nieland has connected this to the observation that cinema communicates “the experience of presence, but it is the disjunctiveness of a presence

relived, of presence haunted by historicity” (Doane 23, qtd. Nieland 587) by specifying the protagonist’s experience as being “unable to access the space of self-presence prior to his traumatic encounter with gravity and fallen things—a space of authenticity embodied, for him, by the seamless movements of Robert De Niro’s celluloid body in *Mean Streets* (1973)” (587). A similar alteration of one’s worldview by trauma expressed through a filmic analogy is exhibited in the passage by Andy Warhol that McCarthy quotes in the INS’s “Joint Statement on Inauthenticity:” “Before I was shot, I always thought I was more half-there than all-there—I always suspected that I was watching TV instead of living life. [...] Right when I was being shot and ever since, I knew that I was watching television” (qtd. in McCarthy and Critchley et al. 232). Ultimately, as McCarthy points out in connection with the relationship between the dancer and the dance for Yeats, the quest to merge “the experience of [...] doing it and the act” is, however, doomed to failure because not wanting “any cognitive gap” between experience and act while at the same time wanting “the awareness of the disappearance of the gap” is “an irreducible paradox” (McCarthy and Critchley et al. 107).

The main character’s impressions about the authenticity of the actor are relevant to the discussion at hand because they mark the beginning of the transference of the symbolic values of realness and authenticity from the spaces that surround the protagonist after his accident to the remembered or imagined spaces that he then (re)creates. The protagonist thus experiences a comparable disruption in his perceived connection to, or rootedness in, the spaces that he inhabits to what the anthropologists Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson have found to be a result of a different type of disruption than brain trauma, of “transnational culture flows” (38). During these, as “actual places and localities become ever more blurred and indeterminate, *ideas* of culturally and ethnically distinct places become perhaps even more salient” for “displaced peoples [who] cluster around remembered or imagined homelands, places, or communities” (Gupta and Ferguson 39, italics in original; see Anderson, esp. 6-7, on *Imagined Communities*). The protagonist in *Remainder*, whose connection to the space surrounding him is severed not by displacement but by brain trauma, similarly retreats into the controlled environment of the (re)built remembered or imagined space of the first reenactment.

McCarthy connects how in *Don Quixote* “the noble knight [...] in order to experience the presence of his present moment he has to detour it, wire it via its

imaginary future mediation” (“Something” 52; cf. Q & A n.p., Answer 11) to *Remainder* by concluding that “then it’s a very strange temporality and he does this in order to be authentic, but he’s radically inauthentic at that point,” and by adding that “I was thinking about that a lot when I wrote *Remainder*” (“Something” 53). In *Remainder*, however, the detour that ironically is needed to “cut out the detour” (*Remainder* 62) is oriented toward a remembered or imagined past instead of the future and the place of mediation is taken by the reenactments that have a pronounced spatial component in that they make use of space “as a springboard or matrix for events” (McCarthy “interview” 664) to emerge a certain way.

The evocative force of spatial elements, which the narration utilizes for the emergence in the character’s mind of the memory of feeling serene right before the accident by the sight of a nearby house, returns as a plot-driving factor as the idea of the reenactments is born: the memories of the spaces that the protagonist wants to recreate in order to reproduce a certain feeling that he remembers having felt like when inhabiting those specific places is evoked by a space as well. It is a composition of spatial elements, specifically a crack that is shaped a certain way at a certain spot in a wall in the bathroom of an acquaintance’s flat, which he visits on the occasion of a house-warming party, that triggers in the protagonist’s mind the image of himself inhabiting a specific flat in a specific apartment complex with a similar bathroom and having felt a specific way:

inside this building, in the rooms and on the staircase, in the lobby and the large courtyard between it and the building facing with the red roofs with black cats on them - [...] in these spaces, all my movements had been fluent and unforced. Not awkward, acquired, secondhand, but natural. [...] They’d been *real*; I’d been real - been without first understanding how to try to be: cut out the detour. [...]

Right then I knew exactly what I wanted to do with my money. I wanted to reconstruct that space and enter it so that I could feel real again. (*Remainder* 62)

Thus the first reenactment utilizes, as Vincenzo Maggitti points out, a building, which, as a concept, is itself an archetypal model of classical mnemotechnics (56), for the evocation of memories and inducing a certain way of feeling in the main character. The protagonist’s recall, however, is compromised by the accident and thus there are elements of the remembered building that is to be rebuilt that he cannot remember. During the reenactment these are simply left blank: reenactors playing characters whose features he cannot remember—or imagine remembering—

wear blank hockey masks (*Remainder* 128) and architectural elements that he does not remember are left blank as well so that “doorways [are] papered and cemented over, strips of wall left bare and so on,” resulting in “[n]eutral space” (113). This stresses what Sabine Buchholz and Manfred Jahn call “the perspectival aspect of space” and which is, as they add, already pronounced in narratives in general (552) because the main character’s physical point of view and interests in this case not only influence what is mentioned in the description of a space but determine the space on the story level, its physical characteristics that are to be narrated on the discourse level, as well. The spaces of the first reenactment are meticulously (re)created to match the space that the narrator has in his mind so that it follows that those aspects will be (re)created with most care that he remembers—or imagines—and then specifically requests to be (re)created: the crack in the wall and the smell of liver are not objectively salient features of the conceptual frame (for a definition see p. 60) associated with the space ‘apartment in an apartment house’ but become such because of their subjective importance to the narrator, who has the means to be in absolute control of the reenactments. This supports Irmtraud Huber and Sophie Seita’s postulation that “[t]he authenticity of the re-enactment lies no longer in the accuracy of an original’s reproduction, but rather in the simulation of authenticity: in the meticulousness of the re-enactment’s execution, in its performative stance, creating the real to which it only pretends to refer” (265).

The remainder of a spatial memory from before the accident becomes a reminder for how the protagonist had felt before the accident added a detour to his interactions with his surroundings and thus separated him from the spaces that he inhabits. The emergence of the memory of not having felt the detour motivates him to spend the settlement money that he got after the accident on rebuilding a space in which he remembers—or imagines—having felt that way to induce the same feeling by entering that space again. As Lea put it, “[t]he concomitance of materiality and experience of self here situates the authentic as a phenomenological quintessence, a compacting of the space between self and thing [...] [so that the] authentic is [represented as] a consummation of external naturalness with a form of internal perceptive flow that transcends the need for contemplation by accessing a state of pure being” (465). Space plays a similarly prominent role in Huber and Seita’s reading that “[a]uthenticity is here entirely detached from content, it is pure form and, as such, purely aesthetic” (266) because, since form is manifested in space,

authenticity becomes here a spatial quality.

Touring the detour

The sociologist Paul Pennartz states in the context of site-specific art installations that “[b]eing able to attach meaning [to an environment] is basic to people’s appropriation of space” (115). When in *Remainder* the protagonist connects the sensation of how he felt before the accident with a space that he remembers having at a certain point inhabited, he attaches subjective meaning to that space and this sets him on the path to reconstruct and thus to appropriate it, whereby this space becomes “constitutive of an individual’s,” in this case the protagonist’s, “subjective life narrative” (Bouissac 20). As the sight of the crack in the wall evokes the memory of the apartment complex in the protagonist’s mind and then leads him to conceive of the possibility of the recreation of the remembered spaces, the spatial element stimulates his imagination.

Imagination plays an important role in perceivers’ interactions with their surroundings because, as Karin Wenz and Friedrich Block put it in the context of media culture, it “transforms the perception of realities into possibilities” (118). “In *Remainder*,” as McCarthy says in an interview, “the narrator continually constructs space not as an expression of London but as an almost Platonic idea of what space might be, and as a springboard or matrix for events—or even, maybe, *the event*” (“interview” 664, emphasis in original). The activation of space as a “matrix for events” implies that it is utilized in the narrative as a plot-driving force but, to account for the foregrounded phenomenological effects of space on the protagonist, to “events” should be added feelings for which space becomes a matrix. Such an understanding of space brings to mind Guy Debord’s definition of the interests of psychogeography in the “effects of the geographical environment, consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behavior of individuals” (8), with the focus being in *Remainder* on the effects on the main character of the consciously organized spaces of the reenactments.

The prominence of the phenomenological aspect of space is illustrated by the logic that the first reenactment follows. In preparation for it a space is rebuilt in order to induce in the protagonist when he enters that space the same feeling as he remembers or imagines having felt there before—ignoring any difference in the evocative power of the original and rebuilt spaces. During the reenactment the

following free indirect perception fittingly emphasizes that space is “a springboard” for the protagonist’s feelings when it lends impetus to specific events:

Moving across the landing and down the staircase I felt like an astronaut taking his first steps - humanity’s first steps - across the surface of a previously untouched planet. I’d walked over this stretch a hundred times before, of course - but it had been different then, just a floor: now it was fired up, silently zinging with significance. (*Remainder* 133)

The space, the landing and staircase in the apartment house, that is the matrix for an interaction with one of the reenactors successfully induces the desired, albeit fleeting feeling because the narrator reports that “[f]or a few seconds I felt weightless - or at least differently weighted: light but dense at the same time. My body seemed to glide fluently and effortlessly through the atmosphere around it - gracefully, slowly, like a dancer through water” (135). The effects of the spaces on the protagonist, who experiences them, are not only in this instance bodily, with the narration focusing on how his body is—instead of his emotions—affected, so that Namwali Serpell’s observation that “[i]n place of novelistic consciousness—thought, reflection, epiphany—the novel takes continual recourse to analogies with bodily experience” is apt (233).

The idea of the (re)creation of specific spaces in the course of (re)enactments is thus introduced and the idea is followed up by action, whereby the imagined or remembered mental spaces become during the re-enactments spatial frames, “the immediate surroundings of actual events” (Ryan “Space” n.p., ch. 2.1 (a)). This shift in their ontology amounts to a combination of a notion of space as a “repository of the authentic [...] [that] provid[es] an ontological groundwork to reassert the primacy of the ‘real’ over the imaginary,” which the sociologist Rob Shields’s reading of Henri Lefebvre introduces (150), with Baudrillard’s understanding of simulation as “the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal” (“Simulacra” 166) so that in *Remainder* space provides a framework for the imaginary to assert its primacy.

The first two reenactments, taking place at the apartment complex that resembles and is altered to match even more closely the imagined or remembered one and at the precisely rebuilt tire shop, respectively, acknowledge and exploit the power of space to change the ontology of the events transplanted into it from the character’s mind by matching the spaces of the reenactments as closely as possible to those where the events that are being reenacted have, or are remembered or imagined to

have happened. In other words, the first two reenactments follow the logic that the higher the congruence of the spaces where reenacted and reenactment take place, the better the space of the reenactment is able to function as a generative field for the same events to occur, which by happening makes them real (again).

The space that the third reenactment takes place at achieves the same goal of it resembling the place where what is being reenacted happened originally at by not merely being made to resemble it but *being* that space. The reenactment of the shooting takes place on the same spot of the same street where the original shooting took place. Here, then, the spatial composition emphasizes the relation between the real and the simulation, which, according to Mike Poster's reading of Baudrillard, "is different from a fiction or lie in that it not only presents an absence as a presence, the imaginary as the real, it also undermines any contrast to the real, absorbing the real within itself" (6). This performance introduces in addition to the spatial overlap of reenacted and reenactment the protagonist's sensation of "a transcendence in space to where living and dead matter coincide" as he immerses himself in the last sequence of movements carried out by the victim before his death (Lea 466):

It may have been clumsy to fall from his bike, but in dying beside the bollards on the tarmac he'd done what I wanted to do: merged with the space around him, sunk and flowed into it until there was no distance between it and him - and merged, too, with his actions, merged to the extent of having no more consciousness of them. He'd stopped being separate, removed, imperfect. Cut out the detour. Then both mind and actions had resolved themselves into pure stasis. The spot that this had happened on was the ground zero of perfection - all perfection [...]. (*Remainder* 184-5)

The understanding of the site of the victim's death as a "ground zero of perfection" that can be inhabited echoes the INS's view of death as "a type of space, which we intend to map, enter, colonize, and, eventually, inhabit" (McCarthy and Critchley et al. 12, 53). The significance of the *actual* spot, which makes "undermin[ing] any contrast to the real" (Poster 6) possible, is, then, why this time the protagonist "doesn't duplicate the location" (McCarthy "interview" 666).

There is a ludic quality to the reenactments because in essence they conform to Sigmund Freud's description of children's actions while playing, which emphasizes the spatial implications of playing. Freud says that the child "creates a world of his own, or, rather, re-arranges the things of his world in a new way [...] and he likes to link his imagined objects and situations to the tangible and visible things of the real world. This linking is all that differentiates the child's 'play' from 'phantasying' [sic]"

("Day-Dreaming" 143-44). An important aspect of this linking of imagined and real for the protagonist is the control that he is thus able to exert on the spaces of the reenactments and on the characters in them, standing in for the real world, during the reenactments. It is because of the generative role of space "as a springboard [...] for events" (McCarthy "interview" 664) in the course of the linking of the imagined to the real that it comes to the forefront on the story level as well. The importance to the protagonist of being able to control his environment after being the victim of an accident is succinctly communicated by Sidney Miller's summary of the story as "the tale of a man who attempts to strip the accidental of its essential stochastic quality by systematically taking control of everyone and everything in his world, until an unintended fall catastrophically subverts a carefully planned trip" (636); or, as Serpell puts it, "*Remainder's* use of repetition thus affords a will to certainty—a desire to see patterns—bestirred by the experiential vibrations of uncertainty" (247).

If the reenactments are interpreted as play, it is then their "simulation of authenticity" (Huber and Seita 265) that enables the protagonist to move in the first reenactment the "re-arrange[ment of] things" (Freud 143-4) from his mind to a place that is both in scale and every possible quality identical to the remembered or imagined apartment complex. The protagonist's commissioning of models of the spaces that are hosting and of the characters that are performing the reenactment emphasizes the ludic effect of the reenactment and lends to it an air of hyperreality in Baudrillard's sense. After the main character is delivered a model of the building and figurines of the reenactors (*Remainder* 151-2), he integrates these into the coordination and choreography of the reenactment in a way that has the same effect of exposing the "*real's hallucinatory resemblance to itself* [...][, its] loop[ing] around itself in pure repetition" that Baudrillard contributes to the hyperreal ("Exchange" 145, italics in original):

"Now," I told Naz, "I'd like the motorbike enthusiast to go sit on the swing closest to him."

[...] The motorbike enthusiast looked up towards my window, then rose to his feet, walked over to the swing and sat on it.

"I'd prefer him to kneel on it," I told Naz.

"Kneel?"

"Yes: kneel rather than sit. He should kneel in exactly the same position as he kneels beside his bike in."

The figure had been cast in that position. Its limbs didn't move. A few more seconds, and the real motorbike enthusiast changed his position on the swing

so he had one knee on the seat.

[...]

I lifted the model up and rested it against the window sill so I could look down on the model's head poking out at the same time as I looked at the real one. The distance made them both look the same size.

Before I sent them all back to their posts, I had the motorbike enthusiast give the swing a hard push. As he did this I did the same thing to the model swing. I watched them both swing. The model swing swung about two and a half times for each time the real swing swung. It also stopped before the real one did. I stayed at my window for a long time, watching the diminishing movements of the real swing. (*Remainder* 153-4)

The protagonist's control of both the model and figurines, and the actual spatial frame of the building and the reenactors allows a canceling out of ontological differences between them the same way as hyperrealism allows, so Baudrillard, art and reality to "overflow[...] into one another through an exchange at the level of simulation of their respective foundational privileges and prejudices" ("Symbolic" 146) so that "reality no more exists outside than inside the bounds of the artificial parameter" ("Simulacra" 172). This way the apartment complex is resignified to a set or stage in the course of the reenactment because the imaginary building overflows into the actual apartment house that, in its turn, overflows into the model, as the latter two are constructed to match the mental image in the protagonist's mind so that in the end the actual building and the model both exist "inside the bounds of the artificial parameter," just as both the actions of the flesh-and-blood reenactor and the figurine do because all are controlled by the protagonist's imagination.

The overflow of the imaginary into the real is expressed in the quoted passage so that it implies that the overflow is a spatial phenomenon because it happens through the arrangement of the figurine and the reenactor in the protagonist's field of vision so that the "distance ma[kes] them both look the same size." This utilization of perspective to emphasize the similarities between the reenactor and the figure made in his likeness is an effectual use in the narrative of the notion of "[s]pace as a medium or field" that enables the exchange between different ontologies (McCarthy "interview" 665). The example that McCarthy gives in an interview to illustrate how space as a field contains time and causality is closely related to how the swinging of the model and real swing are orchestrated in the scene:

I think of time as being, in a literary sense, embedded *within* space. There's a brilliant conceit in Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!* where Quentin says, "Maybe nothing ever happens once and is finished." And he goes on to describe "happen" as being like ripples moving across the surface of a pool

that's connected to another pool by a little umbilical water cord—and there could, in theory, be a third pool and so on. The pebble that caused the ripples in the first place didn't drop in the pool that we actually see; it dropped in another pool lying further back—but the ripples are moving through all pools with “the same ineradicable rhythm.” This is Quentin's way of thinking about generational time. It's totally topographic. (“Interview” 665)

Here, then, the concept of “time becom[ing] a topographic surface” that McCarthy discusses in the context of the bank robbery that happens later in *Remainder* and in which the protagonist by that time “can find cracks and partitions and enclaves and defiles” (McCarthy “interview” 667) is foreshadowed because before during the robbery he can utilize the qualities of the surface of time by entering and extending it, the surface here presents itself first to him as an object of study. He immediately makes use of the realization that time can be investigated as a surface by “watch[ing] them both [the model and real swing] swing” and then “stay[ing] at my window for a long time, watching the diminishing movements of the real swing” (*Remainder* 154), arguably pondering the same “ineradicable rhythm” (McCarthy “interview” 665) that connects Quentin's pools in space and time.

The added detour to his movements that he is so aware of after the accident presents itself as a spatial issue, as an unwanted extension of the “topographic surface” of time that the protagonist wants to “cut out” (*Remainder* 62) by entering the spaces of the reenactments that, “as [...] springboard[s] [...] for events” (McCarthy “interview” 664), are meant to bring about events his participation in which should make him feel more connected to his actions and surroundings. The reenactments are, in other words, about the attempt to alter the surface of time, more specifically to cut out the part that is responsible for the detour. This entails touring, studying and mapping the surface of time in the controlled environments of the reenactments, while hoping that inhabiting the intimately known spaces of the reenactments will result in being able to perform fluid actions in them.

A kink in space or, the tip of the bull's horn

The last reenactment, the bank heist, moves away from the idea of the spaces of reenactments matching as closely as possible the spaces where the reenacted took—or, in the case of the first reenactment, is remembered or imagined to have taken—place in order to lend authenticity to what is being reenacted by shifting the focus from the past to the future. The protagonist is not any more interested in reenacting, with possible minor alterations, a specific sequence of actions having taken place at a

specific place and time, as it is the case with the first three reenactments, but has found in the bank heist a highly schematized sequence that is thus reasonably isolated from space and time and can be transplanted—with minor alterations—to various banks at various times. He is not focused on a specific bank robbery that has happened but wants to (re)enact a “mix of several ones, real and imaginary. Ones that could happen, ones that have, and ones that might at some time in the future” (*Remainder* 233). He then sets out to find a bank that is situated favorably in terms of “access and escape routes,” without looking specifically for a bank that had been robbed in the past by the bank robber that he has hired as a consultant to supply the information on the sequence of actions that a bank robbery consists of (233). The robbery, at this point still a (re)enactment, is initially practiced in a rebuilt copy of a bank but is ultimately moved to the actual bank and thus, by “lifting the reenactment out of its demarcated zone and slotting it back into the world” (246), it ceases to be a reenactment.

It is this shift in the ontology of the reenactment that shows most clearly how the logic of space being the “repository of the authentic, providing an ontological groundwork to reassert the primacy of the ‘real’ over the imaginary” (Shields 150) is not only followed but twisted. In all reenactments, but in the bank heist most clearly, space is the “repository of the authentic providing an ontological groundwork” but not “to reassert the primacy of the ‘real’ over the imaginary” but, rather the other way around, to assert the primacy of the imaginary over the real, to make the imagined into reality. When the (re)enactment of a bank robbery is moved to a real bank, it ceases to be an innocent performance of a robbery and becomes hyperreality—and, as Nieland puts it, “an extended riff on Jean Baudrillard’s example in *Simulacra and Simulation*” (578). Baudrillard uses the same example of a bank robbery to illustrate how a hyperreal simulation provokes the same reaction from those unknowingly involved in the simulation because “[t]here is no “objective” difference: the same gestures and the same signs exist as for a real theft; in fact the signs incline neither to one side nor the other” so that it cannot be reacted to—by law enforcement—as simulation, “since it is precisely as such that no equivalence with the real is possible, and hence no repression either” (“*Simulacra*” 178).

There is a spatial element, a small detail that changes when the reenactment is moved to the actual bank and that has consequences for the actions that are carried out, which exemplifies how the imaginary triumphs over the real in this last

reenactment. All reenactments are, as Nieland observes, “stained by materiality” (569), confirming the protagonist's conviction that matter is his “undoing” (*Remainder* 15). It is also matter that sets into motion “the web of artificial signs [...] [that become] inextricably mixed up with real elements” in the course of the simulation of the heist (Baudrillard “Simulacra” 178). The small detail in question has to do with materiality as well, more precisely with the change in its ontology over the course of the reenactment. As the robbery is practiced in the rebuilt bank for the first time, one of the reenactors, Robber Five, trips on a wrinkle in the carpet and falls over. The protagonist wants him to trip every time in order to “prevent his tripping by mistake - forestall that event, as it were” (*Remainder* 238). After a few runs the wrinkle is flattened, so the protagonist “got Frank to stick a piece of wood beneath it, so that it would kink and Robber Five could semi-trip each time” (238). By the time the reenactment is transferred to the actual bank “Five had got so used to half-tripping on it [on the wrinkle sustained by the piece of wood stuck under the carpet] over the weeks of rehearsals - ten, twenty times each day, over and over - that the half-trip had become instinctive, second nature” (269). In the bank, however, there is no piece of wood stuck under the carpet and thus no wrinkle in the carpet to trip over but the instinctive trip over the now imaginary wrinkle cannot now be avoided.

This confirms the observation that McCarthy makes in an essay, writing that “[w]hat animates space is the trace of what has been excluded from it” (“Nothing” 217)—the trace in the case of the bank heist in *Remainder* being in the mind and muscle-memory of the reenactor. The resulting space in the fictional consciousness of Robber Five is, then, through the inclusion of both presence and absence, empirical and conceived space, similar to the geographer Edward W. Soja’s “Thirdspace,” in which, as a “transcending composite” (62), “*Everything* comes together [...]: subjectivity and objectivity, the abstract and the concrete, the real and the imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable, the repetitive and the differential, structure and agency, mind and body, consciousness and the unconscious, the disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life and unending history” (56-7, emphasis in original).

As the reenactor's foot carries out the same sequence that it does when it came into contact with the wrinkle, the now—that it is no more there—superfluous movements, a detour not cut out, causes him to fall over, and, in falling, to

involuntarily fire his gun and kill another reenactor (*Remainder* 270-1). As McCarthy writes elsewhere, “[t]ripping is not just about losing your equilibrium: it is also about existing in a universe which brings you down” (*Tintin* 171). Matter, its presence, or as the scene in *Remainder* shows even its absence, as “something that gets in the way of perfect *Aufhebung*” (McCarthy and Critchley et al. 73, emphasis in original), then, cannot be ignored without consequences. It is this addition of consequences to the actions carried out in the course of the reenactment that irrevocably resignifies the performance and roots it in reality and it is caused by the absence of matter, of the wrinkle in the carpet that is only present in the imagination and muscle memory of the reenactor. This is the moment when, as McCarthy says at a seminar, “the real jumps out [...] [that, however,] is not authenticity anymore; it’s a radical eruption within the inauthentic which is basically just pure violence” (“Something” 65). In an article, paraphrasing Michel Leiris’s essay “Literature Considered as a Bullfight,” he traces the same connection between violence and reality: “Imagine a bullfight without the bull: it would comprise a set of aesthetic maneuvers, pretty twirls and pirouettes and so forth—but there’d be no danger. The bull, crucially, brings this to the party; and for Leiris, *that’s* the real: the tip of the bull’s horn” (McCarthy “Get Real” 67).

In *Remainder* violence, or, more precisely, its effects, become spatialized as “terror takes on an aesthetic dimension [...] [when the protagonist] looks at the world reflected in the pools of blood that flow from his victims’ chests and finds it beautiful” (McCarthy Q & A n.p., Answer 5) because the effects of violence thus lead him back to Euclidean space, to the reflection of the world in the blood. As the main character subscribes to the idea that “[w]e don’t want plot, depth or content: we want angles arcs and intervals; we want pattern,” events for which space is activated as a matrix are relegated to the background, but when “[s]tructure is content; geometry is everything” (McCarthy “Stabbing” 186, emphasis in original) then space still functions as a matrix for geometry.

C

The narrative of *C* interweaves into “a Victorian bildungsroman³ [...] of maturation,” as McCarthy himself puts it in an interview, “a Marinetti-inspired mashup through the future ruins of the early twentieth century” (“interview” 657). These “future ruins” are of technological nature that allowed at the beginning of the twentieth century new ways of interacting with and perceiving space to emerge. Resignifications of spaces made possible by advances in telecommunications, aviation, cinema, and the automotive industry are filtered through the biographical experiences of the protagonist, Serge, before his symbolic return to a space coded in ancient times at the time of his death in a tomb in Egypt. Here the subjects of the three following chapters are the resignifications specifically made possible through the increased availability of technologies at the beginning of the twentieth century, which illustrate how the change that Doris Bachmann-Medick traces from the eighteenth century’s spatial perception being conditioned through the spirit to that of the nineteenth century through mobility (260) continues in the early twentieth century.

From the little household to the vast sea of transmission

At the beginning of *C*, at Serge’s family’s estate Versoie, which Adam Kirsch has described as a “Victorian pastiche” (n.p.), is set up only to be deconstructed. Intermediality is utilized to stress the connection between space and action that is then upset by the introduction into the estate of communication technologies through his father and later Serge himself. As Catherine Lanone puts it, “McCarthy only returns to the English novel, English house and Dickensian legacy as [—citing McCarthy’s own expression—] a ‘Trojan horse’, to explore the network of transmissions from another angle” (n.p.; McCarthy “Bookworm”).

There are two silk tapestries described that hang at the estate where silk is produced and that depict the house and the silk-making process, respectively. When a character is being lead up the staircase the readers are being informed that

There’s a tapestry hanging above this, a silk weaving that depicts either this same staircase or one very similar to it. They cross the landing at the top and

³ Adam Kirsch has pointed out that a more fitting designation would be that of an anti-bildungsroman because the protagonist “has no depth or development as a character and responds to everything with the same anesthetized curiosity” (n.p. par. 4).

step into a room. A second tapestry hangs on the wall of this: another picture woven in silk, this time of an Oriental scene in which pony-tailed peasants reach up into trees full of the same white fruit as the ones in the orchard. Lower down the tapestry, beneath the trees, more peasants are unravelling dark balls. (C 7)

The narrative space of *Versoie* is reproduced as images woven in silk that thus exemplify a notion of space as a “repository of the authentic” (Shields 150), where culture becomes tangible, by activating for the narration the product of the silk making process, the silken tapestry, to relate back to the space where its material has been produced.

The idea of space being “something more than the theatre, the disinterested stage or setting of action” for Henri Lefebvre (410) is utilized by how the narrative introduces the readers to the silk making process through the adolescent protagonist’s route through the various spaces of the estate. These all have names derived from the stage of silk making that takes place there, such as the “Hatching Room,” “Rearing House,” “Reeling Yard,” “Throwing Room,” “Dyeing Room,” “Weaving Room,” and “Store Room.” The narration utilizes that the perceiving character is a child at this point in the story for providing the reader with information on what is happening in the spaces on the story level itself, by not directly telling the reader about the various stages in silk making in the discourse but following the young protagonist making these discoveries for the first time himself (C 27-32).

This way of narrating a process links time and space effectively by taking into account and showing that there are distinctly different stages taking place at different spaces chained together in a specific chronological order resulting in a sequence that constitutes the process that produces a specific product. The silk worms produced by the coupling of the silk moths in the first room are, when they enter the phase when they enclose themselves in cocoons, stored in the second room and then cooked in the reeling yard so that the worms themselves die and thus in the next room the cocoons’ strands can be twisted into organzine, which then in the next space is dyed and then woven into fabric and ultimately stored in the last room. Each of the stages in the sequence is linked to a specific space, which contains the required objects and tools for the corresponding step in the process to be carried out, thus fusing together the action and the setting. This inseparability and the reliance of the action on the setting elevates it from the status of a “disinterested stage” (Lefebvre

410) and gives meaning to the proud statement of Serge's mother while talking business with a textile merchant that all fabrics are "Versoie originals" (C 33). In the phrase the name of the place where the fabrics are produced stands for the quality of production, which assertion is reinforced in the space itself by the pictures woven in silk that are displayed on its walls. They depict stages of the silk making process in the same house on the very estate where the price of the finished product is now negotiated. The intermediality of the narrative space and the identity between the space depicted in the woven picture and that in which it hangs emphasize "a state of harmony [...] [and that] everything and everybody is in his proper place, acting properly," which Jan Joost van Baak identifies as a quality that narrative spaces can generally communicate (47), in this "Trojan horse" (McCarthy "Bookworm") of a "Victorian pastiche" (Kirsch).

After mentioning the tapestry, the narration links it explicitly to the action currently taking place in the house: when the mother of the newborn protagonist sits in her bed "the bedside maid combs her hair, unravelling it like the Chinese women pulling at their strange dark balls in the silk tapestry above them" (C 13). The simile in the description referencing the silk tapestry and the silk making process that it shows reminds readers of the connection between space and action that the intermediality of the spatial frame of the house, which it attained through the introduction of the tapestry, emphasized previously. By *interweaving* the spaces and actions depicted in the tapestries with the narrative space of Versoie and the narrated actions that take place there intermediality becomes present on the discourse level, as this literary technique corresponds to the process of weaving, which produces the tapestries.

The unity between space and action which is stressed by the intermediality in this first part is disturbed ironically, as it is meant to establish connections, by the intrusion of telecommunication technology into the traditional space where traditional work is being done: the about-to-be father of the protagonist is so caught up in trying to establish connection with the world outside of the estate that he shows no interest in connecting with those nearest to him, from whom he is also spatially isolated as his work on the modern technology is transplanted to a rather remote workshop on the estate. He is not present for the birth of his son because he is too busy in his workshop building his telegraph. After it, when he asks for the doctor to see him, the doctor has to ask the housemaid where he can find the father and

receives as an answer, accompanied by a snort, that he is “[i]n his workshop, of course” (10). The addition of “of course” implies that the father spends most of his time in the workshop. The snort suggests that the maid thinks that he spends too much time there, hinting at the disconnectedness of the father from those around him. His isolation, however, becomes even more apparent by how he first discusses other things with the doctor before asking about his newborn. As the doctor reaches a doorway in the garden wall that leads to the workshop, he sees that the door is locked, emphasizing, again, the father’s isolation, he calls out to him that “[t]he baby’s fine and well,” but the father does not hear it all and says that he does not have the key to the door so that doctor has to circumvent it (11). When the doctor finally arrives at the workshop the father does not immediately ask about the child but rather hands him a coil to hold, offers him something to eat, asks him about his health, tells him about his progress with the telegraph, which brings him to the topic of heirs, when he finally, in a nonchalant way, asks, “Boy or girl?” (11-12).

The father’s work with telecommunication is different from the traditional silk-making not only because it is concerned with modern technology, but also because it is not a labor the product of which becomes tangible in space. Its product is invisible transmission, “a dispatching from one place to another” of signals wirelessly over extended spaces (McCarthy and Critchley et al. 168). This is taken into account in the short scene when the father asks the doctor where he thinks the copper wires end: the doctor looks at the space surrounding him and sees that “[a]mong the billowing mesh of ivy and bushes stands a kind of metal weathercock [...] [with] wires [...] wound around the base of this like serpents,” and asks the father if “[t]hey end there?” (C 12). The father says: “Yes—and no! The wires end, but the *signal* jumps onwards! Five feet, for the moment. With this copper I’ll be able to increase it to ten—fifteen even” (12). The extension in space of the jump that the signal makes by the time the protagonist is old enough to experiment with telecommunication himself allows him to be able to experience space in a novel way that is only made possible by the technology.

The newly established connection between previously separated spaces through radio signals is illustrated by the narrator’s remarks on Serge’s nightly experiments with transmission in his youth.

The spark gap flashes blue each time he taps; it makes a spitting noise, so loud he’s had to build a silence box around the desk to isolate his little RX station from the sleeping household—or, as it becomes more obvious to him with

every session, to maintain the little household's fantasy of isolation from the vast sea of transmission roaring all around it. (64)

The change of scope of reference is implied by the reuse of the adjective “little” which first refers to the protagonist’s RX station. It describes it as such in relation to the household of which it is a part of, which itself in turn is described “little” in comparison to the vast space surrounding it. The household became small in comparison to the space that surrounds it and that became relevant to it by the penetration of its borders through the ability of the radio station to receive inside it and transmit to “the vast sea of transmission roaring all around it.” The scene thus captures how the perception of spaces as distinct and autonomous has been altered through the emergence of telecommunications. The media historian Douglas Kahn summarizes this by pointing out that “[a]ll conventions of relationality, traditionally confined as they were to local and manageable structures and comparisons, would break down once they were bombarded with a global infinitude of possible relations all arriving at once with a newfound speed having “no connecting wires”” (22).

Becoming able to negate through telecommunications the space separating spatial frames that previously have been distinctly disconnected creates a seemingly instant connection between remote spaces in that they become in the act of telecommunication, as Gabriel Zoran has shown, part of the same “zone of action” in narration (323). They do so despite them being separate spaces and the spatial frame, or in Zoran’s terms the space that the “field of vision” is attached to (324), remaining, in this case, the protagonist’s bedroom. This expansion of the zone of action is afforded by a certain feature of “tele-culture,” which Peter Weibel defines as “the separation of body and soul, of messenger and message,” whereby the messenger can stay in place while the reception of the message, which is carried through “traveling signs,” at a separate space can be included in the zone of action of telecommunication (“Vom Verschwinden” 20, 24; “Der neue Raum” 68, my translations). Zoran exemplifies his concept of zone of action, which “is not defined by spatial continuity or a clear topographical border, but rather by the proportions of the event taking place within it,” with telecommunication as an “event which takes place in two nonadjacent, disconnected places (ignoring for the time being the assertion that telephone wires or radio waves are a part of space; they are a part of the physical space, but not of the *human* event defined as the telephone conversation)” (323, original emphasis). Interacting on the story level with “the vast

sea of transmissions” thus makes it possible for the discourse to connect through the extension of the zone of action disconnected spatial frames, whereby the change in the character’s perception of space, which “becomes more obvious to him with every session,” is implied at the same time.

The profoundness of the experience of his perception of space having been altered is shown by Serge remembering back to these nights later, at a moment when he gets aroused:

Serge, following the red flush from her neck down to her blouse, recalls his nights spent DX-fishing in Versoie: the sense that [...] the stations at the far end of the dial, the signals on the edge of audibility—from ships, or desert outposts, or more distant ships and outposts ever further still being picked up and forwarded through vast, static reaches—were coming from a place so remote and enchanted as to belong to another dimension entirely, a “there” as far divorced from “here” as angels from the mortals before whom they might briefly appear in flickering electric visions. (*C* 261)

The thought report expresses the character’s excitement of knowing the vastness of the distance that has been overcome through the act of transmitting and receiving signals that originate in and to spaces far away in his childhood room. This relates the experience of the reception of remote signals in his room to the effects on space of “a particularly expansive quality of communication,” (Niemand 581) of a “globalness” that “collapsed space to an ideal of instantaneous transmission and reception, a communication without mediation” (Kahn 21). This was made possible by the rapid advancement of signals, such as sounds, through space the “ripples” of which Serge imagines “snaking through the sky, pleats in its fabric, joins pulsing as they make their way down corridors of air and moisture” (*C* 66). This new way of thinking of space thus entails “turn[ing in thought] everything into a material plane that gets inhabited” (McCarthy “interview” 673) by signals.

The effects of technological advances on the perception of space becomes apparent to the protagonist not only in the case of telecommunications, of his parents’ household becoming less a space defined by its boundaries but one being integrated into the world surrounding it, but in the case of aviation as well. It is his role in the air force during the Great War that puts him in a position to be able to experience space from the airborne point of view and at the same time to relay information from the frontline to the headquarters. He is thus able to cancel out the limitations imposed by space on the advancement of bodies in it by being able to fly through it and of signals in it by their reach being extended through technology.

Aircrafts had been primarily used in World War I for reconnaissance, making use of their uninhibited maneuverability and speed in the air. In connection with telecommunications on board which made it possible to instantaneously relay intelligence that is gathered by the airplane to the distant command post, which on ground-level is often clearly separated from the aircraft by the frontline or geographical features. Serge's vivid impression of his role, as the relayer of information between separate spaces, as the thus conqueror of space, is communicated by him

feel[ing] an almost sacred tingling, as though he himself had become godlike, elevated by machinery and signal code to a higher post within the overall structure of things, a vantage point from which the vectors and control lines linking earth and heaven, have become visible, tangible even, all concentrated at a spot just underneath the index finger of his right hand which is tapping out, right now, the sequence *C3E MX12 G...* (C 141)

The narrator comes back later to the protagonist's role as the one who relays information through space so that decisions can be made far away that then bring about action affecting the space around the aircraft: "In these moments Serge is like the Eiffel Tower, a pylon animating the whole world, calling the zero hour of a new age of metal and explosive, geometry and connectedness—and calling it over and over again, so that its birth can be played out in votive repetition through these elaborate and ecstatic acts of sacrifice..." (159). His transmission back to the command post results in visible action on the field so that "[e]verything seems connected: disparate locations twitch and burst into activity like limbs reacting to impulses sent from elsewhere in the body, booms and jibs obeying levers at the far end of a complex set of ropes and cogs and relays" (141). In this process the spatial distance between, to continue with the analogy of the body, the brain, the transmitter of information, and the limbs, the receivers of it, and any boundaries perceived between the elements on the basis of their spatial separation are being canceled out and not perceived as distinctly any more.

Zeroing in and tuning out

The unity between action and space and the rootedness of the former in the latter at Versoie, as it is established at the time of the protagonist's birth by the embeddedness of the silk making process into the spaces of the estate and arguably only strengthened by the sole exception of the father and his work, is later further undermined by the young Serge's reception and transmission of signals from and to

distant spaces. During World War I the protagonist's posting results in a further alteration of his perception of space. While he is in the air force the act of targeting guns while flying through space and the sensation of flying itself add new ways to how he experiences the space that surrounds him.

During target practice with guns that are equipped with special sights, which are meant to ease the gunner's task of anticipating where the target will be in the homogenous airspace when the projectile reaches a certain spot, Serge finds that he

likes the way the reticules grid space up when he looks through them, but finds he can perform their main task on his own. The trick's to point the gun not where the target is right now, but to discern its line of movement as it travels through your vision and to run that on into the space in front of it, shooting there instead. Serge develops a knack of splitting his gaze in two, locking the line with one eye while the other slides ahead, setting up camp in the spot at which a successful hit "happens" and thus bringing this event to pass. He experiences a strange sense of intermission each time he does this, as though he'd somehow inflated or hollowed out a stretch of time, found room to move around inside it. (*C* 126)

It is the act of "splitting his gaze in two," "grid[ding] space up" in his mind, and the resulting "strange sense of intermission" that constitute a new way for the character to perceive and experience space in relation to time. Justus Nieland has written on the grid "as a medial trope" that it "allows McCarthy to take up a series of relationships—between form and matter, the systematizable and the contingent, the aesthetic and the historical—that, for McCarthy, define our being in media and shape the time in which events take place" and cites Rosalind Krauss's reading of the twofold meaning of the grid for modern art (584). Krauss states that the grid is a spatial phenomenon in art that flattens and reduces the mimetic qualities of pictorial space and a temporal marker, "an emblem of modernity," formally distinguishing modern art from previous works (9-10). The "abstraction" that the grid achieves through "the separation of the perceptual screen from that of the "real" world" (Krauss 15) leads in *C* to the emergence in the character that perceives space through the grid of the reticule of a sense of mastery over space. The flattening effect of the grid in addition to the same effect of the bird's-eye view on the landscape and, more specifically, an understanding of the flattening of space as the ability to reshape and resignify it through a "mechanical command" (*C* 127) of it, are the effect and feeling that shape Serge's perception and experience of space in the air force during the War.

This is implied by him being reminded, as he is assembling guns, by the sounds of the mechanisms of the new experience of space that he has been afforded while

flying: “In the click and swivel of machinery being slotted together, moved around and realigned, its clockwork choreography, he relives, in miniature, the mechanical command of landscape and its boundaries that flight affords him, the mastery of hedgerows, fields and lanes, their shapes and volumes” (127). The perspective from above, which Serge has already preferred during sessions of landscape painting as a pupil (39), allows a map-like view that makes it easier to perceive the boundaries of certain spatial units, such as fields, but at the same time brings to the forefront the connectedness of such smaller units in forming the topography of the landscape.

The perspective, however, is only a part of “the mechanical command of landscape and its boundaries” and another contributing element to the sense of mastery over space is the speed at which the boundaries can be transgressed and, as a result, ignored:

It's only when the tracers start to rise towards him that Serge realises he's passed onto the German side. It's always like that: on his first few outings he'd anticipate the moment when he'd move across the deadly threshold, bracing himself for it, as though there were a real line strung across the air like a finishing ribbon for the machine to thrust its chest against and breach. But that moment never came—or rather, turned out always to have come already, the threshold to have lain unmarked, been glided over quite unnoticed. Even looking down, it's hard to see which are the front positions: trench after trench slides into view, parallel lines conjoined in places by small runnels as communication trenches link up with evacuation trenches, third-line and supply trenches... At times the network opens into a wide mesh; at others it closes up, compact. The tracers rising from it lend structure to the air, mesh it as well. (139-140)

Up in the air there is nothing to mark any boundaries that would have been clearly indicated by landmarks or objects when traveling on the surface: the “air-space” is, as Salman Rushdie puts it in *The Satanic Verses*, a “soft, imperceptible field which had been made possible by the century and which, thereafter, made the century possible, becoming one of its defining locations, the place of movement and of war, the planet-shrinker and power-vacuum, most insecure and transitory of zones, illusory, discontinuous, metamorphic” (5). From the bird’s-eye view the indicators of territorial boundaries are obscured when looking down because one can rather see how naturally everything is connected than perceive the onto the landscape culturally and often arbitrarily laid national boundaries. The vast uniformity of the airspace becomes only structured by the tracers.

In addition, flying provides a new way of experiencing movement in space by obscuring the relation between the bodies that move in it and the immobile

landscape. While a sense of the motionlessness of the landscape is already blurred to a degree when moving at high speeds on the surface in two dimensions, it is to an even larger extent obfuscated for those who fly because to them it seems that the pilot is controlling not the movement of the airplane but that of the landscape, which seems to move when the controls are moved. This is reflected in the passage in which, when looking down at a town from a flying airplane, Serge can see

the parallel rows of its terraces, the plan view of a St. Leonard robbed of elevation, steeple pushed down and compacted like a collapsed telescope. Beyond the town, the canal forms a dark line across the marsh; beyond that, the rim of shore is marked in white by waves that have become entirely static, as though no independent movement were permitted of the landscape anymore: all displacement and acceleration, all shifts and realignments *must* proceed from the machine...

The coast peels away now and the land tilts towards him, swinging from a hinge running perpendicular to him and his box, along the same line as the Farman's wheel axle. It lifts up to meet him: a flat earth-plane rising to join a wooden rectangle held in a wiry frame set in a huge white-and-blue circle of sky. As it does, depth starts returning. Detail too: he can pick out the airfield, the hangars, the cluster of cadets. (C 124)

The ability to fly and the sheer speed that is thereby achievable in connection with a lack of obstructions in the air result in the character experiencing this new point of view as one that is able to shift and move the landscape while seemingly hovering still: “the constraints of the perspective are overcome,” McCarthy paraphrases Filippo Tommaso Marinetti’s “Manifesto of Aeropainting” in an essay, “sky and landscape superimposed and jolted into motion, their elastic crescendos and diminuendos engendering new progressions of forms and colours” (“Technology” n.p.). These impressions are echoed in Serge’s emerging sense of control over space that he was not able to experience before he flew.

This view from the sky, where “depth rather than gravity is ditched” (Lanone n.p.), and that affords a more distant experience of the front becomes—even more—distorted when the protagonist becomes addicted to cocaine that he first puts in his eyes in an effort to sharpen his eyesight. Under the influence of the drug it seems to him that

[t]he tracer-lines this time are vibrant and electric: it's as though the air were laced with wires. Higher up, the vapour trails of SE5s form straight white lines against the blue, as though the sky's surface were a mirror too. Scorch-marks and crater contours on the ground look powdery; it seems that if he swooped above them low enough, then he could breathe them up as well, snort the whole landscape into his head. (C 157)

To the layers through which the front is perceived by the character, the already distancing—because abstracting—grid of the reticule through which it is zeroed in on and the bird’s-eye view from up high, an additional layer is added when his perception is altered through cocaine. To these yet another layer is added that for the character overshadows the perception of the front and compounds the protagonist’s tuned out state. McCarthy points out in an interview that being at the front reminds Serge of his dead sister, because she prophesied that there will be a war, and, because before she died she seduced him in his youth, she becomes for him a personification of Freudian trauma, a combination of pleasure—the memory of the seduction—and pain—the memory of her death—(“Violence”). All of these layers through which the character perceives and through which his mind interprets his surroundings contribute to the narrated perception of the front being markedly subjective.

Serge’s resignification and altered experience of space through the impression of having “mechanical command” (C 127) of it, of “becom[ing] godlike, elevated by machinery and signal code to a higher post within the overall structure of things” (141), is “an emblem of modernity” that, while not being, as for Krauss the grid in modern art (9-10), a formal marker, places the resignification firmly in time at the beginning of the twentieth century as it relies on the availability to the protagonist of technologies as bases for it. The new technologies that are meant to augment the control of the human body over its environment, however, bring new problems. Planes—and later the protagonist’s car—crash, as the briefly mentioned episode of an observer who “forgets to strap himself into his seat [...] [and] falls out when his pilot loops the loop” (C 129) illustrates, so that the command of space through aviation is unmasked as merely an illusion.

The interweaving into the narration, which is marked by the perceiving character’s fascination with the new technologies, of such accidents brought about by the same technologies affirms on the one hand the feeling of becoming, as McCarthy quotes Freud’s *Civilization and its Discontents* in essays on literature and cinema, “a kind of god with artificial limbs” and on the other the continuation of the quote, which goes, “but those organs have not grown on to him and they still give him much trouble at times” (“Technology,” “Prosthetic” 139). This, as Hal Foster calls it, “double logic” of technological prostheses of modernity (5; qtd. in McCarthy “Prosthetic” 139) in connection with the era’s fascination with technology inevitably leads to “every technology creat[ing] its own disaster” (McCarthy and Critchley et al.

127), as the crashing planes and cars illustrate in *C*. Ultimately, the novel, which narrates through Serge's experiences during the War the attempt and failure to transcend through technologies the limitations that space imposes on the human body, affirms McCarthy and Simon Critchley's assertion that "the modern has always, and very self-consciously, been devoted to failure" ("The Tate Declaration: Joint Statement on Inauthenticity," qtd. in McCarthy "interview" 658).

The speeding flâneur

The passage that describes how Serge perceives the estate of Versoie when he returns there after the War foregrounds how past experiences have altered his perception of the place and how his memories of the place change its present perception:

Versoie seems smaller. Its proportions are the same: the surface area of the house's side-wall in relation to that of the Maze Garden above which it rises, or the width of the maze's paved path in relation to the garden's lawn; the height of the Crypt Park's obelisk-topped columns, or the sightline above these into the park itself afforded by the attic window—all these are correct. But, taken as a whole, they seem to have shrunk. The left-swerving passage from the house's front door to the Low Lawn, then through the Lime Garden with its beehives and, beyond these, past the green slime-topped trough-pond towards the long, conker-tree-lined avenue that skirts the Apple Orchard as it heads towards the spinning sheds and Bodner's garden—a passage each of whose sections used to comprise a world, expansive beyond comprehension, filled with organic density and volume, with the possibilities of what might take place in it, riven with enclaves and proclivities every one of which itself comprised a world within the world, on to infinity—now seems like a small, inconsequential circuit: a transceiver loop or well-worn route round a familiar parade ground. It's as though, in Serge's absence, the whole estate had, by some sleight of hand, been substituted by a model, one into which he's now been reinserted, oversize, cumbersome and gauche... (*C* 193)

The estate seeming smaller presupposes that it once seemed larger. The character's memory of the large Versoie thus now influences his current impression of the place as small. The passage goes on to make clear that it is not so much the physical dimensions of the space that he feels have become altered but the symbolic values that he has attributed to its elements, which "used to comprise a world" and seemed "filled [...] with the possibilities of what might take place" there. A change in these values over time shows, in addition to how memories and current experiences influence each other, that space is "a kind of slate that is wiped clean of old signs so that they can make way for new" (Assmann 305, footnote 38).

The new values that Serge contributes to the estate and indeed to space in general are then given in the next paragraph:

Versoie seems smaller, and the world seems smaller, seems like a model of the world. It's not just that the distance between, say, here and Lydium has shrunk (and done so almost exponentially thanks to the motor car his father's purchased and now lets him drive whenever he feels like an outing), but, beyond that, that the inventory of potential experiences—situations in which he might find himself, conversations and interactions he might undergo—has dwindled so low that they could be itemised on a single sheet of paper. (C 193-194)

The symbolic value that Serge had attributed to the spaces of Versoie and that has been—in Assmann's sense—"wiped" off is that of indicating endless possibilities, "potential experiences." The use of the metaphor of "a model" is significant in that it captures the lingering presence of the memory of the seemingly large estate, of which the estate in present perception seems the miniaturized model of. In addition, the metaphor expresses the limitation of the projecting powers of the original space that could indicate "potential experiences" to those of the model that are only able to indicate the original space, excluding the projections that the fictional consciousness originally linked to the estate. In other words, while the original spaces could stand for "a world expansive beyond comprehension, filled with organic density and volume, with the possibilities of what might take place in it," their model can only stand for the spaces that it is a model of, without being able to effectively take over the codes inscribed to the original spaces.

The new possibility of traversing space faster via the motor car is mentioned as a contributing, however, minor factor in the main character's experiencing the town as smaller. The new means of transportation is not the determining factor in Serge's altered perception of space because, as it was the case with the spaces of Versoie, ultimately it is not the perceived physical dimension of spatial elements that constitutes a marked change in their perception by the character but a change in the symbolic values that the fictional consciousness assigns to them in the process of the "slate [...] [being] wiped clean of old signs [...] [,] mak[ing] way for new" (Assmann 305, footnote 38). Neither the estate nor the town symbolize endless possibilities for Serge any more: after the illusion of having triumphed over space by defying gravity through flying and flattening space through the grid of the reticule, and simultaneously defying distance through airborne wireless communication at the front, "the inventory of potential experiences" of ordinary civilian life seem all too predictable and thus unexciting to him.

So Serge leaves the countryside for London to study architecture. There his

ongoing drug addiction results in a resignification of the spaces of the city as well: when he learns of the sign-based tactics that drug dealers use to let potential customers know that they are selling, he “starts seeing all of London’s surfaces and happenings as potentially encrypted: street signage, chalk-marks scrawled on walls, phrases on newspaper vendors’ stalls and sandwich boards, snatches of conversations heard in passing, the arrangements of flowers on window-sills or clothes on washing lines” (C 211). This way of perceiving and decoding the cityscape have the same effect of implying at the same time “the external and the internal scene,” in other words, what the fictional consciousness perceives and its interpretation of the perceived, that Dorrit Cohn has contributed to the combination of thought report and free indirect perception (49, see p. 11 of this thesis). Although the “internal scene” is only implied, it is where the focus lies because the vignette-like isolated examples of elements of the cityscape that capture the effect of “stimulus satiation” in modern cities, whereby “visual perception [is dispersed] into discontinuous impressions of the perceived phenomena” (Wenz and Block 118), provide no cohesive information about the city, or indeed about the elements themselves because they are simply listed without any context or adjectives describing them. The “internal scene” is implied precisely by the impersonality and unrelatedness of the listed spatial elements because it is not these elements themselves, and as an extension the whole cityscape that is important for the character, who, being addicted to drugs, only cares about satisfying his cravings. Spatial elements, “all of London’s surfaces,” thus are marked as Assmann’s “clean slate” (305, footnote 38), on which information can and is inscribed, with the character’s interest lying not on the medium but on the message that is carried—and more concretely on achieving a goal, that of obtaining drugs, that a successful decoding of the message facilitates. The simple list of “potentially encrypted” spatial elements, whereby, as McCarthy and Critchley write on the conceptual artist Wyn Evans’s experiences of Tokyo, “[a]rchitecture becomes communication becomes code” (172), and the cracking of which in this case should lead Serge to the source of the drugs that he craves so much, thus effectively implies the addict’s single-mindedness.

After the War ends Serge seeks to recapture the new way of perceiving space that he experienced in the airplane and comes close to finding it in driving, another activity that involves moving through space at high speeds:

The restlessness, he comes to realise, is in truth an attempt to achieve its opposite: stasis. It's as though if he moves about enough, the world will fall into place around him. He experiences this most viscerally when driving across Salisbury Plain. Summoning up with his right foot a roar of snarling teeth and whirring cylinders, feeling beneath his hips the force of however many horses surging forwards, he watches the hedge-rows run together till they blur into a tunnel of green speed. As this streaks by and the horizon accelerates towards him, it seems that he himself has become still—and, in these moments, he feels the same sense of satisfaction that he used to in the nacelle of the Rumpitee or the cabin of the RE8: the sense of being a fixed point in a world of motion. (*C* 194)

The landscape blurring before his eyes as a result of “summoning up with his right foot” the power of the engine that propels the car forward evokes in Serge the desired “sense of being a fixed point in a world of motion.” He achieves this, as he previously did in the airplane, through the emergence of the feeling of having control over the space that surrounds him and through a simultaneous sense of passivity, as it is he who brings it about but then it is “the horizon [that] accelerates towards him,” that is mixed into the satisfaction of being able to control the machine and, by extension, space.

Surrendering agency after initiating a movement seems to contribute to Serge's satisfaction. In the Roaring Twenties, after the traumatic experiences of the War, the fascination with fast movement through space, as afforded by the wider availability of transportation technologies in the first quarter of the twentieth century, is connected with a nihilistic tendency. This is manifested in *C* by the protagonist's ignoring of the dangers associated with speeding, and, ultimately, of the possibility of dying, while trying to attain the feeling “of being a fixed point in a world of motion.” Serge's lack of concern for his safety is stressed by his embracing of the passivity of an onlooker who experiences fast movement through space as if the landscape in front of the perceiver itself was accelerating towards the driver:

He doesn't know where he is, or where he's going, and he doesn't care: what matters is to get things moving—get them moving so that he can get them still again, re-find the stasis in the motion. Green, blue and black run by; sometimes an angry shout weaves its way into the air's tapestry, a klaxon whose tone dips and falls off as it passes. The colours run closer and closer to him; the tapestry becomes a screen, a fixed frame through which sky and landscape race, nearer and nearer all the time: soon it's as though he were no longer merely watching the projected image but pressing right up against the surface of the screen itself. *Into* it even: somehow the space around him has become material. It's not just wind whipping his face: the colours, having merged to brown, are on him, scraping right against his skin and pressing down into his mouth. There's some kind of inversion going on too: the

screen's surface has rotated and is now above him. From it comes the sound of crashing metal. The noise travels down to meet him, as though from a more elevated world: it sounds like a big iron lid being closed on him. Then it goes quiet. He's in some kind of nether region now: a mole, being stuffed like drawers and cupboards with an old, familiar substance. (235-236)

In the passage intermedial references to the projection technique of cinema are used in a way so that space is brought to the forefront in that it takes over the active role from the character that is presented as passive. The narration captures the character's impression that the spatial elements in front of him are seeking a connection with him by moving towards him by assigning subject role to spatial elements. For instance, to Serge, who is cast in a passive role, it seems that at the moment of the accident the colors are "scraping right against his skin and pressing down into his mouth." This inversion of agency is reminiscent of how Serge's experiences in the airplane are described, where, when "the horizon accelerates towards him, it seems [to him] that he himself has become still" (194).

Taking into account that space is needed for sounds to travel through and thus be perceivable, the colorful space is first referred to as a tapestry into which sounds are woven. This brings back to the reader's mind a previous instance of intermediality in the narrative, which has woven tapestries into the narrative space of Versoie (cf. p. 38-40). When spatial elements start for the perceiving character to seemingly move themselves the metaphor of the tapestry becomes that of a screen on which spatial elements "race" towards Serge, hinting at—another instance of intermediality in the narrative,—his memory of seeing a film. The protagonist's experiencing something current filtered through his previous experiences lends credibility to the narration because it takes into account how, as readers intuitively know on the basis of their own experiences, memories are involved in the perception and experience of current events.

Aleida Assmann writes on the "reconstructive process" of remembering that "it always starts in the present, and so inevitably at the time when the memory is recalled, there will be shifting, distortion, revaluation, reshaping" (19). This happens because "all memories are," as Edna Andrews puts it, "dynamically reconstructed when retrieved" (154)—or, as McCarthy himself writes in an essay on realism in fiction, "events and memory of them proceed [...] associatively, digressing, sliding, jolting, looping" ("Get Real" 61). Thus the remembered past "is always mixed with projected identities, interpretations of the present, and the need for validation"

(Assmann 73). Accepting it as a fact that our memories are shaped in recall—among other factors—by the present, means that at the same time the present has to be shaped by our memories. When in *C* driving at fast speeds brings back into Serge's mind the memory of seeing a film, which happens on the basis of the similarity of the speed at which the image of the landscape is shifting in front of his eyes, and, which stresses his passive role in being exposed to moving images, the driving experience is altered through the heightened impression of passivity.

The impression of three dimensional space being projected onto the flat surface of the screen as a result of experiencing space while moving through it at high speeds amounts to a similar negation of depth as it happens when flying and looking through the grid of a reticule or down at the landscape from the bird's-eye view. Baudelaire's "flâneur" from "The painter of modern life," who perceives his surroundings while moving through space as well, is applied to modern media and interpreted by Karin Wenz and Friedrich Block "as a means of linearization [...] [that projects] [t]he complexity of three dimensional space [...] onto a linear and therefore one-dimensional temporal structure" (122). They add that this leads to space being "experienced in the form of a path" (Wenz and Block 122). The presentation of Serge experiencing space while driving through it in a filmic way puts into practice and follows the film theorist Mary Ann Doane's point that early cinema has to be considered as part of a "more general cultural imperative, the structuring of time and contingency in capitalist modernity" (3-4). This happens because the passivity of the character and his being put on a linear path downplays contingency by presenting any events that occur on the linear trajectory as inevitably occurring in succession as the linear path is followed. Against the occurrence of the inevitable results of following the path the character is, as illustrated by his emphasized passivity, helpless. So that contingency is limited to the linear path, as well.

Motor cars and film are thus added to the technologies that Serge eagerly makes use of in his attempts to experience the space that surrounds him in comparably novel ways as he was able to while flying and transmitting during World War I. A filmic experience of events unfolding before the perceiver's eyes in conjunction with motoring is utilized in the narrative to illustrate the new ways of experiencing space, of seeing, because of the perceiver's fast motion in space, the landscape in front of the driver unfold linearly. Serge, the speeding flâneur, is able through technology to initiate the motion, and thus feel a sense of command of space, but once put on a

path is confronted with the command of space being unmasked as an illusion as he is forced into the role of a passive observer of how his fast moving body is affected by forces in space.

Satin Island

Although its story arc is disrupted by its diary-like structure, spatial resignifications are a returning feature in *SI*. These, as the following chapters argue, highlight space-constitutive processes through the protagonist's altering of default values associated with generic concepts used in the perception of spaces. As the story is set at the contemporary digital age, the narrative includes in addition to resignifications that result from the main character's unique understanding of certain places, conditioned by his past experiences or current impulses and/or circumstances, resignifications that are brought about by strategies that the protagonist employs in order to conceptualize and thus understand and be able to interact with abstract digital spaces.

Jesus' crown

As the protagonist, who, as he mentions only once, should be called "U" (*SI* 13), sits waiting at the Torino-Caselle airport, he reads about it on the internet. The description of the reading process is thus simultaneously an indirect description of the airport. The narration shows that the description of the airport in the hypertext and the loosely related content that the main character consumes by following hyperlinks both influence his own perception and interpretation of the space that surrounds him. This results in the character's resignification of the airport.

The representation of the hypertext in the narrative retains the effect that hyperlinks have on, as Marie-Laure Ryan puts it, "the temporal unfolding of the text" ("Space" n.p.)—by hiding content 'behind' themselves until clicked on—to the extent that the disruptive effect of the hyperlinks on the flow of the text is maintained. This is done by the incorporation into the passage of abrupt jumps to loosely and not necessarily logically related content that result from narrating the jumps that the character makes in the digital text by following various links:

That's when I read about the shroud. When I'd done reading about that I started reading about hubs. Torino-Caselle is a hub-airport. There was a page on their website explaining what this is. Hub-airports are predominantly transfer points, rather than destinations in and of themselves. The webpage showed a diagram of a rimless wheel, with spokes of different lengths all leading to the centre, such that communion between any two spots on the wheel's surface area was possible despite no direct line connecting these. It looked like Jesus' crown, with all its jutting prongs. A link took me to an external page that explained how the hub-model was used in fields ranging from freight to distributed computing. Soon I was reading about flanges, track

sprockets and bearings in bicycle construction. Then I clicked on *freehub*. These incorporate splines—mating features for rotating elements—and a ratchet mechanism, built into the hub itself (rather than adjacent to or above it, as in previous, non-freehub models), whose temporary disengagement permits coasting. (SI 4-5)

Despite the jumps caused by the hyperlinks a narrative is still constructed through the connection by the fictional consciousness—and the narrator—of the loosely related content on “flanges, track sprockets and bearings” to the underlying concept of the hub-airport. This amounts to an imitation and transferal to the reading character the co-constructive role that, for instance Mikle Ledgerwood (286), Jan Simons (299), Nicole Mahne (234), and Jay Bolter (25) ascribe to the reader in the reading and simultaneous creation of a hypertext. In addition, through the implementation of the jumps in content the narration takes into account the unpredictability that is inherent to a hypertext, which, as Donna Haraway points out when reflecting on the hypertext as a metaphor, relies “on making connections [...] [but] does not suggest which connections make sense for which purposes and which patches we might want to follow or avoid” (127). McCarthy stresses in a Q&A the productivity of the unpredictability of hypertexts for creative writing by pointing out that “this drifting around Wikipedia where you start looking up Mallarmé (for example), and you end up on a page about artichokes or some South Pacific island five slips-sideways later. In a way these continual interruptions are a very productive thing” (“buffering” 37-8). Following links takes the protagonist, in a similarly unpredictable and thus for the resignification of the spatial frame productive manner, from reading about the airport that he is at, through the concept of the hub, which serves as a connection between the otherwise unrelated topics, to elements used in the construction of bicycles.

The character’s original interest in the space that he is at at the time, more specifically in its definition as a hub-airport, motivates him to look up this concept on the internet, which results in unexpected spatial resignifications. The specific version of the digital text that he reads, and which reveals itself only if following the same links that the character clicks on and no others, ends up being more about hubs in general because hubs are the cohesive element that the cross references that take the reader from airports to bicycle construction hinge upon. The passage takes into account the content-varying, and thus defining, effect of the spatial form of digital texts. Furthermore, it stresses that descriptions of spaces in hypertexts which are

accessible on location on various mobile devices and can lead the reader to unforeseen content via hyperlinks can contribute through the introduction of the linked content to the resignification of the spaces that the texts describe and that the reader currently occupies. On the basis of the imagery accompanying the digital text on the hub-airport that looks like “a rimless wheel, with spokes of different lengths all leading to the centre,” an association of hub airports with “Jesus’ crown” is established. This resignification depends on the connections established through the links in the text because the association of the hub-airport with a crown is only possible if the space of a hub airport is perceived as a structure seen from above, simplified to a two-dimensional schematic approximation of its shape. Such a perspective is usually, however, unavailable to those who currently occupy a part of the same space because their point of view does not allow them to perceive the entirety of the structure.

Thus on the one hand the accessibility at one’s fingertips of background information and foreign points of view of the spaces that one inhabits brings one closer to the inhabited space in the abstract way of transmitting information on it but on the other distances one from it by shifting one’s own point of view of the space. The interior point of view of occupants of spaces, which is by necessity fragmented,—and at the time of absorbing information on the space from a screen their gaze is further limited in its capability to perceive the entire structure because it is then directed at the device instead of at the actual space—is shifted to that of an outsider who can perceive the complete structure from an exterior vantage point. Ryan points out that “we can use maps to transcend the limitations of our embodied point of view” and thus “help us visualize what cannot be seen from the perspective of a normal human being. By giving a visual identity—a recognizable shape—to features [...] maps create an emotional bond between people and geographic entities” (“Cyberspace” ch. 1,2; cf. “Cognitive Maps” 214-5 on similar functions of cognitive maps). In connection with augmented reality, which makes it possible “to compose [and access] messages on the mobile phones, to attach them to particular geographic locations and to upload them,” she, however, asks the question whether “the landscape turned into its own map, with explanations, stories, and other people’s personal experience superposed upon its features [will] enhance our appreciation of the external world” (“Cyberspace” ch. 4)? Thus the “double logic of prosthesis” (Foster 5; McCarthy “Prosthetic” 139), which accounts for the fact that they are at the

same time an extension and constriction to the body, applies to the now ubiquitous digital screens, such as that of the protagonist's smartphone. While the mobile device aids him in understanding what a hub-airport is by allowing him to access on location texts describing aspects of the very space that he occupies, it distances him from the actual space that surrounds him at the moment of reading the hypertext on the screen.

The shift in focus from the immediate surroundings to distant elements, which the passage demonstrates, is reminiscent of the phenomenon that the media historian John Durham Peters terms "seeing bifocally" (79). Echoing the same detrimental effects on experiencing proximity that Paul Virilio previously connected to media that allow instantaneous transmission ("The Overexposed" 386; *Polar* 6-7), Peters means by his concept the experience of seeing "proximate fragments with [...] [one's] own eyes and global totalities through the diverse media of social description" (79). These totalities communicated through the various media "we could," as he adds, "otherwise experience only in pieces" and by consuming what is presented to us as the totality "the general becomes clear through representation, whereas the immediate is subject to the fragmenting effects of our limited experience. Our sense organs, having evolved over the ages to capture immediate experience of the local, find themselves cheated of their prey" (Peters 79). This is what happens to the airport terminal in the protagonist's mind, where, under the influence of the digital text, it is overshadowed by the image of a stylized, two-dimensional view from above that to him looks like "Jesus' crown." The general concept of the hub-airport becomes clear, while the actual space at Torino-Caselle, where the character sits reading on a digital device, fades from his view, which is concentrated on the screen, and from his mind, which is concerned with the total structure that is presented in the hypertext.

Apart from the information imparted by the hypertext on hub-airports the information given about the airport terminal is kept to a minimum, whereby only select spatial elements are mentioned scattered across multiple pages: there are "information screens" (*SI* 4) and "espresso bars dotted about" (5), "televisions" (6) and "luxury items stacked up all about us [...] behind polished glass sheets" (10). While, as Ruth Ronen points out, it is generally "impossible to construct a fictional object by specifying its characteristics and relations in every detail" ("Completing" 497), the description of the airport terminal is markedly sparse. It follows then that

the successful communication and establishment of the spatial frame in the reader's mind relies especially heavily for filling in the numerous blanks in the characteristics of the spatial frame on the pre-defined conceptual frame 'generic airport terminal.' Conceptual frames are defined by the cognitive scientists Roger Schank and Robert Abelson as "specific knowledge [that is used] to interpret and participate in events we have been through many times," and that "the reader brings a large repertoire of [...] to the understanding task" (37, 10). So Ronen's general remark that the "reliance [of descriptions] on a frame of reference can explain how a text, characterized by a paucity of information about its world, rhetorically overcomes the incompleteness of its constituent objects" ("Completing" 512) is expressly apt in describing the cognitive process of the reader making sense of the spatial frame of the airport and the terminal in *SI* by utilizing conceptual frames.

The psychologist William Brewer's description of conceptual frames, which overlaps with that of Schank and Abelson but includes additional information on how these are adapted to various situations, is useful for the examination of the character's and, by extension, the reader's resignification of the airport in *SI*. Brewer says that conceptual frames "are knowledge structures that contain fixed structural information [...] [and] have slots that accept a range of values; each slot has a default value that is used if no value has been provided from the external world" (729). The airport and the terminal are so sparsely described in *SI* that they rely mostly on default values for the reader to create a mental image of them. The default values are then, however, challenged by the introduction through the jumps in the hypertext of values not usually associated with airports, such as the "bearings in bicycle construction" or "Jesus' crown." These new values are then to be exchanged for or added to the default values, whereby the character's and the reader's knowledge structure that constitutes their concept of an airport is altered and the established conceptual frame 'airport,' or, more specifically, 'hub-airport' resignified.

The scene at the airport includes another example of U's reinterpretation of his surroundings based on information that he accesses on his phone. While he sees on a television at the terminal a goal in a football match and news footage of a bombing being replayed, he receives multiple messages from the head of the company that he works at and from colleagues, stating that the company has won a major contract. These unrelated impulses are brought into a connection in his mind, whereby the news footage attains a new meaning for him and a sense a synchronicity is

established by the fictional consciousness:

The ball's trajectory, the arc it followed as it cleared defenders' heads and keeper's hands [...]— this sequence now aligned itself with these words sent to me by Peyman: We won. [...] Two more [messages], from other colleagues, followed in quick succession, both conveying the same news. The effects of my chance exposure to this football game lingered after I'd read these; so it seemed to me that Bayern Munich's striker, roaring with delight towards the stands, was rejoicing not for his own team and fans but rather for us; and it even seemed that the victim with the Snoopy shirt on, as he ran screaming towards the camera, was celebrating the news too: from his ruined market with its standard twisted metal and its blood, for us. (*SI* 7-8)

In the passage the narration clearly links the fictional consciousness's thoughts that are at the moment centered on the just received messages, on the company having won the contract, to his surroundings, to the unrelated news footages being shown on the screens at the airport terminal. The linking hinges on the fictional consciousness that unites knowledge of its state of mind, which is currently focused on the company having achieved a goal, and of the surrounding space, which it interprets according to its state of mind. The emotional footages of celebrating soccer players and of screaming bombing victims are linked by the fictional consciousness to the joy experienced by the character's colleagues and shared with him through instant messaging, resulting in a resignification of the news footages.

The regal recycling plant, the dirty hospital and the trashy archive

For the protagonist a number of public spaces become resignified in the course of the narrative through his association with these spaces of values directly opposed to default values of the corresponding conceptual frames. This way the fictional consciousness's task of perceiving and interpreting spatial frames is highlighted.

At least since the miasma-theory of the nineteenth century that, as the archaeologist William Rathje and classicists Michael Shanks and David Platt write, “asserted that ‘vapors’ from filth and refuse were the causes of infection” (71) and the following germ theory and the realization that surgery had to be carried out in sterile environments, the conceptual frame connected to the space ‘hospital’ arguably includes as one of its default values cleanliness, or at any rate, the need for it. This is initially reaffirmed when the protagonist notices the “smudged and blackened” windows of the hospital room where a terminally ill acquaintance is lying whom he visits (*SI* 131), because the narrator goes on to inform the reader that the windows being dirty “upset me, much more than the fact of Petr’s illness did. For crying out

loud, I felt like shouting to the nurse, ward manager, whoever: if you can't save these people, at least clean the windows" (132).

After having had a dream, however, the values that U attributes to the dirt on the windows and, by extension, to the hospital change and are narrated the next time he visits the hospital.

It was the world, its stuff, that had left its deposit—on the windows and in Petr's bones, his organs, flesh and arteries. The stuff of the world is black. If Petr's flesh was turning black it was because he'd let the world get right inside him, let it saturate him, until he was so full of it that it was bursting out again, erupting with a radiating luminescence. (147)

This resignification of dirt, which results in the character no longer perceiving it to be, as Mary Douglas defines dirt, "matter out of place" (36), even at a hospital, occurs as a result of a resignification of another space, which alters what the character associates with waste, and by extension, with the related concept of dirt. The conceptual frame that U connects to the concept of a trash-incinerating plant is modified during a dream of his. In it he sees a city on a coast with an island on which there are "huge, derelict factories whose outer walls and rafters, barely intact, recalled the shells of bombed cathedrals [...] [that] form a single giant, half-ruined complex that covered the island's entire surface area" (*SI* 141-2). The complex is filled with trash that is

being burnt slowly, from the inside, with a smouldering, rather than roaring, fire. Whence the glow: like embers when you poke them, the mounds' surfaces, where cracked or worn through by the heat, were oozing a vermilion shade of yellow. It was this glowing ooze, which hinted at a deeper, almost infinite reserve of yet-more-glowing ooze inside the trash-mountain's main body, that made the scene so rich and vivid, filled it with a splendour that was regal. (142)

In line with the conceptual frame connected to trash changing in contemporary time, which the architectural historian Ben Campkin sums up as the emergence of a "postmodern attraction to dirt and penchant for recycling, where the binary dirty/clean is less stable, or purposefully confused" (387), and with the character's aestheticization of the recycling process, the recycling plant attains for him in his dream the attribute of magnificence. The narration thus achieves what Winfried Fluck identifies as a recurring goal in contemporary art, namely to "dramatiz[e] the redefining power of shifting attitudes that can transform even the 'lowest,' the most vulgar, most trashy or most repulsive materials into aesthetic objects" (19).

Later at the hospital this resignification of the recycling process is extended to

dirt, which is then understood as “the stuff of the world” (*SI* 147). This is not found to be out of place even at the hospital any more. Although previously the presence of dirt, before it became for U “the stuff of the world,” has offended him because it symbolized for him negligence and the hospital administration’s surrender to incurable diseases, as implied by the remark that “if you can’t save these people, at least clean the windows” (132), now its presence is interpreted as an affirmation of the fact that “the stuff of the world” is unavoidably present everywhere, in everything and everyone. Ultimately, the default value of ‘should be clean’ of the conceptual frame that the main character associates with the spaces of a hospital is erased in the course of the resignification.

SI portrays the manifestation of culture in spatial elements, in objects, from the point of view of an anthropologist with a critical stance towards the history of anthropology itself, which results, when U visits a former university colleague who is now a curator at a museum, in his resignification of the concept of an archive. The protagonist is an anthropologist, who practices the strain of the discipline that is focused on the “study of patterns of behaviour and belief” instead of focusing on items as products of cultures (*SI* 104). The curator points out that in the past items were collected in large numbers as “[t]he idea was that you needed to study the morphology of, say, a cooking pot: how the shape and decoration varies from one village or one family to the next” (*SI* 104). Her remarks reinforce the main character’s skeptical position towards past collecting practices when she goes on to discuss that artifacts have been acquired indiscriminately because “[t]he prevailing wisdom was that you had to gather *everything*: a hammer or a pair of scissors might tell you as much about a culture as a sacred fetish—suddenly release its inner secrets, like some codex” (104). She becomes more outspoken as she comes to her conclusion that only after the collections have swollen “we Europeans started to suspect that it had been a bit shitty to take all these objects in the first place. So now, [...] we’ve got these store-rooms full of crap we’ll never show, or even understand” (104). The museum, or more precisely its storage space where the collections not currently on display are stored, is then presented from the point of view that sees this type of storage, despite the objects themselves being stored safely, as equal to oblivion because they have been forgotten despite them having been collected and safely stored:

What do you think, for example, she [the curator] asked, opening another

cabinet and pulling out a strange wicker contraption, this thing is for? [...] Who knows? We don't. We won't. We haven't even catalogued half this stuff. What should we do with it? Why not return it? I asked. That doesn't work, she answered curtly. The tribe's descendants don't know what this wicker thing is either; they've all got mobile phones and drink Coke. [...] So they pile up here. She cast her glance first one way, then another, down the rows of cabinets, and we stood in silence for a moment. Sometimes, I feel like I'm in the final scene in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, where they stash the holy relic in a box exactly like all the other boxes in some warehouse that just stretches to infinity. Or *Citizen Kane*: same thing, but the artefacts are heading for the fire. This, she said, sweeping her now-dirty glove around once more, isn't fire; but it's oblivion all the same." (105, italics in original)

The archive, to which such a storage of a museum as described in the passage corresponds, is defined by Aleida Assmann, "as a collection and conservation point for what has gone but should not be lost, [...] as a reverse image of the rubbish dump, where what is past is collected and left to rot" (369-70). For her, then, "[a]rchive and rubbish dump can also be interpreted as emblems and symptoms for cultural memory and oblivion" (ibid.). The passage in *SI* challenges this view because the curator's opinion of the safely stored collection of her museum erases the dialectic opposition between archive as cultural memory and landfill as oblivion because the items preserved in her archive are forgotten as well.

Edna Andrews's explication of Jurij Lotman's thesis of how meaning is only produced "as information is translated across" semiospheres (46) is a framework that can be utilized to highlight the spatial aspect of why the collected items in *SI* became meaningless, and as a result forgotten. Operating with Lotman's understanding that meaning only arises when movement between distinct culturally continuously redefined areas of sign processes is accompanied by resignification, it can be specified why the indiscriminate collecting behavior that is discussed in *SI* resulted in the artifacts losing their meaning. The collected items, which in this context can be understood as "foreign text[s] or 'non text[s]'" to the semiosphere that the collectors belong to, were transported over a semiospheric boundary without having been "reorganized into a text in one of the available codes of the semiosphere itself," so that the old meaning could not be transferred over the boundary and no new meaning was produced because no "translation [...] occur[red] across the semiospheric boundary" (Andrews 46).

As a result of irresponsible collecting that ripped the items out of their original spaces and cultural contexts without even transferring over to the collectors a basic knowledge of the items' meaning for the societies that they were being separated

from, the collection is established as being comprised of trash. With its meaningless collection the museum loses, by extension, its positive connotation, as being the ultimate space for the preservation of items including their context, function and history for posterity. The items are safely stored in the museum's storage, which is referred to, as a "bunker" (*SI* 104), which emphasizes its isolation, without any connection to their history and, as a result, without any chances of being displayed and thus without any connection to the world—apart from visits by a select a few, such as the curator and the main character, who, as the scene illustrates, also lack any understanding of the artifacts. The artifacts are physically intact but, ultimately, forgotten.

The archive of the museum is thus resignified to a landfill, despite its concern with the physical safety of the items stored there, because the collected objects are trash, as a result of their original cultural values not having been noted as they were collected. The collection being completely isolated in the "bunker" reinforces the identification of the archive with a landfill as the items that are locked away without any information on them have no value even to those who could gain access to them—neither to the curator, who thinks of them as "crap we'll never show, or even understand" (104), nor to the descendants of their original owners because they have lost any connection to the items as well, as the statement that "they've all got mobile phones and drink Coke" (105) is meant to imply. This loss of value is central to the resignification of the items to trash. Michael Thompson's rubbish theory postulates that a transfer from the category of "the Transient," which suggests that the value of the objects in the category decreases with time, to that of "the Durable," which reverses the effect of time on the objects in the category so that their value increases over time, is only possible through the intermediary, "covert" category of rubbish, in which items have no value and thus time loses its relevance as well (*Rubbish* 10, 26-7; "Time's" 321-322). The isolated artifacts, the function of which is not known to anyone anymore, thus become trash because they have no value that could increase or decrease over time.

This archive becomes, then, not, as Foucault would have it, a heterotopia, "in which time never stops building up and topping its own summit" through the "perpetual and indefinite accumulation of time in an immobile place" (26), rather, because of its disregard for history, a non-place in Marc Augé's sense. Augé writes of the non-places of supermodernity that in them "[t]here is no room there for history

unless it has been transformed into an element of spectacle” (103). Although turning history into a spectacle is precisely the normal *modus operandi* of a museum (cf. Augé 68, 73) the “the rooms and art objects” of which, as Georges Bataille says, “form only the container, the content of which is formed by the visitors” (22), this is not the case with the archive in *SI* because there is no history to transform into a spectacle and communicate to the visitors. This archive is the ultimate non-place in that even the element of spectacle is missing because the archived items cannot be exhibited to the public without knowing their historical relevance. This amounts in the framework of conceptual frames to the default value of the frame associated with an archive ‘a place to preserve both the physical condition and the history related to the stored artifacts’ becoming no longer appropriate to conceptualize the specific archive that the protagonist visits, thus leading to its resignification.

Data in digital space as gift and malicious genie

In addition to resignifications of spatial frames there are examples in the text for the main character’s reinterpretations of digital spaces. These satisfy the fictional consciousness’s need to make sense of such abstract spaces. In the following the two examples of the protagonist’s interpretation of the icon that indicates the buffering of an online video and his perception of the fragility of the digital desktop’s purity in the face of continuously incoming data are analyzed.

When a video that U watches on the internet starts buffering, the narrator informs the reader that it

didn’t bother me, though; I’d spend long stretches staring at the little spinning circle on my screen, losing myself in it. Behind it, I pictured hordes of bits and bytes and megabytes, all beaver away to get the requisite data to me; behind them, I pictured a giant *über*-server, housed somewhere in Finland or Nevada or Uzbekistan: stacks of memory banks, satellite dishes sprouting all around them, pumping out information non-stop, more of it than any single person would need in their lifetime, pumping it all my way in an endless, unconditional and grace-conferring act of generosity. *Datum est*: it is given. It was this gift, I told myself, this bottomless and inexhaustible torrent of giving, that made the circle spin: the data itself, its pure, unfiltered content as it rushed into my system, which, in turn, whirled into streamlined action as it started to reorganise it into legible form. The thought was almost sublimely reassuring. (*SI* 73)

The concentration of the paragraph solely on the imaginary space in the protagonist’s mind in the form of thought report implies the character’s losing him in the imaginary space and being completely withdrawn from the actual space that he is

in, where he sits before the screen, and to which he pays no attention at the moment. Accordingly, as a result of the distancing feature of digital spaces that disconnects the perceivers from their actual surroundings the linking function that Alan Palmer attributes to thought report, “whereby the narrator, in presenting a character’s consciousness, connects it to its surroundings” (76), is shifted as well. The fictional consciousness is not connected to its actual surroundings but to the digital space. In the concrete example even this connection is problematized insofar as although the thoughts are still connected to the digital space of the browser window containing the buffering video on the digital desktop, this space fades away as well for the perceiver whose perception is directed towards imaginary spaces extending behind the spinning circle that indicates the buffering.

As McCarthy summarizes in a Q&A session, “the narrator in my new novel is obsessed with buffering [...] [a]nd the first thought he has is that this is not ultimately a technological situation, it’s a theological situation” (“buffering” 35). This is so, he goes on, because

“Data” means *gift* and these servers are gifting all this data to you in this unconditional act of endless generosity and data angels are dancing on the pinhead of your Wi-Fi. And this places you inside the universe of information and effectively of Being, but it’s also incredibly anxious because you haven’t *got* it yet; it’s *coming*.” (McCarthy “buffering” 36, italics in original; cf. “Meteomedia” 14)

The anticipation and the imagining of the source of the “gift” problematizes Paul Virilio’s observation that “[w]ith the new instantaneous communications media, arrival supplants departure: without necessarily leaving, everything ‘arrives’” (“Overexposed” 384) in that buffering introduces a delay into the receiving of the gift. This shows that instantaneous does not always mean immediate, and imagining the data banks and “data angels” as sources reintroduce the departure of the data into its journey. The alternative of not extending the space behind the circle would result, according to McCarthy, in a “Nietzschean counter-thought” that poses the questions “what if it’s just a circle and nothing else? What if there is no connection or the connection was never there? What if it’s just a stupid little circle and there are no angels?” (“buffering” 36).

U’s extension into depth of the spinning circle that indicates work being done by imagining the indicated work actually taking place somewhere located behind the pixels amounts to a relocation of distant spaces and actions to the digital landscape displayed on the screen, but hidden behind the spinning wheel that he is looking at.

This emphasizes the characteristic of space making concepts visible, which Henri Lefebvre attributes to it (410-11, Shields 150), because the connection in the character's mind of the abstract processes that are in progress, as indicated by the spinning of the wheel on the screen, with geographical, albeit unspecific spaces that are "located somewhere in Finland or Nevada or Uzbekistan," makes the process for him almost palpable. The fictional consciousness's imagining geographical spaces behind the spinning wheel reinforces the notion that "[i]magination as mediation is not replaced by the development of digital media, but remains the basis of our approach to them," as Karin Wenz and Friedrich Block point out (123). This is because during the process of perception the screen and the spinning icon become in the character's mind an interface through which one can enter another—imaginary—world that aids his understanding of processes that are only hinted at schematically on the digital screen space. Having thus understood the processes indicated by the icon, the main character is not annoyed by the delay because he understands and even appreciates the work that is being carried out somewhere in order to process his request.

The process of charging spatial elements during the cognitive process with "individual significance" (Hallet and Neumann 25, 27, my translation; cf. Würzbach 5), which contributes to the characterization of the protagonist, simultaneously emphasizes that the narrative adopts the character's point of view. The narration thus utilizes in the passage the concept that "[d]ata is what centers us inside the universe" (McCarthy "Meteomedia" 14).

The spatialization of the digital space on the screen itself is a typical behavior. On a general level, as Marie-Laure Ryan puts it, referring to the findings of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, "language is a vast reservoir of fossilized metaphors, through which we talk about abstract entities in concrete terms [...] [and] [b]ecause the fundamental human experience consists of apprehending ourselves as bodies located in space [...] the vast majority of these metaphors invoke spatial concepts" ("Cyberspace" introduction, cf. Fludernik 30 on embodiment). "We exist and," as McCarthy puts it differently in an essay, "assume subjectivity to the extent that we occupy a spot in or traverse the grid" ("Stabbing" 186), echoing Maurice Merleau-Ponty's assertion that "existence is spatial" (342). Returning to digital spaces specifically, this results in what Ryan calls our "habit of thinking of computers as machines that take us into a separate reality—a domain conceived in terms of spatial

metaphors” (“Cyberspace” introduction). “There is nothing inherently spatial about a collection of documents stored on computers and made accessible to us through fiber optic cables,” she goes on, “except for the physical location of the computers and of the cables themselves” (Ryan “Cyberspace” introduction). The protagonist pictures in the passage exactly these inherently spatial aspects by imagining the “über-server” and its “torrent of giving,” which implies a spatial connection between the giver and receiver. In another essay McCarthy traces back the notion of interconnectedness, which culminates in the internet and which U in the passage pictures behind the spinning wheel, citing Vladimir Janković’s *Reading the Skies: A Cultural History of English Weather*, to the publication of the first weather map that changed “[t]he meaning of locality [...] from its status as an exclusive end of investigation to a specimen in a larger entity, a point on a grid” (qtd. in “Meteomedia” 13).

The role of materiality, which is often downplayed in connection with digitized media, as Maria van den Boomen summarizes (8), is stressed in the character’s perception of the digital object. The process of the character’s making sense of the spinning wheel is presented as one confirming the general thesis that Winfried Fluck formulates as “we already interpret what we see in the act of registering it” (23). Martin Heidegger implied the same by pointing out that “[i]t requires a very artificial and complicated attitude in order to “hear” a “pure noise”” (*Being* 153) because “[i]n immediate perception, we never really perceive a throng of sensations, e.g. tones and noises” (“Origin” 8). His example of us not hearing just sounds or noises, “[r]ather, we hear the storm whistling in the chimney” (Heidegger “Origin” 8), can be transferred to the character’s perception in the passage. His eyes register the moving pixels on his screen that constitute “the little spinning circle” but his mind is picturing something material, something clearly locatable in space behind it that is responsible for its spinning, the “giant über-server, housed somewhere in Finland or Nevada or Uzbekistan,” consisting of “stacks of memory banks, satellite dishes sprouting all around them, pumping out information” (*SI* 73). This way the fictional consciousness reintroduces into the abstract digital representation of a spinning circle on the screen materiality by picturing the somewhere in the world existing servers whose workings the spinning of the circle is meant to represent in an abstract way.

The imagination of the fictional consciousness that connects digital to analog spaces plays a similar mediating role in perceiving the digital desktop. As the

protagonist begins work on a large project he starts by preparing his workspace, his desk, by cleaning it. After he has meticulously cleaned the top of his desk and prepares to start writing on his computer he creates, perceiving it as an extension of the actual desktop, a similarly clean, distraction-free digital space to work in: “Placing my laptop in the middle—the exact, geometric centre—of this clearing [on the desk], I opened a fresh document and stretched its borders out until it filled my screen entirely” (*SI* 97). The clear digital space, however, proves to be more fragile than the clearing produced on the desk and is instantly ruined by an accident, by extending the movement of a finger too far on the trackpad when stretching the window’s borders.

As I did this, though, just as the document’s expanding lower boundary reached the bottom of my screen, my finger momentarily lost contact with the glide-pad; when the finger made contact again, it caused the applications docked invisibly at the screen’s base to pop up, impinging on the clean neutrality both of the screen and of my mind. Trying to hide them once more, I accidentally tapped on the docked news page, which slipped from its box, inflating as it rose, like some malicious genie, taking the screen over—and in an instant, all the extraneous clutter, all the world-debris, that I’d so painstakingly eliminated flooded back into the clearing, ruining it. (97)

The passage emphasizes the notion of the workspace, both actual and digital, being an extension of one’s mind by linking the cluttering of the digital space, its “clean neutrality” being impinged on, with that of the character’s mind. The exclusion of “the extraneous clutter,” of spaces and events irrelevant to the achievement of one’s current goals, corresponds to the characteristics that Friedrich Nietzsche, referring to Goethe, has attributed to the man of action. Nietzsche says that the man of action “forgets most things so as to do one thing, he is unjust towards what lies behind him, and he recognizes the rights only of that which is now to come into being and no other rights whatever” (64). It is this focus on one thing that U transfers from his mind to the screen, which he wants to be occupied by nothing else than the fresh document, which will enable him to start writing. As the focus of the screen on the work ahead of him is ruined by the intrusion of distracting news items, so is the focus of his mind, which becomes involuntarily distracted by the items that pop up on the screen. This happens already as they rise from the dock, as the metaphor of the “genie” illustrates by implying that the character’s mind is occupied by the task of coming up with the metaphor instead of focusing on the writing that he planned to do.

The digital “docked news page” becoming, as it “inflates” from the dock on the

digital space of the screen, for the perceiving character a “malicious genie” shows how elements of the abstract space of the digital desktop are related to analog—albeit in this case fantastic—concepts. This reinforces the assertion that “[i]magination [...] remains the basis of our approach” to digital media (Wenz and Block 123) because it helps us finding in digital spaces similar aspects to real spaces. This way we can establish a “sense of familiarity” that, as the computer scientist Paul Dourish says, “smooths interaction” (99). In this case, however, the “genie” is “malicious” because it is the visible symptom on the screen space of failed interaction, of a “finger [involuntarily] los[ing] contact with the glide-pad.” This suggests that to imagination, should interaction go wrong, humor should be added as “the basis of our approach” to digital spaces.

Conclusion

Narratives construct characters as fictional consciousnesses that readers can relate to by embedding them into a story world not merely by situating and letting them act in it but by telling or showing how they understand and interpret their surroundings. Utilizing characters' perception of spaces and contributing cognitive processes in narratives for characterization and the establishment of a point of view can be accomplished in such a way that not only the mimesis is strengthened but that the process of the constant cultural production and reproduction of the meaning of spaces is foregrounded. I argue that this is how McCarthy incorporates into his fictional works the interaction between his characters and the spaces that surround them.

The narration of the resignification of spaces in *MiS* relies on fictional consciousnesses' blending of different input spaces during perception. The introduction of spatial elements that are central to the plot as recurring input spaces that influence characters' mental blended spaces throughout the narrative enhances the cohesion of the text and reinforces the recurring input spaces as central elements.

The cosmonaut is introduced as a man stranded in space in a story within the story whose uncertain situation is related to the uncertainty of a changing Prague after the collapse of the Soviet Union, whereby the cultural recoding of spaces is highlighted. Afterwards the saint of an icon painting that shows his ascension is brought, as another man levitating in space, into the story. The discourse then utilizes characters' knowledge of these men in space and of the characteristics of the spaces that they inhabit as recurring input spaces for characters' interpretations of spaces that they perceive. Characters' perception and resignification of spatial frames under the influence of elements of the cosmonaut-story and/or the icon painting thus becomes a defining feature of the narrative.

Space is a central element for the protagonist's reenactments that *Remainder* focuses on. It is the evocative power of spaces that brings to the protagonist's traumatized mind in a friend's bathroom the image of a similar space in which he remembers having felt a certain way and having been able to interact with his surroundings in a perfectly seamless way, akin to an actor in a movie scene. The idea of the first reenactment is thus born as an attempt to reinduce that way of feeling by entering that space again. This hinges on an understanding of space as a twofold matrix for making concepts through their implementation in it real and for certain

events and actions that are then meant to induce certain ways of feeling in the one who participates in the events and performs the actions.

The main character's quest for the most profound feeling thus drives him to an ever closer approximation of the space of the reenactments to that of the reenacted, from the imperfectly remembered apartment complex to the perfectly rebuilt tire shop and ultimately to the actual spot on a street where a shooting took place. The last act, the bank heist, brings the connection between spaces and actions carried out in them, which all the reenactments investigate, forcefully to show by illustrating that transplanting certain actions to certain spaces can resignify those actions, which makes the performance of the heist at an actual bank not a reenactment any more.

C captures the profundity of the modern experience of the world that was at the beginning of the twentieth century brought about through the increasing availability and improvement of technologies invented in the previous century by showing how the perception of something as fundamental as space was changed.

As the protagonist, Serge, is being born the family estate is introduced as a spatial frame with clear boundaries and a clear connection through the adaption of its spaces to the action, to the silk making process, carried out in them. This spatial configuration is disturbed by the father's obsessive experiments with telecommunication because he is not involved in the traditional silk making process, which is well embedded into the estate, and introduces into it the modern technology that is aimed at canceling out the clear-cut boundaries of the estate and thus threatens its autonomy. The resignification of the estate from an imposing autonomous household to a small spot on a through transmission interconnected grid of continuous vast space is set forth by Serge's own nightly telecommunication sessions in his teens.

The thus already changing meaning of space is further altered for the protagonist during World War I because of his posting in the air force, which enables him to simultaneously experience flying and telecommunication. Seemingly overcoming at the same time through technology the constraints that space imposes on the distance that the human body, and its voice, is able to influence, interact with and thus control leads to the fictional consciousness's experiencing a feeling of a mastery over space.

After the war Serge tries to recapture the sensation of being in control of space through driving at high speeds, which affords the driver the illusion of pressing the

space before the car flat by operating the throttle and propelling the car forward. The feeling of being in control, however, is undermined through the interference into the experience of another new technology, of cinema, that heightens the emerging impression of passivity as the driver's control exponentially diminishes over the accelerating vehicle. Ultimately, *C* shows that a mastery over space through technology is merely a fleeting illusion.

Resignifications of spaces are a returning feature in *SI*, which features a number of vignettes that highlight how the protagonist (re)interprets spaces. This way, processes that are incorporated into the perception of spaces are laid bare by calling attention to how the fictional consciousness alters, and thus challenges, default values of conceptual frames used in the conceptualization of certain spaces.

A scene at an airport terminal shows how the perception of spaces can be altered by the accessibility of hypertexts on location on the spaces currently occupied. Inversely, the protagonist's interpretation of digital spaces underlines how analog concepts are utilized in order to make sense of abstract digital spaces. The further examples of resignifications of spaces do not rely on digital media but are just as telling of how the process of resignification works. As a result of the protagonist's aestheticization of waste, a recycling plant is assigned uniquely positive values in a dream of his and the related default value of cleanliness associated with hospitals is erased in his conceptual frame of a hospital. An archive of a museum is introduced as another space that becomes for the protagonist resignified because of a change in a default value associated with the concept of a space. An archive should, according to a default value associated with its conceptual frame, preserve, in addition to the physical condition of the items, information on them as well. However, the history of the items in the archive at hand has not been recorded so that it becomes a place without history.

The selected examples illustrate that the narration of fictional consciousnesses' resignifications of spaces and their utilization as a plot-driving factor is a returning feature in all four of McCarthy's novels. To be able to account for how these incorporate into the narration processes that contribute to the resignifications an interdisciplinary approach is necessary. In this thesis I have focused on highlighting the connections between the various fields. Future research on space in the work of McCarthy—or in fiction generally—will surely investigate in greater detail how characters' resignifications of spaces affect readers, more specifically their mental

image of narrative space, which they construct utilizing conceptual frames in connection with information provided by the text and alter throughout the reading process as the text imparts more information.

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Abstract

Realizing characters as fictional consciousnesses in narratives that readers can relate to entails embedding them into a story world not just by situating and letting them act in it but by considering how they understand and interpret their surroundings. The strategy of considering in narration the perception of spaces and contributing cognitive processes for characterization and the establishment of a point of view can be utilized not only to strengthen mimesis but to highlight how the meaning of spaces is constantly culturally produced and reproduced. This can lead to the challenging of established meanings of spaces. The thesis argues that the contemporary British novelist Tom McCarthy's four fictional works, *Men in Space*, *Remainder*, *C*, and *Satin Island*, all prominently feature resignifications of spaces in such a way that processes that contribute to the resignification of spaces are foregrounded, but with each focusing on different aspects of the process.

Characters in *Men in Space* resignify their environment by relating it to embedded spaces of a story within the story and of an icon painting, around the copying and smuggling of which the story revolves. The ontologically different embedded spaces thus feature as input spaces for characters' conceptual blending that aids them understanding and interpreting the spaces that they inhabit, whereby the perceived spaces become resignified.

The reenactments that the protagonist in *Remainder* organizes investigate the effect that space has on actions that are carried out in it and on those who perform those actions. This culminates in the performance of a rehearsed sequence of actions that constitute a heist at an actual bank where the change of venue results in violence that ultimately makes the reenactment into an actual heist and demonstrates how spaces contribute to the significance of actions.

C presents through the life story of its protagonist the change in the perception of space that marked the beginning of the twentieth century in Europe. The spatial resignifications in it hinge upon the availability to the main character of technologies specific to that point in history, such as motor cars, airplanes, wireless transmission, and cinema, which change how he experiences space.

Similarly, *Satin Island* contains, in addition to resignifications of public spaces, such as a hospital and an archive, spatial resignifications to which the setting of the story in time is relevant. These require digital technologies, which are available to the

protagonist because of the contemporary setting, and include the resignification of an airport through its description by a digital text and the necessity of resignifications for the protagonist to make sense of abstract digital spaces.

Abriss

Die Konstruktion von solchen Charaktere in Erzähltexten, die die Leser als fiktionale Bewusstseine nachvollziehen können, bedingt die Einbindung der Charaktere in die Welt der Erzählung nicht nur durch ihre Unterbringung darin und dadurch, dass sie ihre Aktionen dort ausüben, sondern zusätzlich dadurch, dass darauf Rücksicht genommen wird, wie sie ihre Umgebung verstehen und interpretieren. Die Strategie der Rücksichtnahme in der Charakterisierung und Perspektivierung auf die Wahrnehmung der Charaktere von Raum generell und von spezifischen Räumen und auf dazugehörige kognitive Vorgänge kann nicht nur für die Stärkung der Mimesis in der Erzählung eingesetzt werden, sondern für die Hervorhebung der konstanten kulturellen Produktion und Reproduktion der Bedeutung von Raum und Räumen. Dies kann dazu führen, dass bestehende Raumsignifikationen in Frage gestellt werden. Die Arbeit argumentiert, dass die vier belletristischen Werke der zeitgenössischen britischen Autor Tom McCarthy, „Men in Space“, „Remainder“, „C“ und „Satin Island“, alle Raumresignifikationen in den Vordergrund stellen, wobei sie den Akzent auf jeweils verschiedene Aspekte des Prozesses setzen.

In „Men in Space“ kommt es zu einer Resignifikation der Umgebung der Charaktere dadurch, dass sie sie umgebende Räume mit den in die Geschichte eingebetteten Räumen einer Binnenerzählung und einer Ikone, um deren Fälschung und Schmuggel sich die Geschichte dreht, in Beziehung bringen. So fungieren die ontologisch anderen eingebetteten Räume als Input-Räume für das konzeptuelle Blending, das die fiktionalen Bewusstseine ausüben, um ihre Umgebung, die sie hiermit resignifizieren, zu verstehen und interpretieren.

Die Reenactments, die der Protagonist in „Remainder“ organisiert, untersuchen den Effekt, der Raum auf die in ihm durchgeführten Aktionen und auf die Akteure hat. Diese gipfeln in der Ausführung einer eingeübten Abfolge von Handlungen, die einen Raubüberfall ausmachen, in einer tatsächlichen Bank, wo die Wechsel des Ortes zu Gewalt führt, die das Reenactment schließlich zu einem echten Raub macht und vorführt wie Räume die Signifikanz von Handlungen beeinflussen.

„C“ stellt durch die Lebensgeschichte des Protagonisten den Wahrnehmungswandel dar, der den Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts in Europa auszeichnete. Die Raumresignifikationen im Buch hängen von der Verfügbarkeit von Technologien ab, die spezifisch für die damalige Zeit sind, wie Automobile, Flugzeuge, der Rundfunk und das Kino, und die die Raumerfahrung des Protagonists ändern.

„Satin Island“ beinhaltet, neben solchen wie eines Krankenhauses und eines musealen Archivs, Raumresignifikationen, für die die Gegebenheiten des Zeitabschnittes, in dem die Geschichte spielt, ähnlich wichtig sind. Diese erfordern digitale Technologien, zu denen die Hauptfigur Zugang hat, weil die Geschichte in der Gegenwart abspielt, und beinhalten die Resignifikation eines Flughafens, die durch dessen Beschreibung in einem digitalen Text ausgelöst ist, und die Darstellung der Notwendigkeit der Resignifikation von abstrakten digitalen Räumen zu ihrem Verständnis.