

TU Dortmund

Anglistik und Amerikanistik

English 101

WS 1998

Heterotopian Qualities in *King Rat*

"Harry is happy" (Rowling 134).

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In this paper, I intend to outline heterotopian qualities in the urban fantasy novel *King Rat* by China Mieville. Due to the inherently tiny scope of this paper, I focus on one particular scene, which I intend to analyse in more detail, instead of analysing the novel in a broader context. I have chosen the topic of Foucault's heterotopias with the intention of connecting the theoretical knowledge learnt in the British Cultural Studies lecture to a novel read in the pro-seminar. Assessing heterotopian features in the novel read in our British Urban Fantasy class is relevant because of its link to urbanity and spaces. Moreover, Foucault and heterotopias specifically have been mentioned in the seminar as well.

In regard to my thesis statement, I hypothesize that the scene at hand reveals instances of

Foucault's concept of heterotopias, which help propel the story and illustrate new information about characters to the reader. I would like to structure my paper by briefly outlining both the scene of focus as well as heterotopias generally, then critically assessing my findings in the scene, and finally offering a concluding overview of my findings as well as limitations. My analysis consists of illustrating Foucault's heterotopias, and analysing traits of the scene matching those heterotopian qualities. In addition, I attempt to evaluate their effects on the reader and the story progression.

