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“To Know Where I Have Got To”:

The Postmodern Chronotope in Beckett’s *Malone Dies* and Coetzee’s *Foe*

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
Department of English
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ABSTRACT

This study addresses two works of fiction—Samuel Beckett’s *Malone Dies* and J. M. Coetzee’s *Foe*—and is separated into two chapters. The first chapter analyzes the indeterminate nature of postmodern space within the two novels as related to M. M. Bakhtin’s idea of the chronotope found in his work *The Dialogic Imagination*. The second chapter addresses the self-reflexive creation of this postmodern space within each novel’s hypodiegetic narratives and discussions of narrative creation within each respective diegetic narratives.

In each novel, characters as authors create or discuss “inner” narratives that reflect upon the way chronotopes are created in fiction and reveal problematic aspects of those chronotopes. This narrative creation produces what I call a “postmodern creative chronotope” that self-reflexively embraces indeterminacy at the same time that it critiques the elements that produce this indefinite relationship between time and space, a strategy that is especially postmodern. I contextualize the discussion by introducing theories of postmodernism, specifically those of Jean-François Lyotard and Linda Hutcheon. Lyotard’s claim that postmodernism resists totalizing structures and Hutcheon’s contention that it engages in a simultaneous complicity and critique inform the relationships between time and space in both Beckett’s and Coetzee’s text.

Additionally, theories of postmodern space contribute to the more specific discussion of the postmodern chronotopes in both novels. Spatial theorists like Edward Soja and Henri Lefebvre, among others, have attempted to reassert issues of space in what has been an ontological and epistemological framework that has prioritized time. Their reassertion of spatiality reconnects the two halves of the spatio-temporal framework of the chronotope in narrative. Beckett and Coetzee employ similar indeterminate and self-reflexive chronotopal strategies in their novels. Coetzee, however, inserts a number of global/political issues into his self-reflexive discussion of chronotopal creation and definition.

Introduction

I did not want to write, but I had to resign myself to it in the end. It is in order to know where I have got to, where he has got to. (Beckett, *Malone Dies* 207)

We are accustomed to believe that our world was created by God speaking the Word; but I ask, may it not rather be that he wrote it, wrote a Word so long we have yet to come to the end of it? May it not be that God continually writes the world, the world and all that is in it? (Coetzee, *Foe* 143)

In his essay, “Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel,” M. M. Bakhtin establishes a direct relationship between literary time and space, establishing what he calls the chronotope. Implying a complex relationship between space, time, and narrative, Bakhtin explains a series of generic techniques that have been employed throughout narrative history and explains their particular spatio-temporal frameworks, mapping out the various shifts that have occurred within narrative space-time.

Bakhtin is not the only twentieth-century critic to study the relationship between time and space in the narrative. In “Spatial Form in the Modern Novel,” Joseph Frank employs aspects from *Laocoön, or On the Limits of Painting and Poetry*, G. E. Lessing’s

eighteenth-century analysis of the spatio-temporal elements of poetry and painting. In his text, Lessing distinguishes painting's spatial representation of a temporal instant with literature's use of language (a succession of words) to relate an event. Literature, then, is inherently temporal for Lessing, while painting is spatial.¹ Frank argues that early-twentieth-century authors such as Ezra Pound, James Joyce, and Gustav Flaubert attempt to invert this relationship. Modern literature, he states, "is moving in the direction of spatial form" (8).²

Frank's analysis, like Lessing's initial work, relies upon the disjunction of time and space (Holtz 277).³ Neither Lessing nor Frank addresses the possibility that time and space may exist within a kind of complementary relationship, as has been theorized by twentieth-century physicists like Albert Einstein. Conversely, Bakhtin's chronotope, inspired by Einstein's theory of relativity,⁴ offers a more sophisticated and nuanced understanding of literary time and space. Whereas Frank and Lessing disconnect time from space, Bakhtin's chronotope demands an essential interconnectedness that establishes definitions for space and time through their relationship to one another.

Unfortunately, Bakhtin's chronotopal analysis—begun in 1937, not completed until 1973, and translated into English in 1981—includes texts from no later than the

¹ Lessing's text is by no means the first to address this spatio-temporal relationship between painting and literature. In the *Ars Poetica* (ca. 10 B.C.E.), Horace states, "Poetry is like painting. Some attracts you more if you stand near, some if you're further off" (132). *Laocoön* is, in fact, largely a response to this classical simile.

² For example, in his analysis of Proust, Frank states that "to experience the passage of time, [...] it was necessary to rise above it and to grasp both past and present simultaneously in a moment of what he called 'pure time,'" a sensation that is not temporal (24).

³ Some critics of Frank's essay have challenged the oversimplification in his claim that modern literature inverts Lessing's space/time relationship. For example, William Holtz contends that Frank "has allowed himself to be misled by the pictorial metaphor which [...] introduces irrelevancies when used as an analogy to argue from painting to literature" (274).

⁴ Bakhtin states that the chronotope (space-time) "is employed in mathematics, and was introduced as part of Einstein's Theory of Relativity. [...] [W]e are borrowing it for literary criticism almost as a metaphor (almost, but not quite)" (84). For further discussion of the relationship between relativity and the chronotope, see Holquist 158-62.

nineteenth century. Limited by history and perhaps restricted by Soviet censorship to those particular texts,⁵ Bakhtin's analysis of the chronotope includes no modern or postmodern novels. This study attempts to fill in a small portion of this critical gap. Addressing the spatio-temporal strategies employed within Samuel Beckett's *Malone Dies* (1956) and J. M. Coetzee's *Foe* (1986), it attempts to establish the epistemological and ontological dialogues in the chronotopes of these postmodern narratives.

These two texts employ similar strategies that distinguish them within the broad spectrum that is the postmodern novel and offer particularly focused views of the postmodern chronotope. In both works, characters as authors create or discuss "inner" narratives that reflect upon the way chronotopes are created in fiction and reveal problematic aspects of those chronotopes. This narrative creation produces what I call a "postmodern creative chronotope" that embraces indeterminacy at the same time that it self-reflexively critiques the elements that produce this indefinite relationship between time and space.

Jean-François Lyotard offers a distinction between modernist and postmodernist narratives that helps to clarify the indefinite nature of the postmodern creative chronotope within *Malone Dies* and *Foe*. He contends that, for postmodern knowledge, "consensus is a horizon that is never reached" (61). Knowledge is always in the process of being made and redefined. Similarly, we can say that the postmodern chronotope never arrives at a unified definition. For Lyotard, modernist narratives "allows the unrepresentable to be put forward only as the missing contents" (81) Postmodernism, on the other hand, "puts forward the unrepresentable in presentation itself." If we think of this in regards to the

⁵ Bakhtin began writing his essay on the chronotope one year after returning from exile in Kazakhstan.

chronotope, postmodernism directly addresses the dialogue within the continuous process of establishing chronotopal definition.

Contemporary theories of postmodern space also serve to contextualize this discussion of Beckett's and Coetzee's novels. Spatial theorists like Edward Soja and Henri Lefebvre attempt to reassert issues of space in what has been a predominantly temporal framework in twentieth-century geography. Whereas modern concepts of geography are predominantly subordinated to statistical and historical frameworks, Lefebvre and Soja, among others, reemphasize the importance of space and spatiality as ways of knowing the world. I use their reassertion of spatiality as a method of seeing the way that postmodernism reconnects the two halves of the narrative chronotope.

The postmodern novel becomes a narrative space in which this reconnection and reevaluation of space and time becomes explicit, demonstrated most clearly in *Malone Dies* and *Foe*. Beckett's and Coetzee's novels engage this spatio-temporal discourse, employing similar indeterminate and self-reflexive chronotopal strategies. Coetzee, however, inserts a number of explicitly political issues into his self-reflexive discussion of chronotopal creation and definition. He addresses the role of gender, race, and empire as factors that affect the formation of particular spatio-temporal definitions throughout the text. In the first chapter, I argue that the postmodern chronotope is necessarily indeterminate and informed by theoretical reconceptions of space and time. *Malone Dies* and *Foe* constantly challenge and reevaluate spatio-temporal relations so that absolute chronotopal definition becomes impossible and, more importantly, undesired.

The second chapter addresses the self-reflexive creation of this indeterminate space within each novel's hypodiegetic narratives and discussions of narrative creation

within the diegetic narratives. By self-reflexively addressing the nature of their chronotopal frameworks, these two novels reveal their complicity in the establishment of the indeterminate (and often politically charged) chronotopal frameworks that they are critiquing. Ultimately, it is the combination of indeterminacy and self-reflexivity that distinguishes the postmodern creative chronotope from other narrative conceptions of time and space.

The two epigrams above acknowledge this spatio-temporal relationship and hint at the combination of indeterminacy and self-reflexivity within the postmodern chronotope. Furthermore, they recognize the desire to understand relationships between individual narratives, space, and time. When the eponymous, hypodiegetic narrator of Beckett's novel claims that he writes "in order to know where I have got to, where he has got to," he recognizes the spatiality implicit in the creation of narrative. Narrative becomes a means to temporarily establish location. Through writing, Malone attempts to define space. Narrative creation becomes conflated with a kind of geographic stabilization, and Malone may only locate himself within the world through writing. Location and identity become necessarily linked through the narrative process.

And when Susan Barton, the narrator of Coetzee's text, claims that "God continually writes the world [...] and all that is in it," she implies the revision and re-inscription of narrative spatial definitions. Barton conflates creation of the world and creation of narrative. By positing an overtly spatialized narrative, Coetzee's text connects the establishment of space and time. These two elements develop simultaneously and build from one another in a way that relies upon a narrative framework. Both location within the world and the continuous creation of the world through writing imply an

implicit connection between space and narrative. The continuous nature of this creation demands indeterminacy. For these novels, the connection of word and world and the continuous (temporal) creation of both demand an interrelationship between space, time, and narrative.

Chapter One:

The Spatial Turn and Indeterminacy in the Postmodern Chronotope

J. M. Coetzee, in “Homage,” discusses the influence of various authors on his own writing. Two prose authors caught his attention during his early twenties: Ford Madox Ford and Samuel Beckett. While his opinion of Ford has changed,⁶ he still claims to derive great influence from Beckett’s work.⁷ Coetzee states,

Beckett in English [...] made up something the like of which I had not seen before in the language. [...] In Beckett’s case, this comes down to a certain counterpointing of thought and syntax. [...] It comes down to a certain dancing of the intellect that is full of energy yet remains confined. [...] The deepest lessons one learns from other writers are [...] matters of rhythm, broadly conceived. (6)

Critics have noted this linguistic connection between Beckett and Coetzee,⁸ but I argue that this influence goes beyond rhythm and syntax to include issues of time and space

⁶ Concerning his changed opinion of Ford, Coetzee states, “Quite aside from the fact that Ford rarely gave himself the time to write as well as he could [...], his writing now strikes me as rather mannered in its programmatic adherence to an impressionist psychology of perception, and also infected with a certain remorselessly elegiac tone” (“Homage” 6).

⁷ In an interview with David Atwell, Coetzee has acknowledged this influence, stating, “Beckett has meant a great deal to me in my own writing—that must be obvious. He is a clear influence on my prose” (“Beckett” 25). In his introduction to the fourth volume of *The Grove Centenary Edition of Beckett’s work*, Coetzee states that “Beckett was an artist possessed by a vision of life without consolation or dignity or promise of grace. [...] It was a vision to which he gave expression in language of a virile strength and intellectual subtlety that marks him as one of the great prose stylists of the twentieth century” (xiv).

⁸ See, for example, Kellman.

within narrative. By looking at works like Beckett's *Malone Dies* and Coetzee's *Foe*, one sees both authors' concerns with narrative space and time. Both novels incorporate spatio-temporal discourse within their narratives. Implicit in these discourses is a postmodern redefinition of the relationship between literary time and space—what M. M. Bakhtin calls the chronotope—which finds its origins in the theories of postmodern geography.

Political and Ideological Space: The Indeterminate Postmodern Chronotope

In “Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel,” Bakhtin describes an “intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature” (84). Calling this connected relationship the chronotope, Bakhtin goes on to explain how time and space exist not as distinct and separable elements but, instead, as a “concrete whole.” Therefore, while we may be able to distinguish time and space abstractly, “*living* artistic perception” cannot make such a division (243). Bakhtin analyzes and defines specific chronotopes throughout literary history, from the folkloric chronotope to the chronotope of the chivalric romance to the Rabelaisian chronotope.⁹

Narrative chronotopes—no matter their particular form—depend upon the external chronotope of reality for definition. In each of these specific chronotopes, Bakhtin defines relationships between narrative space and time and acknowledges the dependence of these chronotopes on other larger spatio-temporal structures that, according to Bakhtin, include

⁹ For example, Bakhtin discusses a distinct temporal trait of folktales “about paradise, a Golden Age, a heroic age, an ancient truth” (147). These myths tend to locate idealized categories of humanity (e.g., “purpose, ideal, justice, perfection”) in the past. Calling this chronotopal trait “historical inversion,” Bakhtin acknowledges that it “is in no sense part of the past’s reality, but a thing that is in its essence a purpose, an obligation” (147).

the reality reflected in the text, the authors creating the text, the performers of the text (if they exist) and finally the listeners or readers who recreate and in so doing renew the text. (253)

Importantly, this external chronotope is both practical and theoretical. So while the narrative chronotope may depend upon practical issues (whether scientific or technological) for meaning, it relies equally upon philosophical and political elements in delineating its particular relationship between time and space. Paul Smethurst stresses the importance of maintaining this separation between the created chronotope of the narrative and the external, creating chronotope of the world, particularly when analyzing the effect of postmodernism on narrative. He posits that, in the creation of a postmodern narrative, “the boundary line between an actual world and the world as represented in the text is maintained, even if it has become, or perhaps always was, a very soft and permeable boundary” (12).

When analyzing a narrative, one must make the distinction between the diegetic narrative (including the chronotope of the story itself) and the extradiegetic world (from which the diegetic narrative receives its spatial and temporal references). For Michael Holquist, “the chronotope provides a means to explore the complex, indirect, and always mediated relationship between art and life” (111). The question then arises: is there a (postmodern) chronotope that receives its spatio-temporal structure from the theories and philosophies of postmodernism? Though establishing a mutually equal relationship, Bakhtin clearly prioritizes time over space in the chronotope. While discussing the relationship between chronotope and genre, he states that “it is precisely the chronotope that defines genre and generic distinctions, for in literature the primary category of the

chronotope is time” (85). Or consider the title of his essay: “Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel.” His spatio-temporal theories cannot resist the prioritization of time.

This temporality, however, is not surprising. As Edward Soja recognizes, space has been subordinate to time throughout twentieth-century critical theory. As an antidote, in his work Soja refers to cities like Los Angeles¹⁰ to “spatialize the conventional narrative by recomposing the intellectual history of critical social theory around the evolving dialectics of space, time, and social being” (3). Soja argues that modernism essentially stripped geography of its power and lifted history to a favored status within its theoretical framework. During the extended *fin de siècle*,

the politics and ideology embedded in the social construction of human geographies and the crucially important role the manipulation of these geographies played in the late nineteenth-century restructuring and early twentieth-century expansion of capitalism seemed to become either invisible or increasingly mystified, left, right, and centre. (34)

For Soja, modernism emphasized history at the expense of geography. Rather than an actual force in the shaping of society and theory, space became “a reflective mirror of societal modernization” (33).

Henri Lefebvre provides the impetus for a postmodern spatio-temporal realignment. Establishing a dialectic relationship between space and societal organization, Lefebvre challenges the notion of space as a primordial canvas on which societies organize themselves. Instead, for him, “(social) space is a (social) product”

¹⁰ See his self-described “free-wheeling” chapter “Taking Los Angeles Apart: Towards a Postmodern Geography” or his “more concrete regional geography” in “It All Comes Together in Los Angeles” (2-3).

(*Production* 26). While space serves to define and refine society, society also invests space with practical, political, and philosophical meanings. According to Lefebvre, the definition and redefinition of space are a political process. As he states,

If space has an air of neutrality and indifference with regard to its contents and thus seems to be “purely” formal, the epitome of rational abstraction, it is precisely because it has been occupied and used, and has already been the focus of past processes whose traces are not always evident on the landscape. Space has been shaped and molded from historical and natural elements, but this has been a political process. Space is political and ideological. It is a product literally filled with ideologies. (“Reflections” 31)

Lefebvre politicizes and prioritizes space, reclaiming its theoretical force from the modernist historicity that had once concealed it.

This reclamation of space in the dialectical framework, however, does not simply invert the power structure. Instead, this spatial turn reformulates the relationship between time and space. Existing in a constantly reactive and interactive relationship, both are constantly redefined according to their association with each other. This reassertion of the spatial viewpoint does not eliminate narrative time. Instead, it produces a radical alteration of the spatio-temporal axis. As Smethurst states,

The postmodern chronotope [...] registers a shift in sensibilities from a predominantly temporal and historiographic imagination to one much more concerned with the spatial and the geographic, as categories in their own right than as spatialised histories. (15)

These realignments of spatiality begin to reflect the external chronotope of theorists like Lefebvre and Soja, in which space becomes more than an empty vessel waiting to be filled.

Spatial reaffirmation challenges a variety of narrative theorists. For example, Soja's assertion of space in art (and literature) contests Gérard Genette's statement in *Narrative Discourse* that "the temporal determinations of the narrating instance are manifestly more important than its spatial determinations" (215). Genette goes on to state that

I can very well tell a story without specifying the place where it happens, and whether the place is more or less distant from the place where I am telling it; nevertheless it is almost impossible for me not to locate the story in time with respect to my narrating act, since I must necessarily tell the story in a present, past, or future tense. (215)

Much like the modernists that made space an adjunct of time, Genette not only prioritizes time over space; he eliminates space entirely as a determining narrative element.¹¹

But if narrative requires interconnectedness between time and space, Genette's supposed ability to tell a story without acknowledging space appears problematic. Genette's idea reflects what Lefebvre calls the "illusion of transparency," which masks the essential fact that space is a product and not an empty arena. In the illusion of transparency "space appears as luminous, as intelligible, as giving action free rein" (27). This illusion stresses speech and believes that "social transformation [can] be brought about by means of communication alone" (29). Genette emphasizes the act of telling and

¹¹ This is partially a result of Genette's focus on Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*, a text that relies heavily upon history and memory in its narrative strategies.

ignores the importance of space, thus falling prey to what Lefebvre might call “a trap, operating on the basis of its own quasi-magical power” (29).

As Patricia Yaeger describes, a realignment of spatio-temporal relationships resists the traditional or “comforting” structure of story (4). Eliminating the hierarchical relationship between time and space contests conventions that we have assimilated “from the earliest moments of childhood.” Yaeger explains the difference in perception:

Space is a fragmentary field of action [...] which appears to be negotiable or continuous but is actually peppered with chasms of economic and cultural disjunctions. In contrast, time has seemed, until recently, consolingly linear. While temporal narratives (like histories or chronologies) offer a comforting seriality that initiates the queuelike patterns of traditional narrative, space moves out in all directions at once, and it is difficult to imagine a narrative structure capable of capturing this multiplicity.

This seemingly innate order within the historical narrative is actually a product of its own fiction. The creation of the historical narrative requires a creation of its own particular chronotope. Elements that do not fit are eliminated, as are the mundane and irrelevant. The temporal narrative seems linear and reassuringly serial only because individual storytellers (e.g., historians, chronologist, authors) have constructed it to be so, having been influenced by conventions of their time and place.

Even Michel Foucault (who once admitted that “geography acted as the support, the condition for possibility for the passage between a series of factors I tried to relate” [“Questions” 77]) has serious reservations about a narrative in which space dominates. In

his book *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault's writing threatens to end in "an as yet uncharted land and unforeseeable conclusion" (39). He asks the question, "Is there not the danger that everything that has so far protected the historian [...] may disappear, leaving for analysis a blank indifferent space, lacking in both interiority and promise?" Foucault's work often relies on discourses pertaining to space.¹² Here, however, he speculates on the possible chaos of spatialized narrative.

To prevent this empty spatial narrative and see that indeterminacy does not necessarily lead to indifference, we must return to Soja. For him an essential aspect of the spatial turn is a "rejection of the totalizing 'deep logics' that blinker our ways of seeing" (73). Universalist frameworks provide artificial limitations that "blinker" us from other potential paths of understanding. Instead, Soja calls for the rejection of such epistemological absolutism. His attempt to expose "the disheveled tangle of threads that constitute the intellectual history of critical social thought" (73) parallels Jean-François Lyotard's own concept of postmodernism as an "incredulity toward metanarratives" (xxiv). Lyotard makes a sharp distinction between the modern and the postmodern. The modern is related to "any science that legitimates itself with reference to a metadiscourse [...] making an explicit appeal to some grand narrative" (xxiii). Instead of the metanarrative, postmodernism has embraced "the little narrative [*petit récit*]" as its "quintessential form of imaginative invention" (60). Instead of the grand narratives of modernism (which often reinforce or simply reverse established power structures), postmodernism produces micronarratives in which "knowledge is not simply a tool of the authorities," where "its principle is not the expert's homology, but the inventor's paralogy" (xxv). For Lyotard, postmodernism produces narratives that were silenced by

¹² e.g., the prison, the asylum.

the grand narrative. Both Lyotard and Soja reject fixity and embrace flexibility. Importantly, each sees postmodern sensibilities as rejections of certain aspects of modernism. Lyotard discards modernism's attempt (and ultimate failure) to achieve metanarrative. For Soja, postmodernism rejects modernism's prioritization of history at the expense of space.

Similarly, Linda Hutcheon discusses the way that postmodernism both undermines and reinforces the power and influence of history and narrative. Postmodernism embraces a paradoxical "complicity and critique" that "inscribes and subverts the conventions and ideologies of the dominant culture and social forces of the twentieth-century western world" (11). Hutcheon distinguishes postmodern architecture from its modern predecessor:

Postmodern architecture is plural and historical, not pluralist and historicist; it neither ignores nor condemns the long heritage of its built culture—including the modern. It uses the reappropriated forms of the past to speak to a society from within the values and history of that society, while still questioning it. (12)

Modern architecture, on the other hand, made a "deliberate break with history," in Hutcheon's view, causing "a destruction of the connection to the way human society had come to relate to space over time" (11).¹³ Postmodern architecture, on the other hand,

¹³ Frederic Jameson offers another interpretation of this break between Modern and Postmodern architecture. Using the Bonaventura Hotel in Los Angeles, Jameson believes that it embodies "postmodern hyperspace," and has "finally succeeded in transcending the capacities 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" (83). Jameson claims postmodernism has left its human subjects to wander in spaces which they have no capacity to define. The spatial indeterminacy is byproduct of the logic of late capitalism rather than an epistemological necessity. He claims that other definitions of postmodernism produce "moral judgements (about which it is indifferent whether they are positive or negative)." His

both derives from and challenges previous forms of architecture.¹⁴ Modernist architecture mirrors Soja's description of modernism's "growing submergence and dissipation of the geographical imagination, a virtual annihilation of space by time in critical social thought and discourse" (31). Soja describes how the break that modernist architecture makes with past architectural forms parallels a break within Western Marxism between history and geography throughout the twentieth century. Prior to Western Marxism's "spatial turn" in the 1960s—which he distinguishes from the "hegemonic, rigid, establishmentarian" Leninist Marxist of Eastern Europe (30)—such geographical theorization was limited to "small pockets" of urban ecology and regional historiography (38). Modern Geography was relegated to a field of measurement, thus stripping it of theoretical power.

What arises from postmodern discourse is a narrative structure with a very loose spatio-temporal axis. If we look at Hutcheon's postmodernism, space and time exist dialectically, both undermining and reasserting their roles within a particular chronotope. Postmodernism reconnects time and space, a connection that was lost in modernism. But that connection is tenuous (and constantly challenged). What Hutcheon makes most clear is postmodernism's acknowledgement that these connections—in whatever form they may exist—are cultural products rather than naturalized or essentialized frameworks (32).

produces a "genuinely dialectical attempt to think our present of time in History." In postmodern space, one is incapable of rising above ideology because it permeates everything.

Jameson sees a danger in the subversive and deconstructive nature of postmodernism. It creates the illusion of the possibility for critical distance when, in Jameson's view, such distance cannot exist. Hutcheon, on the other hand, posits that the postmodern tendency to "legitimize culture (high and mass) even as it subverts it" lessens this danger (15). For her, "the function of the irony of postmodern discourse to posit that critical distance and then undo it [...] prevents any possible critical urge to ignore or trivialize historical-political questions." Critique of the reprehensible aspect of postmodernity (like the Bonaventura Hotel) occurs while still existing within the framework of postmodernity. Jameson's critique of such postmodernism seems problematic when we consider that its use of irony challenges such moralist approaches.

¹⁴ For many critics, this is not necessarily a positive development. Smethurst describes recent trends in postmodern architecture—particularly in Hong Kong—as "diluted" and "driven by fashion and economic forces rather than design principles" (27). Hong Kong is "a city without history" for Smethurst, and seems content to simulate New York and European cities.

She sees postmodernism as a “self-conscious, self-contradictory, self-undermining statement” that attempts to “de-naturalize some of the dominant features of our way of life; to point out that those entities that we unthinkingly experience as ‘natural’ (they may include capitalism, patriarchy, liberal humanism) are in fact ‘cultural’” (1-2). In other words, postmodern space is a constantly questioned space.

Furthermore, Lyotard’s ideas and their relationship to the postmodern geographies of Lefebvre and Soja provide insight into the relationships within temporal and spatial definitions. Lyotard’s description of the end of metanarrative within postmodernism and Soja’s rejection of totalizing logics create, for the postmodern chronotope, the possibility of micro-geographies and micro-histories. Therefore, in addition to the dialectical relationship that exists *between* time and space (what I am calling “interchronotopal”), there also exists a dialectical relationship *within* the two (or “intrachronotopal”). Various spaces and definitions of spaces struggle and negotiate within a larger chronotope. Similarly, histories and temporal frameworks engage in this dialectical process. Lyotard discusses this struggle and negotiation within postmodern art:

The postmodern would be that which, in the modern, puts forward the unrepresentable in presentation itself; that which denies itself the solace of good forms, the consensus of a taste which would make it possible to share collectively the nostalgia for the unattainable; that which searches for new presentations, not in order to enjoy them but in order to present a stronger sense of the unrepresentable. (81)

The chronotope for postmodern art must then reflect this denial of “the solace of good forms” and consensus. A firm spatio-temporal alignment becomes unattainable, unnecessary, and undesirable within a postmodern chronotope.¹⁵

These postmodern theorists provide a means to analyze the spatio-temporal frameworks of Beckett’s and Coetzee’s works. These two novels offer discourses on the indeterminate relationship within and between time and space. Samuel Beckett’s *Malone Dies* (1956) and J. M. Coetzee’s *Foe* (1986), seemingly incompatible, maintain the important similarity of the postmodern chronotope. This first chapter will focus upon basic elements of the postmodern chronotope in both novels. Later, a look at the hypo- and hyper-diegetic elements in these two works will address their self-reflexivity in regards to the formations of their specific postmodern chronotopes. By focusing on the diegetic narratives, I will reveal the spatio-temporal indeterminacy of the postmodern chronotope.

“Six Planes of Solid Bone”: *Malone Dies*¹⁶

For the eponymous narrator of *Malone Dies*, even the chronotope of his room and its immediate surroundings proves dynamic and incapable of finite definition. The floor and the building in which his room is located are unclear. Through a single window, he is

¹⁵ Barry Rutland, in his essay “Bakhtinian Categories and the Discourse of Postmodernism,” offers another interpretation of the postmodern chronotope. Rather than seeing a total annihilation of the grand narrative, Rutland argues that a new metanarrative has come to replace that of “Reason and Progress”: “the Green Story of environmental conservation, sustainable growth, and equitable sharing” (133). In this new metanarrative, “nationalist-imperialist objectives” no longer dictate the world geography. Instead, geography relies on “a continuous generation of cultural energy through displacement for reinvestment in labour and consumption” for definition, requiring perpetual dialogical change.

¹⁶ I use the English title and the English translation of the text because, as many critics have noted, it is possible (and, for some, necessary) to consider *Malone Dies* and *Malone Meurt* two different works. For a discussion of Beckett’s self-translations and the problems of critical reception in French and English, see Fitch.

given a small glimpse of the outside world but is unsure of its contents. He hears noises. Time passes in intervals that he cannot fully understand. In his spatial and temporal speculations, Malone reaffirms yet resists his conclusion that “I shall go on doing as I have always done, not knowing what it is I do, nor who I am, *nor where I am*, nor if I am” (226 italics added). Despite the near impossibility of defining his surroundings, his spatial negotiation places him within a social setting that defines and affirms his existence.

Malone, at one point, makes a statement that closely parallels Hutcheon’s concept of postmodernism and its relationship to the chronotope. Differentiating between “the light of the outer world” and his own, Malone describes this outer world as a place where people “know the sun and moon emerge at such and such an hour and at such another plunge again below the surface” (221). These people in this external space “rely on this” physical sign of passing time. From this outer world and its people, Malone distinguishes his world and himself. In his internal world there is “never really light” and “all is in a kind of leaden light that makes no shadow, so that it is hard to say from what direction it comes, for it seems to come from all directions at once, and with equal force” (220). Whereas light (and absence of light) dictates periods of time within the external world, such temporal divisions are absent from Malone’s. Additionally, in the outer world, these temporal divisions have sources (e.g., the sun and the moon) that provide an important causal link between time and space. Such a link does not exist overtly in Malone’s world. His world enjoys “a kind of night and day,” but it is quite different from the night and day that he once experienced in this external world (220). Malone, at one point, states, “I see there is no possibility of making light, artificial light” (221). Colors within his room

do not “always seem to depend on the time of day” and he is able to state that “my night is not the sky’s.” Consider Malone’s personal temporal referents in terms of Hutcheon’s postmodernity, which suggests

that notions of truth, reference, and the non-cultural real have not ceased to exist [...] but that they are no longer unproblematic issues, assumed to be self-evident and self-justifying. [...] The postmodern is [...] a questioning of what reality can mean and how we come to know it (32).

Malone, by referring back to his historical existence within a specific temporal framework, recognizes the problematic definition of terms as seemingly basic as “night” and “day.”

Separated from his room by “the pane, misted and smeared with the filth of years” (198), the outer world represents a chronotope different from his own. In it, time and space are linked to the sun and the moon. People shape their lives to fit within this connection between time and space; however, for Malone’s inner world, such connections are not explicit. Time and space seem disconnected in that there are few spatial markers for the passing of time (no clear change in the light, no rising and setting sun, no moon). In Malone’s world, chronotopal structures seem to have come unglued. But this is not entirely true. As we see with his mentions of prior events and his desire to pinpoint the date, time and space in Malone’s world are not entirely separated. He admits that his world “too has its alternations, I will not deny it, its dusks and dawns, but that is what I say, for I too must have lived, once out there, and there is no recovering from that” (221).

Malone attempts (and ultimately fails) to find spatio-temporal definition for his inner world—no matter how threadbare that connection might be—through its dialectical interaction with the chronotope of the outer world and his remembrance of his time in it. While there may be no literal dawn within his room, no rising of the sun in the eastern horizon, his interaction with this outer world, which he admits must have happened at one point, has infiltrated his inner world. What we see, then, is a postmodern embrace of the historical over the historicist (Hutcheon 12). In the light and dark within and without his room, Malone has trouble establishing a totalizing formula that restricts his spatial definition. His conceptions of his current space are informed and challenged by his history in this outer, lighted world.

Similarly, the outer world (of which Malone seems to no longer be a member) exists for Malone primarily in its relationship to the inner world. It is an “other” space. His very use of the words “outer” and “old” requires an “inner” and “new” and, hence, shapes his world and its chronotope. “The old world cloisters me,” he states at one point, happy that the “search for myself has ended” (199). But, despite its supposed ending, he continues to

go back again to the lights, to the fields I so longed to love, to the sky all
astir with little white clouds as white and light as snowflakes, to the life I
could never manage, through my own fault perhaps, through pride, or
pettiness, but I don’t think so. (199)

Despite his separation and indeterminate speculation about this world outside the walls and window of his room, he depends on that world to frame his own. In this way, Malone’s dialectical chronotope embodies the postmodern tendency to undermine and

reassert simultaneously. If we return to Hutcheon's words, Malone's chronotope appears postmodern in that it "inscribes and subverts" (11) through the dialectical interactions between inner and outer worlds.

In addition to this interchronotopal action between inner and outer worlds, a variety of intrachronotopal negotiations take place, both spatially and temporally, to contribute to the overall postmodern chronotope of the narrative. In the first sentences of the novel, Malone states, rather bluntly,

I shall soon be quite dead at last in spite of it all. Perhaps next month. Then it will be the month of April or of May. Perhaps I am wrong, perhaps I shall survive Saint John the Baptist's Day and even the Fourteenth of July, festival of freedom. Indeed I would not put it past me to pant on to the Transfiguration, not to speak of the Assumption. But I do not think so, I do not think I am wrong in saying that these rejoicings will take place in my absence this year. (179)

These initial sentences situate Malone within a temporal structure related to the outer world. But it is not a structure that relies upon the phases of the moon or the alignment of stars. Instead, Malone uses holidays (both holy and political) as mile markers toward his inevitable death.¹⁷ These markers, however, shift as he continues to live. Through these religious and national events, Malone inserts the inevitable (though unpredictable) event of his death into a socially created temporal framework, one that relies upon previous human and spiritual events as markers. His attempt to predict the date of his own death is

¹⁷ Saint John the Baptist Day is on 24 June. The Fourteenth of July refers to the French *Fête Nationale* which celebrates the storming of the Bastille in 1789. The Catholic Church celebrates the Transfiguration of Christ on 6 August. The Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary is held on 15 August.

also a fairly problematic endeavor and resists exact definition. One cannot know with certainty when one's death will come until it has arrived. Malone's shaky prognostication blatantly undermines his own attempt at intrachronotopal definition by relying upon an event that cannot be determined.

Malone's inner temporal framework is imprecise at best and constantly renegotiated. The inability to pinpoint exact dates or times occurs throughout the novel, often the result of his admitted failing memory. In determining his own age, Malone declares, "I know the year of my birth [...] but I do not know what year I have got to now" (185-86). He speculates that he is an "octogenarian" but cannot be sure. He has moments when he feels that he may have always existed within his room, but these pass (249). Beckett engages in what Hutcheon describes as postmodernism's refusal "to stay neatly within accepted conventions and traditions," instead deploying "hybrid forms and seemingly mutually contradictory strategies" in an attempt to "frustrate critical attempts [...] to systematize them" (35). The reader is perpetually forced to reevaluate the chronotopal framework of the narrative because of the diverse, speculative techniques. Constantly renegotiating his existence within the room through tools as diverse (and unreliable) as religious holidays, his inevitable death, and his shaky memory prevents any systematization by both Malone and, hyperdiegetically, the reader.

Malone also has trouble establishing his exact location, further problematizing the postmodern chronotope of the narrative. He states,

Unfortunately I do not know quite what floor I am on, perhaps I am only on the mezzanine. The doors banging, the steps on the stairs, the noises in the street, have not enlightened me, on this subject. [...] Perhaps after all I

am in a kind of vault and this space which I take to be the street in reality
no more than a wide trench or ditch with other vaults opening upon it.

(219)

Hearing noises above and below him, he wonders if “there are other vaults even deeper than mine” (219). Malone even hypothesizes that his room is actually “in a head and that these eight, no, six, these six planes that enclose me are of solid bone” (221). This head, he insists, is not his own.¹⁸ But even in this hypothesis, he refuses to become completely solipsistic. If it is a skull, it is the skull of another, and he would reside in the space of the brain.¹⁹ Malone continues to look outward—to the possible skull—for his spatial definitions.

Each of Malone’s speculations offers possible, though by no means absolute, solutions for his attempt to understand his surrounding space. His spatial and temporal redefinitions serve as intrachronotopal negotiations that complement his interchronotopal interactions. His room might be within a hospital. He may also be many levels underground in some sort of prison. Or he may exist as the idea within the skull of another person. Each offers a possible—and no less likely—definition for Malone’s surroundings. So, whether weeks or minutes have passed, and whether Malone is in a vault, a hospital or another’s skull, each of Malone’s interpretations of time and space engages him in an extreme postmodern indeterminacy which, as Soja notes, resists the totalizing effect of logic and categorical thinking (Soja 73).

¹⁸ The skull as embodied space appears in many of Beckett’s works. For examples, see *Ill Seen Ill Said* (“the madhouse of the skull” [*Nohow On* 58]), the poem “The Vulture” (“dragging his hunger through the sky/of my skull shell of sky and earth” [10]), and “Not I” (“all the time the buzzing...so-called...in the ears...though of course actually...not in the ears at all...in the skull...dull roar in the skull” [407]).

¹⁹ This space can be read as Samuel Beckett’s skull. Malone, then exists only as Beckett’s creation within Beckett’s brain. The reference to authorship would further problematize the spatio-temporal relationship. See chapter two for further discussion.

Even Malone's body rejects totalization and becomes a negotiated space. As the narrative progresses, his body becomes less his own. He disassociates his identity from all of its parts, save his head. His feet "are leagues away" (234). His fingers "write in other latitudes." Even bodily acts seem to happen in other places, and he believes that "if my arse suddenly started to shit at the present moment, which God forbid, I firmly believe the lumps would fall out in Australia" (235). In his final moments, he states that "the feet are clear already, of the great cunt of existence. [...] My head will be the last to die" (283). In the process of death, his body becomes compartmentalized and prioritized. As death works its way upward from his feet through his legs and onward until finally reaching the head, Malone's body becomes a space separate from him and contributing to the chronotope in which he exists. His definition of himself shifts, as do his definitions of time and space throughout the novel, until limbs and torso become separate things and his head remains the only part that he calls "I."

For a novel as enclosed as *Malone Dies*, its chronotope forms primarily through Malone's outward observations. He looks to the window. He listens for sounds outside his room. He compares his inner light to the outer sunshine and moonlight. The chronotope finds its spatial definition in this outward reach. Similarly, the temporal aspects of the novel rely upon a constant interactivity. Bakhtin suggests that

where there is no passage of time there is also no *moment* of time. [...] If taken outside its relationship to past and future, the present loses its integrity, breaks down into isolated phenomena and objects, making of them a mere abstract conglomeration. (146)

So, when Malone relies upon socially constructed holidays or bases the passage of days on the alternations of sun and moon, the chronotope of the novel resists a momentless present.

At the same time, the chronotope of the novel remains undefined. In fact, the dialectical relationships between and within time and space commented above contribute to the essential indeterminacy of the novel's chronotope. Rather than delineating a totalizing structure for spatio-temporal relations, Malone's constant reinterpretations and speculations create a number of possible chronotopal definitions, each one as valid as the other. The indeterminacy of this process and the impossibility of conclusion embody the flexible, postmodern spatiality of the text.

“I Am Becoming an Island Dweller”: *Foe*

Gilbert Yeoh, in his comparative study of Beckett's *Molloy* and Coetzee's *The Life and Times of Michael K*, argues that Coetzee appropriates three specific “Beckettian paradigms”—nothingness, minimalism, and indeterminacy—in his own text and applies it to a South African reality (“Nothingness” 121).²⁰ Coetzee is remarkably adept at “using the strategies [...] to address his own personal and historical circumstances” (136). Yeoh calls this adoption of the third paradigm of indeterminacy “a politics of historical evasion” (131). This similarity between Beckett and Coetzee extends beyond the two specific novels discussed in Yeoh's essay to include the two in this study. But, whereas Yeoh focuses on the “historical evasion” in *Michael K*, I suggest that a more encompassing chronotopal evasion occurs in *Foe*. Coetzee structures *Foe* so that space,

²⁰ For other comparative analyses of Beckett and Coetzee, see Cantor, Kellman, and Yeoh's “Ethics.”

as well as time, resists firm definition, and the novel relies upon a politicized framework of empire for its specific discourse. *Foe* depends upon malleability and renegotiation of time and space. By analyzing these renegotiations, we see how *Foe* creates a chronotope that, while similar to *Malone Dies*, carries overtly political and politicized messages.

Coetzee directly engages with Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Defoe's biography. *Foe* is broken into four distinct sections. In the first, Coetzee creates the narrative of Susan Barton, a castaway washed onto the shore of Robinson Crusoe's²¹ island, as she lives for a year on the island. The second section, written in epistolary format, tells of her time in England living in Daniel Foe's²² abandoned house. The third section, narrated by Barton, relates her interactions with Foe in his new home. The final section, narrated by an ambiguous, possibly authorial voice, returns to the house years later. For the purpose of this chapter, analysis will focus on the first section of the book: Susan Barton's arrival on Crusoe's island, her year-long stay there with Crusoe and Friday, their rescue, and Crusoe's death aboard the rescuing ship. The latter three sections of the book, which contain a great deal of the novel's self-reflexivity, will be addressed in the second chapter.

In this first section, Coetzee constructs an interchronotopal dialogue amongst the fellow castaways. Barton finds herself on an island heavily influenced by Crusoe's societal definition. Throughout, she calls the island Crusoe's island, implying his ownership and control. She refers to herself and to Friday as "subjects" and states that Crusoe "ruled over

²¹ The different spelling is Coetzee's, though Derek Attridge points out that it is the same spelling as a Norwich family known by Defoe. This family was likely the source for Crusoe's name in his novel (187).

²² In 1695, Daniel Foe added the prefix "De" to his name (Shinagel 433). Both Coetzee's Crusoe and Foe are, then, fictional constructions informed by previous fictional and historical characterizations. Coetzee's character names then contribute to the postmodern complicity and critique of his postmodern narrative.

his island” (11). For, as supreme authority, “Cruso would brook no change on his island” (27). He is, in her eyes, “a truly kingly figure” (37). Yet, though the island seems ultimately controlled by one man, even his authority becomes defined by the island itself. When asked by Barton if there are any laws on his island, Cruso states, “Laws are made for one purpose only [...] to hold us in check when our desires grow immoderate. As long as our desires are moderate we have no need of laws” (36). Barton presses him, challenging that her desire to leave the island is immoderate. Cruso’s response reveals the role of space in his societal definitions:

I do not wish to hear of your desire. [...] It concerns other things, it does not concern the island, it is not a matter of the island. On the island there is no law except the law that we shall work for our bread, which is a commandment. (36)

The island, then, serves to negate those desires that Cruso’s commandment may regulate. And, while Barton is ultimately dissatisfied with this explanation and looks to “certain laws unknown to us” or “the promptings of our hearts” for the ideal source of societal control (36), Cruso sees no source for society beyond the island itself. Space, then, serves to define society at the same time that society defines the space. Cruso’s commandment and geographical limitation imply a dialectic between space and society that coincides with Lefebvre’s basic concept that “(social) space is a (social) product.” In this case the social space of Cruso’s realm is a social product of his geographical boundaries.

With the island, Coetzee creates a clash between two different chronotopes. For Barton, rules and the boundaries of those rules supersede geographical space. She finds the origins of her ethics within ideas—whether religious or political—deriving from her

British culture. She claims, at one point, that she finds a sense of Providence in history (23). Her island chronotope rests on the presumption that there is a higher power that controls the actions of the world and exists beyond the spatial definitions of that world. Cruso, on the other hand, derives his ethics from the space of the island and from prior experience. For Cruso, ideas are dependent upon their existence within specific geographical boundaries: in this case, the shoreline of Cruso's island. The interchronotopal gap between these two characters makes Cruso's ideology incomprehensible to Barton.

Cruso often visits a bluff on the island. Barton discovers that these trips are "a practice of losing himself in the contemplation of the wastes of water and sky" (38). She interprets his contemplations as his one escape from his island, for even in the way that he perceives time and space, this island often dominates his thinking. For Barton, however, such mental escape is impossible. For her, "sea and sky remained sea and sky, vacant and tedious" and she is incapable of loving "such emptiness" (38). In Cruso, Coetzee has created a character that understands, on some level, the problematic relationship between culture and truth. Whereas Barton still clings to a reality that exists beyond the structures of culture (in concepts like Providence), for Cruso such metaphysical notions are worthless. In Cruso, Coetzee creates a character who, through his stubbornness and unwillingness to look beyond the physical realm for societal definitions, embraces a geography similar to that of Lefebvre. Just as Lefebvre posits an inherent interconnectedness between definitions of space and culture, so too does Cruso formulate his own cultural framework in relation to his existence on the island.

On the island, Barton can only find one space which she may call her own: “a hollow in the rocks where I could lie sheltered from the wind and gaze out to the sea” (26). Her hollow within the occupied space of Crusoe’s island is defined primarily by the fact that it looks outward from the island into the openness of the ocean, a space that remains undefined and uncontrolled by Crusoe or others who would place her within their own frameworks. But such escapes into emptiness can only be fleeting at best, and Barton must always return to her existence on the island. She must rely upon Crusoe’s island as a chronotopal axis even when escaping the spatial definitions of the island.

Just as Barton cannot understand Crusoe’s spatial justifications, she cannot understand his ultimate act of geographical redefinition: the terracing of the island. He has no seeds for planting and creates the terraces “for those who come after us and have the foresight to bring seed” (33). Of this task, which has required years of work by Crusoe and Friday, Barton asks, “Is bare earth, baked by the sun and walled about, to be preferred to pebbles and bushes and swarms of birds?” She sees the task as a mere passing of time that could just as easily be replaced by “digging for gold” or “digging graves” (34). Yet even in this seemingly arbitrary act, the role of space within the chronotope of the narrative reasserts itself. Crusoe’s role is that of preparer, who sees his responsibility as preparer of the island for future settlers (who may never come) (33). He spends his time in the service of space with the ultimate goal being the production of imperial wealth.

This service is also a colonial endeavor, one in which Crusoe changes the island to suit those colonizers who might come after him and plant the seeds of civilization. He defines the land, literally creating it in the service of his imperial vision. This preparation

is imperial in scope and colonial in spirit. Consider Edward Said's statement that "as both geographical and cultural entities—to say nothing of historical entities—such locales, regions, geographical sectors as 'Orient' and 'Occident' are man-made" (5). Power, for Cruso or any colonial authority, carries with it the ability to define and manipulate the space. Cruso defines the island's geography by its potential agricultural value.

Cruso also destroys any prior spatial definitions. His and Friday's terracing has literally reshaped the landscape. He has relocated an entire population of apes that once roamed throughout the island. After "he had killed many," the apes were relegated to the North Bluff, existing in Cruso's eyes as "a pest" (21). In Cruso, Coetzee creates a colonial power that enters a space and redefines it to his liking. During his indeterminate time on the island, Cruso makes a spatial turn that transforms the temporal into a peripheral element of his own narrative chronotope. Barton describes the way he tells stories:

I would gladly now recount to you the history of this singular Cruso, as I heard it from his own lips. But the stories he told me were so various, and so hard to reconcile one with another, that I was more and more driven to conclude age and isolation had taken their toll on his memory, and he no longer knew for sure what was truth, what fancy. (11-12)

Whereas one day he came from a wealthy merchant family, the next he was "a poor lad" captured by Moors. He claims that Friday came with him to the island as a child (12).

Later, Cruso states that Friday was a cannibal rescued from death. He has disconnected himself from the passage of time so that, to use Bakhtin's phrase, there is no moment of time. Each event becomes a separate thing disconnected and de-contextualized. Barton

recognizes an irony in this: “Growing old on his island kingdom [...] has so narrowed his horizon—when the horizon all around us was so vast and so majestic!—that he had come to be persuaded he knew all there was to know about the world” (13). In Cruso’s chronotope, narrative time and space remain connected—if, indeed, they are connected—by the thinnest of threads.

The old man’s “age and isolation,” which Barton blames for his wildly varied stories, offer glimpses at deeper meanings in Cruso’s frayed spatio-temporal framework. Barton guesses him to be sixty years old (8). But it need not be age alone that causes his historical fluctuations. His long isolation—we are never given a specific length of time—has separated Cruso not only from relatives and home; it has also separated him from a European consciousness in which history and issues of time are paramount. Hayden White calls the historical consciousness “a specifically western prejudice” (1). Isolated on his own island, where all matters of time and place remain undefined, Cruso has slowly slipped away from a reliance on English history. The island serves such a primary role in Cruso’s space-time that, when he is forced to leave it, he is unable to adjust to a new framework. Already sick when a ship arrives, he is incapable of recovering. The ship takes him “farther from the kingdom he pined for,” making him “a prisoner” on board (43). As “the rock of England looms closer and closer” his life wanes and, eventually passes (44).

Despite Barton’s speculation on Cruso’s senility and madness, he slowly influences her chronotopal framework as space comes to occupy a larger share of her thoughts. She begins to see space as something malleable and interactive. Her spatial redefinition addresses the island’s very placement within the world. Barton describes the

island as a place that is constantly relocating itself on the globe. The ground seems to “sway beneath” her, like the rocking of a ship (26). Barton thinks, “It is a sign, a sign I am an island-dweller. I am forgetting what it is like to live on the mainland.” She, like the island swaying beneath her, is shifting. Coetzee alters the way that Barton interacts with space. At one point, she imagines the island floating on the sea:

I stretched out my arms and laid my palms on the earth, and, yes, the rocking persisted, the rocking of the island as it sailed through the sea and the night bearing into the future its freight of gulls and sparrows and fleas and apes and castaways, all unconscious now, save me. (26)

This passage of the island “into the future” connects the passage of time and space. While Barton, Crusoe, and Friday may remain trapped, this conception of the floating island moving forward through time reasserts for Barton a temporal mobility that conflates with spatial mobility. This revision of her perceived chronotope reassures her and allow her to fall asleep smiling.

Importantly, Barton contrasts this rocking of Crusoe’s island with the perceived solidity of Britain: “They say Britain is an island too, a great island. But that is a mere geographer’s notion. The earth under our feet is firm in Britain, as it never was on Crusoe’s island” (26). So, while geographers may have defined “island” as a body of land surrounded by water, Coetzee shows Barton attempting her own definition, one which goes beyond scientific measurement to include a definite social and political framework. On Crusoe’s island, such an existence is impossible. The novel goes beyond rigid categorical thinking and incorporates elements beyond science and geography to redefine space.

This new conception of space does not, however, eliminate the influence of her traditional conception of space. Instead, her perception of the relationship between time and space is heavily influenced by her time away from the island. When complaining about the ever-present wind, Barton says,

Very likely you will say to yourself: In Patagonia the wind blows all year without let, and the Patagonians do not hide their heads, so why does she? But the Patagonians, knowing no home but Patagonia, have no reason to doubt that the wind blows at all seasons without let in all quarters of the globe; whereas I know better. (15)

Her knowledge of other lands informs her experience on this island. Unlike those living isolated on windy Patagonia, Barton's spatializations are constantly in dialogue with the global spaces of imperial England. Patagonians have not had their conceptions of space challenged by journeys to other places or, perhaps more importantly, by stories about other places. By comparing her own experience to that of a Patagonian, Barton reveals the imperial influence upon her own spatialization. Patagonia, on the other side of the world from England, provides the contrast that she needs to justify her discomfort in the wind. Her existence on the island is informed by her existence as a subject of the British Empire and by the others places to which she has traveled to or heard of.

Barton struggles against Cruso's chronotopal framework. By comparing his reshaping of the land to a preparation for death, Barton mistakes Cruso's terracing for mere busywork. Coetzee establishes an incongruity between Cruso's and Barton's chronotopal frameworks through her misunderstanding of the terracing. For Cruso, all events and actions exist in their relationship to the island, his civilization. Just as his

single law “that we shall work for our bread” finds its definition on the island, so too his actions relate directly to the island and its possible future inhabitants. In Barton, Coetzee creates a character that looks beyond the wasteland of the island. In fact, the island seems excluded from her chronotopal boundaries. As a woman and as Crusoe’s “subject” she may play no part in defining the island society. So she looks outward for definition, into the sea and to Britain, away from the island that restricts her.

The novel posits a chronotope of alienation as an alternative to Crusoe’s colonial chronotope. Looking out to the sea, Barton also looks into the space between her spatial definitions. On the one hand, she is defined as one of Crusoe’s “colonial” subjects. On the other, she is a citizen of England. Yet in neither definition can she find a place for self-definition. Her alienation as a colonized woman forces her to reconfigure her own spatial framework. As Bill Ashcroft, et al state in their discussion of post-colonial literature, “The alienating process [...] turned upon itself and acted to push that world through a kind of mental barrier into a position from which all experience could be viewed as uncentered, pluralistic, and multifarious” (12). Barton, like many who react to colonial authority, experiences a chronotope of indeterminacy that relies upon difference, hybridity, and indeterminacy, in an attempt to break out from Crusoe’s patriarchal colonialism. For her, the ideal space is the one with no solid definition. When she states that she is becoming an island dweller, she is reevaluating her own spatiality in reaction to Crusoe’s kind of colonialism. She begins to resist Crusoe’s authoritarian definition of space by embracing indeterminacy.

Crusoe and Barton, while offering examples of postmodern chronotopal interactions, do not provide the only spatio-temporal frameworks within the novel. Most

interesting (and most problematic) is Cruso's supposed servant, the apparently tongueless Friday.²³ Having little concept of his perception of space-time, Barton's attempts to understand Friday's actions depend upon her own spatio-temporal framework. Friday represents an "other" whose own perceptions of time and space are both incomprehensible and incongruous to Barton's own spatio-temporal framework.

Friday's history is left to be told by Cruso, a man who has largely abandoned conventional history. When asked by Barton how Friday lost his tongue, Cruso responds that it was removed by slavers. When Barton presses, Cruso responds:

Perhaps the slavers who are Moors, hold the tongue to be a delicacy. [...] Or perhaps they grew weary of listening to Friday's wails of grief, that went on day and night. Perhaps they wanted to prevent him from ever telling his story: who he was, where his home lay, how it came about that he was taken. Perhaps they cut out the tongue of every cannibal they took, as a punishment. How will we ever know the truth? (23)

Friday's history is lost to Barton. There is even the possibility that Cruso, rather than slavers, cut out Friday's tongue. She wonders what keeps Friday so placid and servile (36-37). Friday's story cannot be pinned down and constantly shifts, much like the island underneath them. Both the novel's spatial indeterminacy and its uncertainty concerning Friday's background reflect the postmodern tendency to question totalizing narratives. Both undermine conventional means of definition, whether Barton's conception of space and culture or the traditional narrative framework.

²³ Lewis MacLeod argues that there is actually no evidence that Friday has no tongue (8). As proof, he points to Cruso's unreliable stories, the fact that "it was too dark" (12) for Barton to see into Friday's mouth, and her later confession that "when [Cruso] asked me to look, I would not" (85). For the moment, Barton's perception of a tongueless Friday serves to support the particular argument of this study. The fact is that Friday cannot (or will not) tell his own history.

We see this postmodern spirit when Friday paddles into the sea upon a log to lay “white flakes” into the water, which are later discovered to be petals (31). Barton speculates that “he had been making an offering of the gods to cause the fish to run plentiful, or performing some other such superstitious observance” (31). While Friday’s act cannot be fully understood, Barton interprets it as “the first sign that a spirit or soul [...] stirred beneath that dull and unpleasing exterior” (32). These actions give a social meaning to that specific space off shore. This sign of “spirit” places Friday within a culture and raises him from a kind of animalistic existence that Barton initially sees. His action, while enigmatic, is proof for Barton of a larger cultural (and chronotopal) framework. Barton speculates that his actions at that particular space hold some meaning for him, thus placing cultural value upon the location.

The novel establishes Barton’s inability to understand Friday’s chronotopal framework. So she creates one informed by her own chronotopal framework, inserting Friday’s actions into her providential system. In the same way that she renegotiates her own chronotope upon the island, she also reinterprets Friday’s actions. If, as Lefebvre posits, space is produced socially, then the space to which Friday paddles and lays the flowers is defined not only by his actions but also by Barton’s interpretation of those actions. Moreover, since Friday does not contribute to that interpretation except through the initial action, it is Barton who ultimately defines the space in her narrative.

In her interpretations, Barton engages in colonialism similar to Cruso’s own. Just as Cruso tries to dictate the definitions of the island, Barton’s narrative offers an interpretation of Friday’s actions. Prior to his trip on the log, she “had given to Friday’s life as little thought as I would have a dog’s or any other dumb beast’s” (32). Only by

imposing her own spatial definitions on Friday's actions is she able to humanize him. Therefore, as Patrick Corcoran states, Barton "may be a victim, but the subtlety of Coetzee's text is that it illustrates how victims too can simultaneously be oppressors" (265). Friday is just as unable to challenge her interpretations as Barton is unable to challenge Foe's narrative. His silence allows for the creation of Barton's narrative.

For both of these novels then, there exist two important elements of chronotopal interaction. The first, interchronotopal interaction, engages two differing spatio-temporal axes in a dialectical relationship. The second, intrachronotopal interaction, involves renegotiation of specific spatial or temporal elements within a single chronotope. Both assume an inherent flexibility within and between space-time relations, and through these interactions the postmodern chronotope resists totalization. Admittedly, these two chronotopal interactions can be found throughout literature. But novels like *Malone Dies* and *Foe* explicitly acknowledge the indeterminate nature of these spatio-temporal relationships. Additionally, postmodern texts embrace a problematic self-consciousness that sophisticates chronotopal indeterminacies by addressing the novel's very nature as a written text. These texts about the creation of text establish spatio-temporal relationships that reflect the creation of spatio-temporal relationships. This chronotopal self-reflexivity becomes the distinguishing trait of the postmodern chronotope in these two novels.

Chapter Two:

Self-Reflexivity and the Postmodern Creative Chronotope

To distinguish the postmodern chronotope from the chronotopal frameworks of other literary styles we must go beyond spatio-temporal indeterminacy, for nearly all forms of narrative employ some interchronotopal or intrachronotopal dialogue. As Bakhtin explains, “Chronotopes are mutually inclusive, they co-exist, they may be interwoven with, replace or oppose one another, contradict one another or find themselves in ever more complex relationships” (252). All chronotopes depend upon a dialogical relationship for existence and definition. Indeterminacy within the chronotope problematizes these dialogical relationships, but does not diminish their necessity. As a result, the interchronotopal and intrachronotopal indeterminacies of *Malone Dies* and *Foe* embody the dialogical situation of space and time in each respective narrative.

To understand the postmodern elements employed by the two novels, we must examine the self-reflexivity of each text. Through hypodiegesis and diegetic reflections on narrative formation, these postmodern works embrace the indeterminacy of spatio-temporal definition while at the same time critiquing the very process of chronotopal formation.

Narrated/Narrative Events: The Postmodern Creative Chronotope

In addition to the spatio-temporal interactions that occur within and between individual chronotopes (intrachronotopal and interchronotopal, respectively), chronotopes establish fundamental relationships between texts and the worlds from which they derive. Both art and lived experience are informed by the same spatio-temporal framework. Labeling this informing process the “creative chronotope,” Bakhtin explains that

The work and the world represented in it enter the world and enrich it, and the real world enters the work and its world as part of the process of its creation, as well as part of its subsequent life, in a continual renewing of the work through the creative perception of listeners and readers. Of course this process of exchange is itself chronotopic: it occurs first and foremost in the historically developing social world, but without ever losing contact with changing historical space. (254)

In other words, the time-space of art and life are two different but interdependent levels of dialogue. This creative chronotope informs issues of time and space for both the novel and its represented world. Michael Holquist offers an analogy: “when I am in the kitchen I am not in the bedroom but nevertheless I am still in the same house” (111). The house—or the creative chronotope—serves as the organizing center for establishing definitions of and relationships between the different rooms—or the dialogically related chronotopes of art and life.

Within these various dialogues of time and space, Bakhtin identifies a number of specific chronotopes. He mentions, for example, the chronotope of parlors and salons in the realist novels of Stendhal and Balzac (246). In these spaces “the epoch [of nineteenth-

century realism] becomes not only graphically visible [space], but narratively visible [time]” (247). He also discusses the chronotopes of the road, the provincial town, and the castle that, among others, become “the organizing centers for the fundamental narrative events of the novel” (250). But, in the postmodern novel, the possibility of maintaining an “organizing center” becomes problematic. If the spatio-temporal center is undermined and made epistemologically problematic, then chronotopal definition appears to be difficult, if not impossible.

To allow for such an indeterminacy to exist within a narrative there must be a constant renegotiation of the chronotopal boundaries of that narrative, both within the text itself and externally by the writer (and later by the reader). Bakhtin explains:

Before us are two events—the event that is narrated in the work and the event of narration itself [...]; these events take place in different times [...] and in different places, but at the same time these two events are indissolubly united in a single but complex event that we might call the work in the totality of all its events, including the external material givenness of the work, and its text, and the world represented in the text, and the author-creator and the listener or reader; thus we perceive the fullness of the work in all its wholeness and indivisibility, but at the same time we understand the diversity of the elements that constitute it. (255)

In other words, our understanding of a text is predicated on our understanding of its fragmentary nature. Postmodern narratives often recognize this chronotopal fragmentation. Whereas other narratives may include dialogues within and between

chronotopes, postmodern narratives occasionally make these dialogues the narrative itself, self-reflexively informing the process of chronotopal definition.

Many postmodern narratives self-reflexively address this dilemma of chronotopal definition. Robert Siegle claims that self-reflexive texts derive authority from “the codes by which we organize reality, the means by which we organize words about it into narrative, [...] and the nature of our relation to ‘actual’ stages of reality” (3). Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan acknowledges that “self-conscious texts often play with narrative levels in order to question the borderline between reality and fiction or to suggest that there may be no reality apart from its narration” (94). Both seem to argue that self-reflexivity clarifies the inherent separation between representation and reality while also positing an overarching framework that defines both.

In many self-reflexive postmodern texts, the organizing center of the creative chronotope is found within the text itself. If, as Holquist contends, “the time/space relation of any particular text will always be perceived in the context of a larger set of time/space relations that [are obtained] in the social and historical environment in which it is read” (141), then the self-reflexive chronotope also finds those larger relations within the text itself. Definitions of and relationships between time and space within postmodern, self-reflexive texts derive from narrative creation. In the postmodern creative chronotope, time and space become points of conflict within this creative process. If we think of this in terms of Linda Hutcheon’s ideas of postmodernism, the postmodern creative chronotope embodies the “complicitous critique” that “involves a paradoxical installing as well as subverting of conventions” (13), using the dialogic

process of chronotopal formation and definition to challenge the potential for its totalization.

An extended revision of Holquist's house analogy offers an explanation. Rather than simply declaring "I am in the bedroom and not in the kitchen," the postmodern creative chronotope challenges the definitions of these specific rooms and, more importantly, the very concept of "room." It may move the oven into the closet or place the mattress in the garage. It may remove a wall from the bedroom, connecting it to the den. While I am still in the house, the postmodern creative chronotope constantly questions and problematizes the relationships between those things within the house. It asks the questions, "How do I know that I am in the bedroom? What makes this room the 'bedroom?'" And while it may provide no answer, the act of questioning reveals the social and historical construction of both the house and the rooms within the house. In the postmodern creative chronotope, then, chronotopes are defined by their complex dialogical relationships to one another, which, paradoxically, resists definition.

In the postmodern creative chronotope, then, external and internal chronotopes are defined by their dialogical relationship to one another. These self-reflexive discussions of space and time exist throughout *Malone Dies* and *Foe*. Their hypodiegesis or diegetic discussions of narrative formation self-reflexively address the process of chronotopal definition.

"I Shall Tell Myself Stories": Self-Reflexivity in *Malone Dies*

In "Three Novels and Four *Nouvelles*: Giving up the Ghost Be Born at Last," Paul Davies discusses the way that Samuel Beckett's works

confront a civilization which is the theatre of [...] a conflict between two powerful forces. One is the rational(izing) principle, *cogito*, abstract reasoning, the conscious mind, will and design, determinism, positivism, the imposition of extrinsic order. [...] Beneath, above and against this force, is the opposite force, often hidden, as yet inaccessible to conscious will: a sense of the primordial spring of life, which does not respond to analysis. (43).

As he proceeds to explain, this distinction between conflicting epistemological frameworks is revealed in the language of *Malone Dies*. “The language of Beckett’s novels,” Davies explains, “reflects, as it tells, on the means of telling” (58). What it finds: “all descriptions are misdescriptions” (Davies 59).²⁴ The indeterminacy of narrative manifests itself in the very language of Beckett’s novels, including *Malone Dies*. Davies’ argument closely aligns with my own conception of the postmodern creative chronotope, and by analyzing the relationship between indeterminacy in the spatio-temporal frameworks of Malone’s hypodiegetic narratives, we see that Beckett’s confrontation with “the ‘scientific’ concept of the universe as a mechanism” (Davies 43) becomes self-reflexive.

Near the beginning of the novel, Malone states his narrative intentions:

While waiting I shall tell myself stories, if I can. They will not be the same kind of stories as hitherto, that is all. They will be neither beautiful nor ugly, they will be calm, there will be no ugliness or beauty or fever in them any more, they will be almost lifeless, like the teller. What was that I

²⁴ Beckett concisely expresses this in *Worstword Ho*, where the narrator proclaims, “Said is missaid” (113).

said? It does not matter. I look forward to their giving me great satisfaction, some satisfaction. (180)

Even in this intentional statement, Malone's hypodiegesis (and its corresponding chronotope) begins to falter. He questions his intentions ("What was that I said?") and, by linking his near lifelessness with the lifelessness of his narrative, begins the connection between diegesis and hypodiegesis that continues through the novel.

Having tentatively declared his narrative purpose, Malone formulates a plan—a "time-table"—for the creation of his stories. His initial intention—to create a story "about a man, another about a woman, a third about a thing and finally one about an animal" (181)—establishes very distinct chronotopal boundaries for each tale. But his time-table changes soon after its inception. He merges the tale of the man with that of the woman. He adds a discussion of his present state and of his inventory. Then their narrative order bothers him. He asks, aware of his impending death, "Would it not be better for me to speak of my possessions without further delay?" Yet, even in his affirmation of this plan ("There it is then divided into five" [182]) his narrative plan falters:

To return to the five [stories]. Present state, three stories, inventory, there. An occasional interlude is to be feared. A full programme. I shall not deviate from it any further than I must. So much for that. I feel I am making a great mistake. No matter.

Malone begins what comes to be a constant renegotiation of temporal and spatial definitions throughout his hypodiegetic narrative.

The chronotope of his own life (the novel's diegetic chronotope) interacts and alters the chronotope of his writing (the novel's hypodiegetic chronotope). Malone must

shape his stories so that they fit into the remaining time in his life. And, like all guesses at one's death, the exact length of time remains indeterminate. Simon Critchley states that "*Malone Dies* takes place in the impossible time of dying, and it is into this ungraspable temporal stretch that the voice gives itself the possibility of telling stories" (119). That the specific moment of Malone's death remains ungraspable means that his hypodiegetic narrative—the only chronotopal structure over which he has any (partial) control—"continually breaks down into an unnarratable impossibility" (Critchley 119). The chronotopal relationship between art and life (between Malone's stories and his existence) disintegrates. Narration becomes impossible because chronotopal definition becomes equally impossible. Malone finds himself constantly shifting the narrative chronotope to coincide with the current temporal conception of his existence. He often hurries his narratives along ("I told myself too that I must make better speed" [197], "I hasten to turn aside from this extraordinary heat" [259]) in order to allow for the end of his narratives (and their chronotopal boundaries) to coincide with his own life (and its chronotopal boundaries).

Renegotiations of these hypodiegetic chronotopes serve as self-reflexive dialogues on the nature of time and space in narrative formation. Despite all attempts, Malone's hypodiegetic narrative fails to maintain the "paradigmatic closure and rigidly categorical thinking" that Soja argues is embodied in modernist thinking (73). Closure, for Malone, comes only in death, and this closure is ultimately unknowable. Malone's inability to know what he does, where he does it, or if he even exists is reflected in his inability to define an absolute chronotope for his stories. The ways that time and place constantly shift throughout them mimic the chronotopal negotiations that result from the

indeterminacy of his own time and space (that is, the indeterminacy of the diegetic chronotope). Chronotopal dialogue, then, becomes a continuous and necessary part of his creative act.

Within Malone's tales, characters are often unaware of their surroundings. For example, when describing the locale Malone states, "[Macmann] did not know quite where he was" (240). When attempting to pinpoint the season for his story of Macmann, Malone writes,

For Macmann [...] it is a true spring evening, an equinoctial gale howls along the quays bordered by high red houses, many of which are warehouses. Or it is perhaps an evening in autumn and these leaves whirling in the air, whence it is impossible to say, for here there are no trees, are perhaps no longer the first of the year, barely green, but old leaves that have known the long joys of summer and now are good for nothing but to lie rotting in a heap. (231)

The physical markers of place become markers for time in Malone's hypodiegesis. Macmann's (and Malone's, as narrator) inability to pinpoint the season comes from the fact that there are no trees with leaves that change colors or flower at the appropriate times to serve as markers for the passing year.

At one point, Malone describes the grounds of Macmann's asylum, the House of Saint John of God, as "a genuine English park, though far from England, [...] the trees at war with one another, and the bushes, and the wild flowers and weeds, all ravaging for earth and light" (275). But he then hesitates and declares, "Let us try it another way" (277), and it becomes a "great mound with gentle slopes" lashed by wind that "blew

almost without ceasing.” He revises the geography of his hypodiegetic narrative in much the same way that he shifts his speculations on his own location.

This shifting of space coincides with critical observations of temporal instability within similar texts. In his study of diary novels, H. Porter Abbott addresses the relationship between *Malone Dies* and three traditional topoi of diary fiction. For Abbott, Beckett accentuates one of these topoi in his novel: the merging of “the time of the narrating and the time of the narrated” (189), by having Malone “aspire hopelessly to the condition of the omniscient and omnipotent artist” (190). Abbott goes further:

Malone draws on what remains of the left lobe of his brain to fulfill the requirements of a plan [...], a plan which, as we know, begins to fall into ruin the moment it is formulated. His stories are swamped by his present state; time lies heavily on the notebook. (190)

In other words, the time of Malone’s stories (the hypodiegetic narratives) and the time of Malone’s existence reflect upon one another and, in some instances, appear to conflate. I want to expand Abbott’s claim by relating it to the creative chronotope. If we can accept that *Malone Dies* addresses the relationship between narrating and narrated times, then it follows that narrating and narrated spaces also affect the work. If “time lies heavily on the notebook,” so too does space.

Importantly, these spatio-temporal instabilities often mirror the diegetic narrative. When Malone writes, “This is the kind of story [Macmann] has been telling himself all of his life, saying, This cannot possibly last much longer” (239), his hypodiegetic narrative reflects the opening sentence of the novel: “I shall soon be quite dead at last in spite of

all” (179). Neither Macmann nor Malone can pinpoint the exact moment of ending. This *mise en abyme* occurs elsewhere as well. Discussing Sapo’s work ethic, Malone states,

To stop in the middle of a tedious and perhaps futile task was something that Sapo could readily understand. For a great number of tasks are of this kind, without a doubt, and the only way to end them is to abandon them” (214).

Compare this to Malone’s many interruptions throughout his narrative, despite his insistence on continuing.

The reflexivity is also spatial. Both Malone and Macmann find themselves in enclosed spaces. Just as Malone is enclosed in his room, “naked in the bed, in the blankets, whose numbers I increase and diminish as the seasons come and go” (185), so Macmann finds himself similarly confined, “in a kind of asylum” (255). Of Macmann’s asylum, Malone writes,

But the space hemmed him in on every side and held him in its toils, with the multitude of other faintly stirring, faintly struggling things, such as the children, the lodges and the gates, and like a sweat of things the moments streamed away in a great chaotic conflux of oozings and torrents, and the trapped huddled things changed and died each one according to its solitude. (278)

For both Malone and Macmann, the isolation within their respective enclosures coincides with a temporal wasting away. Malone’s stories of Sapo and Macmann, written in his exercise-book, reflect upon his own situation. He wants to “make a little creature [...] in my image” which, after “seeing what a poor thing I have made, or how like myself, I

shall eat it” (226). Malone will destroy his creations, his self-images, just as he (Beckett’s fictional creation) will be destroyed, as the title of the novel implies.

However, his desire to devour his own creations proves futile. The self-reflexivity of Malone’s hypodiegetic narrative is made apparent when he states,

With my distant hand I count the pages that remain. They will do. *This exercise-book is my life*, this child’s exercise-book, it has taken me a long time to resign myself to that. And yet I shall not throw it away. For I want to put down in it, for the last time, those I have called to my help, but ill, so that they did not understand, *so that they may cease with me*. (274, italics added)

Malone understands that his hypodiegetic stories will end with his life. Both are dictated by the spatio-temporal relationship that exists between art and life within the creative chronotope. In this case, however, Malone’s life (Beckett’s diegetic narrative) is art or, more specifically, text. The chronotopal dialogue between diegesis and hypodiegesis accentuates this textuality and reveals its own problematic nature as text. What results from this self-reflexivity is an indeterminism that addresses the very nature of artistic creation. Subversions of the spatial and temporal structure of Malone’s hypodiegetic narrative reflect upon the subversions that occur throughout the diegetic narrative. The postmodern creative chronotope takes shape in the relationship between these two levels of chronotopal indeterminacy.

At the end of the novel, just before Malone’s final descent into the hypodiegetic narrative, he writes, “The render rent. My story ended I’ll be living yet. Promising lag. That is the end of me. I shall say no more” (283). Here, Beckett directly juxtaposes

Malone—moments away from passing—and his own spatio-temporal existence with that of his stories. His contention that he will live on beyond his stories is immediately denied. He—his chronotope—is subsumed into his own narrative.

Simon Critchley argues that Malone “tries to silence the emptiness by telling stories but only succeeds in letting the emptiness speak as the stories break down into mortal tedium” (120). Similarly, Ulrika Maude sees the subversion of cultural codes which, in turn, “exposes the discursive nature of the code” (76). Perhaps Beckett’s novel summarizes this point best when Malone states, “my notes have a curious tendency, as I realize at last, to annihilate all they purport to record” (259). The dialogic interchange between and within the indeterminate chronotopes of both Malone’s life and his narrative ultimately reflects upon the impossibility of narrative specificity and definition in regards to time and space.

“The Island Is Not a Story”: *Foe*’s Politicized Creative Chronotope

A similar chronotopal dialogue can be found throughout the work of J. M. Coetzee. Coetzee, however, explicitly acknowledges the political origins and consequences of this dialogue. In his 2003 Nobel lecture, “He and His Man,” J. M. Coetzee recreates Robinson Crusoe as a man who has returned from his desert island to rest in Bristol. This Crusoe reflects upon the story of his survival and escape from the island and its influence on others:

When the first bands of plagiarists and imitators descended upon his island history and foisted on the public their own feigned stories of the castaway life, they seemed to him no more or less than a horde of cannibals falling

upon his own flesh, that is to say, his life; and he did not scruple to say so...But now, reflecting further, there begins to creep into his breast a touch of fellow-feeling for his imitators. For it seems to him now that there are but a handful of stories in the world; and if the young are to be forbidden to prey upon the old then they must sit for ever in silence.

The necessary plagiarism of these “imitators” connects their act of thievery to Crusoe’s story. Crusoe—Defoe’s fictional character, inspired by the historical castaway tales of Alexander Selkirk and others—calls these imitations “feigned stories” and challenges the idea of narrative origin. If all narratives mimic “a handful of stories,” then the differences lie in the ways that they mimic and the purposes behind those acts of mimicry. Their discourses are informed (though not dictated) by the time and place of the originary text.

Contemporary texts that return to these “handful of stories” are often informed by issues of postmodernism and, with narratives like *Robinson Crusoe*, post-colonialism. Bill Ashcroft, in *The Empire Writes Back*, attempts to distinguish the *post* in post-colonialism and postmodernism. Using Anthony Kwame Appiah’s statement that “the *post* in post-colonial, like the *post* in postmodernism, is the *post* of the space-clearing gesture,” Ashcroft claims that the distinction “lies in the fact that [the two terms] are both, in their very different and culturally located ways, discursive elaborations of Post-modernity” (208). Post-colonial culture, for Ashcroft, is “a hybridized phenomenon involving a dialectical relationship between the ‘grafted’ European cultural systems and an indigenous ontology” (220). The interaction and reformation of these two different cultural influences into unique post-colonial cultures demand that literature and literary studies take this localization into account. Lyotard’s claim that postmodernism maintains

an “incredulity toward metanarratives” would initially seem to affirm the localization that occurs in the hybridized cultures of post-colonialism.

But such a conflation is problematic, at best. John Thieme emphasizes a twofold approach when analyzing texts that write back to the canon (what he calls “con-texts”), calling for a localized analysis of a work and then a placement of that regionally specific text into a comparative relationship with other texts from other regions (7). Similarly, Ashcroft cautions against compartmentalizing post-colonial theory by arguing that such theoretical segregation only “contradicts the capacity of post-colonial theories to demonstrate the complexity of the operation of imperial discourse” (200). For both, there is a need to understand the localization implicit in post-colonial literature at the same time that one considers its global relationship.

Admittedly, the distinction between postmodern and post-colonial is unclear, and their influence upon one another is unmistakable. Grounded in European textuality and informed by the process of colonialism, *Foe* self-reflexively addresses the relationship between post-colonialism and postmodernism, challenging Ashcroft’s attempt at separation. Through his novel’s self-reflexive narrative discourse and appropriation of Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*, Coetzee addresses the politics implicit in narrative production, something that is made explicit in the novel’s narrative space and time. His imitation, in other words, employs a kind of postmodern creative chronotope, one similar to Beckett’s in *Malone Dies* but additionally informed by overtly political issues.

A number of critics have acknowledged the intertextuality invested in most, if not all, of Coetzee’s writing. Derek Attridge argues that Coetzee’s works “appear to locate themselves within an established literary culture, rather than presenting themselves as an

assault on that culture” via an “over *allusiveness*” (169).²⁵ Lewis MacLeod states that Coetzee writes novels that are “politically resonant, stylistically dense, and explicitly intertextual” (1). In *Foe*, this intertextuality becomes a fundamental principle, as Coetzee directly engages and appropriates both the novel *Robinson Crusoe* and Daniel Defoe’s biography.²⁶ Inserting a female narrator who is washed upon the shore of Crusoe’s island, the novel recounts her time on the island, her rescue and return to England, and her attempt to have the story of her time on the island written down.

Coetzee’s reflection upon previously constructed texts is a typical strategy of postmodern artists. Hutcheon’s discussion of this strategy within postmodern photography informs Coetzee’s own textual strategy in *Foe*:

Reappropriating existing representations that are effective precisely because they are loaded with pre-existing meaning and putting them into new and ironic contexts is a typical form of postmodern photographic critique: while exploiting the power of familiar images, it also de-naturalizes them, makes visible the concealed mechanisms which work to make them seem transparent, and brings to the fore their politics, that is to say, the interests in which they operate and the power they wield. (42)

²⁵ Attridge offers a list of allusions that occur throughout Coetzee’s works, from *Waiting for the Barbarians* and its references to a Cavafy poem and Samuel Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot*, to the *Life and Times of Michael K* and its connections to the works of Franz Kafka (169).

²⁶ For other references to *Robinson Crusoe*, see Coetzee’s *Elizabeth Costello* (2003), in which one character observes, “Supply the particulars, allow the significations to emerge of themselves. A procedure pioneered by Daniel Defoe. Robinson Crusoe, cast up on the beach, looks around for his shipmates. But there are none. ‘I never saw them afterwards, or any sign of them,’ says he, ‘except three of their hats, one cap, and two shoes that were not fellows.’...No large words, no despair, just hats and caps and shoes” (4). This statement mirrors a passage from Coetzee’s essay about Defoe’s novel, where he states that Defoe’s “method of bald empirical description works wonderfully” and then quotes the same passage (“Daniel Defoe” 20). Most recently, *Slow Man* (2005) contains a passage in which the isolated main character declares, “I have all the friends I could wish for...I am not Robinson Crusoe. I just do not want to see any of them” (14).

It is a small step to see the way that *Foe* employs similar strategies. Just as postmodern photography re-uses prior images to acknowledge the politics of creation, so too does Coetzee's text.

Coetzee uses a variety of appropriations to reveal these politics, referring to elements of Defoe's biography and bibliography throughout the text. Daniel Foe, the novel's fictional recreation of the historical Daniel Defoe, relates a convicted woman who closely resembles the eponymous character of Defoe's novel, *Moll Flanders* (123-24). It also mentions Defoe's short story "A Relation of the Apparition of Mrs. Veal" (58). Foe's abandonment of his house to escape arrest parallels Defoe's many arrests for debt and political writing in 1713 and 1714 (Shinagel 434). By applying these and other biographical and bibliographical elements within a work of fiction that responds to one of Defoe's own texts, *Foe* clarifies the gap between the two levels of the creative chronotope (the authorial and textual worlds) at the same time that it problematizes that gap.

Coetzee's appropriation of Defoe's novel *Robinson Crusoe* is even more problematic. The most basic narrative element—an English castaway on an island, living with his non-white companion—remains the same. But, beyond this basic structure, Coetzee undermines much of Defoe's text. In the original, the island is rich with wildlife. There are goats that Crusoe tames, grapes that he harvests, and trees for lumber. Conversely, the island in Coetzee's novel is a wasteland. Its wildlife consists of ants, lizards, large flocks of birds, and apes; the landscape is barren, save for "drab bushes that never flowered and never shed their leaves" (7); and the daily pattern of "wind, rain,

wind, rain” never stops (14). Coetzee constructs an island devoid of splendor, quite different from the Caribbean paradise of the original text.

On this desolate rock, Coetzee’s Crusoe challenges the pragmatic imperialism at the heart of Defoe’s novel. Whereas Crusoe maintains a constructive livelihood, Crusoe spends his days terracing the hills in preparation for future settlers who may never come. In the eighteenth-century text, Crusoe recovers tools and materials from the shipwreck. In the contemporary retelling, Crusoe has none save those that he constructs. The earlier Crusoe builds a home with a series of living quarters, storage areas, planting fields, and animal pens. The twentieth-century recreation, on the other hand, maintains a paltry triangular habitation with a lean-to hut and a patch of “wild bitter lettuce” (9). By the end of his stay, Crusoe establishes a diverse agriculture. Crusoe and his companions, on the other hand, eat only lettuce, fish, and bird’s eggs.

These challenges to Defoe’s original novel illuminate the role of the eighteenth-century author—and his political and ideological intentions—within the creative act. While Coetzee’s Crusoe may see himself as a colonial figure, establishing a livable space through his terracing, the basic geography of his space—created by Coetzee and barren when compared to Defoe’s original story—make his actions seem fairly futile. Coetzee shows that space—and authorial investment within that space—serves as a political tool for Defoe. For a narrative of pragmatic imperialism, Defoe creates a space in which Crusoe’s imperial flourishes. Coetzee constructs a barren space, thus pulling back the curtain on this necessary authorial manipulation.

Coetzee’s challenge to Friday’s characterization also reveals this spatial management. In Defoe’s novel, Friday is an indigenous Caribbean with hair that is “long

and black, not curl'd like Wool" and skin that is "a bright kind of dun olive Colour" (148-49). In Coetzee's appropriation, however, Friday is African. Barton calls him "a Negro with a head of fuzzy wool" (5). In the 1719 text, Friday's Caribbean origins allow for the narrative of a savage who is civilized through Crusoe's Anglo-Christian endeavors. Friday's geographical origins contribute to the political ideology of the novel's chronotope. By transforming him from an isolated Caribbean²⁷ to an enslaved African, Coetzee taints him (and the chronotope) with one the more barbarous effects of colonialism. Changing Friday's geographical origins shifts his particular history. Rather than existing in Eurocentric prehistory until his encounter with Crusoe, Coetzee's Friday has a history of oppression, enslavement, and subjugation, all the result of European interaction.

Additionally, Defoe's Friday speaks throughout. Initially speaking a language incomprehensible to Crusoe (147), he eventually speaks a Pidgin English (his first word, after his given name, is "Master" [149]). The Friday in Coetzee's narrative never speaks. Crusoe says that he has no tongue and, moreover, has "no need of words" (56). Friday only reacts to basic notions, like "firewood" (21), quite different from the Friday of the earlier text, who engages Crusoe in a theological discussion of the relationship between God and the Devil (157-58).

All of these discontinuities challenge the British, Christian imperialism of the original text. At every turn *Foe* undermines Crusoe's ability to transform the island (and Friday) into miniature manifestations of England. If not the barren island, then Crusoe's lethargy and unwillingness to participate in any sort of imperial endeavor makes such

²⁷ Friday does mention an encounter with some Europeans in his homeland (161). In these encounters, however, the sailors attempt no colonization or "civilization." In fact, Friday tells Crusoe that his people "make brother with them."

activities difficult. The transformation of Friday from a native Caribbean into an African slave who has suffered from the worst aspects of European colonialism also challenges the missionary zeal of the 1719 narrative.

At this authorial level, Coetzee's novel writes back to Defoe and the imperial center, while further complicating the discussion on another level of chronotopal appropriation. Barton, on arriving in England, hires an author to write her story. She is very specific about what that story will be: "The history of our time on the island" (47). Daniel Foe,²⁸ the author whom she has hired, insists on knowing other aspects of her story: Barton's search for her lost daughter and the time that she spends in Bahia. Even when Barton declares that "Bahia is not a part of my story" (114), Foe pushes. Her story begins as Coetzee's novel begins, with her falling from her boat into the ocean and arriving on Crusoe's island. For Foe, it begins elsewhere:

The story begins in London. Your daughter is abducted or elopes, I do not know which, it does not matter. In quest of her you sail to Bahia, for you have intelligence that she is there. In Bahia you spend no less than two years, two fruitless years. (116)

He then explains how her daughter heads to Bahia, returns to Europe, "haunts the docks of Lisbon and Oporto," hears of rumors, returns to England, and finds her mother.

Here, the narrative struggle again revolves around chronotopal issues. Barton has prioritized her time on the island. For Foe, however, Barton's desired chronotope is a narrative black hole. In his words, "the island is not a story in itself" (117). It is a "novelty," a middle "adventure." Foe and Barton have defined the space and time of their respective narratives in ways that cannot coexist. Whereas Barton establishes her

²⁸ In 1695, the historical Daniel Foe added the prefix "De" to his name (Shinagel 433).

narrative space within the confines of Crusoe's desert island, Foe incorporates everything but the island.

As final author of Barton's tale, Foe's appropriation, much like Coetzee's own appropriation of Defoe's biography, ultimately dictates the nature of the chronotope. Just as Coetzee decides which elements of Defoe's life to include and which to eliminate or alter, so too Foe manipulates and ultimately eliminates Barton from her own narrative, relegating her to a story that she never wanted told. English colonialism, Protestantism, and paternalism all affect the way that he dictates time and space so that Barton is removed from the island while Robinson Crusoe (the English colonial force) and Friday (the "savage," colonized subject) remain. For Richard Lane, *Foe's* narrative usurpation is "paradigmatic of colonial appropriation and mastery of the Other" (106). By limiting the story to this geographical space, Foe is able to control its ideological elements, becoming the narrative master.

These authorial and diegetic struggles between conflicting chronotopes reflect the dialogic nature of all chronotopes. Linda Hutcheon argues that, as we read Coetzee's text, "we separate what we know of the history of the writing of Defoe's novel [...] from what Coetzee offers as the (fictionally) real—but absented and silenced—female origin of the story," which has "something to say about the position of women and the politics of representation in both the fiction and the nonfiction of the eighteenth century" (73). I want to go further and argue that *Foe's* issues, while historically situated in the eighteenth century, are not necessarily reflective of *just* that specific time. Furthermore, *Foe* addresses more than just the position of women in narrative formation if we consider

Barton's own narrative usurpation of Friday. Instead, Coetzee's novel reveals the necessary silencing in all storytelling.

The final section of the novel turns this authorial appropriation back upon the implied author and, ultimately, the reader. In it, an unnamed first-person narrator returns twice to Foe's house, once while the characters still inhabit it, the other a visit from the late twentieth century, contemporary (and perhaps parallel) to Coetzee's production of *Foe*. This second visit returns us, as well, to the island. More specifically, the narrator enters the underwater realm and the wrecked ship below the scattered petals that so bedevil Barton's interpretation of Friday. Friday is there and the narrator asks him, "What is this ship?" But, as the narrator explains, "this is not a place of words. Each syllable, as it comes out, is caught and filled with water and diffused. This is a place where bodies are their own signs. It is the home of Friday" (157). Even when Friday opens his mouth, all that comes forth is "a slow stream, without breath, without interruption." His silence, then, resists all appropriations, even those of the author and the reader. Since we may only feel Friday's "dark and unending" breath and can hear nothing, we are restricted from knowing and appropriating his tale. In the unnamed narrator's prying open of Friday's jaw to find only silence, we see *Foe*'s ultimate resistance to the totalized narrative. Because of his silence, Friday's narrative can never be truly understood; it can only be created again. His silence creates a narrative gap that Barton, the final narrator, and the reader can never cross. In Friday's world, "where bodies are their own signs," his narrative retains its independence and avoids chronotopal appropriation.

By appropriating a canonical text, Coetzee reveals the politics of appropriation and canonization. Self-reflexive and indeterminate struggles for definitions of time and

space inform these narrative usurpations. In them, we see what Attridge, in his discussion of *Foe*, calls “an attempt to break the silence in which so many are caught [...] by literary means that traditionally have been celebrated as characterizing canonic art” (171). By doing so, *Foe* addresses the literary nature of this appropriation through specific political issues of gender, race, and empire. Benita Parry argues that, in Coetzee’s “renarrativation,” the European center maintains authorial power despite the questioning of that power, thereby “sustaining the West as the culture of reference” (40). In Hutcheon’s terms, we can say that *Foe* “exploits and yet simultaneously calls into question notions of closure, totalization, and universality that are part of those challenged grand narratives” of modernity that began with eighteenth-century enlightenment (67). The novel employs the post-colonial strategy of writing back to discuss the nature of narrative construction, an activity that is specifically postmodern.

Implementing a unified narrative chronotope relies upon silencing specific dialogical elements or rigid categorization of these various elements. The postmodern text denies both of these narrative controls. Instead, texts like *Malone Dies* and *Foe* attempt to create narratives that exist within the dialogical process. They are novels about the formation of novels. More specifically, both texts self-reflexively address the role of space and time within the establishment of narrative.

Malone Dies largely addresses these concerns in regards to the formation of biography, the relationship between diegesis and hypodiegesis, and the inevitable inability to establish a determinate chronotope for narrative. Its self-reflexivity, from diegetic to hypodiegetic narrative, employs the indeterminacy implicit in the postmodern

chronotope as a tool for raising these narrative concerns. Similarly, *Foe* addresses the relationship between various textual levels. Its chronotopal dialogue between characters within the text and Daniel Defoe's original work politicizes the discussion of time and space. Additionally, *Foe* inserts issues of gender and colonialism into the narrative process. In both Beckett's and Coetzee's work, the self-reflexivities establish—in different, yet complementary, manners—chronotopes that address the establishment of chronotopes.

Conclusion:

Postmodern Chronotopal Imitation

Both *Malone Dies* and *Foe* clarify spatio-temporal issues of postmodernism, particularly the nature of chronotopal dialogue within narrative. They challenge the way that narratives develop relationships within and between dialogical definitions of space and time. Each offers a nuanced discussion of the chronotopal process and uses indeterminacy and self-reflexivity to establish a postmodern creative chronotope.

These postmodern creative chronotopes remain actively engaged in the processes that they challenge, something that Lyotard does not acknowledge in his own theories of postmodernism. Nevertheless, he offers an initial definition of the postmodern artist that, when expanded by Hutcheon, helps us to understand another chronotopal relationship between *Malone Dies* and *Foe*. He observes,

the text [the postmodern artist] writes, the work he produces are not in principle governed by preestablished rules, and they cannot be judged according to a determining judgement, by applying familiar categories to the text or to the work. The artist and the writer, then, are working without rules in order to formulate the rules of what *will have been done*. (81)

In other words, for Lyotard the traditional paradigms and categories, having been undermined by postmodernism's incredulity to totalizing frameworks, no longer function for the postmodern artist. Instead, this artist must establish new rules.

Hutcheon argues that Lyotard and other postmodern theorists are “deeply—and knowingly—implicated in that notion of the center they attempt to subvert” (14). That is, postmodern theorists *and* postmodern artists establish their own creative frameworks while still influenced by the metanarratives that they challenge. Novels like *Malone Dies* and *Foe* further complicate Lyotard’s postmodern incredulity. They simultaneously employ and challenge the process of chronotopal formation. This combination of complicity and critique does not disengage the postmodern from the totalizing process; instead, it provides texts with complicated and self-reflexive means for questioning the aesthetic and political underpinnings in all narrative chronotopes, even their own.

Lyotard contends that postmodernism “refines our sensitivity to differences and reinforces our ability to tolerate the incommensurable” (xxv). Both of these texts show that individual investment and reevaluation of prior chronotopal frameworks are a necessary part of this postmodern refinement. These reevaluations make possible the idea that exact definitions of space and time are not necessary. In fact, they emphasize that such unchanging definitions are ultimately impossible.

Coetzee’s Nobel lecture, mentioned in the previous chapter, reveals an additional level of complicity for comparison of these two postmodern authors. He claims that “there are but a handful of stories in the world; and if the young are to be forbidden to prey upon the old then they must sit for ever in silence” and calls all who engage in such retellings “plagiarists and imitators.” Importantly, Coetzee includes himself among these authors who must retell the old stories, since *Foe* is, at its most elemental, an imitation of Defoe’s eighteenth-century novel. Coetzee makes use of the same characters, reapplying Cruso(e) and Friday, though changing them in significant ways. He places them upon a

desert island that, while not a direct reflection of the eighteenth-century location, refers back to that place. Because of these narrative imitations, *Foe*'s chronotopal implications cannot be fully grasped without understanding the novel's relationship to Defoe's original narrative.

Just as important as these parallels between *Foe* and *Robinson Crusoe* are their moments of diversion. Friday's switch from a Carib to an African; the insertion of a woman into the narrative; the desolation of the island; each of these changes clarifies the politics implicit in all narrative construction. These gaps between Coetzee's text and Defoe's original novel establish the self-reflexivity of the novel's postmodern chronotope. By applying postmodern spatio-temporal relationships to Robinson Crusoe's tale, Coetzee's novel reveals the political decisions underneath all forms of storytelling, even *Foe*. An author of a text must decide its particular narrative chronotope, and, as *Foe* makes clear, this decision is potentially informed by issues of gender, race, and empire, among others.

Furthermore, Coetzee inserts a fictionalized author. Daniel Foe, imitating the historical Daniel Defoe, provides the novel with an intersection between the narrative chronotope and its formative process. Existing within a fictional life that closely parallels (but never actually intersects with) Defoe's own biography, Foe imitates Defoe in the way that he tells stories. His decision to eliminate Susan Barton from her own narrative mimics the chronotopal decisions—and all of the religious and political ideologies implicit within—that the historical Defoe made in his own appropriations.²⁹ Like Coetzee

²⁹ We must also remember that Defoe, himself, engages in a kind of imitation, appropriating the tale of Alexander Selkirk and other castaways to tell his own story of protestant imperialism. *Robinson Crusoe* is, like *Foe*, an imitation. So even Defoe cannot claim to be the sole origin of his own story.

and other imitators, he is required to engage in the act of retelling or otherwise “sit for ever in silence.”³⁰

Coetzee’s idea of imitation can be taken a step further. Coetzee has long acknowledged the influence of Beckett’s work upon his own prose. Furthermore, he has often employed elaborate intertextualities within his novels, referring to authors like Dostoevsky, Kafka, Beckett, and, of course, Daniel Defoe. And just as Coetzee’s Nobel lecture reveals his own complicity as a “plagiarist” and “imitator” of Defoe’s work, his reapplication of an indeterminate, self-reflexive chronotope makes him equally complicit as an imitator of Beckett.

But we can easily include Beckett in this group of “plagiarists” as well. Beckett’s imitation is most complicated because, through hypodiegesis, *Malone Dies* employs a kind of self-plagiarism. Within the text, the eponymous, hypodiegetic narrator performs narrative strategies that are similar to those employed by Beckett in the formation of the diegetic narrative. In Malone’s stories of Sapo and Macmann, the relationship between space and time constantly shifts, locations are revised and determined to be inaccurate, and the understanding of particular events changes as chronotopal definitions alter. Malone imitates the very author of the text in which he exists, producing within *Malone Dies* a self-reflexive imitation.

Beckett’s imitation is not limited to the narrative confines of this text, however. Many critics have recognized the way that he returns to common themes throughout his

³⁰ Can we say that Selkirk’s story provides the end to this string of imitations? I am doubtful. For one, Selkirk never wrote his own narrative, relying on authors like Edward Cooke, Woodes Rogers, and Richard Steele to retell his story. Within these retellings, there are further references to journals by other sailors with no direct relationship to Selkirk’s narrative and even ancient texts. So, for example, Rogers’ version is influenced by the journal of the sailor Basil Ringrose (234) and Steele’s retelling of Selkirk’s tale is informed by the *Aeneid* (235).

works.³¹ Issues of desire, the human body, Cartesian dualism, and isolation are but a few of the issues to which Beckett returns time and again in his fiction and dramatic works.

Paul Davies acknowledges this when he states,

By describing [throughout his body of work] what seem to be distinct individuals who are ultimately re-reflections of the same human state, Beckett is able to illustrate the human consequences of a philosophical perspective, without naming it directly. This is what makes him a literary artist, someone who has rendered the consciousness of an age. (47)

By returning to similar philosophical perspectives in different characters and different chronotopes, Beckett's self-imitation inscribes the nature of human existence, instead of discussing it explicitly. Beckett's inscription (mimicked by Malone's own notebook inscription) resists simplistic reflection through its intertextual, chronotopal dialogue.

Both *Foe* and *Malone Dies* establish spatio-temporal frameworks that exist in a kind of binary system, affected by the equally powerful gravitational forces of both imitation and self-reflexivity. As the narratives progress and the chronotopal frameworks shift within these dialogical systems, the pull of imitation or self-reflexivity adjusts and reevaluates the relationship between time and space. Postmodern chronotopal indeterminacy relies upon this reciprocally-influenced relationship. Imitation in all of these instances is by no means negative; rather it is a necessary aspect of the narrative process. Both novels recognize that all stories are, in one way or another, a form of imitation, and each text reflects the influence of this imitation on the ways that time and space interact within the narratives. *Malone Dies* and *Foe*, by employing chronotopes that are both indeterminate and self-reflexive, engage in postmodern imitation. They reflect

³¹ See Abbot, Maude, and Watson.

upon the act of narrative creation, revealing the aesthetic and political underpinnings that shape the ever-changing relationships between time and space in the two novels.

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