His/Her Man ~~Friday~~: Re-righting/-writing of an inaccessible *cannibal* in J.M. Coetzee's *Foe*

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Abstract

Friday, the cannibal of Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, is merely a shadow on account of his loss of speech organs in J.M. Coetzee's Foe that is a rewrite of Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe. Friday's cut out tongue has mimicked and resisted the Western centralist mode of representation and writing that fails to represent Friday's likes but, at the same time, he remains vulnerable to mispresentation. Friday's tonguelessness, an innovative narrative device employed by Coetzee in the plot of rewriting, creates the crisis of representability for the narrator and the readers. The corrective process of rerighting the texts by rewriting seems limited when certain truths like Friday's pre-island life remain inaccessible. Foe, the western writer, plans to exploit Friday's silence and assimilate him into the colonial agenda of creating the image of a willing slave in the canonical text. Susan, the woman narrator of Foe, questions how the colonial master visualizes the imperialized lands and its inhabitants, and challenges Eurocentric and patriarchic mode of representation that is based on tongue and speech. Susan tries to retrieve Friday's speech through his fingers and visibalize him by importing the feminist idea of resistive body and silence that may be the only alternative left to speech.

Keywords: voice, silences, canon, rewriting, representation

1. Introduction

~~Friday~~ [i] remains a mystery incomprehensible and unintelligible to the known ways of auditory communication and canonical writing. His tonguelessness creates the crisis of representability even in the rewriting, and leaves Susan and the readers with the question how to give truthful representation to Friday's likes in the oppressive history based on the "epistemic violence" of the marginal during the colonial times (Spivak, 1985, p. 251). Friday's is a missing story. He is represented by Crusoe in the canonical text and by Susan in *Foe*. His representation as a slave and uncivilized cannibal serves imperialist and colonialist designs. The rewriting, Coetzee's *Foe*, does not explain if Friday is the last surviving native of recently colonized island by Cruso[ii] or there is another pre-island story. How to represent Friday remains a question till the end of the story. Smith (2005) studies Edward Said's position about the marginalized in relation to the European Imperialist forces. She recommends that the colonized people need to address their othering by "rewriting and rerighting our (their) position in history" (p. 28). It is like speaking for those who cannot speak for themselves or more appropriately giving space to those in texts who were formerly erased on designs in the discursive empire of the texts:

> *The reach of imperialism into 'our heads' challenges those who belong to colonized communities to understand how this occurred, partly because we perceive a need to decolonize our minds, to recover ourselves , to claim a space in which to develop a sense of authentic humanity. (Smith, 2005, p. 23)*

The discursive nature of the empire situates the colonized on the margins, and thus puts them under the control of hierarchical structure of discourse. However, their remaining at the margins gives the marginalized self a certain freedom of articulation and, once decentered, they get a space to reclaim their identities. They, perhaps, also develop "a sense of authentic humanity" as claimed by Smith.

2. Historical revisioning of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719)

Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* is an influential work in English literature as a travelogue and genre. It has been attracting the rewriters from the periphery to 'write back.' Defoe can be called founder (father) of English Fiction writing. In literature, William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954), Michel Tournier's *Friday and Robinson* (1977), Nicolas Roeg's film *Castaway* (1987) and Robert Zemeckis's *Cast Away* (2000) have also been inspired by Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. Pat Rogers reports that by 1900 there were at least 200 English editions of *Robinson Crusoe*, 110 translations, 115 revisions and adaptations, and 277 imitations (as cited in Platten, 1999, p. 220).

The story of Robinson Crusoe has been rewritten in different cultures and by different authors with a different perspective—J.M. Coetzee's *Foe* is not the only rewriting. These rewritings revise the canonical colonial discourse with respect to stereotyped Crusoe- Friday relationship and have attempted to set this relationship right.

Reworking Defoe's novel along with *The Tempest*, the rewriters have challenged tradition-bound subordination of black peoples in a master/slave binary in general and Crusoe/ Friday and Prospero/Caliban relationships in particular. Pennycook (2002) points out that Robinson Crusoe's English lessons to Friday are "one of the earliest instances of English linguistic imperialism" (p. 10). Belsey (2005) believes that Defoe's story has conditioned all subsequent castaway stories. In Defoe's story, we find "an ancestral relationship to nature—the creation of an economy by Crusoe's solitary struggle to appropriate and transform the island—on which subsequent bourgeois society is also conditional" (p. 88).

However, Derek Walcott's *Pantomime* (1978) "resituates *Robinson Crusoe* in a new temporal setting but maintains its original geographic locale." Its setting is West Indian island of Tobago that is an allusion to Defoe's stereotyped, canonized and "exoticised vision of the Caribbean" (Gilbert & Tompkins, 2002, p. 36). In comparison with other rewrites of Robinson Crusoe that have appeared since 1719 like J. M. Coetzee's *Foe* and Sam Selvon's *Moses Ascending* (1975), Derek Walcott's *Pantomime* experimented with the genre and converted the original genre of fiction to drama like Margaret Atwood's fictional *The Penelopiad* against the epic *The Odyssey*. Like *Foe*, this play is performed in Caribbean context and its narrative displaces the centralised voice of Defoe's narrator by indigenizing it. Re-writing/playing questions the politics of naming "when Phillip plays the black man he calls himself Thursday" (Gilbert & Tompkins, 2002, p. 38).

The American poet Elizabeth Bishop also offers a revisionary account in her late poem "Crusoe in England." Another such poem is by Caribbean poet Derek Walcott's "Crusoe Island[iii]." The above studies reveal that every rewriting takes a particular perspective of the canonical story and tries to mend the damage caused by it across cultures and centuries. Pennycook takes a linguistic perspective; Belsey does the Marxist study and Walcott experiments with new temporal setting. These readings of the canonical text bring forth different dimensions of imperialism and try out different possibilities to challenge it. The thrust of my study is on how much fruitful these counterproductive re-readings have been.

The character of Robinson Crusoe has survived as an archetype in English literature. James Joyce was also enamoured by this agent of English imperialism. We can find Crusoe and Friday story in his lecture published as "Daniel Defoe by James Joyce," where Joyce maintains that Defoe is the "true prototype of

the British colonist, as Friday [the trusty savage who arrives on an unlucky day] is the symbol of the subject races" (Joyce, 1964, p. 24). But this archetypal image or prototype has been re-envisioned in "The Wind and a Boy," a short story by Bessie Head, a coloured South African writer. It appears in the collection of short stories, *The Collector of Treasures* (1977). It is about the Botalaote tribe. Its feudal and pre-colonial culture is affected by Christian missionaries and their Western ways of life. What is of particular interest to me is the version of Robinson Crusoe that the grandmother Sejosenye makes up for the boy Friedman. She presents Crusoe as an elephant hunter. She invents the story of Crusoe on her own from the perspective of her own society and narrates it to the boy. She indigenizes the story and teaches the boy the values of responsibility to community, togetherness and fellowship instead of the Defoe's story of exploitation:

> *Well, one day, Robinson appeared suddenly in their midst and people could see that he had a great thing on his mind. They all gathered around him. He said, "I have killed an elephant for all the people. . . . All this while, as he listened to the story, the boy's eyes had glowed softly. At the end of it he drew in a long breath. 'Grandmother,' he whispered, . . . 'One day, I'm going to be like that. I'm going to be a hunter like Robinson Crusoe, and bring meat to all the people.' (Head, 1977, pp. 72–3)*

We can compare and contrast Daniel Defoe's version of Robinson Crusoe with the grandmother's. Sejosenye's story teaches the lesson of community-consciousness and fellow feeling to the boy. This reading shows how the postcolonial writers have twisted the colonial stories, reacted positively to the elisions and absences of the colonized voice and highlighted the social structures of the underrepresented communities like teaching moral values to the young ones by the oral tradition of storytelling.

J.M. Coetzee's *Foe* (1987) is another version of Robinson Crusoe's story from feminist/postcolonial perspective. It includes the voice of an excluded, Susan Barton. *Foe* where questions the writing of Defoe and his status as a writer, it gives agency to the narration of a woman. Susan Barton's story stands in opposition to Foe's story and challenges the reliability and authenticity of the previous patriarchal/colonial version of the story. Innes discusses J.M. Coetzee's *Foe* with reference to the issues of representation of the other, narrative identity and authority, and characterization. Coetzee's *Foe* has been contextualized by Robinson Crusoe story. Coetzee (1999), in his "Introduction to the Oxford World's Classics edition of Robinson Crusoe", describes the novel as 'a fake autobiography', and Defoe as, "an impersonator, a ventriloquist, even a forger" (p. vii). Coetzee's rewriting *Foe* seems to be inspired by these accusations which Coetzee himself puts on Defoe. Coetzee tries to put records straight. He revises many details and incidents, like Susan Barton is introduced as the main narrator of the island story *Robinson Crusoe* and is an absence in the Defoe's story. Her Cruso does not keep a chronological record and dies on his way back to England. Contrary to Defoe's island, hers is a barren and rocky one. Walcott's version of the island in "Castaway" is also different. Coetzee (1988) talks of how the contemporary readers may react to his revisiting of Defoe's work: "Our craft is all in reading the other: gaps, inverses, undersides; the veiled; the dark, the buried, the feminine; alterities" (p. 81). The role of audience and especially internal audience is very important in the rewritings. The internal audience and narrator like Friedman in the story, "The Wind and a Boy" and Susan Barton in *Foe* influence the revisioning of absences.

Poyner associates Susan Barton in J. M. Coetzee's *Foe* (1986) with Roxana from Defoe's another work, *Roxana* (1724). Poyner (2009) has talked of erasure and silences in *Foe* but her concern about erasure is of authorial erasure. My focus is on the recovery process of their erased individual in the rewriting:

> *Key to unlocking the secret silences in Foe, including the silence of authorial erasure, is an understanding of how Coetzee, in the tradition of postcolonial writing, "unwrites" his colonial intertexts, but also how these texts impinge upon each other. (p. 92)*

"Intertexts" highlight the element of intertextuality and stress how the texts are interlinked and colonial texts reinforce the stereotypical representations. Crusoe, the colonizer in *Robinson Crusoe*, is finally marginalized in Coetzee's story and Barton takes up the function of a narrator and adventurer who tries to set free Crusoe's Friday in the narrative. Marx (2004) warns the readers and writers of the danger that new rewriting of canonical text will "tend to reinforce the centrality of Western writing by default" (p. 89). Poyner compares and contrasts Crusoe-(less silenced) Friday relationship in *Robinson Crusoe* with Cruso-(more silenced) Friday-Barton relationship in *Foe*. Friday's silence in the narrative of *Foe* overwhelms the proceedings.

Lewis Nkosi in "Robinson Crusoe: Call Me Master" finds fault with the English readers of the English /Western canonical text and claims that they "cannot read *Robinson Crusoe* properly, just as they cannot read *The Tempest* for what it is, because they cannot read themselves into the book" (as cited in Poyner, 2009, p. 94). One reason behind this faulty reading is that they cannot associate themselves with the "native." I identify this ethnic estrangement and trouble with alternative view of reading with the question of hermeneutic situatedness of the reader. Poyner (2009) points out contextualizing the story of *Foe* that Barton and Foe have different views regarding it. Foe, the white writer wants a story to be "a marketable narrative" and gives an insignificant role to the story of the island and of Friday unlike Barton. She accuses Barton for "imposing the language of the colonizer on Friday" (p. 100).

In "Speech and Silence in the Fictions of J. M. Coetzee," Benita Parry (1998) takes the position that Coetzee reimposes the Eurocentric by "sustaining the West as the culture of reference" (p. 151). Spivak (1999) argues that "'The native', whatever that might mean, is not only a victim, he or she is also an agent. He or she is the curious guardian at the margin" (p. 190). Poyner understands that Spivak thus revises her claim that in literature subalterns cannot speak. For Poyner (2009) in *Foe* "silence is Janus-faced for it not only signals Friday's oppression but also his autonomy" (p. 102). Friday is both an oppressed and a resistant voice of the colonial other[iv].

Spivak's (1990) Marxist study "Theory in the Margin: Coetzee's *Foe* Reading Defoe's *Crusoe/Roxana*" questions the representation and self-representation of the margins in a text. Coetzee's stress is on gender and empire than on the story of capitalism whose extension Robinson Crusoe is. Spivak finds similarity between the characters of Roxana and Susan in the sense that Roxana uses her sexuality as labor power (outside of the institution of marriage), and, likewise, Susan becomes source of sexual pleasure at the island. In the mother-daughter plot, Coetzee marks an aporia. Susan disowns the claimant daughter and informs her that she is "father-born" (Coetzee, 1987, p. 91). Spivak here tries to make the point that it is impossible to restore the history of empire and recover the lost text of mothering. Susan tries to "father" his (Friday's) story. Spivak questions at the end if the book *Foe* recuperates the margin (Friday—a question mark at the margin). I agree here with Spivak (1990) that "texts are porous" (p. 174). She accuses Susan, the white woman, an agent and Foe's double to be responsible for the marginalization of Friday.

In his sonnet "On Sitting Down to Read King Lear Once Again," Keats (2010) prescribes a different mode of reading:

> [. . .] once more humbly assay
> The bitter-sweet of this Shakespearian fruit. (p. 323)

These lines highlight the necessity to review, re-read and assess the binaries in the classic works. Partially it has been done by the rewriters and creative rereading. "Humbly" shows the inherent reverence in the writers for the classics (canonical writers). This word smacks of the anxiety of influence. Attridge (2004) holds that "[r]e-reading the literary work, by contrast, is an affirmation of its literariness (p. 89). Benita Parry (1998) in "Speech and Silence in the Fictions of JM Coetzee" is of the view that fiction works to "demythologize history" (p. 149). Rewriting is an effort to deconstruct structured myths regarding the othered cultures and obliterated histories. In the canonical texts, the dominated cultures and people prevail upon the textual texture and silence the colonized in the European discourse. Parry (1998) asks a very interesting question regarding silences in the canonical/colonial texts:

> *Is the silence of these 'strange' and defeated people deployed here as a textual strategy which counters the colonizing impulse and impudence in simulating another's voice? (p. 151)*

I do not agree with the argument that silence is a textual strategy as a counter force. If it is so, there is no justification for the rewritings, recovering voice and postcolonial or/and feminist discourses.

3. Friday's tonguelessness and the crisis of representability in *Foe*

Foe, an English writer in *Foe*, gives an idea how to find the "heart of the story" in a certain text. He recollects that "[i]n every story there is a silence, some sight concealed, some word unspoken, I believe. Till we have spoken the unspoken we have not come to the heart of the story" (Coetzee, 1987, p. 141). It is self-contradictory that there is unwritten in the written and "unspoken" in the spoken in a canonical writing—a phenomenon which makes space and creates possibility for the rewriting. The rewriter is to "speak" the "unspoken" and reveal the hidden "sight." Contrary to it, the postcolonial and feminist reader and (re)writer is to read what Spivak (1999) says "against the grain (canonical writer/writing)" (p. 24) and investigate what is still left "unsaid" in said, by doubting the ostensibly self-contradictory inscribed and internalized "truth(s)" of patriarchy and colonialism and, thus, offer the resistance of revelation and reconstruction to the location of erasures, silences and absences in the text.

Foe speaks the "unspoken" in his dominant imperialist gaze. He colonizes the experience of Susan and Friday by exploiting his pedestal as a recognized Western privileged writer. He does not let Friday remains a silence in the canonical story; rather he puts words in his mouth and presents him as a willing slave. In *Robinson Crusoe*, Friday is a person who has successfully internalized "servitude" and not willing to return home or remove the blinders of slavery, "Take kill Friday, no send Friday away" (Defoe, 2005, p. 249). In the standardized description, Friday assimilates himself into the Western culture and ways of life. He forgets all about his origin and does not show any concern about his blood relations. He is happy over Crusoe's slave in England. His transportation from "Africa" to England has been understated. England has been presented as his newly found "home" where he has internalized Crusoe's mastership and superiority. However, the inaccessibility to the voice, speech and history of

Friday in *Foe* negates his stereotypical representation in *Robinson Crusoe* and Foe, the writer, has never tried to and could never reach "heart" of Friday's story.

In the absence of his tongue, he remains a story "unspoken," unheard and, thus, unwritten. Loss of speech in case of Friday seems to have obstructed his thought process. Here Friday is "unrepresentable" because he is "unthinkable" in the worldview based on speech. His tongue and ability to communicate is the evidence against the colonial excesses which has been obliterated at the spot. The question remains how in the absence of "spoken" words, writing can take the place of his voice that is an unresolved knot in the "partially" described Friday's story. The process of "writing" here has been equated with the "voice" and "speech." This assumption justifies why Susan Barton makes Friday learn writing, "Writing is not doomed to be the shadow of speech…. God's writing stands as an instance of a writing without speech. Speech is but a means through which the word may be uttered, it is not the word itself. Friday has no speech, but he has fingers [. . .]" (Coetzee, 1987, pp. 142-43). She equates the phenomenon of writing to that of speech. She tries to convince the audience that writing has not been "shadow(ed)" by speech. As ecclesiasts quote religious scriptures to explain their point of view, Susan Barton wrongly quotes the example of God to justify the human experience by invoking readers' attention. She seeks hope in Friday's "fingers" in the absence of intelligible human "speech." The question remains how to find if Friday retains his faculty of thinking and reasoning so much as to enable him to transfer his thoughts to writing by employing his fingers. She has no example to quote from human life where writing comes prior to thought that is speech within us. However, she ferrets out the possibility of having a prophetic vision and creative faculties while giving voice to a Friday in a culture of dominance. She, here, contradicts her earlier claim that writing is "the manifest of a speech spoken," by disbanding the relationship between speech and writing and declaring them as independent entities (p. 142).

Rousseau prioritizes speech over writing, "Languages are made to be spoken, writing serves only as a supplement to speech [. . .] Thus the art of writing is nothing but a mediated representation of thought (as cited in Derrida, 1997, p. 144). In this specific historical context, "spoken" language, or "voice" is recommended. In the absence of Friday's languaging "voice," this "mediated representation of thought" that is writing either by Foe or Susan dislocates his true story and reduces his story to the level of mere a "supplement." In comparison with Rousseau, Derrida (1997) is of the view that there is "concealment (even) within speech itself" (p. 141). He takes the relationship between speech and writing as complementary instead of supplementary. However, in case of Friday's story, his inability to communicate through writing or speech makes his story unrelatable. There is no answer in the text if Friday's desires are "dark" even to his own self, "For as long as he is dumb we can tell ourselves his desires are dark to us, and continue to use him as we wish. Friday's desires are not dark to me. He desires to be liberated, as I do too" (Coetzee, 1987, p. 148). The "dumb" metaphor makes the inner self of Friday inaccessible to the readers. She oversteps her role when she asserts that his desires are "dark" to "us" and not to "me." Here, she takes privilege as the narrator and dissociates herself from the readers. She presumes that both wish "to be liberated," and writing is the only way in the absence of speech. The anxiety to represent Friday overshadows her case. She in an unjust manner assumes that Friday's inner being is hers inner being. What she thinks and desires is identical to Friday's yearnings. Unlike Friday, she has "speech" and knows writing as we find her teaching him how to write but she miserably fails to weave her own story vis a vis Foe's commercializing on her sufferings. Friday's first impression in the story given by Susan is standardized and evokes readers' previous knowledge of the classic text:

> *He was black: a Negro with a head of fuzzy wool, naked save for a pair of rough drawers. I lifted myself and studied the flat face, the small dull eyes, the broad nose, the thick lips, the skin not black but a dark grey, dry as if coated with dust. "Agua," I said, trying Portuguese, and made a sign of drinking. He gave no reply, but regarded me as he would a seal or a porpoise thrown up by the waves, that would shortly expire and might then be cut up for food. At his side he had a spear. I have come to the wrong island, I thought, and let my head sink: I have come to an island of cannibals. (Coetzee, 1987, pp. 5-6)*

His description is stereotypical "the flat face, the small dull eyes, the broad nose, the thick lips," with a spear at his side but here the color of his skin is not "black" but "a dark grey." She utters "Agua," a Portuguese word but gains no reply. She herself understands that he "regarded" her "a seal" or "a porpoise" (Coetzee, 1987, p. 6). He does not "cut (her) up for food." She images it a stereotypical "island of cannibals" (p. 6). As a Negro is required of in canonical texts, here we also find a black a Negro who turns out not a man-eater but a saviour. In absence of understandable oral language, she uses sign language. Her rowing all morning and having no water "since the night before," shows her struggle as a sailor. She follows the Negro to the interior of the island and on the way rides on his back with injured heel. Like Antoinette, she also "follows" a man. She is portrayed depending on a man and seeking help. She is too weak to bear the pains. She counters the canonical understanding of desert isle of the "readers reared on travellers' tales" (Coetzee, 1987, p. 7). The Negroes' soles crushing "whole clusters of the thorns" in an exception to the standardized depiction of desert isle with no easy access to victuals. Friday degenerates in England as much as Cruso at the island.

4. Friday's pre-island life: An inaccessible part

Susan is keen to contextualize Friday's character with his pre-island life:

> *I would give much to hear the truth of how he was captured by the slave-traders and lost his tongue. [. . .] What I fear most is that after years of speechlessness the very notion of speech may be lost to him. [. . .]I think of the root of his tongue closed behind those heavy lips like a toad in eternal winter, and I shiver. (Coetzee, 1987, p. 57)*

> *[. . .] at this very moment he (Mr. Foe) is engaged in writing another story, which is your story, and your master's, and mine. [. . .] from what I have told him, using words. (Coetzee, 1987, p. 58)*

The word "truth" here is slippery. The simile "toad in eternal winter" expresses Friday's tongue in the hibernation mode. Foe's writing of "another" story is Friday's story in which he remains othered. It is "your story" where *Foe* is not "gazing at" him and writing rather he is imagining him by hearing to Susan. Friday is an object of Susan's gaze. Here, representation is not by "eying" at him rather using sense of hearing. It means that mispresentation is not just by using "eye" but also by ear. His image is communicated to Foe by "using words." Cruso is "your" master—master of "you" that is Friday. Here she revokes Cruso's status as her master. Therefore, Cruso is not "our" master. In that sense, Susan is privileged over him. All the sources to know "truth" are either incomprehensive or unapproachable. First Cruso, the master, is dead whose version of the story is questioned by Susan. Secondly, she only knows his story from island onwards. Thirdly, Friday himself is tongueless and speechless. Nobody is in the story has the agency to return to Friday's roots which the trade of slavery and canonical writing has cut off.

Where Susan is interested in Friday's early part of the story, likewise, Foe is keen to know about her life in Bahia. Friday's silence is comparable to the colonial and patriarchal deafness exhibited in the subsequent canonical mode of writing. Susan pins her hopes on Foe's writing of their story which might exonerate them from the world of oblivion and forgetfulness. Susan here resists the mechanism of colonialism. She is courageous enough in the presence of Cruso and Foe and "mocks" their authority by questioning the governing laws which confer power on them. She tries ways to help Friday when Cruso and Foe are not ready to. She wishes to:

> *build a bridge of words over which, when one day it is grown sturdy enough, he may cross to the time before Cruso, the time before he lost his tongue [. . .] 'I tell myself I talk to Friday to educate him out of darkness and silence. There are times when benevolence deserts me and I use words only as the shortest way to subject him to my will. (Coetzee, 1987, p. 60)*

Susan's efforts to construct "a bridge of words" for Friday to "cross" it over fail. She cannot make him go back to the times "before Cruso." He remains an enigma who fails a woman of "benevolence." Like Cruso, she makes him her "subject." Her desire to make him representable and audible leads her to submit him to her "will." Instead she herself is relegated to "darkness" and "silence" when she could not write either her story nor of her man Friday. Friday's senses and voice remains paralysed and dysfunctional in the world of patriarchal and colonial subjectivity. He remains stuck up in his inner self—uncommunicated to the world of communication outside. He could not transact his anxieties, sufferings and problems to the world outside his being which creates anxiety into the minds of internal(Susan) as well as external audience (the readers). Friday's case is of "epistemic violence." His reality and true identity is buried with his tongue, sunken ship and late Cruso. He is in no ways better than his fellows buried deep in the wreck. The life of the marginal is held in abeyance as they have been left out and erased from the canonical writing and, therefore, only writing can liberate them from the epistemic "excesses" of history:

> *Can you not press on with your writing, Mr Foe, so that Friday can speedily returned to Africa and I liberated from this drab existence I lead? [. . .] More is at stake in the history you write, I will admit, for it must not only tell the truth about us but please its readers too. Will you not bear it in mind, however, that my life is drearily suspended till your writing is done?' (Coetzee, 1987, p. 63)*

Susan exposes the contradiction in Foe's story that is history, where the writing has to "please its readers" at the cost of "telling the truth." The crude reality about the marginal is not likely to please the English senses. It is ironic here that Susan and Friday are to depend on Foe's writing who is directly responsible for their "drab existence." The narrative attaches a new meaning to the purpose of writing. It is a way to liberation and means to return home that is "Africa" in Friday's instance. He is a slave at the ship prior to his landing at the island, subject to Cruso's orders at the island, and object of Susan's desires and finally to Foe's writing which is least focused on him. He is a personified silence in the text. His identity is speechlessness. Foe's task of writing their story is self-contradictory. His story (History) is to make "truth" pleasing to his English readers. His eulogizing Crusoe at the expense of Susan and Friday suspends their life in history and marks them absences. Friday's speechlessness and tonguelessness suspends the postcolonialist objective to hear the unheard voices. At the same time, a woman who, in contrast with Friday, has a voice and vision also remains unheard and undocumented.

Here, the feminist endeavours to represent truth about women reaches out to a colonized and othered slave and, hence, makes a broader base for sharing and struggle between postcolonialism and feminism. Sorensen (2010) refers to Susan's task of writing her and his story (Friday's), "Her story becomes a narrative of non- existence or negation, one that is incapable of reconciling a contradictory narrative desire for truthful- ness and meaning, concluding in failure and silence"(p. 106). Sorensen misreads Susan's narrative. It is not totally a story of "failure"; her partial successes need to be recorded and appreciated. It is Susan who brings up the case of a still born baby girl. She creates an anxiety of "double consciousness" in the minds of the readers not to leave Friday mute. It is she who responds to the imposter daughter and analyses how characters are interpolated by the canonical writers on purpose in order to fictionalize the truth and erase the real story. It is not as much her "incapacity" as it is of the patriarchal culture which is intolerant to the divergent and diverse meaning-making space created by the feminist counter discourse against their hegemonic mispresentations. Here, Susan lays hands on "master's tools." She acts out and "mimics[v]" Foe's style of writing:

> *'I sat at your bureau this morning [. . .] and took out a clean sheet of paper and dipped pen in ink -- your pen, your ink, I know, but somehow the pen becomes mine while I write with it, as though growing out of my hand - and wrote at the head: "The Female Castaway. Being a True Account of a Year Spent on a Desert Island. With Many Strange Circumstances Never Hitherto Related."*

[. . .] Yet the only tongue that can tell Friday's secret is the tongue he has lost! (Coetzee, 1987, pp. 66-67)

"Your" pen (Foe's pen) and ink becomes "mine" (Susan's). Foe's pen, an image of "phallus," grants power to a male writer but "grows out" of Susan's hands which are made to hold a feminist pen. It is not used to write in woman's ways and could not deliver "many strange circumstances" about her on the page. Susan takes Friday a liability that she wants to dispense with. His story overtakes and colonizes her own story and in a way adds to the hurdles in her writing. She is not only to bequeath the writer Foe and the reader with her own story of a missing daughter but, at the same time, with Friday's as well. However, she in uninformed about his lost origin. She has only partial knowledge about him which is not enough to exonerate him of his silence and erasure of his self. The pen is an image of a "phallus[vi]" that is source of power according to Lacan. Her inability to write is because of "lack" of "phallus." In order to gain power, Susan would have to leave out Foe's pen and discover her own creative potentials. Dickinson (2005) explains "anxiety of authorship" in her poem:

> A Word dropped careless on a Page
> May stimulate an eye
> When folded in perpetual seam
> The Wrinkled Maker lie
>
> Infection in the sentence breeds
> We may inhale Despair
> At distances of Centuries
> From the Malaria – (p. 495)

A woman writer has to face "anxiety" in the culture of writing where it has been patriarchal and canonical at the expense of their mispresentation. How to create different images, metaphors and identities from Foe's or Cruso's and yet to be recognized in the absence of literary mother made writing

for Susan a slippery ground. The rewriting has "infection" of the sentences already bred in the canonical text and she has to do careful feminist writing in order to get out of the centuries of "Despair" personified in the marginalization and silences of women.

Susan's story is binary to Crusoe's story of the island. She as a "Female Castaway" is not a sole owner of the "desert" island instead she is Cruso's subject. "Never Hitherto Related" invites readers' attention to the postcolonial and feminist question why "never related" and for what reasons. Friday's "only tongue" is the archival evidence is for history. Susan defends her role, as a woman, to represent a man, Friday, and questions why gender should always be disempowering for a woman, "Who was to say there do not exist entire tribes in Africa among whom the men are mute and speech is reserved to women? **[** . . .] Why should such tribes not exist, procreate, and flourish, and be content?" (Coetzee, 1987, p. 69). Here the traditional role of men and women has been reversed. The epithet of "mute" reserved for women has been transferred to men and of "speech" has been given to women. She is skeptic why such tribes having women as their head cannot be prosperous. Susan is contemplating the possibility of matriarchal culture in human society. By taking the role of a matriarch, Susan challenges the vocality associated with patriarchy and its standardization in most of the cultures. By taking the assumption of matriarchy, she tries to find her place in the patriarchal culture of writing. As seafaring was reserved only for men in the canonical sea adventures so was giving voice to a character. A woman did not have the right of way to present a man's case. The job of a woman here is not only to seek rights for her but also for a man.

What associates a woman (Susan) to a man (Friday) is their othering by patriarchy and apparatus of colonialism, "Does "the sign 'woman' have no origin, no historical, cultural, or linguistic limit"? We have seen the women in *Robinson Crusoe*. In *Foe*, the good white woman's anguish is stumped by an ignorance that seems removable only by anthropology: "who was to say there do not exist entire tribes in Africa among whom the men are mute and speech is reserved to women?" (Spivak, 1999, p. 196).

5. Conclusion

The inaccessible postcolonial characters can be helped by anthropological and archival research. Adrienne Rich's poem, "Diving into the Wreck" urges women to challenge the man-made myths about women by exploring them and looking for the evidence of damage. She harshly terms the male writings as the "book of myths/in which /our [women's] names do not appear" (Rich, 1973, p.24). Therefore, it is the job of the marginalized characters and their associates (feminist and postcolonial writers) to dive into the wreck of the centuries for themselves, and write in order to (re)present themselves against their mispresentation by patriarchy and colonialism. To recall Rich, the feminist and postcolonial writers are to dive into the "wreck" created by the mispresentation of the distortionist colonial and patriarchal writings, in order to enlighten the sites of "ignorance," "limit" and "mute(ness)" created by patriarchy and colonialism, be empowered and track down the possibility of "tribes" where women had "speech" and compassionately tried to represent the silences of Friday's likes.

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[i] The crossed out ~~Friday~~ reminds the reader that the slave's real name is inaccessible. It is merely an English name given by the master to dehumanize the other. Sarup (1993) in "Derrida and Deconstruction" explains the term "*sous rature*" which is usually translated as "under erasure". It means to write a word and cross it out because the word is inaccurate

and inadequate but it is necessary in the writing so it is left legible in the writing. Derrida derived this device from Martin Heidegger who often crossed out the word "Being" and "let both deletion and word stand because the word was *inadequate yet necessary*" (p. 33, original stress). Here, the character of ~~Friday~~ is under erasure both in the canonical text as well as in the rewriting.

[ii] Daniel Defoe has spelled the name Crusoe as 'C-R-U-S-O-E' while Coetzee has dropped the letter 'E' in order to defamiliarze the canonical image attached to the name Crusoe. In the present writing, Crusoe means Defoe's Crusoe while Cruso refers to Coetzee's revisioned character.

[iii] See Kit F. (2005). Imagined Places: Robinson Crusoe and Elizabeth Bishop. *Biography*, *28*(1), 43-53.

[iv] Lacan (1993) differentiates between the other and other on the basis of "locus" of speech. The Other with capital 'O' is the one who gets the position of speech and constitutes the other with small 'o':

> "There is an Other, and this is decisive, and structuring [. . .].The other must first of all be considered a locus, the locus in which speech is constituted" (p. 274).

See Lacan, J., & Grigg, R. (1993). *The psychoses*. New York: W.W. Norton.

[v] Bhabha (1994) explains the concept of "minimicry" as a tool of resistance which can be used by the colonized to challenge the colonial derision by showing their "partial presence." Bhabha persuades that "colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable other, as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite. (p. 86)

[vi] "The Signification of the Phallus" is a lecture that Jacques Lacan (2005) delivered in German on 9th of May, 1958, at the Max- Planck Institute, Munich. Here he explains the role of phallus associated with male, as the signifier of meanings in the patriarchal cultural system. He interprets that phallus as "the privileged signifier," is "the signifier intended to designate as a whole the effects of the signified, in that the signifier conditions them by its presence as a signifier" (p. 218).