

A REWRITING OF DANIEL DEFOE'S *ROBINSON CRUSOE* THROUGH COETZEE'S *FOE*: A SUBALTERN STUDY

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Abstract

This article critically assesses power relations as well as political aspects of representation in J.M. Coetzee's Foe. Using postcolonial approaches, the investigation seeks to highlight the colonial narrative form of the text as well as the marginalization within such narratives. In his reworking of Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, Coetzee exposes the invisibility of subalterns, in particular Friday, as that trait denoting barbarism, which has relegated the people colonized to Fourth-world status in historiography. The narrator Susan Barton's self-fought struggle with the other authorities expands the concept of authorship from mere artistry in creativity to ethical involvement in representation. The article attempts to address the complexity in her struggle fictions while keeping Friday's mute presence as the background whose absence was meant to be filled with action, therefore – story. Finally, Foe is positioned as a tragic story about language, truth and power over representation of the contemporary, affected by colonialism's history and its realisms. This analysis is valuable in extending the discussion around literature and its politics of resistance against dominant ways of knowing.

Keywords: Power, Foe, Representation, Subaltern, Colonialism, Coetzee, Barbarians, Robinson Crusoe

Introduction

J. M. Coetzee and his novel *Foe* (1986) pose a challenge for readers of *Robinson Crusoe*, because he entirely subverts the concepts presented by Daniel Defoe. Colonial, patriarchal and authoritative ideas exposed in classical literature are achieved essentially through subjugation of women's and other 'others' voices. Dealing with settled power relations, Coetzee embarks on the task of reconstruction. Power is a relative measure and its presence modifies social structures. As the narrative unfolds, the reader sees three women represented. They include Susan Barton, Friday and their fictive writer, Foe. Through the angle of Barton, Foe and Friday's relations, Coetzee presents subalternity in its raw form. The novelist anchors the narrative towards the woman perspective presenting males in respective voids. In characterizing subalternity, Coetzee exposes polyphony which lies within the mundane. An evidentiary scene addresses a familiar colonial and post-colonial theme of politics, hegemony and discrimination. In the micro political discourse, Barton is depicted as someone voicing her position over the loci of the male narrator. While other narratives vocally support the objectives of Settler colonialism through invasion aiming occupation. The author of scarce narratives within Feminist criticism focus deeply on international borders and history, but there is no documentation offering a global perspective.

The article seeks to highlight politics of reversal which Foe proposes critique on as settler colonial expansion occurring in a patriarchal society. The discussion makes use of postcolonial theory, especially Spivak's notion of the subaltern, as well as various feminist critiques of narrative authority to demonstrate how Coetzee complicates the question of ethics behind speaking on behalf

of others. The analysis introduces the idea in reaction to postmodernism's obsession with the paradox of language and truth, thus illustrating the novel as an exploration of the nature of storytelling. In its recreation of *Robinson Crusoe*, *Foe* doesn't simply subvert the ideological basis of the former but also places emphasis on more significant issues such as the nature of power, representation, and the politics of narration. To do so, it positions itself as a counter-hegemonic literary and cultural political statement, forcing its audience to rethink the way in which narratives perpetuate and reproduce relations of power.

Postcolonialism, according to McLeod (2000), includes 'writing back' against colonial methods of knowing and challenging them. The fall of the Empire did not mean the end of colonial methods of knowing and thinking. Their agency is still evident in many circumstances. Even if decolonization resulted in a political shift in the world's map, physical realities and colonialism-related modes of representation can still be found today. Adding to McLeod's (2000) definition, the phrase "Postcolonialism" does not mean "colonialism after," as if colonial values are no longer relevant. It does not usher in a brave new world free from the scars of colonialism or designate a fundamentally new historical era. Rather, 'Postcolonialism' acknowledges historical change as well as continuity (p.33). The history that was stolen from these authors was what these authors initially set out to bring back. Thus, they participated in the power issue/dialectic and protested the colonists' settlement. Works of "white" and "black" writers all discussed the theme of apartheid opposition. Politics and social issues that affected African society were often topics of debate by these authors. The racial crimes perpetrated on the local people by the White race during the apartheid government was documented by other authors including; Wole Soyinka, Peter Abrahams, Ngugi WA Thiongo and Chinua Achebe. These authors described conflict of White and Black people, which in result in banning of their books. Some of these authors were expelled, imprisoned or forbidden.

Literature Review

Liaquat and Aziz (2020) try to evaluate the resistance and effort put in by the weaker and the powerless to subvert the colonial exploitation of the powerful. The research explores the role of language in power, particularly in marginalized society, particularly in the works of Susan Barton and Friday. Both characters, despite their seemingly powerless nature, resist authority by inventing counter discourses with politically strategies. The paper decodes their strategies against racial and gender denigration, highlighting the relevance of power to language, history, and gender as pivotal instruments in relocating and redefining power dynamics. It also highlights the potentialities and limitations of language as a means of reinventing subaltern historiography through extensive textual study and Foucauldian discourse analysis of *Foe*. Blizzard (2018) investigates intertextuality and its significance in J. M. Coetzee's novel *Foe* which concerns the story of Daniel Foe's adventure novel *Robinson Crusoe* (1719). To a certain extent, the novel emasculates *Robinson Crusoe*, persistently wondering why there is no female character in the story and doubting that gender is still a determining factor in power. The book *Foe* written by Achebe is focusing on telling the story of the European Susan Barton as a form of countering the imperial power that writes her as the other in world of narration. Coetzee does not have discursive control as the Boer leader and decides to give it to the people with no portion in ruling and decision making. There is more substance in the ways, in which Barton searches for truth's materiality compared to her concern with the point of view that brings temporal and spatial liberty of thought and openness to share an experience. Thus, by exploring the connection between authority and

truth that the authors try to reveal, these characters undermine authority by employing counter-discursive strategies and subverting language, history, and gender in an attempt at redefining power relations, as well as the subaltern historiography.

John Rees Moore explores Susan Barton and Friday's resistance strategies in the novel, highlighting a victim-turned-fighter back against a patriarchal society that becomes mighty not due to mere survival but because it begins supporting its own transformation towards difference from norms social, racial or gendered parsing. Against the authority of hundreds of years, Barton subverts entrenched depictions and points toward herself as Defoe's literary father.

We get the dialectics of colonizer-colonized relationship: Crusoe doesn't want to learn Friday how to speak--nor does he try and breakthrough in order to understand his silence. Susan Barton counters Crusoe's story about how Friday lost his tongue, finds it equally as barbaric but intrinsic to the point that cutting off this shape organ indicates an outer necessity. The voicelessness of Friday in *Foe*, for Deleuze and Guattari is an allegory that represents the colonial project to strip indigenous peoples from their home language. His alienation with language cripples his linguistic talent and stunts his awareness and judgment. Susan Barton later accuses Bart Crusoe of rewriting Friday by the day, due to his amnesia that has left him with no "command on words" and thus defenseless against being re-cast in the mold desired by others. *Foe* can be considered to be a historiographic metafiction because it uses the multiple narratives and monolithic account of history. In using intertextuality, postmodern fiction undermines the idea of linear or centralized knowledge and advances plural meanings. Enter Susan Barton and her bifocal history of Friday, a man much more than the heartless cannibal he seems to be in other telling.

Materials and Methods

This research is based on a close analysis of Coetzee's novels, as well as on secondary sources, such as scholarly articles and books on Postcolonialism and power dynamics and representation of the marginalized and the colonized. The research particularly focuses on Spivak's study of subalternity.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this research draws on postcolonial literary theory, narrative theory, and subaltern studies. Postcolonial Literary Theory is an important perspective which deals with the study of literature originating in nations that were once or still are, colonies of other countries. It also deals with the literature produced by the writers belonging to the colonizing countries but with the colonies or their populations as objects. Postcolonial theory came up as a result of political, aesthetic, economic, historical, and social effects or colonialism all over the world throughout the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. It aims at providing explanation for imperialism and colonialism effects on the international level. Postcolonial theory simply opines that one cannot read or analyse European philosophy, literature, or history without taking colonial encounters and oppression into consideration. The colonized world is part and parcel of modernity or the modern world. The use of the term 'postcolonial theory' does not mean that colonialism has ended; instead, it confirms that colonial domination continues even after the colonies' geopolitical settlement. The postcolonial theory is underscored by archaeology of the colonial actualities in South Asia and Africa in the middle of the twentieth century. Historically it has centered on these areas but is still interested in world politics and justice.

The term "subaltern" originally emerged from the writings of Italian Marxist thinker Antonio Gramsci. He defines it as the suppressed and the marginalized. He used it to describe social groups on the margins of history—those who were oppressed, silenced, and excluded from

dominant narratives. Spivak extended this concept, emphasizing that the subaltern represents individuals or communities who are systematically marginalized due to factors such as class, caste, gender, religion, and region. According to Spivak, the subaltern is rendered voiceless by oppressive structures and power dynamics. Their voices are often suppressed, and they lack the agency to express their concerns, articulate their experiences, or participate in shaping policies.

Spivak's essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" provocatively asks whether the subaltern can truly express themselves within the dominant discourses. She suggests that the subaltern's speech is often mediated, distorted, or co-opted by those in power. The title question is both a challenge and a call to recognize the limitations of representation. Spivak emphasizes that the subaltern's identity is multifaceted. They are not a monolithic group but rather intersecting identities shaped by various oppressions. Gender, caste, ethnicity, and economic status intersect to create unique subaltern experiences.

Spivak's work encourages scholars to critically engage with the subaltern's condition. She advocates for listening to the subaltern indirectly, through their traces, silences, and gaps in dominant narratives. Rather than speaking for the subaltern, scholars should create spaces for their voices to emerge. Spivak's concept of the subaltern highlights the structural inequalities that prevent marginalized groups from speaking freely.

Textual Analysis

In Foe J.M. Coetzee (1986) treats the relations of power and representation from a post-colonial, patriarchal, and authorial perspective interdicting and embedding itself in the very fabric of the narrative. It highlights how Friday and Susan Barton's disfigurement and marginalization are the key features of Robinson Crusoe's dominant views as crafted by Daniel Defoe. With reference to the book, Susan Barton's definition of possession and her attempts to control the narrative also points towards the politics of stay and authority relations. She is, as usual, confronted with Foe who seeks to control the plot structures, especially as far as the designing of the story is concerned. For example, Foe tells Susan: "This should not be the central theme of your story. It should be dramatic and exciting" "In my view, what all the forces tell 'A bolder erotic tale is needed. That's all that's straining to see'" (p. 121).

Women such as Susan are judged solely on the idealized representation of her life through the male narrative lens. These experiences have shaped her working very well in the media sphere, yet absenting herself from it she would remain, embittered deep inside by emotions. Nevertheless, resentment of stress and blame throughout their creative endeavors permeates their very life, totally controlling it.

The most effective illustration of subaltern erasure in Foe is Friday's silence. As Susan notes, 'he has no tongue, it was cut out,' which is not only a physical violence but a further silences him from telling a story of himself: "He has to open his mouth. He can speak without voice modulation and this sound comes out smoothly and uninterrupted. It would seem that he is acting as a speaker whose voice is not within him" (p. 150). The consistent absence of Friday's voice can therefore be characterized as an embodiment of what Gayatri Spivak characterizes as the subaltern's inability to speak in other's words where they are embedded within existing dominant structures. In this case, it is interesting that Susan does not manage to recall Friday's actions or during Friday's absence, she attempts to offer meaning as to why he was not speaking all along – she becomes 'the voice of the voiceless'. She muses for example on the following point: "Is it us who are the problem as we do not comprehend what he is attempting to communicate or is it he who is the problem?" (p. 122).

This is an important question since it confronts the possibility of representing the unrepresented. In the absence of coming up with an answer, Coetzee instead leaves the challenge of why Friday means silence, to the reader who provides the meaning to power and its representations. Foe, who embodies the figure of the ‘author’, does indeed take control over Susan’s story as he wishes her story to fit the rules of literature. After all, it is political power that determines what stories are told and to what purpose, as Susan’s story has to have both the beginning and the closing parts wrapped into an adventure as he states: “The island is no story on its own: it calls us to make it the backdrop of a bigger adventure” (Foe, p. 117). Enforcing this kind of stories is akin to the practice adopted during colonial times of redrawing history to benefit the enterprise. The way Susan’s history is painted by Foe raises issues of the authority of narrators, which is in its nature a political discourse, and more often than not excludes or oppresses those who do not abide by the established regime.

Language in Foe is both a form of power and a domain of its deficiency. Susan’s account is both ruptured as well as contained. Such instabilities, of a voice as a stable medium for truth, are troubling. This is fragmentation that is the last perception of the novel when Friday is concerned and indeed it is his silence the novel deploys mostly: “His mouth opens. Inside flows a stream of water, uninterrupted and breathless, from somewhere within. This gives the impression that he is the mouthpiece for a voice from another place” (p.157). This passage highlights the inadequacy of language to the fully represent the experience of the subaltern. For the colonized person in this case Friday, silence is not the absence of words rather suppression to the language structures that were designed by the colonizers. The fact that Coetzee didn’t give out the entire narrative of Friday pushes the reader to examine his or her own biases especially when it comes to tales of telling and how much representation is allowed to certain people.

Deconstructing Colonial Storytelling in J.M. Coetzee’s *Foe*

Foe, by J.M. Coetzee - a complete and utter rework of Daniel Defoe’s classic colonial text Robinson Crusoe is truly inventive-which exists as an attempt to challenge pre-existing narratives regarding arguably all traditional post-colonial literature in language surrounding representations and power dynamics. In its treatment of Susan Barton and the bowdlerized iconography of Friday, Coetzee criticizes hegemonic colonial accounts - reminding us that minority narratives deserve as much attention from these moments in history. With Coetzee, we are introduced to Susan Barton as the narrator, a far cry from Defoe’s male-cantered narrative. In the following passage, Susan’s struggle to have her story written by “none other than *Foe*” (58) symbolically parallels the exclusion of women from dominant colonial discourses: ‘But this is not the tale of Susan Barton. (Coetzee, p.123) The story of the woman washed up on an unknown continent. It calls back, in a way that Crusoe’s story never could.

Colonial literature of the European whites, often depicts non-European people as alien and uncivilized and their representations being- black or colored skinned. Therefore when J.M. Coetzee wrote *Foe*, he was writing within an African context where the black skinned natives are not necessarily most erotically alluring of heart but they follow their instinct. Colonial discourse further degrades the natives portrayed as cannibals. The whole edifice of colonialism is built on racism that separates ‘white’ from ‘black,’ and labels all non-white people as a lesser human species. The original inhabitants of Africa are black in his complexion by the name of Negro which is a bad word used by whites.

At the start of the novel, *Foe*, it displays a European set of mind who conforms to stereotypical view regarding Africa; when Mrs. Susan Barton after her ship wreck lands on an

African Island fords she woke up at shores and met with man whose dark shadow as well (Coetzee, p. 6). For example, these opening lines of the novel are a dead giveaway that here is their subjects speaking personated from colonial prejudiced mind as dark shadow should have already been plenty enough but Susan Barton (White) can't help identify by using phrase 'dark shadow' for native whom shows how culturally ingrained her thinking patterns really seem to be. It only enforces the preconception of how Europeans deem non-Europeans. Riley Ousted racist foundation on which colonial literature is otherwise predominantly based giving us a sense of the true nigger: separate, docile and deracinated from reality. In *Foe*, Susan Barton introduces Friday as a native with all the racism she can muster in her soul: A dark shadow fell across me, not of a cloud but of an (Coetzee 1986 p.5).

Her words are drenched in racial overtones that mirror a prevalent feature of colonial discourse, describing the population as 'Other' in Africa. Dark skin is portrayed as the rule of evil and all mischief, since colonial literature days. These people have dark skin and are now being likened to cannibals eating the literal flesh of human beings. European literature that has time and again reiterated Africa natives as the child-eaters. This notion in one way or another helped to intermingle into their consciousness of manner, but, likewise, stir them up teaching it at home. In Africa, the presence of 'cannibals or man-eaters,' as described by Daniel Defoe in *Robinson Crusoe* (1719).

As a resistance and rebutting of colonial discourse, *Foe* is J.M. Coetzee's response to Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. Thus, in *Foe* Coetzee brings to light the ideological foundation of what would later become apartheid. *Robinson Crusoe* by Defoe is instrumental in the development of apartheid ideology for British colonizers. It is true that Defoe apparently discusses the colonial theme in his work. The colonization theme in Defoe is highlighted by Edward Said (1993) *Robinson Crusoe* is virtually unthinkable without the colonizing mission that permits him to create a new world of his own in some remote part of Africa" (Said, 1993:64).

After all, a powerful white man, Crusoe (henceforth: the Empire) rocks up to their island because he wants it as part of his territory — implicit control over that little sphere of northern Africans. In the process of colonizing Africa, he has no genuine reason to enslave the African natives together with their resources. Two weird stories that I read in newspapers he turned into narratives of mental instability to blur out the single malevolence: wanting sex, and therefore hunting a land. He lies to Susan Barton (who may be even more gullible), and this makes her think he is speaking the truth, but in fact his words are an imaginary antithesis; a lie opposing facts that can tell what stands beyond — the reason of why did all these mass into land armed with such desires to wrest it from African tracts. At times he said they had both lived on the island for fifteen years, only one who survived when his ship sank with him and Friday alone (Coetzee, 1986, pp. 11-12).

The Empire roars in as it enforces despotic rule over the natives. Surely Susan Barton introduces the readers a man of Crusoe as he belongs to this country with native on migrant, and understand yourself 'Thus one day he would say his father had been a wealthy merchant whose counting-house he had quit in search of adventure' (Coetzee). The European colonizers enter the lands of Africans unjustly and also de facto dominated indulged in extreme violence against indigenous inhabitants. Well, fine they have to convert safe/civilized boxes within the zone. Instead, this is a phony facade created by the Empire to overtake other foreign lands. In his novel *Foe*, Coetzee denies another completely inaccurate cliché in European discourse: that African natives are "anthropophagous". Reading Susan Barton hunting down in the colony buildings made hidden stories and unbridled human desires where Crusoe also no such cannibal been there, Crusoe

was a construction of myths. Foe by Coetzee Like when Susan Barton demands of Crusoe, “Over all these years why did you never build a boat and leave the island?” (Coetzee, 1986, p. 13).

And this is the crux of that whole paragraph, because in case it was a desolate land filled with cannibals he must have escaped long ago. But even Crusoe’s answer itself attests to the fact that there are at least cannibals somewhere, as he answers Susan Barton only by asking her in return “And where should I escape to?” (Coetzee, 1986, p. 13). When she tells Crusoe that he belongs in Brazil, and when the challenger singles out brown and black people from a crowd—“Brazil is hundreds of miles away,” full of cannibals (Coetzee 13). In the conversation, Susan Barton argues with him that Brazilian people eat other person crap a division and she said: «« I spent two long years in Brazil and met no cannibals there (Coetzee, 14). Again, here it is manifest to every eye that Crusoe lies in his place and people. All it does is reassert the post-colonial mantra that European Empire has to be founded on pack of lies.

Susan Barton, on the other hand researches into Crusoe to see why he should be stranded there forever with no apparent wish for life. This false account, appropriated from dominant accounts of prisoners as active continua and cannibals born in Africa underscores Coetzee’s profound manipulation. She tries to argue that Crusoe is not afraid of cannibals, he does not bonfires if two leagues in all directions around and do see it. Their minds can only yield to the fact that life cannot be livedC507 as it would seem from other land suits which cower. The situation is more simply explained by Susan Barton “His mind was made up to stay... not fear of pirates or savages that kept him from lighting bonfires and prance on the hill waving his hat but unconcern for salvation, habit; inflexibility of old age” Coetzee (1986: 13-14). In this statement, Coetzee reveals the real motivation for why we colonizers go to territories beyond our own backyards and conquer it all...Kingdom Land... He sneers at Susan Barton for not obeying, “While you live under my roof you will do as I command!” (Coetzee, 1986, p. 20).

The Empire could not stand the truth. This is why it always turns to violence and aggression, which tends to do so at the state level. One that cleans away political—and the rest—grime to create a colonized body always in fear and never able to lead an average everyday life. Some of the worst ways to kill truth is thought up by colonizers The most embarrassing traits of white supremacy are the lies it must tell to itself and everyone else in order not only to conceal its own very real history of atrocities, but also simultaneously dismiss, hide or justify any at all perpetrated by Black people. When Susan Barton (who is Crusoe) enquires who has slit Friday’s tongue, he replies nervously; “It could be the slavers Moors think it titillating to bite of a man-tugs togue-pershope. Or maybe they got tired of hearing Friday’s wailings of misery that never stopped day or night. Maybe they didn’t want him to tell what’s his story; who he was, where is his home, how that happened when he got disappeared. Maybe as a punishment, they cut off the tongue of each cannibal 180 captured. How are we ever to know the truth? (Coetzee, 1986, p. 23).

African Island is the lie, Western imperial conception and writing of necessarily African otherness, ever pretending to be Defoe referring all Africans like Robinson Crusoe must Friday a civilized adoption tame cannibal. In Foe, Coetzee cannily dismantles Defoe’s Denial tale. The cannibal native to Africa in the eyes of colonial writers are equally fierce and bestial. Whatever the colonizers do, deny working to set up that notion about the Africans or their land in his capacity they work at any given amount and it cannot overshadow entirely what exactly is going on. But, for the truth is revealed by itself and just Empire tries to suppress it. Although there is nothing in particular which endangers her time on the island, Susan Barton asks Crusoe some questions of what sort place it was and how she would report to people back home when they ask have you seen any cannibals now that you lived with them for 28 years; Englishmen imagine Africa a land

where savages seize human flesh... Why were there not more novel fruits, no snakes? No animals? A Changing Man 4: Return of the Cannibals how will we explain ourselves to people in England telling us redirect them? (Coetzee, 1986, p. 43).

Truth does not matter to the colonizer, because their lives depend upon lies that generate a completely fake reality through which they get away with promoting myths about everything in those enslaved nations where they continue colonization. This will be expressed in the literature of that place where another colonized is already a very bad provision. Coetzee says that as Foe lies in order to fabricate stories about the native Africans, he makes them out to be cannibalistic. After all, in the novel Mr. Foe is actually writing Susan Barton's (an addition themselves) story, and he wants to turn her tale into something European enough that they might find it interesting as well. The colonizers—colonial neologism of colonial machination is interspersed throughout the novel, a chronicling that has likely contributed to their vilification in time: A writing accentuating self from how others are suppressed; “a telling unlike us but must to tell its readers as well” will we admit necromancy—as Susan Barton writes towards Foe's fictionally entitled.

It is, standing as this—mere fodder for the master-narrative of Africa to refute defiantly. He was creating fake theories of stories about the Empire made-up by colonizer who has no sources assigned or legit claims to justify themselves. This is not a literature of the superintendence, for just as Crusoe cuts Friday's tongue to keep that colonized voice silent. The techniques used in producing this sort of literature by the Empire are tangled up with diminishing the pure language from innocent colonized. Susan Barton describes this as a Sisyphean task in the novel, when she writes to Mr. Foe: “To tell my story and be silent on Friday's tongue is no better than offering a book for sale with pages in it quietly left empty.” And the only language which could possibly form Friday's secret is that tongue he has lost! (Coetzee, 1986, p. 67).

The suspicion of how it exposes the colonial machinery, reveals Susan Barton in her own words that quote: “it is used to subdue the knowledge language; turn off this voice. The way of the Empire: Hiding Truth. *In Can the Subaltern Speak?* An essay by Indian scholar and literary theorist Spivak, almost exactly this situation is examined. (1988). Friday even cannot display his in the action version here. No surprise there, for the colonized have no place in colonialist literature. *Robinson Crusoe* ostensibly being a story about African people and land, as Tillmann writes “stands Defoe's on his head (Coetzee) offering an analysis of textually drawn representation”. Defoe represents the Africans as cannibals overlooked by wild beasts on his island in *Robinson Crusoe*. Yet, this is a form that Susan Barton absolutely will not take — she plants herself on an island of her own in which the cannibals refuse to visit and where there exists no manner for its indigenous wildlife to do so. The true story of the past she lives with on that island would never be juicy enough if done entirely in her own hand and free from any literary fraud- working fake occurrences into her tale. In fact, her existence on the island is quite serene — there are no threats lurking around every corner, she contends.

“But what shall I write? Actually, our life was really boring you know there were no dangers, no beasts of prey not even snakes. The food was rich too, and the sun kind. Not a pirate set foot on our shores, not as much as one land-stealer or cannibal but thou! —An open abstract (insolent summary!) if you will have it so.... Do you think, Crusoe believed, that a cannibal child? Again was that deep terror of his, the dread you'd again grow hungry for human flesh and shoot him one night in a pool of lights shining on your wet in bloody throat an roastinyer live liver fer supper? (Coetzee, 1986, p. 81).

A little later this becomes: ‘Could it be that all these years I have been misreading Crusoe; did he excise Friday's tongue to famish him from the use of speech as penance for sin? Better had

he drawn his teeth instead! (Coetzee, 1986, p. 95). But since the Empire was looking for an excuse to invade that racist African land, it is hypocrisy and a LIE. They would just cook up any lie out of thin air. They make up a cannibal aspect for him to attack the natives, and then there's Empire pretending it takes civilizes them. But of course, they stifle their voice in order that the damning and despicable stories about we maltreating African Isles, (offering backlashes I heard called today a Back Lash on Orchids) - not any bit likely would you believe. And then when it is eventually proven for him to be a savage, Coetzee brings pieces of hid bid about the uncivilized Africans right down in lights and show that even though Friday sleeps like normal.

The day before, in Confucian Crusoe and Robinson Friday, the civilized slave is taught English by Crusoe. In its essential premise, colonial discourse loves nothing better than the old Master/Slave dichotomy: dare I say...all colonized slaves unto the Other! This is how the Crusoean cannibal came about. Coetzee, however, makes an implicit mockery of not just this Crusoe story but also Defoe's colonial endeavor to arrive at any kind of understanding about African society by offering a completely different version. Coetzee actually titles his novel, *Foe* (which makes it pretty evident that he's playing off of Defoe and Robinson Crusoe). To Defoe, Coetzee tells us was a *Foe* of the African folk he calls cannibals. Foe among the natives; here, Daniel Defoe himself as Foe. Rifle this pure of ambivalence for a few lines and witness Susan Barton approaching him in text: she is tart but needy — hell-bent on getting at least one man to write her story of island. And Susan Barton speaks the real truth of a colonialist representation by these that saw much cannibal and pirate water color portraiture based on their arrival at Discovery Island, yes rather too plain — none needed attract English tuitions to start reading simply as she warns Mr. Foe "... you wouldn't expect me to mix my own with your invention of boat people dopers..." No, I would not take these things because they were not truth' (Coetzee 1986:121).

This is yet another apology of an Empire in colonial literature, apart from the very language everything else has been subdued and hand tied; they decide what would be their wish or desire. The case of the language identity is one that carries the history of a nation. 'Friday had no words with which to defend himself against being re-written every day, moved further and closer still into Mr. Foe's world simply "because he has not, like him I have the arbiter of lexis in my fingertips," says Susan Barton. I call him a cannibal and so he is, but I would have called him the laundryman just as easily. What is the truth of Friday?.....Friday is Friday. '... there was the silence of Friday, a thin helplessness. (Coetzee, 1986, pp. 121-122).

That is the way Susan Barton marks a site of language captured from colonized by empire. A mediocrity tongue without which he cannot speak for himself on any platform and instead spoken by the colonizers just as fancy being their whims. Susan Barton and Mr. Foe clash over this-- she urges him not to, he refuses; Susan Barton says the following: "It is far from dull with that constant reminder of truth." As an adventure, however, it is quite boring. That is why you implored me to lend aid the cannibals, didn't it? (Coetzee, 1986, p. 127).

The enslaved African, Friday is usually mother-naked and his nakedness renders him mute the same way other members of this subaltern are muted. We can interpret his silence as the erasure of native voices in colonial literature: "Friday, because he cannot speak for himself, has nothing with which to preserve himself against being daily reshaped by others as they wish" (Coetzee 60). Silence is also the unspoken narrative question being asked therein: whose stories get told and who decides which are to be kept silent?

Susan Barton still needs to work hard just to tell her story, which is a broader example of the control over narrative at play in our Letters by Men series. She challenges the author *Foe*, demanding "Who not being on the island and in our story has the right to tell what sort of stories

ought to be ours? (Coetzee, *Foe*, p. 131). This confrontation is a critique of the colonial strategy to place authoritative narratives on voiceless peoples. The fractured memories of Susan and her disorientation towards reality effectively subvert the linear, tell-it-like-it-is colonial storytelling seen in other works. Her narrative untrustworthily echoes memories shattered by colonization - “What I must say to you, what is the truth of me: This story” (Coetzee, p.71) This splitting is against the supposedly straightforward heroics and moral certainties so often encountered in colonial epistles, from *Robinson Crusoe*.

Friday doesn't say anything, but he is a painful reminder of those silenced stories and untold tales from the colonized. In the novel's coda, where Susan imagines Friday speaking as an act of erasure or reclamation of his voice and history: “Let Friday speak. He cannot stay a slave” (Coetzee). This plea is a stark reminder to recognize and listen to the voice of the dispossessed. But Coetzee offers a decentering of the Crusoe story, undermining petrified history in colonial literature. In focalizing the narrative through Susan and Friday, he challenges Defoe's Eurocentric paradigm to offer a more differentiated — in both senses of that word— or at least appropriately expansive history of colonial encounters: “The story of the island belongs to him too” (Coetzee). This transnational and inclusive way of thinking calls for a revision of how we interpret our history from many different viewpoints.

Conclusively, J.M. Coetzee has written *Foe* to oppose conventional colonial themes by rewriting the narrative of *Robinson Crusoe* through subordinate lenses in his novel, Coetzee thus uses Susan Barton's contested authority to narrate a narrative that she heard from another source; and in Friday's underlying voicelessness as well as the figurative portrayal of power relations via language, he makes statements about how stories are told and who tells them. Turning exploration to a local perspective, his representation of fragmented memories and the reclamation of marginalized voices gives insight into the nuances embedded in postcolonial identity and history. *Foe* is a withering assault on the traditional frameworks that underpin so much colonial literature, ensuring it stands as one of few texts in this period to understand power and representation in their most inclusive forms.

Dismantling Robinson Crusoe

Colonization is the unlawful capture of distant lands (which after all ‘belonged no more to Crusoe than to the King of Portugal or indeed to Friday and his African cannibals’ — Barton describes her Empire's true crime (Coetzee 1986 p.26). A fact by nature that much potent enough easily to hide it for a while but does not need anyone's help in revealing. But it is, as Susan Barton concedes and holds out against calling Crusoe's Island. It is the same island named like the land of Friday, similarly for a pale woman is the arrow-head it is to empire. For his day job, Crusoe uses the place to spread the right sort of lies: it's an Africa full of cannibals. This kind of propaganda narrative has been established by Daniel Defoe in his famous work *Robinson Crusoe*. This thought of the continent became cannibal and restless, which continued with Susan Barton and Crusoe. Susan Barton almost admits giving land to poverty-stricken Africans at the hands of her Empire. Although it is undeniable that the island in question has Friday, a colonialist voice channeled through his clearly speaks out when she says ‘Crusoe would brook no change on his island’ (Coetzee 1986, p. 27). In that, it is so compactly formatted into these few words becomes traceable roots of a sense of colonial entitlement.

Challenging the Power and representation are so many inner workings being unpicked by an act of resistance which is destroying Robinson Crusoe. Behind this faux-civility, the colonists were playing all of the Africans for chumps as long as they kept falling for their claims that it was just some white people who showed up and grabbed an empty piece of land where a bunch of non-

whites happened to live alongside a box full of natural resources. With the other gender, they wear a mask of sophistication, and show only their lovable part. They advertise the Empire as a culture in which men & women have such great relations and then... it's not. Their colonizers lay many harsh accusations upon the women of their respective non-European countries, accusing them frequently that they possess such characters but in this novel Susan Barton is ready to do it (rightly or wrongly she still breaks virginity for a male stranger) Susan Barton describes an instance in the book;

“That gave me pause, He hasn't been with a woman in 15 years, so who am I to say that he shouldn't have it? What you desire is heal in 150 experienced, so I had to postpone my resistance and let him do what he wants. I was glad when I left the hut and Friday wasn't to be seen” (Coetzee, 1986, p. 30).

It is where Coetzee starts to dismantle the idea that Empire was built with good ethical intentions. They accentuate any deed where the colonization looks immoral or uncivilized like in *A Passage to India*, Forster by giving an instance that how all English turned against Dr. Aziz on a mere accusation of making assault towards Miss Adela Quested about few days back at Marabar caves and she called up several policemen who had hardly no concern other than colonial hierarchy nutrition. He is put in prison for that crime and all the other Englishmen and women unite to ensure he stays locked away. The European Kurtz himself turns evil and has an animalistic sexual relationship with a female native appeasing his lust in *Heart of Darkness*, by staff pressure.

Conclusion

Through such scrutiny, this study has mapped the colonialism, patriarchy and authorship embedded within modes of storytelling. The interactions between Susan and Friday and Foe are representative of the diabolical sociocultural forces that narratives support or promote against, enabling participation on discursive terms. Coetzee's *Foe*, places emphasis on the dispossessed subordinate and raises questions about coercive authorship and deploys literature to offer perspective on correct ways of engaging with the past. This fragmentation and incompleteness is then the achievement of the novel because it is the meaning of the greatest message of all - representation is possible but not through language and power itself. Thus, Coetzee's *Foe* impressively unpacks the politics of power and representation in the act of storytelling. The author focuses plot in the book and discards the authority of a single and canonical author, condemns the exclusion of weak characters, and questions the morality of speaking for others. Through the prism of her narrative, Susan Barton reveals the historical mechanisms that have rendered female authors' voices and narratives to significant male dominance. Friday's muteness is also a strong image of the 'subaltern' in this context, tracing the silences of the colonized or marginalized in history and culture. The *Foe* of the title becomes a picture of such creative violence: the language and imagery of the text created someone and becomes an ideology's pursuer itself. It is fundamentally more than just an anti-colonial and anti-patriarchal piece; it is part of the literature on literature. Further, Coetzee also proposes to reevaluate the role of literature in defying the oppressive forces and bringing out the perspectives that have been silenced in history. In this regard, *Foe* re-calibrates the scopes of narrativity in the honor of which mountains of narrational ethics and deep transformative potentials are invoked.

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