

Thomas Pynchon's Southern Californian Literary Heterotopology: Decompression Heterotopias in *Inherent Vice*

Moein Moradi ¹

PhD Candidate of English Literature, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran

Amirali Nojournian (Corresponding Author) ²

Associate Professor of English Language and Literature, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran

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Abstract

Looking back at the early 1970s socio-cultural upheavals, Thomas Pynchon's *Inherent Vice* (2009) generates a discursive construct of Los Angeles that captures the transition from a Fordist culture to a Post-Fordist one. This essay holds that around this watershed moment, literary heterotopias specific to Southern California are being made. Michel Foucault defines heterotopias as realized utopias, emplacements that simultaneously represent, contest, and invert the normal space. This study reads *Inherent Vice*, using Foucault's archaeological method of analysis to develop literary heterotopology. A discursive analysis of Pynchon's novel reveals heterotopias' discontinuous nature, which this study proposes as the seventh principle for heterotopology. Furthermore, Pynchon uses a new vehicle, Decompression Heterotopias, to reshape globalization in his retro-production of Los Angeles. Ultimately, the essay shows how the Fordist and Post-Fordist waves of globalization aspire to affect Angeleno's lives by compressing the time-space spectrum. Pynchon's decompression heterotopias, however, resist the status quo and propose reconfiguring globalization's compression forces.

Keywords

Thomas Pynchon; *Inherent Vice*; Los Angeles; Archaeological Analysis; Literary Heterotopology.

1. Introduction

Published in 2009, *Inherent Vice* is Thomas Pynchon's third Los Angeles novel following *The Crying of Lot 49* (1966) and *Vineland* (1990). The story returns to Southern California to review the events of the transitory moment of the early 1970s from the point of view of one hippie gumshoe, Larry 'Doc' Sportello, who gets involved in various kinds of vice-related dossiers. According to one critic, Doc is a "part Colombo, part Clouseau, part Philip Marlowe, part Roadrunner cartoon" who runs into "popular culture, power relations, betrayal, and an outlandish interchangeability of criminals and law enforcement officials" (Lynd 18). The peculiarity of the story is

¹ mo_moradi@sbu.ac.ir

² a-nojournian@sbu.ac.ir

not limited to its lead character. The novel introduces its curious spatial politics from the very outset by constructing a surrogate for Manhattan Beach, Los Angeles. The central urban emplacement in which Pynchon carries on his spatial criticism is the fictional Gordita Beach: hometown of the hippies and carefree surfers who are the last to be affected by the Post-Fordist wave of economic as well as spatio-cultural dispositions. Fordism is the economic model that rose in the late 1930s, fell in the early 1970s, and affected California as the cultural locus of the U.S. This economic development model is characterized by “mass production and mass consumption in the United States and Western Europe” (Tu Lan 1). This term addresses the rigidity of labor rules and capital circulation and their impact on the social and cultural scene. Fordism was first used by “Antonio Gramsci to describe Henry Ford’s automobile industry and later developed into a theoretical framework to study capitalism by French regulation school” (1). Post-Fordism, on the other hand, was a response to Fordist tradition. Starting from the early 1970s, Post-Fordism “includes a number of alternative development models, of which flexible spatialization has been the most influential in geography” (1). Implementation of Post-Fordist models in Los Angeles has resulted in “urban landscapes [that] have been revamped systematically to serve better the demands of the new—flexible and globalized—accumulation” (Browne and Keil 159). Around 1970, Southern California witnessed a cultural shift from the ongoing Fordist regime to the arriving Post-Fordist one.

Gordita Beach, as seen through the eyes of the genre-defying private eye Doc Sportello is a city that belongs to neither Fordist nor Post-Fordist waves. This essay tries to find what makes Gordita Beach different from the rest of Los Angeles. And as the difference lies in some specific heterotopias, what is the impact of heterotopias on the discourse of space in the story. To respond to the above questions, this paper argues that Doc’s peculiar spatial perception of the city resists the coming and going of the cultural trends. On the other hand, globalization implies pressure on distances and a shrinking of space. However, Pynchon has devised certain heterotopias as a vehicle to release his settings from the compression coming from Post-Fordism. This way, the novelist has attempted to transform the globalization pattern, using heterotopias as decompression emplacements.

Although Foucault proposes six principles for the analytic description of other spaces, his heterotopology remains a broad field that has attracted numerous scholarly responses. This study attempts to contribute to heterotopology in such a way as to develop literary heterotopias specific to Pynchon’s Southern Californian novel. Los Angeles for Pynchon is on the verge of profound urban transformations. These transformations lead to the formation of heterotopic emplacements that we tentatively-

and in contrast to David Harvey's formulations- call Decompression Heterotopias; as sites of reflection and inversion of globalized socio-cultural codes that form the spatial politics of Los Angeles. Following the literature review, Foucault's methodology of heterotopology would be detailed, and then, using his archaeological analysis on the novel, we would develop literary heterotopology towards new horizons.

2. Literature Review

Inherent Vice has been noted for its multilayered look back to the region. Some critics have read the novel for its surface message as a reminder of the "entertaining time reading about the almost-free sex and drugs in a California that is no more" (LeClair, 25). In contrast, others have treated the novel's social message as an underlying criticism of capitalism and its attempt at proposing "ideological antithesis" for the early 1970s plights of the nation (Jones 1). This essay stands with the second group, adding to their observation that Pynchon's antithesis for 1970s upheavals lies in its heterotopic settings. Other critics have compared *Vice* to *Lot 49*, maintaining that, unlike Oedipa Maas, *Vice's* protagonist is "entirely divorced from epistemological questions" (Chetwynd 933). Doc's advantage enables him to foreground "an optimistic resolution for the earlier analogy between the individualist fatalism" of the city and "the distrust underlying cooperative living at the beach" (Chetwynd 933-944). Chetwynd rightly observes two epistemologically distinguished Los Angeles lifestyles for the city and the beach. Taking Chetwynd's argument as a starting point, this article finds heterotopias that evolve because of Pynchon's portrayal of the city versus the beach.

Among the critical works that have read the novel as a site for flourishing heterotopias, the recently published collection of essays in *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Pynchon* (2012) is noteworthy. Chapters by Brian McHale and Hanjo Berressem analyze Pynchon's texts using a postmodernist theoretical framework that sheds light on the initial aspects of heterotopology. Affirming McHale and Berressem's chapters, this article follows the heterotopias they introduce for their social impact on the characters and how they conceive of the space. Furthermore, in a widely cited paper, Maria Cichosz reads Pynchon's reference to the mythical sunken continent of Lemuria as a Foucauldian heterotopia that works to ensure the novel's postmodernist allegorical significance. She believes that "*Inherent Vice* begs a spatial reading. Geographic space in the novel is carefully organized to ensure the correspondence of specific locations with specific archetypal and symbolic associations" (Cichosz 529). To add to Cichosz's observation, considering hippies as a deviant group, Gordita beach as the hometown of hippies would also fit into the definition of heterotopia of deviation.

3. Discontinuity as the Seventh Principle of Heterotopology

In his 1967 influential speech *Of Other Spaces*, Foucault categorizes contemporary space into emplacements of passage, temporary halt, and rest. Then he argues that he is interested in beyond these ordinary spaces. He aims to analyze sites that have the “curious property of being in relation with all other sites, but in such a way as to suspend, neutralize, or invert the set of relations designated, mirrored, or reflected by them” (Dehaene and De Cauter 17). Foucault detects two versions of these places that “contradict all the other emplacements,” maintaining that “first there are the utopias,” which “are emplacements with no real place” (17). Then he defines the second type of other spaces as heterotopias: “effectively realized utopias in which the real emplacements... are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted” (17). Following this, to introduce a “systematic study, analysis, description, and reading” of them, the philosopher proposes a new field of knowledge called heterotopology (17). He further endows this field with six principles, each describing different emplacements, namely: heterotopias of crisis, deviance, illusion, compensation, festivity, and performance (27).

Heterotopology is a spatial concept that addresses real sites. To appropriate heterotopology for reading the novel, we reflect upon another Foucauldian method that analyzes space as a discursive construct. Foucault's way of reading the history of knowledge is called the archaeological analysis. In this method, the archaeologist pays special attention to the minor deviations, mutations, and contradictions in the continuous narrative accepted as history. As a result, finding discontinuity would emerge as the main aim for historical analysis. On the other hand, heterotopias function as a rupture concerning the discourse of their environment. Aiming to displace discontinuity from an obstacle to a significant player, the archaeological analysis provides valuable tools for the expansion of Foucault's literary heterotopology in such a way as to prioritize the role of discontinuity. To do so, Foucault takes utopia as an emblem of continuity and, as its antithesis, introduces heterotopia as a symbol of discontinuity. After providing a fresh translation for Foucault's *Of Other Spaces*, Dehaene and De Cauter observe “Foucault's latent anti-utopianism” as an attempt to do away with the “non-existent inversion” of society” (Dehaene and De Cauter 24). Instead, Foucault stresses on a real place, heterotopia, that deals with discontinuities: “against any teleology (of progress, continuity, utopia) Foucault puts his archaeology, the science of layers, and discontinuities (Dehaene and De Cauter 24).

Discontinuity, therefore, becomes the common trope that makes the archaeological method a suitable tool for the application of heterotopology. Furthermore, Peter Johnson's essays and concise reviews of the literature on Foucault's critical reading of

visual art shows, “heterotopia is best understood as an approach to exposing and exploring different spaces” (*Foucault’s Heterotopian Art* 4). What Johnson observes as exposing the difference and “disruptions” in space (Johnson *Unravelling Foucault’s Different Spaces* 75) can be better understood knowing that Foucault’s archaeological analysis also has a strong tendency to detect, expand and valorize ruptures in the history of knowledge. To summarize Foucault’s signature method of archaeological analysis, the critic reads the strata of discursive formations to trace “autochthonous transformations that take place in the field of historical knowledge” (*Archaeology of Knowledge* 15). In this way, the condition of the concept of rupture and discontinuity would be elevated from an abnormality to a creative drive for generating events.

We can find the same idea in the realm of Foucauldian criticism of literary works as well. In his doctoral thesis, Kelvin Knight focuses on the literary origins of the concept of heterotopia. Knight argues that since this concept is akin to the breakage with the ordinary, Foucault has aimed to give us “an awareness of the contingencies of the systems of classification by which we attempt to order the world” (Knight 12). Detecting contingencies in the categorizations of knowledge is also the aim of Foucault’s archaeological method in which “we must question those ready-made syntheses, those groupings that we normally accept before any examination” (Foucault *Archaeology of Knowledge* 22). Here, the similarity between the core arguments of heterotopology and archaeology is undeniable.

To apply the archaeological method for detecting the formation of heterotopias is a significant novelty since the analogy between heterotopias and archaeological descriptions opens up new horizons for Foucauldian scholarship. Heterotopias tend to invert their surrounding environment, thus implicitly creating a sudden discontinuity in the normalcy of space. In general, “the concept of heterotopia is useful in discussing coexisting times and spaces, but its role (as described by Foucault) is not to efface the seams that hold them together or the underlying layers. In fact, heterotopias self-reflexively reinforce their otherness” (Chung 90). Therefore, heterotopias reflect the difference hidden in their heterogeneous ingredients. Parallel to this, Foucault’s archaeological analysis is centered on the notion of discontinuity, a method which “breaks the thread of transcendental teleologies” (*Archaeology of Knowledge* 131). Archeology and Heterotopology, subsequently, are aiming for the same goal. Upon the above observation, here, for the first time, we propose adding a seventh principle to heterotopology: regardless of their function or type, heterotopias are discontinuous in relation to their surrounding discourse of space.

In *Inherent Vice*, Thomas Pynchon has devised heterotopias to address a historical shift in Los Angeles. The novel’s timeline reflects a transitory historical moment in

globalization in which a flexible economic structure is rapidly replacing a rigid one. The watershed moment that Pynchon's heterotopias are criticizing is best described in David Harvey's terms. Harvey believes that "more generally, the period from 1965 to 1973 was one in which the inability of Fordism and Keynesianism to contain the inherent contradictions of Capitalism become more and more apparent" (Harvey, 141-2). As the critic Thomas Jones has called *Vice's* Golden Fang the epitome of Capitalism (Jones 3), the inherent vice of the early 1970s comes from the same inability Harvey detects in the capitalist core of the society. As the rigid accumulation of capital in the previous Fordist regime is about to be replaced by a new and flexible one (Harvey 147), Pynchon's novel captures a fractured moment in Los Angeles history that coincides with this radical transformation. The impact of the rupturing moment- both in terms of discursive formation and the production of space- is significant, leading David Harvey to believe that the early 1970s has witnessed a mutation in space and time, describing it as "space-time compression": "The time horizons of both private and public decision-making have shrunk, while satellite communication and declining transport costs have made it increasingly possible to spread those decisions immediately over an ever wider and variegated space"(147).

On the other hand, Foucauldian archaeology is interested in such epistemological breaks in which a "possible point of diffraction of discourse" would happen (Foucault *Archaeology of Knowledge* 65). This is a crucial observation since it allows the novel to showcase a discontinuity in its urban fictionalization through generating specific heterotopias that resist the status quo.

4. Discussion

It has been noted before that Pynchon's general portrayal of the "beach had been the scene of recurring conflicts of authority and resistance" (McClintock and Miller 3). The emphasis upon otherness and difference is a central idea in the novel as well. Basically, in *Inherent Vice*, the juxtaposition of two distinct urban expressions shapes heterotopic sites. *Vice's* heterotopias emerge because of the cultural and spatial differences between downtown Los Angeles versus the beach. Doc is detached from any cultural imposition, and when he reflects upon the past, he discovers that he is an outsider to the system. He remembers his encounters with the "crudely engineered curves" of L.A. freeways and ending up walking around "back alleys east of L.A. River," thinking that the "reckless era" of standing in-between two compressing worlds of the 1960s and 1970s was over with (2). Still, now that Shasta is back seeking his help, "he was beginning to feel deeply nervous again" (2). Doc, in other words, suddenly finds himself pressed between the two cultural settings that immediately evoke the Fordist

and Post-Fordist economic rationales upon which Pynchon is erecting his particular criticism of contemporary Los Angeles urban development.

Heterotopic settings that populate the novel come from Doc and Shasta's encounter, which is the encounter between the beach and the city. Doc, who wants to be hospitable to his ex-old lady, sadly realizes that Shasta despises the place where she used to belong. "He almost said, 'there's room here,' which in fact there wasn't, but he'd seen her looking around at everything that hadn't changed, the authentic English Pub Dartboard to...the velvet painting and so forth, with an expression of, you would have to say, distaste" (5). Jennifer Backman argues that "Doc projects his negative emotions about the changing world onto Shasta's changed style" (22). Another reason for Doc's negativity comes from the fact that the changing world of the city stands in contrast to his beach home. Doc's place is old-fashioned enough to appear as a heterotopic site in Shasta's eyes. Accordingly, heterotopias resurface from these early pages of the novel. Doc's retro room creates an eccentric space that defies the "reigning logic of the dominant culture" of the Post-Fordist city (Dehaene and De Caeter 6). The room feels "simultaneously mythic," in terms of being decorated with obsolete items, and also real, as in "real contestation of the spaces in which we live" (17).

Doc's home is a heterotopia of deviation since, as a hippie fellow, Doc's "behavior is deviant in relation to the mean or required norm" (18). Doc and the circle of his hippie friends refuse to take side with either side of the cultural spectrum. Rob Wilson notes that *Inherent Vice* "once again tracks this centuries-long battle for the soul of America between what he calls the non-flatland Preterite (surfers, dopers, fun seekers, rockers, hippie riffraff)" versus the "straight-world *Elect* (land developers, bankers, tax-dodging dentists, big shots, police within police, loan sharks, or worse)" (Wilson 217-18). Dwelling in heterotopic emplacements, beach hippies are breaking with the cultural norms of the city. Such an epistemological rupture between beach people and other Angelenos resonates with the key role the concept of discontinuity plays in Foucault's archaeological method of description of discourse.

Foucault's archaeological reading gives prominence to the epistemological breaks regarding their appearance in the discourse on space. Accordingly, the "discursive formation" that develops around Pynchonian heterotopias includes a "series of events, transformations, mutations, and processes" (74). Such a constellation of "discursive practice" (72) revolves around an economic principle which Harvey calls a "regime of accumulation" that denotes "the stabilization over a long period of the allocation of the net products between consumption and accumulation" (Harvey 121). When such a chain becomes problematic, as late 1960s events manifest, one regime of accumulation-portrayed as a discursive formation in the novel's fabric- is replaced by a new one.

Early in the story, and tired of his unending investigation, Doc looks at a painting that hangs on his bedroom wall. The painting shows “out of the vans and into the calm early mornings would come sofa-width Crucifixions and Last Suppers, outlaw bikers on elaborately detailed Harleys, superhero badasses in Special Forces gear packing M16s and so forth” (Pynchon 9). The picture shows a parallel Los Angeles, “a Southern California beach that never was—palms, bikini babes, surfboards, the works” (9). Indeed Doc uses the painting as an escape from the current state of affairs: “he thought of it as a window to look out of when he couldn’t deal with looking out of the traditional glass-type one in the other room” (9). Doc’s “velvet painting” (9) illustrates a heterotopic version of Gordita Beach, one that offers an island forever frozen in time, and an absolute detachment from the chaotic city. Here, Pynchon is introducing a new heterotopia, one in which Harvey’s space-time compression ceases to exist.

Compression in space and time in *Inherent Vice* is visible through the forces that are reshaping Los Angeles, among which Mickey Wolfmann’s housing projects and LAPD’s war on drugs are the most significant. Whether through urban reconfigurations or by violation of civil rights in the name of the law, these forces struggle to implement globalization’s socio-cultural uniformity. Contrary to these forces, Gordita Beach is endowed with heterotopias that decompress global flows or equally resist cultural homogenization. Pynchon’s Gordita Beach heterotopias are working on decompressing the space-time pressures coming from the new wave of social order.

As the story develops, refusing Aunt Reet’s advice not to meddle in a tycoon’s affairs, Doc disguises as an institution clerk and penetrates Sloan Wolfmann’s house (Pynchon 48). After gaining Mickey’s wife’s trust, on the surface, what Doc witnesses are the corruption of the police forces as representatives of the state. Yet as Doc digs deeper for evidence of his ex-old lady, he discloses a heterotopia of deviance in Mickey Wolfmann’s bedroom: “Snooping around, he came across a number of strange neckties hanging inside a walk-in closet on a rack of their own. He switched on a light and had a look. At first glance, they seemed to be vintage hand-painted silk ties” of each of Mickey’s women’s pictures on them (48). As it turns out, the LAPD has left its duty of securing the city aside only for guarding Mickey’s heterotopia of deviance in which he stores souvenirs of his illicit affairs. Law officers are portrayed relieved from pressing police matters as they swim in Wolmann’s pool and listen to live music. Here again, the space-time compression is halted, and the heterotopia of deviance turns into a decompressing zone.

Afterward, Doc comes across decompression heterotopias in Gordita Beach. Vehi's home, where he has taken Doc on an acid trip, is one of the examples of decompression zones. The sacred and imaginatively sunken island of Lemuria finds a symbolic role in Doc's acid trip: "Doc was reminded of the acid trip he'd been put on by Vehi and Sortilege, trying to find his way through a labyrinth that was slowly sinking into the ocean" (182). The trip involves using some drugs, and deep under their influence, Doc

found himself in the vividly lit ruin of an ancient city that was, and also wasn't, everyday Greater L.A.—stretching on for miles, house after house, room after room, every room inhabited. At first he thought he recognized the people he ran into, though he couldn't always put names to them. Everybody living at the beach, for example, Doc and all his neighbors, were and were not refugees from the disaster which had submerged Lemuria thousands of years ago. (183)

In Doc's dream, the beach inhabitants resemble ancient people who do not belong to the contemporary U.S. spatial and demographic patterns. This idea enters Doc's mind in Vehi Fairfield's place that embodies decompression heterotopia, an emplacement of rupture that releases the entering person from capitalism's existing cultural and social shackles. Through such peculiar sites, Pynchon creates heterotopias that are situated outside of both cultural mechanisms of Fordist and Post-Fordist modes by resisting the time-space compression generic to both systems. Gordita's heterotopic emplacements, therefore, provide discontinuity and rupture from the system.

Later in the story, Doc hides the heroine package he wants to swap with Coy's freedom in Denis' place. When Doc comes back, he finds Denis watching the drug as if it was a television packaged inside of a T.V. set box:

"It said on the box it was a television set," Denis explained.

"And you couldn't resist. Didn't you check first to see if there was something you could plug in?"

"Well I couldn't find any power cord, man, but I figured it could be some new type of set you didn't need one?"

"Uh huh and what..." why was he pursuing this? "were you watching, when I came in?"

"See, my theory is, is it's like one of these educational channels? A little slow maybe, but no worse than high school..." (Pynchon 258).

Here the author ironically blames the U.S. educational system and entertainment industry for legitimizing drug use in the public culture. Pynchon relates drug abuse to corrupt power. Power in commonsense works to assure the creation of social structure; however, Pynchon inverts such conceptions. He aims to create a discontinuity in the typical image of power relations in Fordist and Post-Fordist forms. Denise watching a

drug package as a T.V. set generates a decompression heterotopia that creates a rupture in the reader's understanding of corporate power.

The Decompression heterotopia of Denis's place resists both flexible accumulations of the capital in the coming Post-Fordist era and the ending dominance of Fordism's rigid labor control system. Yet as a heterotopia, it mirrors both. Fordism and Post-Fordism share one key element: they both are in place to establish a more efficient corporate power. Decompression heterotopias reflect the same corporate power (which the reader comes across in Sloan's luxury residence in Santa Monica) and at the same time invert it in both Fordist and Post-Fordist directions of it. Therefore, the above episode showcases the inversion of corporate power as the symbol of both systems.

Through the end of the novel, when Shasta disappears, and Doc's search reaches a dead-end, he finds his ex-old lady in his dreams. He envisions Shasta aboard the Golden Gang, a mysterious schooner that belongs to a drug cartel. The imagery of this ship, as a heterotopia, stands in disagreement with the lost continent of Lemuria as a utopia. As the story creates a tension between utopia and heterotopia, Doc's eyes are opened to the changing times, and his place as an outsider to the system becomes more and more evident. Then, Sauncho takes Doc to watch the schooner from afar. "People get creepy talking about it," Sauncho assures Doc, pointing to San Pedro sailors, for whom Golden Fang boat is related to Bermuda triangle mysteries (Pynchon 59). Sauncho explains that the boat's mysterious in and out operations constitute how the schooner drops an illegal cargo deep in the ocean. Later on, using the exact location, the buyers of the contraband will pick up the hidden container. The ship, therefore, undermines the global laws of the legal maritime business. Golden Fang does its operation in secrecy; it short-circuits the normal time space relations, and as Foucault's heterotopia par excellence, it becomes the last and most significant decompression heterotopia in the story. The schooner foregrounds otherness with its peculiar "relationship of difference with other sites," which leads to "alternative representation of special and social relations in heterotopia," making it a "site of alternative ordering." (Hetherington 8). Here, the alternative representation of the ship is that of a mystery. While in reality, the boat is nothing short of a decompression heterotopia.

Furthermore, Golden Fang's status is also related to the opposition it provides for the utopian imagery of Lemuria. As a real heterotopia site, the schooner feeds people with a narrative that tries to coexist with the imaginary story behind Lemuria. According to heterotopia scholars, the coexistence of incompatible sites demonstrates the most radical transformation since the aesthetics of utopianism has turned into a heterotopic sensibility. This, in Eliza Claudia Filimon's words, denotes the "hybrid

combination of the incongruous" space (21). Filimon believes that "what defines heterotopia as places of another order is a not physical location. The relation of the topos of the Other to the topos of the Same is determined less by physical position than by the confluence of discourses, institutions, and procedures deployed in a place" (21). Therefore, the discursive juxtaposition of Golden Gang and Lemuria reminds us of new spatial coding, which is brought to the fore by the turn to the Post-Fordist discourse.

Inherent Vice is populated by settings that link Foucault's heterotopias and David Harvey's time-space compression, an idea that has not been observed in academia to date. Furthermore, such connection would lead to advances in the interdisciplinary field that studies urban space in fiction. The significance of our proposed concept of decompression heterotopias lies in its function. The status quo tries to put the individuals sandwiched between the current modes of urban existence, and Pynchonian Southern Californian heterotopias resist such operation. Pynchon distances from the commonsensical portrayal of hippies and using decompression zones; he introduces them as the other in relation to the global waves that swipe Los Angeles. From this point of view, Pynchon's decompression emplacements are discontinuous heterotopias par excellence. On the one hand, these heterotopias advance the scholarship in urban studies by giving the scholars a new toolbox for analyzing a rupturing moment in the history of Los Angeles development. On the other hand, decompression heterotopias elevate the status of Pynchon Studies by reinforcing the significance of the discourse of space in Pynchon's fiction.

5. Conclusion

Since its publication, *Inherent Vice* has enjoyed relatively positive comments from critics. The novel's protagonist, Doc Sportello, is a private detective who perceives the city as an independent urban space. Doc lives in a fictional Gordita Beach that populates varying heterotopias in contrast with downtown Los Angeles. On the other hand, *Vice* is contextualized in a rupturing moment where Los Angeles is rushing from Fordism towards Post-Fordism. This transitory moment creates a discontinuity in terms of the knowledge of space. Such an epistemological break is also echoed in Pynchon's portrayal of the city versus the beach. We put the above observation parallel to the importance of discontinuities in Foucault's archaeological method of analysis of discourse. The outcome helps us introduce discontinuity as a new principle for heterotopology.

Furthermore, the novel generates discursive emplacements that fit into Foucault's definition of heterotopias. These emplacements, however, are not limited to the six

variants of other spaces proposed by Foucault. The findings showcase a new heterotopia as a generic Southern Californian other space in the novel, which we tentatively call decompression heterotopia. Expanding heterotopology towards decompression zones is significant in terms of the functionality of such emplacements. As the findings ultimately exhibit, while the trending socio-cultural waves of globalization aspire to compress time-space spectrum, Pynchon's decompression heterotopias propose to reconfigure their compression forces.



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