

**TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY**

**Dismantling of Robinson Myth in Coetzee's *Foe***

**A thesis submitted to the Central Department of English  
in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of  
Master of Arts in English**

**By**

**BASHU DEV ADHIKARI**

**Central Department of English**

**Kirtipur, Kathmandu**

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This thesis titled **Dismantling of Robinson Myth in Coetzee's *Foe***  
submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by **Bashu Dev**  
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**Bashu Dev Adhikari**

## ABSTRACT

J.M. Coetzee's *Foe* is a radical revision of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. It dismantles allegorical and canonical myth of Robinson from different perspectives. For this respect, Crusoe, white Friday and Daniel Defoe are supplemented by Cruso, black Friday and *Foe* respectively. Susan Barton, a woman protagonist replaces Crusoe as the narrator. Likewise, the linear narration of Robinson myth has been supplemented by metafictional narration of present text *Foe*.

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## Chapter -I

### Introduction: Robinson myth and *Foe*

Present study is an analysis on Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Coetzee's *Foe*. It will try to find dismantling elements on *Foe* which dismantle the myth of *Robinson Crusoe*. How the classical and allegorical Myth of island is dismantled and how it is presented in the *Foe* is subject of my study here. I will follow ideas of reviewers that Coetzee's *Foe* is a new version of Robinson myth.

*Robinson Crusoe* is classical work in English literature. It is taken as one of the best production and the first publication as the form of novel. Daniel Defoe has drowned the biographical image in the novel *Robinson Crusoe*. The hero Robinson starts his carrier from the sea, instead of his family approval to him. The committed man, Robinson ables to earn name and fame in his life. This novel tries to depict human commitment and victory over his future.

*Robinson Crusoe* is argued from different perspectives since its publication in 1719. Reviewers take it as milestone of English literature. Coetzee found many loopholes in it. He redrew *Robinson Crusoe* under the title *Foe*. This research will be focused that Coetzee *Foe* is post structural revision of Robinson myth. There are many similarities as well as many difference theoretical issues between these two stories. In my present study I will try to find the counter issues in *Foe* which reinterpret the novel *Robinson Crusoe*. I realize some of the major changes in new form, which are my subject to inquiry in this study. The male protagonist is supplement by female

protagonist, linear myth of Robinson is replaced by met fictional story of Susan Barton. Like wise the white Friday is changed in to black African Friday. All of these significant changes in canonical work made me curious to investigate dismantling elements in Coetzee *Foe*.

*Foe* provides role to marginalized people like female black and colonized. It inaugurates voices of subaltern people, Wikipedia Encyclopedia tells *Foe* as: “Archetypal, postmodern novel examining the creative process of story telling, narrative technique, language as well as issues of gender race and colonialism (15: 11)”. Like this encyclopedia reviews *Foe* touch issue about gender, race and colonialism. It substitutes the phallogocentric discourse by presenting voice of female. Crusoe is replaced by Susan Barton. Barton, the female protagonist collects her memoirs and gives it the form of novel under the title “Female Castaway”. She gives her story to the famous writer of the time, Daniel Defoe. But, Defoe enables to give suitable position for females. It arise revelry between Susan and Defoe. As a result Susan takes Defoe as *Foe* for her. He is always against presence of female. Coetzee is liberal to female, black and colonized people. It tries to include voice of excluded people, what the Robinson myth failed. Patriarchal domination is replaced in Coetzee’s *Foe*. Race is next Viking issue; the black Friday is replaced by white Friday. It disrupts the traditional canons of class gender and race in the processes of cultural acceptance and exclusion.

The main importance of the novel is on the art of story telling. Who is narrator and who is character is the main confusing aspect. Susan Barton is

protagonist and wants to write her story by hand of Defoe. But she is enabled to find her position on the novel. Her regular letters were hidden by Defoe. *Foe* starts from the struggle between character and the author Defoe. Metafictional narration of the *Foe* is the main charm of the novel. Susan story is written and Susan is her self the main character of the novel. Friday is no more docile servant of Master Defoe but true friend of white woman Susan. He rescues her from shipwreck. He becomes accompany Susan to her last destination England. Some reviewers believe that Friday is sexual partner after death of Crusoe.

Reviewers believe that *Foe* is parody of the English novelist Daniel Defoe. The name *Foe* is ambivalent, it was Defoe's real name before he gentrified it with the De- and it is a synonym of enemy. Robinson myth is myth of island. The protagonist of the novel *Robinson Crusoe* is entrapped on a lonely island twenty-eight years of his life. The land cultivates corn and rice and keeps goats on the island. Crusoe rescue Friday whom he educates and converts to Christianity. At last, Crusoe and Friday enable to return England. It is liner myth of *Robinson Crusoe*. His entrapped life is presented by first person narrator 'I' is Crusoe himself. Where as, in the novel *Foe*, Susan Barton tries to write her memoir by the hand of a famous author Defoe. But the rigid author tries to give fantastic callabration than reality of female which can be realized after study Coetzee's *Foe*. Here, we can realize that Susan's fight is first with the Crusoe and second with the author Defoe. Angry Susan takes Crusoe as Cruso and Defoe as *Foe* in her life.

Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Coetzee *Foe* are two complimentary parts of this research. It can be taken as two parts of same coin. In my present research I will introduce both novels in first part. In second parts I will talk about post structuralism and its relation outside to visualize literature. In the third part I will try to interpret the novel with the dismantling elements of *Foe*. Final part is for conclusion of the research.

Doing research over Coetzee's *Foe* is difficult in the sense of post modern writer with multiple issues in his writing. But it is easy because *Foe* received host of criticism since its publication in 1986. Many critics and reviewers have argued this novel from different perspectives like post colonial, racial, deconstructionist, existential and linguistic. These approaches no matter whether they are author oriented or reader oriented or language oriented have tried to interpret it or invest this novel with meaning. Present study is different than others because it tries to search the dismantling elements in Coetzee's *Foe* which deconstruct the myth of *Robinson Crusoe*. Lynn Meskell and Linday Weiss in criticism title *Coetzee on South Africa's Past: Remembering in the Time of forgetting talk* about apartheid movement and colonialism in Africa. They try to link Coetzee relation with apartheid movement in post colonial South Africa; by interpreting *Foe* as the product of apartheid Africa. They indicates: "J.M. Coetzee an intellectual figure in south Africa has consistently engaged with politics of the past particularly the contemporary ethical ramification, colonial past history of oppression under apartheid movement (88).

Dana Dragunoiu comments existential point of the Coetzee novel *Foe*. She says on the title “*Existential Doubt and Political Responsibility in J.M Coetzee’s Foe*:

My aim is to add to the existing feminist post colonial and post modern reading of the *Foe* as an existential critic that addresses important aspect of the novel left unexplored by these readings. In many ways, existentialist though has anticipated those late twentieth century theoretical models, particularly in rejecting absolutes, in prevailing existence freedom and self-determination, and in analyzing ideology language and the gaze. On a more particular level, existential philosophy helps to explain the mysterious figure of Crusoe. (309)

John Rees Moore provides us major reviews on different issues of Coetzee’s *Foe*. Within this close analysis of *Foe*; Moore compares several aspects of the text to that of other novels as well. He uses examples of Coetzee’s fiction to illustrate the ways in which the South African dilemma is discussed or omitted from them. These examples also demonstrate how Coetzee has shown actual awareness of the powers and limitations of language within various discourse of society.

In all his writing Coetzee has shown an actual awareness of the powers and limitations of language, particularly as they affect society and political reality. In *Foe* questions of language are the central subject of the book. What does a narrative need to be convincing? Does the drab truth require the artifice

of a professional writer? Or can the writer create truth by the forced of rhetoric? If words can never pluck out the heart of the mystery, is outright fiction the best that the writer can do? In his self consciousness about writing, his Meta fiction, Coetzee displays his modernity. But again these questions are objectified in terms of story and character. By mounting his story on Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, Coetzee achieves a subtle and original story of his own.

Barbara Eckstein regards the criticism of the book as post-colonial text, "In this novel, Coetzee reconsiders Defoe's concerns with colonialism, African others and unruly Women, through a story narrated by Susan Barton who declares herself the executrix of his (and Friday's) story at his death" (57). This sentence depicts post colonial aspect of the novel. It further says:

The possibility of using adventure genre to denaturalize the imperial construction of geography and masculine identity implicit in most adventure literature. It seems that only Coetzee, who writes a critical commentary on adventure rather than an adventure tale itself, manages to escape an imaginative geography suffused with imperialism. (211)

Kit Fan regards the criticism of the book as an autobiographical novel. He also focuses on Coetzee's geographical displacement in the novel. He says:

Coetzee's text avoids the first person, generating a third person fiction of writing built around the ides of Crusoe and Defoe as authors of each other, and using them as a likeness, presumably,

of his won role as a multiply displaced author in the new millennium.(44)

Aleks Sierz and Francis Spufford regard the criticism of the book as a deconstructionist novel, “ In J.M. Coetzee’s (1986) novel *Foe*, the Crusoe myth is deconstructed by telling another story-that of Susan Barton, female castaway”(35).

The lexical components of Coetzee’s met fictional response to Daniel Defoe as well as its narrative allusiveness are examined by Ruth Kolani in the following words:

Question of authorial and narratorial power and authority and levels of intertextuality are encapsulated in one sentence in J.M. Coetzee’s novel *Foe*, his metafictional response to Daniel Defoe: ‘In Mr. Foe’s house there are many mansion’ (77) [...]. The intertextual pluralistic statement epitomizes the shifting hierarchical complexities at play in *Foe* (62).

If we unpack the lexical components of the above quoted sentence from the novel and its narrative allusiveness, we get the proliferation of roes witness throughout the novel. Further more, it shows that Mr. *Foe* as a writer assumes almost as many identities as the mansions he possesses.

Susan Calonvini regards the criticism of the book as racial text on title *Race and Foe*. It highlights racial biases as:

An Englishman marooned on a tropical Island, alone except for his trusty servant Friday-these two famous figures, the central

character in Daniel DeFoe's 1719 novel *Robinson Crusoe*, are resurrected in South African writer Coetzee's 1986 novel *Foe*, but they reappear in an altered form that highlights the cultural, class and racial biases underpinning the earlier text (97).

The above mentioned reviews and criticisms indicate that, though the novel can be dealt from various perspectives such as postcolonial, Marxist, racial, deconstructionist, autobiographical, existential and so on, the perspective which I have chosen to conduct a research is a distinct one- the post structural issues that how *Foe* dismantles discourse of *Robinson Crusoe*. Post structural issue of the text search on the basis of comparative study of Robinson myth and Susan myth on her own words. How the already created structure is disrupted and how disruption is possible is prime focus of this study. Characters, narrator, narrative technique, voice, representation, activities, consciousness will be deeply focus on research.

## Chapter-II

### Post structuralism, History and Reality

This research is an inquiry in to J.M. Coetzee's novel *Foe* and Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* from the post structural perspective. I will attempt to analyze post structuralism as tool rather than theory in itself here. Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* is dismantled by Coetzee's *Foe*. How the issues of *Foe* are counter issues for Robinson myth is basic focus in this research. Post structuralism will be taken as the helpful tool to gain this goal. Before analyzing the counter issues of the novel I want to discuss the post structuralism and its perspective to visualize history at first.

Robinson myth is part of history. It is canonical in English literature. Many novelist and writers take it as a milestone for their creative works. Coetzee *Foe* tried to prove the created truth of Robinson myth is false. Voice of marginalized people like black, female and colonized is excluded in the Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. *Foe* tries to include such voice of subaltern people like Friday and Susan Barton. The male protagonist Robinson is replaced by the female protagonist Susan Barton, white Friday is replaced by black African Friday. Likewise, Crusoe is supplemented by Cruso (e) who is old and has no more interest about future. Coetzee's *Foe* is story of female, their experience and struggle for existing in male dominated society is main subject matter of the novel. Post structural reading of the novel search the created structure of earlier novel which is proved false by Coetzee's *Foe*. Narrative technique and narration in itself is dismantled by poetic metafictional narration.

Post-structuralism is not a school, but a group of approaches motivated by some common understandings, not all of which will necessarily be shared by every practitioner. Post-structuralism is not a theory but a set of theoretical positions which has slipperiness, the ambiguity and the complex interrelations of texts and meaning. Post-structuralism is, as the name suggests depends upon structuralism in order to understand it. Post-structuralism is marked by a rejection of totalizing, essentialist, foundationalist concepts. For brief, totalizing concept puts all phenomena under one explanatory concept. An essentialist concept suggests that there is a reality which exists independent or beyond, language and ideology that there is truth and beauty. And foundationalist concept suggests that signifying systems are stable and unproblematic.

Post-structuralism sees reality as being much more fragmented diverse tenuous and culture specific than does structuralism. The post-structural view believes that persons are culturally and discursively structured, created in interaction as situation. Subjects are created, cultural meanings and practices are various culturally-based so meaning is diverse as cultural differences. Subjects are material beings, their meaning and value and self-image from their identity groups from the multiple pools of common meanings and symbols. Post-structural understandings of persons are sometimes referred to as 'anti-humanist', because they are opposed to the Humanist idea that persons are isolate, unified, largely immaterial being. Post structuralism has greater

attention to specific histories, to the details and local contextualization time and history discourse and cultural practices.

Post-structuralism rejects a sense that we live in a linguistic universe by rejecting the traditional aesthetic, phenomenalist assumption that language is a 'transparent' medium which hands over experience whole and unproblematically. In linguistic universe 'reality' is only mediated reality, and what it is mediated is false conception of actuality of time and history. For this instance we can take *Foe* that what was mediated through Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* is false conception of that time and context. Crusoe, the protagonist is representation of male dominated society. Friday the servant of Crusoe has no voice because of the constructed society and reality of context. We know Friday only by the context of the colonial society. Poststructuralist reading does not depend upon such false conception of the social context.

The way language works by difference, master of tropes metaphor and metonymy. What Defoe has constructed is taken as reality of the context. Coetzee dismantled it and provides next reality, but here is also probability of many deceiving factors because language bears such thing always. *Robinson Crusoe* is linguistic reality which was created by the powerful people of that time. Coetzee *Foe* tries to see created reality of that time here. Poststructural reading believes that Coetzee *Foe* itself is not unmovable reality of the history. The idea that any cultural construction of meaning will false in reality. Meaning is pre-channeled which ways reveal about it. To put this briefly, we

live in a world of language, discourse and ideology, none of which are transparent, all of which structure our sense of being and meaning.

All meaning is textual and inter textual there is no "outside of the text," as Derrida remarked. Everything we can know is constructed through signs, governed by the rules of discourse for that area of knowledge, and related to other texts through filiations, allusion and repetition. Every text exists only in relation to other texts; meaning circulates in economies of discourse In John Lye terms in Foucault and History,

. . .the production of discourse is the way we know our world, is controlled, selected, organized and distributed by a certain number of procedures. Discourse is regulated by rules of exclusion, by internal systems of control and delineation, by conditions under which discourses can be employed, and by philosophical themes which elide the reality of discourse -- the themes of the founding subject, originating experience, and universal mediation. Discourses are multiple, discontinuous, originating and disappearing through chance; they do not hide the truth but constitute its temporary face. (70)

It is helpful to visualize Robinson myth that what is created in certain circumstance is cause of that context of time. Exclusion of minorities is cause if power and truth the reality of outside. Voice of female, black and colonized people is excluded in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*.

Post-structuralism has been described as a ‘rebellion against’ Structuralism. It may be more accurately understood as a critical and comprehensive response to the basic assumptions of Structuralism. Structuralism proposed itself as a study of the underlying structures inherent in cultural products utilizing analytical concepts from linguistics, psychology, anthropology, and other fields. Although the movement fostered critical inquiry into these structures, there was an unmistakable emphasis on logical and scientific results. Many Structuralists sought to integrate their work into pre-existing bodies of knowledge. This was observed in the work of Saussure in linguistics, Strauss in anthropology, and many early 20th century psychologists.

The general assumptions of Post-structuralism derive from an emerging critique of Structuralist premises. According to reviews in Wikipedia Encyclopedia,

. . . post-structuralism typically holds that the study of underlying structures is itself a cultural product and therefore subject to myriad biases and misinterpretations. To understand an object (e.g. one of the many meanings of a text), it is necessary to study both the object itself and the systems of knowledge which coordinated to produce the object. In this way, Post-structuralism positioned itself as a study of how knowledge is produced. (23: 43)

Wikipedia highlights the structure is the main source of meaning, it is culturally constructed. So it has danger of misinterpretation. We can take it as focus point to utilize in Robinson myth. Robinson myth is created in the certain context where marginalised voice is impossible to include. Structuralist focus upon structural root for gaining meaning but poststructuralist denies it. They show loopholes of structuralism and unlimited boundary of meaning. It spared it wings everywhere and every spare of knowledge. Post structuralism shows multiple facet of knowledge, so it is difficult to trust over it. Michel Foucault tells meaning is changing as the change of power structure. The present structures of discourse, understanding, including the present conceptions of the discourse is structured as the time of the 'writing' of the text. It can not bear any meaning for future. Hoping meaning is fake hope of human consideration. The relations of meaning which are 'in' the text by virtue of its having been written at all, modified by the fact that these relations have a certain historical existence, a local, situated, and corporeal existence whose reality may or may not be imaginatively recoverable the understanding that these 'historical' relations of meaning will to some extent be mystifying and idealizing.

A prominent aspect of post structural theories is that they are posed in opposition to inherited ways of thinking in all provinces of knowledge. That is, they expressly challenge and undertake to destabilize and in many instances to undermine and subvert what they identify as the foundational assumptions, concept, producers and finding in traditional modes of discourse. Knowledge

and language are two important subjects for post structuralism which unable to provide any truth and reality that it is believing.

Michel Foucault, Roland Barthes are two pillar of post structuralism. They focus on slippery nature of meaning which is culturally, time and contextually generated. Power is the tenets which manipulated meaning. Post structural critic unable to find static, constant meaning of the text. Barthes tells that meaning is inside of metaphor and metonymy. Change of metaphor and metonymy meaning is changing. Myth of Robinson is one metaphor which is created on basis of that time and context which has no faith and constancy. So it needs to visualize deeply.

Post structuralism reject finding meaning, and any sense from the text. Text bears lots of signifier. Signified is always impossible on the eye of post structuralism. Post-structuralists hold that the concept of "self" as a singular and coherent entity is a fictional construct. Instead, an individual is composed of conflicting tensions and knowledge claims (e.g. gender, class, profession, etc.). Therefore, to properly study a text the reader must understand how the work is related to their own personal concept of self. This self-perception plays a critical role in one's interpretation of meaning. Post-structuralism rejects the idea of a literary text having one purpose, one meaning or one singular existence. Reader must be able to utilize a variety of perspectives to create a multifaceted (perhaps even conflicting) interpretation of a text. It is particularly important to analyze how the meanings of a text shift in relation to certain variable.

In the post-structuralist approach to textual analysis, the reader replaces the author as the primary subject of inquiry. This displacement is often referred to as the "destabilizing" or "decentering" of the author, though it has its greatest effect on the text itself. Without a central fixation on the author, and disregarding an essentialist reading of the content, post-structuralists examine other sources for meaning e.g. readers, cultural norms, other literature, etc.. These alternative sources are never authoritative and promise no consistency.

In his essay "Signification and Sense", Emmanuel Levinas remarked:

...language refers to the position of the listener and the speaker, that is, to the contingency of their story. To seize by inventory all the contexts of language and all possible positions of interlocutors is a senseless task. Every verbal signification lies at the confluence of countless semantic rivers. Experience, like language, no longer seems to be made of isolated elements lodged somehow in a Euclidean space... [Words] signify from the "world" a Post structuralism is not limited inside the boundary of language only. It spreads all spears of know ledges. (110)

Despite of all these discussion, I will search the post structural issues on the novel *Foe*, what is following to dismantle myth of Robinson. How the myth is dismantled is primary focus of this study. For this purpose, I will search appropriate issues of post structuralism that will useful here in comparative study of Robinson myth and Susan myth of island. Dismantling of character,

narrative technique, narration with different issue is the main target in this project. All of these are describing in coming chapter.

### Chapter- III

#### **Dismantling of Robinson Myth: the implication in Coetzee's *Foe***

J.M. Coetzee's *Foe* is a radical rethinking of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. Myth of Island is re-versioned by demonstrating the previous. The re-imagining of Daniel Defoe's Classic novel *Robinson Crusoe* is with a woman Susan Barton, cast away on the same Island as *Robinson Crusoe* and Friday. *Foe* is considered as archetypal, post modern novel examining the creative process of storytelling, narrative, language as well as issues of gender, race and colonialism. Coetzee turns the story, characters and subject positions of Defoe's novel and disrupts notion of truth, trust and story.

*Foe* dismantles the myth of Island. Robinson myth is archetypal subject matter for English literature. Many fairy tales, child stories, are constructed on the basis of it. It is acclaimed by much criticism since its publication in 1719. In this present study I will search dismantling elements on Coetzee *Foe* which dismantle the myth of *Robinson Crusoe*. This project will talk about types of dismantling issues collected in the novel. Dismantling of characters, dismantling of narrative technique and dismantling on theoretical ground like colonialism, post colonialism will be subject of focus. *Foe* is parody of the novelist Daniel Defoe. The name *Foe* is ambivalent. It was Defoe's real name before he was gentrified with the 'Foe'. 'De' is a synonym of 'enemy': 'De' refers to the devil and his cruel activities. Coetzee tries to prove 'Defoe' is real 'De' for minorities. His *Foe* is written from the marginal position and questions marginality itself is an attempt to break the norms of elitism. Defoe's *Robinson*

*Crusoe* has written in eighteenth century where white, male were leader of the world. Position of female and colonized people was no different from cattle; they can be bought and sold easily. Coetzee disrupts it and provides next where we can find sufficient role of minorities like female, black and colonized.

Coetzee's *Foe* dismantled the history of *Robinson Crusoe* from different perspectives. One of them is on the level of characters. Defoe presented only male character and gave them role. His novel excludes voice of females like Widow, his wife, daughter, sisters etc. Such characters can be found in his narration but all of them are forgotten to provide any significant role. Only the Crusoe is master of Defoe's narration. Subaltern were excluded from the famous legendry of eighteenth century.

Coetzee's *Foe* gives adequate role to the female. The protagonist Crusoe is changed in to Cruso who have no significant role. He is like a lying log on the ground. The myth is changed from male centralism to female centralism, the male protagonist Crusoe is replaced by female protagonist Susan Barton. In Coetzee's *Foe*, Susan passes through different modes of life. She is searching for her lost daughter. Her life journey is interesting to read; which is no less interesting than Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. Susan Claims that she is similar character of history that passes life like Robinson Crusoe. She imagined her story of life is fictional story of Crusoe. She says, "With these words I presented myself to Robinson Crusoe in the days when he still ruled over his island and become his second subject, the first being his man servant

Friday" (11). It tells that the replaced character Robinson Crusoe is similar to Susan Barton. Susan Barton finds her as Crusoe in the Island. She tells her ill luck brings her to the bear land. Swan says, "I am on your island Mr. Cruso, not by choice but by ill Luck" (20).

In the myths of Robinson Crusoe, there was no human creature on the island when he landed on the ground. But in Susan story there were two human creatures, Crusoe and Friday. Crusoe is unlike Crusoe, he is old, at the age of sixty without any desire of life. The changed Friday is also no more white and docile servant of Crusoe. He is black and African as the lines illustrate, "He was black, a Negro with a head of Fuzzy wool, naked same 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" (6).

We find Friday of Swan is different than Friday of Robinson. Robinson Friday can't find any ideas to share with his master. He was docile servant does everything what his master says Susan Friday is a friend for Susan life. He travels from island to England. He can dance and sing songs. Changed can be seen on the Master Crusoe too who was died on the journey rather than take part in marriage and business like in myth in *Robinson Crusoe*.

Daniel Defoe is not author but the cursed character in *Foe*. Defoe is severally cursed because he did not include reality of a female like Swan Barton. The story proceeds with the struggle between author Defoe, (Foe' for here) and Susan Barton. The lines tells, "What can I do but protest it is not true?"

I am as familiar as you with the many, many ways in which we can deceive ourselves. But how can we live if we have been? If I were as obliging as you wish me to be" (130). We can't find characters whom we find in story of Defoe but we addressed biography of Susan Barton where Friday and Crusoe are friend in her journey.

*Foe* is a Meta fiction. We can not pin point who are characters and who is author. Susan tries to tell reality of her story like life, but at the same time it becomes an interesting meta-fictional story for the readers. The replaced character Crusoe is an interesting subject for reviewers. Many times it arises confusion to readers' minds that who are character of *Robinson Crusoe* and who are of *Foe* respectively.

We can find the replacing of character is post-structural replacing. Disrupting the past and leaving present in confusion. Character of *Robinson Crusoe* is ruptured and presented similar characters for confusion. It shows that Coetzee's *Foe* is post-structural reading of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* on the medium characters.

Susan Barton's story recounts desire of human being successfully. It tells that singularity is impossible in human life, we need copulation of both sexes, whether we are in difficult situation or not. Crusoe was old and sick but he is having sex with Susan. Friday, the lonely character, also has a lot of desire but his miserable situation made it impossible for him. Susan behaves sexual activities after the death of master Crusoe to him. Susan in her journey says:

I lie against Crusoe; with the tip of my tongue I follow the hairy whorl of his ear. I rub my cheeks against his harsh whiskers, I spread myself over him, I stroke his body with my things. I am swimming in you, my Crusoe, 'I Whisper, and Swim. He is tall man, I a tall woman. This is our coupling: This swimming, this clambering, this whispering. (40)

It is sexual dynamic of Coetzee *Foe*; which is impossible to find in *Robinson Crusoe*. *Robinson Crusoe* is bare and collection of singularity of human life.

Neither Crusoe nor Fridays shows their sexual desire to opposite sex. They are lonely and busy for daily life who have no desire of family and future.

In Coetzee's *Foe* Crusoe dies in the first part. Susan narrates that how feeling is uneasy on the trip. He was interesting to confine his life in the island. But Susan brought him to England. But in the mid of path Crusoe dies.

In Susan words:

We were yet three days from part when Crusoe died. I was sleeping beside him in the narrow bank, and in the night heard him give a long sigh; then afterwards I felt his legs begin to grow cold, and lit the candle and began to chafe his temples and wrists, but by then he was gone. (44).

We can't find any weakness in Robinson in Defoe's novel. Crusoe is full of passion, adventure and desire of earning more. He is more interested about money and matter than life and marriage. Defoe provides sufficient role to protagonist Crusoe, who is in hope of better life in future. He marry in his late

life. Yet he is hopping full of civilization in his island and wealthy life in his future. But Coetzee turned his role to Susan and presented the dead Crusoe in the mid of story. Post structural reading of Coetzee *Foe* aware readers to the disruption, supplement and confusion created on the novel.

Coetzee *Foe* disrupts the previous. Robinson myth bears many things which are essential to disrupt. Inequality between male and female, hegemony over colonized, tendency of marginalizing is disrupted and provided equal role to powerful and powerless, have one and have less, male and female, colonized and colonizers. Coetzee *Foe* is written from marginalized perspective. It gives equal opportunities to both parts of life the light and dark, powerful and powerless for this proof *Robinson Crusoe* is silence about reality of Friday tongue. What is the reality about Friday's tongue? Who has cut his tongue is not investigated. Susan tells reality that Master Crusoe is responsible about it. He accused the barbarians, but he cut the tongue of Friday himself. In Susan words:

The truth that your master cut it out himself and blamed the slavers. If so it was truly an unnatural crime, like chancing upon a stranger and slaying him for no other cause than to keep him from telling the world who slew him. Crusoe bind your hand and foot and force a block of wood between your teeth and then back out your tongue. (84)

It tells that Master Crusoe is responsible for making tongue less Friday. Defoe is next male character who made Susan tongue less. He collected members of

Susan but he interpreted from male perspective by disregarding role of subaltern people like female, black and colonized in his interview title *The Novel*, talks about history:

History is nothing but a certain kind of story that people agree to tell each other, then there seems a pressing need to investigate the types of stories people agree to tell and the implications of a too-heavy reliance on particular narratives in the construction of individual world views. (4)

It proves that Coetzee believes on myth, legendary and history are for teller and believes. He unable to believe on the myth of *Robinson Crusoe*. Which is for tellers and believers of the context? He proves it singular, one sided and written from the perspective of powerful. Powerless are disregarded and forgotten. So, coetzee dismantled the one sided *Robinson Crusoe* where male and powerful people one on the center. He brings powerless people and gives them role.

Coetzee's novel *Foe* is clearly caught the concepts of literature as play, entertainment and as didactic exercise. It focuses as voice of social conscience, speaking for a silenced and persecuted other with which one cannot hope to communicate. It helps us to discuss on a historical consideration of Defoe's work and its reception in both culture. Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* is widely accepted on myth of economic individualism is deconstructed in coetzee *Foe*.

As myth is created a paradigm for a certain type of economic and social behavior, showing how one can serve one's personal material interests and still

be a morally upstanding human being. *Foe* is rebellion against such the patriarchal order, and the domination created by the context of social cultural proliferation of the society. "Historically *Robinson Crusoe* marked the transition in utopian social thought between utopia as satirical fantasy and utopia as realizable project" (433) on the words of Manual and manual. Such utopia is demolished by Coetzee's *Foe*.

So called social individuality of Defoe's myth is deconstructed in Coetzee *Foe*. So called social individuality of Defoe's myth is deconstructed in Coetzee *Foe*. Crusoe is protagonist in the utopian thinking of the society. Defoe made him the legitimate agent for realizing wealth and power in the new world. All these utopian Fantasy, individualism, patriarchal domination are demolished in Coetzee's *Foe*.

Robinson myth is essential for re-interpretation by recasting all these mythical reality of that time. Myth of colonic is so harsh and rude if we go from the subaltern perspective. Coetzee fulfill the lack and bring the marginalized on the centre. Voice of female and their roles, in society is reforming on the new Robinson. *Foe* is not only challenge to the hegemony of male consciousness but also deliberately constructed new frame of society which gives equal opportunities to male and female, colonized and colonizer, white and black. For this reference we can take female Susan Barton equally challengeable to Crusoe and White Friday is no different to black Friday of Coetzee. Barton fights a battle for self-determination and free herself from the man's projection. She is representative character of Coetzee's *Foe* for challenge

the Robinson Myth which is rooted since its publication in 1719 in this male dominated society. Friday is next representative, who has no voice but his silence is more powerful than any voice of reality. His silence speaks that remaining silence is more powerful than bargaining with bud voice in one sided colonizer's society. Susan fights for making place for female and for subaltern people like her. She claims that she is free woman and can tell her story freely.

According to Susan Barton, she has no hidden desire as Crusoe and Defoe in *Robinson Crusoe*. She says, "I am a free woman who asserts her freedom by telling her story according to her own desire" (131). But she unable to find such freedom in male constructed society. A person who wrote her story is male. He did not project her as what was reality. J. M. Coetzee's 1986 novel *Foe* leaves its reader in a tumble of a multi-layered reality, confused about literary original and copy, and, maybe most grave, confronted with the question: what is historical truth and how can it be recognised. The veils that unfold and reveal the facets of fiction and reality through the novel are many, and they are intricately woven into each other. We, the readers, however educated and experienced with fictional texts, may find ourselves slightly confused after a first reading.

Coetzee has written a parody of a classic of world literature: Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, first published in 1719 A.D. The simple fact that Coetzee's work of fiction was first published in 1986 makes it evident that it was based on the older classic. Yet the content of the novel claims the very opposite when the female protagonist Susan Barton tells how the story really

was before Mr *Foe* sat down to turn it into a novel of his own intentions, altering and falsifying it. She tells her own story in the Perspective of own, in terms of the plot even before the writer Mr. *Foe* would have completed his Robinson Crusoe . Through this, Coetzee creates the illusion that Susan Barton's report might have indeed been the antecessor of the literary classic Robinson Crusoe. Nevertheless, we are talking of a work of fiction here, so there is no doubt that Coetzee's marvelously plays with the means of storytelling instead of telling the world how it all really was . There is no such Robinson Crusoe as depicted both in Defoe's and Coetzee's novel - there is merely fiction, and one should not confuse fiction and reality, however many layers of both seem to be mingled into each other in Coetzee's *Foe*.

Even if fictional elements in Coetzee's story do not have the purpose to shed light on reality, those kind of elements generally represent something outside of things that really happened - which they do in Coetzee's novel. Coetzee does not intend to correct the actual story of Robinson Crusoe. His way of re-writing a story, which is so much part of national, or probably even global, literary heritage, is clearly a metaphor. Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe has shaped the minds of generations, especially in its widely-spread form as a youth book. With the alterations that Coetzee made in the story and characters of the original Robinson Crusoe when rewriting it, he forces us to think why he chose to retell the old story in this very way.

Why was Robinson Crusoe written that way and no other? And why does Coetzee decide that he has to write the old story anew? In a way, Daniel

Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* could be considered a perfect example for the spirit of the times it was written in. The way Robinson cultivates and reigns the island and the slave-master relationship between him and colored Friday represent the attitude of colonization. White European men come to a foreign, apparently uninhabited island and turn it into a fertile, livable environment through their intelligence and hard labor. The occasional native is saved from great danger and, in gratitude to the white man, becomes his servant, whom the benevolent master even introduces to the realm of European language, culture, and Christian religion of course.

If this depiction of colonial attitude is of a rather ironic tone that already indicates that today's reader will see Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* in a critical light. Reading about Friday's domestication, the way Robinson Crusoe treats Friday seems rather racist in today's view. Coetzee rewrites the story of the eighteenth century white castaway, introducing us to the complicated links between reality, fiction, and metafictional. He also makes us realize that an author writing a novel always has an intention that makes him depict a certain character in a certain way, and what impact this intention can have on culturally shaped images of social and cultural history. Coetzee rewrites *Robinson Crusoe*, and he does so in the 20th century, being a white, critical South African writer. As we think about his intention in rewriting the story, we come upon the fact that Daniel Defoe had his intentions, too. That he was, although being a very liberal mind, a child of his times, and thus promoting a view on the encounter of Europeans with the savage natives during colonial

times that is indeed told from a very European, or even colonial, point of view. We come to understand that all literature, and with it history and the like, was written with an intention and in favor of the social group writing it, and that with nothing that we read can we be careless believers. So Coetzee's novel functions as an eye-opener to the reader; when he rewrites the story of white European Robinson Crusoe and his fate in the Caribbean, it is an act of adding his own version of colonization to the culturally shaped view on history - he thus corrects the official accounts, of which Defoe's Robinson Crusoe is one, by adding the voice of a minority that was speechless before. A parody according to Linda Hutcheon says, "imitation characterized by ironic inversion, repetition with critical distance, which marks difference rather than similarity" (6).

When we look the way in which the Robinson fabula is recast in these two narratives, we find quite different treatments. *Foe* empties out the colonial message of Defoe's novel *Robinson Crusoe*. If we can argue that *Robinson Crusoe* is one of the key embodiments of the meta-narrative of enlargement and liberation, then we can likewise argue Coetzee's works compromise the possibility of gaining real insight, freedom and power. The Defoe fabula has six basic parts. It parts with rebellion against patriarchal order and its endorsement of what Robinson calls the middle state of society and its ends with a reinforcement of patriarchal social order and the ascendancy of the middle state. In moving from rejection to assertion, Robinson first experiences

adventure and ruin enslavement followed by colonization of island in all over the world.

This way Coetzee's *Foe* dismantles the myth of island. By bringing subaltern to the center, presenting metafictional narration instead of linear, singular myth makes us believable that *Foe* dismantles the myth of Robinson Crusoe, which is the subject of study here

## Chapter- IV

### Conclusion: Dismantling as the Result of Study

Comparative study between Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Coetzee's *Foe* made us sure that *Foe* is full of dismantling elements that dismantle Robinson myth of island. The singular myth of Robinson which is unable to include voice of minorities is dismantled by *Foe* and provides roles to subaltern and elite people equally. There is no difference between importance of Black Friday and White Crusoe. The male protagonist Crusoe is supplemented and female becomes protagonist of the legendary. Protagonist Susan dismantles ideology of Robinson Crusoe and shifts it to Crusoe; who has no passion of life and future.

Metafictional narration of Coetzee's *Foe* is taken as the weapon for gaining victory over Robinson's linear myth. Robinson myth is singular in its voice and in its narrative technique. *Foe* dismantles it and provides the metafictional narration of Susan Barton's story. Susan Barton tries to write story about story of her life. Her story like journey becomes story for Defoe. But, the misogynist Defoe did not provide adequate role to her. Coetzee dismantled the established notion of Robinson myth by the help of *Foe*. For this respect Robinson Crusoe, white Friday and Daniel Defoe are supplemented by Crusoe, black Friday and *Foe*. Susan Barton, a woman protagonist, replaces Crusoe as the narrator.

The supplement and disruption of character, narrative technique, narration and narrator of the canonical and allegorical Robinson myth reflects

the dismantling of it. The already created structure is ruptured by the *Foe*. *Foe* shows many weakness of Robinson myth from different perspectives. Coetzee, unlike Defoe, articulates feminist vision that emphasizes woman's ability to transform her from an oppressed creature to a free one. Coetzee dismantles the structure of patriarchal society which always forces to live under hegemony of so called elite people like Robinson. But the new version provides free role to subaltern people like Susan, Friday and savages equally.

In contrast to Robinson Crusoe by rewriting of it as *Foe*, Coetzee shows that there is the possibility of multiple voices. Multiple voices tell us multiple meaning is possible according to time and context in connection with types of interpretation. Coetzee's *Foe* is one of the new interpretations which dismantle the previous Singular myth and presented multifarious myth of Island. Coetzee's *Foe* sees many things that are not contained in the first version. It successfully struggles to persuade readers that Defoe is a *Foe* for minorities. He presents that Robinson is not the only possible character of the myth of Island. Describing his grand narrative is not only subject for his new version. Thus, Coetzee dismantles the old version in his novel *Foe*.

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