Reading Heterotopia as a Site of Resistance in Gloria Naylor's *Mama Day* (1988)**Soumia Bentahar**Department of English
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This article uses Foucault's concept of heterotopia to explain Gloria Naylor's metaphoric spatial representation of resistance in *Mama Day* (1988). It seeks to read Willow Springs, a fictitious island lying outside the U.S borders, as a resistant locus that presents a subversive spatio-temporal paradigm as it suggests a possibility for transformation from isolation and marginalization to agency and potential liberation. Heterotopias emphasize the critical potential of space to challenge the hegemony of dominant discourses and give voice to peripheral positions. These spaces, according to Foucault, address discourses of resistance effectively through counter-sites. In *Mama Day*, then, we argue that Gloria Naylor molds the fictional island of Willow Springs as a heterotopic space, a counter-site where black groups contest the dominant discourses of race and gender. Therefore, this article concludes that in her portrayal of a heterotopic space with an inverting character, Naylor transforms a physical place into a site of agency where the subversive yet productive dynamics of heterotopia interrupt and deconstruct the existing ideologies of mainstream culture.

Keywords: African-American literature, dominant discourses of race and gender, heterotopia, *Mama Day*, Michel Foucault, periphery, site of resistance

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