The Dialectics of Inside and Outside: Dominated and Appropriated Space in Defoe's Historical Fictions

George A. Drake

Daniel Defoe's two historical fictions, *A Journal of the Plague Year* and *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, have been tangential to most histories of the historical novel.[1] The *Journal* represents an event largely outside historical causality, and even though the *Memoirs* deals with great historical events, most readers have found it little more than a pastiche of existing accounts. But if the two works do not quite qualify as historical novels, they nonetheless register historical changes, particularly in the experience of space. The fictional authors of the *Journal* and the *Memoirs*, H.F. and the anonymous Cavalier, enact Defoe's ambivalent fascination with spaces dominated by official power and spaces appropriated by individual practices.[2] The Cavalier is enthralled by military power, wanting nothing more than to see with its gaze. And yet he remains in crucial respects an outsider, unwilling to be wholly "player" or "observator" in the wars, though also

1 The two most influential studies of the historical novel, Georg Lukács's *The Historical Novel*, trans. Hannah and Stanley Mitchell (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983) and Avrom Fleishman's *The English Historical Novel: Walter Scott to Virginia Woolf* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971), mention Defoe only in passing.

2 I am adopting Henri Lefebvre's distinction between *dominated* space and *appropriated* space. See *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (1991; Cambridge and Oxford: Blackwell, 1994).

uncomfortable with everyday life. H.F., who reluctantly accepts an official role in the quarantine, is equally enthralled by the appropriations of those too poor or powerless to escape London during the plague year. The indecisiveness of the two narrators embodies contradictions in seventeenth-century social space.

In Defoe's time, possibilities for state control of collective space were nowhere more evident than in the medical and military management of space, which are central to the *Journal* and the *Memoirs* respectively.[3] At the same time, capitalism produced its own space of exchange, which sometimes contradicted official barriers and pathways. The *Journal*'s H.F., a saddler, acknowledges the state's need to control the plague, but his real sympathies lie with individuals who avoid quarantine or maintain the free flow of goods. The Cavalier's single-minded fascination with fortifications during the Thirty Years War and bewilderment at a disorganized war on English soil emphasize the contradictions between the geometric order of military space and the appropriated spaces of everyday practice. Neither narrator wholly resolves his ambivalence, but their irresolution allows Defoe to explore both dominated and appropriated spaces. Defoe's other protagonists, such as Robinson Crusoe or Moll Flanders, are master appropriators of their immediate environments, experiencing both dominated and appropriated spaces as undifferentiated spaces of opportunity.[4] The more passive H.F. and the Cavalier, who move uneasily between insider and outsider status, begin to see others in terms of collectivities, and to see what shapes their collective spaces. Defoe does not use them simply to portray historical events, but to examine, in Gaston Bachelard's phrase, "the dialectics of inside and outside."[5]

3 In an interview on the topic of geography, Michel Foucault notes that "Doctors were, along with the military, the first managers of collective space. But the military were chiefly concerned to think the space of 'campaigns' (and thus of 'passages') and that of fortresses, whereas doctors were concerned to think the space of habitations and towns." *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, ed. Colin Gordon, trans. Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham, and Kate Soper (New York: Pantheon, 1980), p. 151.

4 John Richetti notes that, with the exception of H.F. (and we might add the Cavalier), Defoe's "narrators appropriate their environments, converting them from historical and geographical entities into emanations of the infinitely resourceful self." *Defoe's Narratives: Situations and Structures* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 233.

5 Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. Maria Jolas (1964; Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), p. 211.

"So Soldierly a Stile": *Memoirs of a Cavalier*

Although Walter Scott believed Defoe "would have deserved immortality" for the *Journal* and the *Memoirs* had he written nothing else, few critics share his estimation of the *Memoirs*.[6] When discussed at all, it has been dismissed as "deadening historical narrative"[7] or one of Defoe's "poorest forgeries";[8] J. Paul Hunter's and G.A. Starr's seminal works overlook it altogether.[9] The nameless Cavalier lacks psychological depth and his life has little shape. If the religious musings of Moll Flanders or even H.F. resemble spiritual autobiography, the Cavalier's vague uncertainty about religion (pp. 32, 165) and attempts at a providential interpretation of the Civil War reveal only his bewilderment at matters beyond strategy.

But the Cavalier's aimlessness and desultory education as a soldier produce peculiar blindnesses and insights that foreground his experience of space. He is as mobile as Scott's Waverley, fighting for both sides during the Thirty Years War, but changing camps only to "see" the armies in action (pp. 24, 43, 51), not because his sympathies change. The religious causes of the war have little interest for him, and in his almost picaresque "wandring up and down" (p. 113) war-torn Europe and single-minded focus on military strategy, he does not seek power itself, but rather the space of power. As a gentleman soldier serving "at his own charge," he maintains privileged "Intimacies with the General Officers" and attracts the particular attention of the King of Sweden. But despite his admiration for this

6 "Daniel De Foe," in *A Journal of the Plague Year*, ed. Paula R. Backscheider (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992), p. 269.

7 Richetti, p. 191.

8 Thomas De Quincey, in *Defoe: The Critical Heritage*, ed. Pat Rogers (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), p. 117.

9 Few critics have written on the *Memoirs* in recent years. Arthur W. Secord's essay establishes that Defoe did in fact piece together the narrative (and some of his sentence structures) from a fairly small number of readily available histories; see "The Origins of Defoe's *Memoirs of a Cavalier*," *Robert Drury's Journal and Other Studies* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1961). Maximillian Novak devotes a chapter to the *Memoirs* and the *Journal* in *Realism, Myth, and History in Defoe's Fiction* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), giving an excellent account of the contemporary events that occasioned them; and John J. Burke, Jr, treats them as historical novels in "Observing the Observer in Historical Fictions by Defoe," *Philological Quarterly* 61 (1982), 13–32. Michael Boardman's extended discussion in *Defoe and the Uses of Narrative* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1983) usefully analyses narrative methods in the *Memoirs*. John Mullan's introduction to *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, ed. James T. Boulton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), situates it historically in terms of authorship and the development of realism. References are to this edition.

King—whom he regards as a "compleat surveyor" and "Master in Fortification" (p. 101) rather than a Protestant hero—his alliance is with strategy itself, with the domination of space. After the King's death he loses all interest in the war, not because his loyalty has lost its object, but because the war's turn towards long and static sieges disappoints a connoisseur's taste in strategy.

The Cavalier's experience divides sharply into Lefebvre's dominated and appropriated spaces. Seventeenth-century military strategy, with its complex fortifications and geometric troop movements, produces a thoroughly dominated space, which Lefebvre defines as

> invariably the realization of a master's project. ... In order to dominate space, technology introduces a new form into a pre-existing space—generally a rectilinear or rectangular form such as a meshwork or chequerwork. ... Dominated space is usually closed, sterilized, emptied out.[10]

In the seventeenth century, military strategy, with its close adherence to geometrical forms in both fortifications and troop movements, sought to dominate using a spatial grid. Appropriated space, by contrast, is shaped by the lives of the people who use it, following the contours of everyday practices. Lefebvre does not simply contrast "natural" appropriated spaces with "unnatural" dominated spaces, but rather the spaces projected by power with spaces organized by collective practice. Power seeks a fixed and static order. Appropriated space, on the other hand, follows the contours of movement. Thus the rectilinear form of a public square may express power, especially if it is dominated by a monument attesting to its permanence. The appropriated spaces of the square are produced by pedestrian pathways, market stalls, and opportunities for meeting. A pedestrian must possess competence in both kinds of space, recognizing lines of power as well as the subtler rules of social manners that determine right of way, appropriate distances, and even where one may look or stare.

The Cavalier is fully competent only in dominated space; in appropriated spaces, he is awkward and uncomfortable. Defoe asserts that his narrowness gives the narrative authority:

> it is thro' every Part, related with so Soldierly a Stile, and in the very Language of the Field, that it seems impossible any Thing, but the very Person who was present in every Action here related, could be the Relator of them. (p. 2)

10 Lefebvre, p. 165.

But authenticity does not require so many blindnesses. In adapting historical materials to soldierly style, Defoe sterilizes what has already been accepted as authentic and objective. For example, he adapts this stylistically colourless passage from the *Swedish Intelligencer*:

> And thus was this goodly, rich, strong, and pleasant castle ... taken ... A palace it was ... which having been something defaced by the cannon, the King caused to be forthwith repaired. ... The town redeemed itself from pillaging by the payment of 4 tun of gold; or of 300,000 florins ... so that the King and his soldiers never went away so rich from any place. Here was found a princely stable of goodly horses, with which the King was very much delighted.[11]

The Cavalier's soldierly "account of the glory of the morning" is even less literary:

> There was first a magazine of very good arms for about 18 or 20000 Foot, and 4000 Horse, a very good Train of Artillery of about 18 Pieces of Battery, 32 brass Field pieces and four mortars. The Bishop's Treasure, and other publick Monies not plundered by the Soldiers, was telling out by the Officers, and amounted to 400000 Florins in Money; and the Burghers of the Town in solemn Procession, bareheaded, brought the King three Tun of Gold as a Composition to exempt the City from Plunder. Here was also a Stable of gallant Horses which the King had the Curiosity to go and see. (p. 73)

The *Intelligencer*'s descriptive adjectives—"Goodly, rich, strong, and pleasant"—disappear and the "palace" that was "defaced" becomes a storehouse of useful arms and money. "Goodly" horses acquire the more warlike adjective "gallant" and become an object of strategic curiosity rather than delight. Even Defoe's added detail—the "solemn Procession" of "bareheaded" Burghers—measures the castle's complete domination. Defoe's narratives are typically replete with numbers, but for the Cavalier, quantification substitutes for perception. Although he apologizes for unskilled "Descriptions of Places" (p. 11), his expression limits him less than what he can see.[12] After the catastrophic defeat of the Imperial General Tilly, for example, he "was most diverted ... with viewing the Works which *Tilly* had cast up" (p. 93)—but he ignores the battle's human cost.

11 Quoted in Secord, p. 100.

12 Novak regards descriptions of battle in the *Memoirs* and many scenes in the *Journal* as a "retreat into the ineffable," but while this may be true of the *Journal*, the Cavalier is less limited by what he cannot describe than what he cannot see. See "Picturing the Thing Itself, or Not: Defoe, Painting, Prose Fiction, and the Arts of Describing," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 9 (1996), 1–20, 14.

Even the Cavalier's choice of pronouns reflects his complete identification with strategy. While often reminding us he was an "Eyewitness" to the wars, he uses the observing "I" less frequently than the choric "we." Because he is a favourite, his experiences of large battles are supplemented with details "from the Mouths of some of the very Princes themselves" (p. 38). Michael Boardman suggests that Defoe uses "we" to "direct attention away from the narrator and place it on events and sights."[13] However, the Cavalier's attention is not on the sights themselves, but rather on sights structured by the discourse of military strategists. The plural pronoun directs attention towards dominated space.

By contrast, the Cavalier's rare observations of appropriated space are marked by obvious discomfort and a heightened awareness of self. He is unsettled by a riot in France (p. 19), bewildered by an Italian courtesan, and in a "strange Confusion" when he accidentally kills a man in a private quarrel (p. 17). At the end, without connection to power, he is merely a "melancholly observator" of a "World of Confusion" (p. 270). Even the camps of the Civil War disconcert him because they resemble the impromptu spaces of appropriation rather than dominated space:

> we never encamped or entrenched, never fortified the Avenues to our Posts, or lay fenced with Rivers and Defiles. (p. 151)

At the same time, he cannot observe with the same detachment as on the Continent:

> I had been enough used to Blood, and to see the Destruction of People, sacking of Towns, and plundering the Country; yet 'twas in *Germany*, and among Strangers; but I found a strange secret and unaccountable Sadness upon my Spirits to see this acting in my own native Country. ... when I heard a Soldier cry, *O God, I am shot*, I looked behind me to see which of my own Troop was fallen. (pp. 164–65)

When confronted with an undisciplined war in the English countryside, where everyday life begins to intrude, he becomes an "I" unable to account for or even acknowledge his sadness. Instead of seeing the battle as from above, from the space of power, he is situated by familiar surroundings in the singular space of practice, where "behind" matters more than absolute geometry.

13 Boardman, p. 74.

It is not simply, however, that Englishmen like the Cavalier were used to fighting wars on other soil. The Cavalier's strategic intelligence is suited to understanding contests for power between master strategists, not struggles over religion or the distribution of power. The most telling episode occurs near the end, when the Cavalier flees after a Royal defeat and must appropriate space dominated by Parliament forces. His party disguise themselves "*a la Paisant*," stealing clothing and horses from a farmhouse with "rash" bloodshed (p. 207). Disguise renders him "shy," and when challenged by a civilian who recognizes the stolen horses, he is in the "utmost Confusion" and "vexed at Heart that I could not tell how to talk to him" (p. 209). He can react only with violence, giving his challenger "a great Knock on the Pate with my Fork" and shooting another. When the undisguised Cavalier and his men are later given shelter by this same man, who in fact sympathizes with the Royalists, he expresses grief for having been "forced to treat one so roughly who was one of our Friends," but covers his action when one of his men tells a "formal story" that they had in fact rescued the horses from an unknown "Fellow" (p. 212). He admits that they "pretended a great deal of Sorrow for the Man's Hurt" and for not having "knocked the Fellow on the Head" in rescuing the horse. Not only does the Cavalier seem most concerned with appearances, but in relating the deception, he reverts to the "we" of power.

That the injured man has sympathies at all measures the difference of the Civil War. More is at stake even for farmers than a simple change of leaders. But even when the man proves friendly, the Cavalier cannot acknowledge him, and he pretends sympathy for tactical purposes. His shyness and confusion seem disproportionate, resembling shame rather than fear. Stanley Cavell writes:

> shame is the specific discomfort produced by the sense of being looked at, the avoidance of the sight of others is the reflex that it produces. ... Under shame, what must be covered up is not your deed, but yourself.[14]

Previously, the Cavalier has been so identified with power as to efface any sense of "I." He has not had to hide himself because, in Elias Canetti's words, "power is impenetrable."[15] But in disguise, in the

14 Stanley Cavell, *Must We Mean What We Say?* (1969; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 278.

15 Elias Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, trans. Carol Stewart (1962; New York: Seabury Press, 1978), p. 292.

appropriated space of defeat, he not only sees the lived effects of war, but is himself seen. Confronted with an ordinary man who does not belong to the space of strategy, but who nonetheless has a stake in the war's outcome, he is at a loss.

While the Cavalier's experiences do not change him, they raise larger doubts in the minds of his readers. John J. Burke, Jr, concludes that the Cavalier's failure to understand history is "a human failure symbolizing the limitations of the human intellect" because he is "a moderately sensitive man, of ordinary intelligence ... whose intelligence is overwhelmed and ultimately defeated" by history.[16] But the Cavalier's intelligence is not at all ordinary: it is keenly, if narrowly, focused.[17] However, since he negotiates only one kind of space successfully, his understanding grasps feebly at the causes and effects of the wars. His incompetence at reading everyday appropriated spaces, along with his failure, ultimately, to understand the Royalist defeat, demonstrate that the two wars he participates in are not so much beyond ordinary intelligence as they are beyond traditional analysis from the viewpoint of power. They are modern wars that both result from and further a change in subjectivity, and consequently a change in the experience of space.

"The face of London strangely alter'd": *The Journal of the Plague Year*

Although spanning the shortest period of time among Defoe's major narratives, the *Journal* nonetheless follows the least coherent sequence. Defoe's notorious haste or carelessness surely contributes, as when he introduces the three men from Stepney parish only to abandon their story for a quarter of the book,[18] but carelessness does not explain all. By using concurrent examples instead of a strictly linear presentation of H.F.'s story, Defoe creates a sense of the plague's magnitude, of the thousands of stories it comprises.[19] Some readers have attempted to hang the narrative on the slender thread of

16 Burke, pp. 18, 20.

17 Boardman observes that "his brand of intelligence is exactly the mundane and unimaginative kind necessary in a narrator who must comment on strategy" (p. 75).

18 Daniel Defoe, *A Journal of the Plague Year*, ed. Louis Landa (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 54, 120. References are to this edition. Paul Alkon sees this delay as intentional, as part of Defoe's general slowing of the narrative: "Making readers wait so long for this episode adds to their sense of slow motion." *Defoe and Fictional Time* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1979), p. 219.

19 Alkon remarks: "Each death that is described must be imagined as representative, not merely as particular; and that necessary effort of imagination slows the pace while adding to

H.F.'s "repentance,"[20] but the "story" to which Defoe continually returns plots the chronicle of the mortality schedules in spatial terms. He does more than simply mapping the progress of the plague, drawing attention instead to the ways in which the plague and responses to the plague reconfigure the city's spaces. At the same time, those responses reveal the changing space of the city in the latter half of the seventeenth century.

H.F. continually seeks a principle for ordering his materials, grouping them thematically, by month, or with events in his own tale, but his constant interruptions and self-conscious repetitions undermine any order.[21] Unlike Defoe's earlier disaster narrative, *The Storm* (1704), which is organized by thematic chapter headings, the *Journal* has no chapter headings or visible breaks at all, except when H.F. inserts long quotations from official documents. H.F.'s narrative lacks even the diurnal structure of a journal; instead of writing to the moment, he uses "memorandums" made during the plague to compose his story some thirty years after the event.[22] He frequently borrows the perspectives of others, so that his point of view, rather than unifying the narrative, is eclipsed by more dramatic experiences. Thus when he resolves after considerable "wavering" (p. 61) to visit an open burial pit, his reaction to "Bodies shot into the Pit promiscuously" (p. 62) matters less than the stunned grief of a man who sees

the horror of each description by compelling realization that the kind of agonies described were in fact never confined to the moment which H.F. has singled out for narration" (p. 215).

20 See Everett Zimmerman, who argues that "the intensity of the focus on the narrator ... makes *A Journal of the Plague Year* something more like a novel than like either history or the seventeenth-century pious writings that lie in the background." *Defoe and the Novel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. 124. See also Burke, who argues that "if it is about anything, it is about the severe test to which the Saddler's faith is put by the unaccountable evil of the plague" (p. 26). But H.F.'s story is far less developed than those of Robinson Crusoe or Moll Flanders or the Cavalier.

21 V.L. Wainwright argues that the confusion of the narrative masks Defoe's rhetorical purposes, so that it appears H.F. "is not a professional or habitual writer" with a "particular angle or pet theory to push." "Lending to the Lord: Defoe's Rhetorical Design in *A Journal of the Plague Year*," *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 13 (1990), 61. And yet the narrative is surely more chaotic than is called for simply to establish the narrator's naïve objectivity.

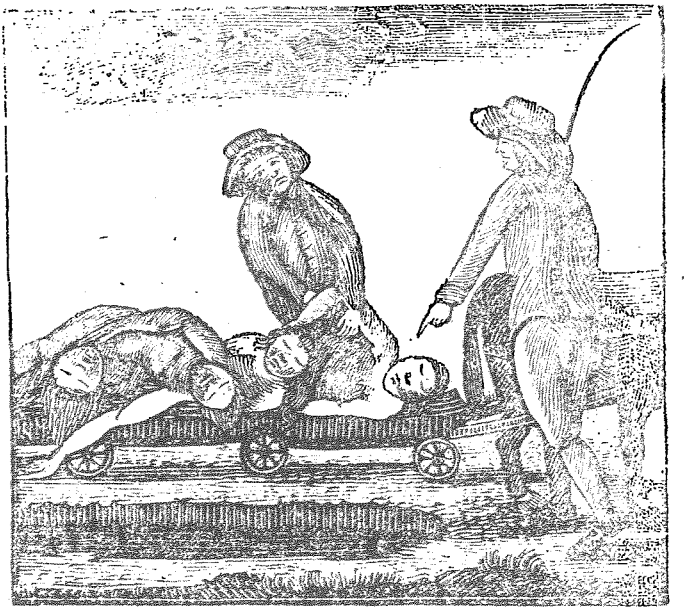
22 A journal might look more like Pepys's *Diary*, which, as Novak observes, "tells us just how odd the *Journal of the Plague Year* is" (*Realism, Myth, and History*, p. 65). A note in the text referring to H.F.'s burial place (p. 233) suggests yet another hand preparing (and complicating) the narrative. At the same time, calling such a narrative a journal was not without precedent; George Fox's *Journal* (1694) was written at the end of his life.

his family unceremoniously dumped. H.F. cannot use the Cavalier's confident "we." He cannot speak for the magistrates who control quarantine, nor, as a successful tradesman who *chooses* to remain in the city, does he share the experience of the "labouring poor" who constitute the majority of the plague's victims. And yet, as Maximillian Novak suggests, "H.F. is surely the first fictional narrator whose sympathies embrace the swarming poor of the city."[23] He serves less as a focal point than as a method of diffusing the narrative into many spaces.

For H.F., the city is shaped by and shapes collective experiences. He both sympathizes with and criticizes those experiences. Although he uses bibliomancy in his own decision to stay, H.F. sets himself apart from the masses "addicted to Prophesies, and Astrological Conjurations" (p. 21). When he is the only one in a crowd who cannot see an apparition, his scepticism draws the crowd's anger. He establishes his objectivity with a scientific explanation of a seemingly prophetic comet, and yet not only his scepticism and empirical skills matter, but also his considerable sympathy for the way that others experience plague-haunted spaces. H.F. describes the site of one apparition in extraordinarily concrete (if not sensual) detail:

> Another encounter I had in the open Day also: And this was in going thro' a narrow Passage from *Petty-France* into *Bishopsgate* Church Yard, by a Row of Alms-Houses; there are two Church Yards to *Bishopsgate* Street, coming out just by the Church Door, the other is on the side of the narrow Passage, where the Alms-Houses are on the left; and a Dwarf-wall with a Palisadoe on it, on the right hand; and a City Wall on the other Side, more to the right.
>
> In this narrow Passage stands a Man looking thro' between the Palisadoe's into the Burying Place; and as many People as the Narrowness of the Passage would admit to stop, without hindring the Passage of others; and he was talking mighty eagerly to them, and pointing now to one Place, then to another, and affirming, that he saw a Ghost walking upon such a Grave Stone there; he describ'd the Shape, the Posture, and the Movement of it so exactly, that it was the greatest Matter of Amazement to him in the World, that every Body did not see it as well as he. On a sudden he would cry, *There it is: Now it comes this Way.* Then, *'Tis turn'd back*; till at length he persuaded the People into so firm a Belief of it, that one fancied he saw it, and another fancied he saw it; and thus he came every Day making a strange Hubbub, considering it was in so narrow a Passage. (pp. 23–24)

23 Novak, *Realism, Myth, and History*, p. 66.



History of the Plague in London in 1665; with Suitable Reflections (London: Cheap Repository, n.d.). Reproduced by permission of McMaster University Library.

I quote at length not least because Defoe's own fictional practice is mirrored so closely by the man who sees the ghost. H.F.'s careful description attests to his observational skills and gives Defoe's narrative authority. But he also describes what Pierre Bourdieu calls "the practical space of practice, with its dissymmetries, its discontinuities, and its directions conceived as substantial properties, left and right, east and west."[24] What ultimately interests H.F. is the way the crowd experiences and constructs the scene, reshaping an everyday space into a discontinuity even before the first serious outbreak: "At length few People, that knew of it, car'd to go thro' that Passage; and hardly any Body by Night." Superstition may not be unique to this plague in this historical moment, but Defoe establishes that plague space is produced collectively.

A disaster such as a plague seems almost outside history; while its effects are unquestionable and may be exacerbated by human actions, it expresses no larger historical trends. And yet Defoe carefully situates this plague in history, locating both private and official responses as parts of larger cultural processes. He analyses the economic situation before and after the plague, noting "that the City and Suburbs were prodigiously full" (p. 18) of labouring poor attracted by increased trade after the Restoration, and that "there never was such a Trade all over *England* ... as was in the first seven Years after the Plague" and subsequent fire (p. 224). Defoe's occasion for writing was Walpole's Quarantine Bill, for which the plague in 1665 was a concrete precondition. For H.F.—and for Defoe—the plague is history, since it shaped London in particular ways, and because a recurrence of the plague is a continual threat with political consequences. It is also a significant register of longer-term changes in London's urban spaces.[25]

The *Journal* documents the history of spatial practices during the plague, and those practices reflect in turn the rise of capitalism and innovations in state control. The space of the plague is produced by official domination, by appropriations ranging from theft to dwelling in the forest, and by exchange itself—for Defoe the circulation of

24 Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp. 117–18.

25 Cynthia Wall reads the *Journal* as a response to changes in the city after the Great Fire of 1666; it "attempts to reoccupy a rebuilt and rebuilding city, a city that was dramatically divorced from its past topographical patterns and had to re-find and redefine its lines of urban space." "Novel Streets: The Rebuilding of London and Defoe's *A Journal of the Plague Year*," *Studies in the Novel* 30 (1998), 175.

trade forms a space with its own gravity and directions.[26] Many critics have noted H.F.'s obsessive concern over the shutting up of houses, but other kinds of enclosure interest him as well—the burial pits, the shelters built by the Stepney men, and even the storeroom from which his brother's trade goods are stolen. While John Bender's claim that "H.F. considers the whole of London as a place of confinement bounded by hostile villages whose citizens allow no passage by road" may be somewhat exaggerated—the Stepney men do pass, and their desire for news of London restrains them more than opposition from villagers—at the height of the plague, Londoners without means or considerable resourcefulness are indeed confined. But what confinement means for H.F. is not so much imprisonment as blockage of the dynamic exchange that constitutes urban space. He dwells on spaces of egress and exchange as much as enclosure. He details approvingly methods for bringing food into the plague-ridden city and ingenious exchanges of money and goods. H.F. himself cannot keep "within doors" (p. 103) but compulsively explores the streets. He may reluctantly co-operate with power in shutting up houses, but sympathizes with families that escape and recounts their stories, as Cynthia Wall observes, with "loving details."[27] The narrative is replete with windows, as emblems not simply of detached observation, but also of communication: windows fly open to announce a death or to exchange news—and also to escape quarantine. Windows convey H.F.'s ambivalence towards shutting up houses, simultaneously separating and connecting individual and plague-infested city.

H.F.'s pre-eminent examples of the appropriation of space are the Stepney men and Robert the Waterman, who exchanges money and goods without touching anyone:

> I very seldom go up the Ship Side, but deliver what I bring to their Boat, or lie by the Side, and they hoist it on board; if I did, I think they are in no Danger from me, for I never go into any House on Shore, or touch any Body, no, not of my own Family; But I fetch Provisions for them. (p. 107)

26 Novak has observed that "in a sense, the very basis of Defoe's economic thinking may be found in a self-contained circular system of goods passing through many hands to establish a full circulation of trade through the nation" (*Realism, Myth, and History*, p. 13).

27 Wall, p. 173.

The Waterman appropriates a Utopian space of circulation within the plague's dystopia.[28] Because his social space encompasses people confined on boats and traders on land, this appropriation of space is not simply an individual activity, but rather a collective spatial practice. H.F. presents the three Stepney men, who appropriate space outside of London, as "a Pattern for all poor Men to follow, or Women either, if ever such a Time comes again" (p. 122). More is at work here than a celebration of extreme individualism. If, as Simon Varey suggests in another context, "Defoe's city is spatially conceived, by the individual who is alone in it" and "People are indifferent to others' problems because everyone is isolated," that indifference belongs more to the rogue novels than the *Journal*.[29] No one—not Robert the Waterman or the Stepney men, and certainly not H.F.—is indifferent to others. Robert sympathizes even with a "poor Thief" infected in the act of stealing (p. 106), and the Stepney men help many others. H.F.'s interest in Robert the Waterman is not simply for his ingenious avoidance of infection, but even more for his ability to circulate goods without infecting others. He admires the three men from Stepney parish not as solitaires but for creating a small community that receives assistance and advice from the villagers instead of hostility. Without customary patterns of relationship, Defoe's Londoners may appear isolated, but what Defoe shows us is social space itself, however defamiliarized, not rampant individualism.

Bender's Foucauldian reading of isolation in the *Journal* suggests that H.F.'s attitude towards quarantine represents a specifically modern internalization of authority:[30]

28 David Marshall observes that the Waterman embodies circulation "as a go-between, a messenger, a mediator and medium of exchange for individuals who are separated by distance and confinement." *The Figure of Theater: Shaftesbury, Defoe, Adam Smith, and George Eliot* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p. 159.

29 Simon Varey, *Space and the Eighteenth-Century English Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 140–41. The context of Varey's remark is Robinson Crusoe's claim to "enjoy much more solitude in the middle of the greatest collection of mankind in the world, I mean, at London, while I am writing this, than ever I could say I enjoyed in eight and twenty years' confinement to a desolate island." *Serious Reflections during the Life and Strange Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (Boston: C.T. Brainard, 1903), p. 6.

30 John Bender asserts that the *Journal* was written "in part to justify the unpopular Quarantine Act." *Imagining the Penitentiary: Fiction and the Architecture of Mind in Eighteenth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), p. 76. Novak (*Realism, Myth, and History*) and Benjamin Moore, "Governing Discourses: Problems of Narrative Authority in *A Journal of the Plague Year*," *Eighteenth-Century: Theory and Interpretation* 33 (1992), 133–47, however, argue persuasively that Defoe is in fact writing against the kind of quarantine that would be effected by force.

> [H.F. rejects] symbolic boundedness as a method for organizing and allocating authority. The shutting up of houses was an old practice by which authority placed itself in a distinct relation to material circumstance, drawing putative boundaries around areas within which the arbitrary and the bizarre not only were tolerated but expected. ... In the old system, one could talk of infected houses; H.F. would deal in infected persons. By contrast with the demonstrative power that liminal boundaries symbolize, his representation of authority is more penetrating, diffused, and internalized.[31]

Self-imposed quarantine is indeed presented as the best solution for the family in Defoe's *Due Preparations for the Plague* tract, and H.F. attempts it as well. The circumspect behaviour of the Waterman—who avoids even his own family—as well as the self-imposed exile of the Stepney men could be regarded as internalized quarantine. And yet it does not wholly explain their behaviour. H.F.'s compulsive wandering—quite unlike the Cavalier's—surely does not result from an internalization of authority. He seems, as Novak suggests, to believe that "a certain amount of anarchy need not subvert the general order of society."[32] Bender's argument perhaps overemphasizes H.F.'s "acceptance of the role of examiner despite strong disagreement with official policy,"[33] and undervalues H.F.'s endeavouring "with all my might to be excus'd" (p. 159). Nor do the Stepney men simply replicate the dominant order in their remarkably egalitarian miniature society. While the internalization of quarantine contributes to the production of London's plague space, that space is a hybrid fragmented by strategies of domination and appropriation.

In some respects, H.F.'s wandering makes him a tourist of the disaster. And yet he is not a typical tourist, whose "evaluation of environment is essentially aesthetic," as the geographer Yi-Fu Tuan suggests, noticing picturesque cobblestones rather than the life of the street.[34] Instead, H.F. notices absences (p. 188) and "dismal scenes" that reveal fissures in lived space:

> of a sudden a Casement violently opened just over my Head, and a Woman gave three frightful Skreetches, and then cry'd *Oh! Death, Death, Death!* in a

31 Bender, p. 79.

32 Maximillian Novak, "Defoe and the Disordered City," *PMLA* 92 (1977), 246.

33 Bender, p. 76.

34 Yi-Fu Tuan, *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values* (1974; New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), p. 64.

> most inimitable Tone, and which struck me with Horror and a Chilness, in my very Blood. There was no Body to be seen in the whole Street, neither did any other Window open. (p. 81)

What is strange for H.F. is not simply "frightful Skreetches," but the lack of response. "The Face of *London*" is "strangely alter'd" (p. 16); the street itself, in Restoration London a place of communication and extraordinary movement, becomes starkly visible to H.F. when communication gives way to unanswered lamentation and fear empties the pavement. His own street attracts H.F.'s attention when lack of use leaves it "like a green Field" (p. 100). While he commends the magistrates for keeping the streets "constantly clear, and free from all manner of frightful Objects" (p. 186), official strategies cannot preserve the appropriated spaces of everyday life.

The absences that H.F. notices are specific to a Restoration London that was "prodigiously full." They reveal a city increasingly shaped by circulation; while all plagues must resemble one another in some respects, this plague chokes the dynamic centre of commodity exchange. New contours of power no longer inscribed by the monarchy or the magistrates, but by capitalism, become visible. The *Journal of the Plague Year* explores the hybrid space of the marketplace as it reconfigures strategic domination and individual appropriations of space. H.F. is painfully aware that his own "Presumption" in remaining in the city pales beside the Waterman's "true Dependance" (p. 108) and that he remains figuratively outside even when in danger. But as a small tradesman from the same class as Defoe, he recognizes the new space of exchange even in the midst of disaster. If the Cavalier's blindness clearly delineates dominated and appropriated space, and suggests that neither the Thirty Years War nor the English Civil War can be understood purely from the viewpoint of strategy, H.F.'s uneasy observations reveal that the plague of 1665—and the threatened plague of 1722—can only be understood by recognizing the constitutive role of exchange in producing capitalist urban space.

Central Washington University