

ÇANKAYA UNIVERSITY

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

ENGLISH LITERATURE AND CULTURAL STUDIES

M.A. Thesis

**PHYSICAL AND TEXTUAL SPACES IN COETZEE'S *FOE* AS A
REWRITING OF DANIEL DEFOE'S *ROBINSON CRUSOE***

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SEPTEMBER 2021

ABSTRACT

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M.A. in English Literature and Cultural Studies

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September 2021, 68 pages

This thesis explores the concept of space in J. M. Coetzee's *Foe* (1986) as a rewriting of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719). *Foe* creates a fictional chronology to rewrite a famous canonical text from the perspective of a woman. While trying to understand the ideological dimensions of spatiality in *Foe* and how it subverts certain issues regarding canonicity in *Robinson Crusoe*, Henri Lefebvre's concept of space as a social product and Michel Foucault's concept of "Heterotopia" constitute the basis for the analysis of certain physical spaces in both novels. The thesis makes a comparative analysis of these spaces in order to reveal the repetition with difference that is manifest in *Foe*, and tries to understand how these differences utilize the tensions between the center/the margin, the male/the female, the author/the narrator, and the colonizer/the colonized. Finally, the thesis traces how the different representations of these physical spaces influence the textual space of *Foe* to produce a self-reflexive counter-site that encompasses all these differences, which is manifest through intertextuality as Julia Kristeva defines it.

Keywords: J.M. Coetzee, Rewriting, Space, Intertextuality, *Foe*, *Robinson Crusoe*.

ÖZET

COETZEE’NİN *ROBINSON CRUSOE*’NUN YENİDEN YAZIMI OLAN ROMANI *DÜŞMAN*’DA FİZİKSEL VE METİNSEL MEKÂNLAR

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İngiliz Edebiyatı ve Kültürel İncelemeleri Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Danışman: Prof. Dr. Özlem Uzundemir

Eylül 2021, 68 sayfa

Bu tez J. M. Coetzee’nin *Robinson Crusoe*’nun yeniden yazımı olan romanı *Foe*’da mekân kavramını inceler. *Foe* çok ünlü ve kanonik bir metni bir kadının bakış açısından yeniden yazarken kurmaca bir kronoloji yaratır. Tezde *Foe* adlı romanın mekânsallığın ideolojik boyutları ve *Robinson Crusoe*’nun kanonla ilişkisi üzerine ortaya attığı sorular anlaşılmaya çalışılırken, Henri Lefebvre’nin mekânı sosyal bir üretim olarak kavramsallaştırması ve Michel Foucault’nun ortaya attığı “Heterotopya” kavramı fiziksel mekânların analizinde temel alınmıştır. *Foe*’nun *Robinson Crusoe*’yu nasıl tekrarlar farklılaştırdığı fiziksel mekânların karşılaştırmalı analiziyle ortaya koyulurken, iki roman arasındaki farklılıkların merkez/marjin, erkek/kadın, yazar/anlatıcı ve sömürgeci/sömürge gibi ikilikler arasındaki gerilimleri ne şekilde öne çıkardığı anlaşılmaya çalışılmıştır. Son olarak, fiziksel mekânların farklı temsillerinin *Foe*’nun metinsel mekânını Julia Kristeva’nın metinlerarasılık kavramı üzerinden tüm bu ikilikleri kapsayacak şekilde nasıl ortaya çıkardığı ve nasıl “kendi üzerine düşünen bir karşı-mekân” yarattığı incelenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: J.M. Coetzee, *Düşman*, Yeniden Yazım, Mekân, Metinlerarasılık, *Robinson Crusoe*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my special thanks and sincere gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Özlem Uzundemir for all her enthusiastic encouragement, advice and constructive feedback. She has been singularly, the most influential teacher I have ever known. I would not be the reader, writer or thinker I am today without her. I would also like to thank all the department of English Language and Cultural Studies for all they have contributed to my development.

Much gratitude to all the members of my family for all the moral support and encouraging words that they gave me during my studies. I would also like to express my deepest love and appreciation to my husband Hayder Albeer for his patience, assistance, and tolerance.

Finally, I would also like to give special thanks to my friends Görkem Mercan who helped me a lot during the whole process of studying and writing, and Neşe Özdemir who always supports me.

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INTRODUCTION

John Maxwell Coetzee (1940) is a prominent South African novelist, critic, linguist and essayist. As a South African writer, he was a prominent adversary to the regime of the apartheid in South Africa. Some of his works reveal and criticize the imperial power in South Africa that categorized people according to their race into three groups: whites, Native and Indians and Colored people. According to Dominic Head, Coetzee's "works present a sophisticated intellectual challenge to the particular form of colonial violence embodied in apartheid He is the first South African writer to produce overtly self-conscious fictions drawing explicitly on international postmodernism" (1).

During his literary career, J. M. Coetzee has received many literary awards and is considered "one of the most influential novelists of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries" (Poyner 1): In 1977, he won South Africa's premier literary award, the Central News Agency (CNA) Prize, for his novel *In the Heart of the Country*. *The New York Times* chose his *Waiting for the Barbarians* as one of the best books of 1982 and it won the CNA Prize, the James Tait Black Memorial Prize and the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize. The next year, *Life and Times of Michael K* won Great Britain's Booker Prize and twelve years later, Coetzee became the first author that won the Booker Prize twice as he received the second one for his novel *Disgrace*. He has also been awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2003 which affirms his role as one of the most noteworthy writers of the period.

Coetzee's works occupy a distinctive position in contemporary literature due to their themes; they are "characterized by an intense though oblique involvement with the political, intellectual, aesthetic and philosophical issues of our time" (Boehmer, et al. 1). More specifically, they reflect themes and concerns such as domination, marginalization, language and representation, authority and authorship, space and spatiality and issues of constructing the "other". For example, *In the Heart of Country* (1977) takes place in South Africa, where people suffer the oppression of the European colonizer who considers the

land primitive and uncivilized to justify colonization. *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980) is another novel that dwells on the consequences of colonialism that are manifested in the degradation and torture of a barbarian girl and her people.

Coetzee's writing style is characterized by an extensive employment of intertextuality. Many of his novels show an implicit or explicit engagement with prior well-known literary works. To mention some of the more obvious instances, the title of *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980) is taken from Cavafy's poem and the novel itself reminds Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* and *In the Penal Colony* for Franz Kafka, a German-language writer whose name is referred to in Coetzee's *Life and Times of Michael K* (1983). *The Childhood of Jesus* (2003) has a direct intertextual reference to Miguel de Cervantes's *Don Quixote*.

Coetzee's *Foe* (1986) has been approached by most critics from a post-colonial perspective. They focus on how Coetzee's *Foe* rewrites Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* with a reversal of the role of the colonial hero. In his "Post-Colonial African Literature as Counter-Discourse: J. M. Coetzee's *Foe* and the Rewriting of the Canon", Ayobami Kehinde argues that "*Foe* deliberately rejects *Robinson Crusoe*'s canonical formulation of the colonial encounter and addresses the silences and prejudices in its precursor, while actually invading and deconstructing the economic utopia of *Crusoe*'s island" (109). In my thesis, I try to add to the existing postcolonial criticism of *Foe* a spatial critique that focuses on certain physical spaces in *Foe* and *Robinson Crusoe* to clarify their reciprocal influences on the characters of the novels. Besides, I attempt to highlight that the strategic intertextual references in the novel provide a textual space that points out the differences among characters, events and places in *Foe* and their counterparts in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* to show that the interrelationship between the notion of space as a physical domain and the representations and interpretations of space in the cultural realm manifest that space is not a static entity but a socially produced communicative medium of culture that defines and is defined by society.

Coetzee's *Foe* which is a rewriting and re-envisioning of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* highlights, questions and problematizes relations of power and domination. Coetzee employs various conceptions of space and spatiality to uncover the power of the author to include, exclude, centralize or marginalize certain characters and events on the

basis of race, as in the case of Friday, and gender, as in the case of Susan. Coetzee invents a reversed historical linearity to introduce the story of a castaway on a desert island from the perspective of a female narrator, Susan Barton, as an earlier version, a source material for Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. In her "When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re—Vision", Adrienne Rich claims that "Re—vision—the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction—is for us more than a chapter in cultural history: it is an act of survival" (18). Rich claims that such activities of revising famous canonical texts from the standpoint of the marginalized do not aim at passing on "tradition but to break its hold over us" (19) because "if the imagination is to transcend and transform experience it has to question, to challenge, to conceive of alternatives, perhaps to the very life you are living at that moment" (23). Accordingly, the rewriting of a well-known novel, such as *Robinson Crusoe* from the viewpoint of a marginalized woman, accentuates certain values embedded in a canonical literary text.

Coetzee's *Foe* is the story of a woman, Susan Barton, who searches for her daughter in Bahia in Brazil, but her efforts are fruitless. After spending two years there, Susan travels to Lisbon on a ship. Unfortunately, the captain is killed by the sailors who put him along with Susan on a small boat and leave them alone at sea. She finally finds herself on the shore of a deserted island where an African man, Friday, finds her and brings her to his master, Cruso. After spending a monotonous year on the island, Susan is rescued by an English ship and she takes Friday, who is dumb, and Cruso, who is sick, with her. Cruso dies during the journey and Susan finds herself responsible for Friday. In England, she searches for a famous writer, Foe, to transform her letters concerning her adventure on the island into a book and get rid of her financial problems. She cannot meet him as he escapes due to some financial debts, but she continues to send him letters concerning the story of the island in addition to her life with Friday after she comes to England. Later, she moves to Foe's deserted house with Friday and uses his belongings in her writing. When she finally meets Foe, he advises her to tell him the story of her complete life, especially the two years that she spent in Bahia. After a long metafictional discussion on Susan's story, she refuses and insists that she is free to include or exclude certain details about her life and that the most important part should be the story of the island. The novel ends with an account of Susan's story when she becomes a castaway on

Cruso's island by an unknown narrator who finds her letters in a dispatch box in Daniel Defoe's house. The narration of *Foe* starts after the death of all the characters of the novel except Friday, who remains as the only witness to the story of the island and the unknown narrator/reader of Susan's letters.

Coetzee's *Foe* involves a variety of physical spaces, such as the island, the shore, the sea, the ship and Foe's houses which have their counterparts in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and the shift in the narration between the precedent canonical work and the rewriting contributes to the textual space of *Foe*. The first part of the novel contains Susan Barton's account of the story of Cruso's island told in retrospect; Susan writes her memoir as a castaway as soon as she returns to England and sends it to Foe, the fictional author, in order to recast her adventure into narrative. The second part is a series of precisely dated letters in which she narrates the way she manages her life in Foe's empty house, her daily encounter with Friday's silence and certain issues and problems concerning the production of her story. The third part revolves around her confrontation with Foe that involves some philosophical discussions about speaking and writing, her struggle to prevent him from changing the events of the story according to his own desire and her attempt to author her story. While the first three parts present a narratorial shift from the male/Cruso(e)¹ to the female/Susan and an authorial struggle between the male/author/center/De(foe)² and the female/marginalized/Susan, the last part introduces a new ungendered narrator who seems to read both intertexts as he/she constructs a new/repeated beginning for the novel that can be regarded as the reader's reassessment of the entire endeavor of the narrative in the light of the antecedent/new findings that he/she finds in De(foe)'s house.

Throughout the novel, the characters adopt different roles such as an author or a reader, which brings forth questions about how the narratorial space functions in the novel. (De)foe, for instance, is transformed from a real author into a fictional author/character and a reader of Susan's story. Susan acts as a character/narrator as well as the writer of her story, and the unknown narrator appears as a character/reader in the last part of the novel. All these aspects construct an additional fictional space that is neither explicitly

¹ I prefer to put Cruso(e) in this form when I need to emphasize the intertextual connection between Coetzee's Cruso and Defoe's Crusoe.

² In order to clarify that the name of the fictional author in Coetzee's novel refers to Daniel Defoe, the real author of *Robinson Crusoe*, I combine them together in this way.

referred to in the novel nor belongs to either *Robinson Crusoe* or *Foe*; but lies between the novel and its relationships with the intertext/s and provides additional interpretive possibilities. For example, the narrative in *Foe* can inspire a story about Defoe's construction of *Robinson Crusoe* by including or excluding certain events and characters from the story. If there is a constructed chronology between the two works, the reliability of *Robinson Crusoe* is directly problematized, taking Susan's story into consideration. Such unreliability, though, is also implicit in *Robinson Crusoe* as Defoe starts his fictional account through a note at the beginning of the novel by claiming that the whole book is written by the protagonist himself, although the narrator is a fictional construction of Defoe. Such interwoven conceptualization of narratorial space, which unfolds through physical spaces as encountered in both novels, renders the novel "an interrogative reworking of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, and a fictionalized account of the circumstances of that novel's making" (Mehigan 92). In other words, *Foe* offers an alternative fictional account regarding "The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, of York, Mariner" to question and destabilize the canonical reception of *Robinson Crusoe* through an alternative reflection on it.

A spatial analysis of *Foe* can manifest how humans relate to each other as well as to their environment, for example, the physical space of the island is socially constructed by Cruso(e). Space and its inhabitants interact and space can influence identity formation of characters; Cruso(e) is characterized as the king of his island, Friday is Cruso(e)'s first subject and Susan is his second subject. De(foe)'s house is another physical space that embraces the authorial struggle between the marginalized female narrator/writer Susan and the real/fictional author De(foe) on the one hand and between these authorial figures and Friday to discover his story on the other hand. The movement among the physical spaces throughout the novel demonstrate various authorial shifts among conceptual spaces, such as outside/inside, periphery/center, female/male, narrator/author and absent/present. Accordingly, the spatiality of *Foe*, the interrelationship between physical and textual spaces and their influences on the characters cannot be conducted without shedding some light on theories of space and their interconnection with theories of intertextuality, gender and power relations.

Until the end of the nineteenth century, space was conceptualized as three dimensional, static, stationary and delimited by time. However, the twentieth century witnessed a radical change in the perception of space and time with the realization of the prioritization of temporality over space. Thus, the notion of space acquired currency that it became one of the essential concerns of theorists, like Michel Foucault and Henri Lefebvre who endeavor to assert the notion of space and spatiality together with the concept of time. They emphasize the role of social agents that continuously produce, shape and transform the concept of space according to certain cultural, historical, economic and political events. They also assert the power of space to affect, guide and restrict potential actions of human beings. Consequently, the concern with the production of space in literary studies has been discussed from various perspectives, such as colonial and postcolonial studies, feminism and gender studies and Marxism and critical theory.

In his “Questions on Geography”, Michel Foucault highlights the “devaluation of space that has prevailed for generations” (70). He argues,

Space was treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile. Time, on the contrary, was richness, fecundity, life, dialectic.

For all those who confuse history with the old schemas of evolution, living continuity, organic development, the progress of consciousness or the project of existence, the use of spatial terms seems to have an air of an anti- history. If one started to talk in terms of space that meant one was hostile to time. (Foucault, “Questions”, 70)

In his criticism of the prioritization of time over space, Foucault points out that historians utilize space as a means to entail the passage of time. In other words, historians’ analysis of space is delineated in terms of time, in terms of the changes that occur in space across time. However, Foucault questions the possibility of exploring space independently outside the concept of time.

Despite the fact that Foucault had not developed a systematic elaboration on space, his ideas concerning this concept has an influence on the evolution of the spatial turn. In an article entitled “Of Other Spaces”, he declares that “[t]he present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space. We are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed”

(Foucault and Miskowiec 22). Touching upon the historical development of the perception of space in western culture, he claims that “space itself has a history in Western experience, and it is not possible to disregard the fatal intersection of time with space” (22). He starts from the Middle Ages where “there was a hierarchic ensemble of places: sacred places and profane places: protected places and open, exposed places: urban places and rural places” (22), all of which connote a kind of categorization, and discusses how this concept of space changed in time. Space, according to Foucault, cannot be viewed as a constant and predetermined homogenous entity but as a network of heterogeneous one interrelated with cultural identities.

In addition, Foucault proposes two distinct sites, utopias and heterotopias, which are analogous to each other in the sense that they “are outside of all places” and they bear a ligament as well as discrepancy to other sites. Yet, they differ from each other as utopias refer to “unreal spaces” that depict “a perfected form” (24) of society while heterotopias represent real spaces that constitute “counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites . . . that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted” (24). He argues that while heterotopia differentiates itself from other spaces, it concurrently grants a mutual interrelationship with them. For example, a garden can be heterotopia as it is a real site that is different from other sites around it but may constitute microcosm of plants from various environments.

As a term, heterotopia has a medical origin; it refers to the “abnormal displacement of a bodily organ or part”³. Simultaneously, it has an etymological connection to the term utopia. According to Foucault, the idea of the mirror can explain the juxtaposition between the unreal utopia and the real heterotopia. He states:

The mirror is, after all, a utopia, since it is a placeless place. In the mirror, I see myself there where I am not, in an unreal, virtual space that opens up behind the surface But it is also a heterotopia in so far as the mirror does exist in reality, where it exerts a sort of counteraction on the position that I occupy The mirror functions as a heterotopia in this respect: it makes this place that I occupy at the moment when I look at myself in the glass at once absolutely real, connected with

³ Collins dictionary

all the space that surrounds it, and absolutely unreal, since in order to be perceived it has to pass through this virtual point which is over there. (24)

On the one hand, the mirror represents a utopia because the reflection of the figure does not really exist in physical space, but in a virtual space within the frame (physical space) of the mirror. On the other hand, it is a heterotopia because in the mirror the real figure can perceive itself via its image.

In order to clarify the various kinds of heterotopia and how they are constructed according to their sociological context, Foucault categorizes six principles that may exist in heterotopic spaces. The first principle is that heterotopias can be found in every culture and in diverse forms which deny universality. He classifies them into two main categories that emerge according to the social situation of the period: first is the heterotopia of crisis which represents the “privileged or sacred or forbidden places” (24) and then the heterotopia of deviation where “individuals whose behavior is deviant in relation to the required mean or norm” (25) are imprisoned. The second principle proposes that a society can alter the function of a heterotopia in immensely various ways over time as in the case of cemeteries. The third principle suggests that a heterotopian space “is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible” (26). For instance, in the theater and the cinema where different places are represented in a single space, the stage or the screen, a heterotopia of heterogeneity is exhibited. The fourth principle is connected with “slices in time” which “for the sake of symmetry” frames “heterochronies”⁴ (26). For example, the cemetery as a heterotopia has the ability to disconnect people from their “traditional time” (26) to give the sense of the timelessness of death in a specified time and place. The fifth principle is concerned with the ability of heterotopias to “presuppose a system of opening and closing” that allows penetration, yet, produces isolation, such as the barracks and the prisons. The final principle is that it has “a function in relation to all the space that remains” outside and “[t]his function unfolds between two extreme folds” (28) and is divided into two kinds: it either creates a space of illusion like warehouses or of compensation like some Puritan societies in America.

⁴ “[H]eterochronies define places that accumulate time, as well as temporary spatial formations” (Toprak and Ünlü 159)

Moreover, Foucault argues, in his *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, that to define heterotopia through language is problematic, saying,

Heterotopias are disturbing, probably because they secretly undermine language, because they make it impossible to name this and that, because they shatter or tangle common names, because they destroy 'syntax' in advance, and not only the syntax with which we construct sentences but also that less apparent syntax which causes words and things (next to and also opposite one another) to 'hold together'. This is why utopias permit fables and discourse: they run with the very grain of language and are part of the fundamental dimension of the fabula; heterotopias (such as those to be found so often in Borges) desiccate speech, stop words in their tracks, contest the very possibility of grammar at its source; they dissolve our myths and sterilize the lyricism of our sentences. (xix)

As counter-sites, heterotopias unsettle the order of things. Foucault marks their disturbance in the “heteroclitite” where words are “‘laid’, ‘placed’, ‘arranged’ in sites so very different from one another that it is impossible to find a place of residence for them, to define *a common locus* beneath them all” (xix). Therefore, heterotopias by nature are transitive, oxymoronic and disjunctive which in its turn have a liminal effect on language. This influence can be obvious in Foucault’s explanation of the ship that he considers as the “heterotopia par excellence” (Foucault and Miskowiec 27). It “is a floating piece of space, a place without a place, that exists by itself” (27), yet, it has a connection with all other ports/sites that it encounters during its movements. I will discuss this heterotopic disturbance in term of language as it is manifested in the last part of Coetzee’s *Foe* with the unknown narrator’s attempt to interpret Friday’s mystery when he turns up to be the only survivor in the shipwreck.

Henri Lefebvre is another theorist who emphasizes the importance of space in social theory. In his *The Production of Space* (1974), he argues that space is a social product and that socially produced space is the output of “individual and collective” (33) participants who need to affirm their objective reality. Lefebvre claims that the production of social space goes side by side with the production of social relations and use-value saying:

There is an immediate relationship between the body and its space, between the body's deployment in space and its occupation of space. Before producing effect in the material realm (tools and objects), before producing itself by drawing nourishment from that realm, and before reproducing itself by generating other bodies, each living body is space and has its space: it produces itself in space and it also produces that space. This is a truly remarkable relationship: the body with the energies at its disposal, the living body creates or produces its own space; conversely, the laws of space, which is to say the laws of discrimination in space, also govern the living body and the deployment of its energies. (170)

So, there is a reciprocal relationship between space and its inhabitants. Lefebvre emphasizes that space must be occupied by a body, “not bodies in general, nor corporeality” (170), but a definite body that has the ability to set the boundaries and designate directions of its space. Moreover, he considers the body as a “deployment of energy” (171) whose movement and energy produce space in accordance with its own reproduction. Accordingly, space is not a pre-existing, fixed container that people fill up and move in; it is a social product that contains human involvement. For Lefebvre, there are three dynamic forces which are interrelated and essential in the production of social space: the first of these forces is the perceived space or “the spatial practice” (38) that produces the society’s space through the physical as well as material circulation and interdependence of individuals or objects within and across space. This force “propounds and presupposes it, in a dialectical interaction; it produces it slowly and surely as it masters and appropriates it” (38). It depends mainly on how people perceive their surroundings through the senses which in turn determine their utilization of space, such as the arrangement and rearrangement of the workforce, land-use pattern and eventually economy. The second force is the conceived space or “representations of space” (38) which means the intellectual formation of signs, codes and knowledge that social agents like planners, experts, architects and scientists have established to “identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived” (38). Lefebvre considers this conceptualized space as “the dominant space in any society” (38-39) because the agents who decide the way space is represented, have the authority to govern its production, regulation and application. It is a dimension where power relations can be observed.

Lefebvre's third category is lived space or "representational spaces" (39) that is "directly *lived* through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of 'inhabitants' and 'users', but also of some artists and perhaps of those, such as a few writers and philosophers, who *describe* and aspire to do no more than describe" (39). Accordingly, people experience their lived space differently depending on their interaction with the perceived and the conceived spaces. Some have the ability to appropriate it depending on their conceptions and others just accept it as it is. Lefebvre offers a harmonious interrelation among these categories and emphasizes that they should not be treated as independent. His claims concerning the social and political involvement in the production of space propound aspects of hegemony and power relations in the analysis of space in literature.

All these different conceptualizations of physical space by different theorists have also brought about conceptualization of textual space. The notion that the meanings of a literary text are produced by the transformation of other texts, expressions and sign systems by means of implicit or explicit references, citations or repetitions marks a radical shift in twentieth-century literature. In her "Word, Dialogue and Novel" Julia Kristeva uses the term "intertextuality" to refer to the dialogue between texts. Taking Bakhtin's dialogism⁵ as a point of departure, Kristeva has expanded the notion of intertextuality to conceive texts as operating along two axes. She observes that "[t]he word's status is thus defined *horizontally* (the word in the text belongs to both writing subject and addressee) as well as *vertically* (the word in the text is oriented towards an anterior or synchronic literary corpus)" (36-37). Accordingly, the horizontal axis refers to the communication between the author and the reader, and the vertical one links the text with other texts.

Intertextuality creates a space for the writer to appropriate earlier texts, select and alter certain parts of them and transform or repeat these parts according to his/her own purpose in order to draw the reader's attention to certain aspects in the (inter)text. As a result, any literary work can become subject to intertextual analysis on the part of the reader. In her "Post-Colonial Literatures and Counter- Discourse", Helen Tiffin claims

⁵ In her "Word, Dialogue, and Novel", Kristeva says that "[w]hat allows dimension to structuralism is [Bakhtin's] conception of the 'literary word' as an *intersection of textual surfaces* rather than a point (a fixed meaning), as a dialogue among several writings: that of the writer, the addressee (or the character) and the contemporary or earlier cultural context" (36).

that Coetzee's *Foe* is not "simply 'writing back' to an English canonical text, but to the whole of the discursive field within which such a text operated and continues to operate in post-colonial worlds" (23). Tiffin thinks that *Foe* is an example of a postcolonial text which highlights a cultural controversy and challenges the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, the center and the periphery and the self and the "other". Consequently, to read Coetzee's *Foe* is to re-read Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and appropriate its previous understanding in light of its re-written version to come up with new interpretation(s) about the (inter)text. Thus, among the writer, the reader, the text and the context there is an endless communication, which reminds the reader of Derrida's idea that the meaning of a text is infinitely delayed. In this way, the text never has a fixed meaning due to the fact that it is established in the textual spaces and that meaning is constantly evasive.

In his "The Death of the Author", Barthes claims that writing itself is a complex space: "A text is not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the 'message' of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture" (146). According to Barthes, any text is structured as a synthesis of quotations or allusions which are never "original", it cannot be created out of nothing, but it is constituted of a net of interrelations between preexisting texts or ideas. They are subjected to reinterpretation by the scriptor (the modern writer) when creating his own text and then by the reader; that is the space on which all these words and quotations are inscribed and recreated in the process of the reader's interpretation of the same text. In other words, every writer is at the same time the reader of other texts that are written before his and is influenced by them in one way or another. Consequently, every text has what Derrida calls "traces" (*Of Grammatology* 65) of and is connected implicitly or explicitly with other texts that eventually affect the reader's evaluation of a text.

Accordingly, the first chapter of this thesis aims at analyzing certain physical spaces in Coetzee's *Foe* such as the island, the sea and Foe's two houses and comparing them with those in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* to reveal how different modes of representation can produce or subvert certain practices like colonization, gender and racial

marginalization and the construction of the “other”. Besides, the analysis will manifest the heterotopic qualities of some of these physical spaces and their role in the creation of other possibilities of being as in the case of Friday.

The second chapter explores the textual spaces of the novel. Dwelling on the repetitions with differences that Coetzee employs in his novel, I will try to illuminate how *Foe* destabilizes Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* by proposing a fictional chronology for the story of the island that problematizes issues of authority and authorship. In this sense, Kristeva’s intertextuality will be used to explain how textual spaces interact with one another. Coetzee derives certain names, events and places, refers to and hints at another text implicitly and/or explicitly to open an in between space that manifests the dialectic interrelation between the text and its main source.

So, the thesis will trace what a spatial focus can contribute to the understanding of Coetzee’s *Foe* with respect to its intertext, Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*.

CHAPTER I

PHYSICAL SPACES

This chapter will focus on the physical spaces in Coetzee's *Foe*, namely the island, the sea, the shore, the shipwreck, Foe's houses and the dispatch box respectively, and compare some of them with their counterparts in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* to discuss how the changes in *Foe* highlight the interrelationship between these physical spaces and the characters and subvert the colonialist aims in *Robinson Crusoe*. On the one hand, the events in one physical space such as the island go beyond geographical boundaries to be discussed in other physical spaces, like the sea and Foe's two houses. For example, while they are sailing to England, when Captain Smith rescues them, Susan narrates her story to the captain who implants the idea of writing in her mind, saying, "[i]t is a story you should set down in writing and offer to the booksellers" (Coetzee 40) and when Susan occupies Foe's house in Stoke Newington in London, most of her letters are about the events that took place on the island, her encounter with Crusoe and Friday and their rescue from the island. Besides, when she goes to Foe's other house in East Central London, she constantly discusses with Foe how to transform these events into a narrative. On the other hand, the influences of the physical places contribute to the identity formation of some of the characters as they experience a literal as well as metaphorical shift from the center to the margin as is the case with Defoe's *Crusoe* or from the margin to the center as it is with Coetzee's Susan.

1.1. THE ISLAND

The desert island is the physical space where the adventures of both Robinson Crusoe in Defoe's novel and Susan Barton in Coetzee's *Foe* take place. Yet, the island is represented in two different ways in these novels. While Defoe's novel depicts it as a colonial space from the imperial masculine perspective of Crusoe, Coetzee's *Foe*

describes it as a humble space from the marginalized female perspective of Susan. Juxtaposing the two accounts of the story of the island illustrates Henry Lefebvre's suggestion that "[social] space is a (social) product" (26), and points out to the fact that gender, geographical and racial marginality can be produced through the representations of space and the spatiality of human life.

In Defoe's novel, Crusoe transforms the island to satisfy his needs. After the shipwreck, he realizes the necessity to find ways of survival on the island. Thus, he starts to appropriate this deserted space that he describes as "more frightful than the sea" (Defoe 68) and transforms it from an "Island of Despair" (93) into a domesticated one. He encloses certain parts of land and builds a very strong fence to protect himself against any kind of danger which contributes to his psychological comfort as well. The fence which sets definite boundaries between the inside/the center and the outside/the margin serves as a miniature paradigm for the process of colonization. Later, Crusoe expands his center by means of establishing more enclosures and plantations to create more domesticated/cultivated areas. With each expansion, he encounters new experiences that makes him proud of his achievements in shaping his surroundings to create an approximation of European life on the island and proclaiming his authority over it as he states,

At the end of this march I came to an opening where the country seemed to descend to the west . . . and the country appeared so fresh, so green, so flourishing, everything being in a constant verdure or flourish of spring that it looked like a planted garden. I descended a little on the side of that delicious vale, surveying it with a secret kind of pleasure . . . to think that this was all my own; that I was king and lord of all this country indefensibly, and had a right of possession; and if I could convey it, I might have it in inheritance as completely as any lord of a manor in England. (120)

Accordingly, Crusoe's spatial appropriation of the island that reflects his socio-cultural paradigm makes him envision the island as a simulacrum of the British kingdom and himself as a king. Crusoe's employment of words like, "planted garden", "country" and "manor" that indicate a sense of order and cultivation and carry traces of familiar English topography shows his conceived dominant ideologies. He goes beyond the physical

boundaries of the island and establishes a social space that is defused with meanings and cultural values and reflects, defines and is defined by his ideological practices which he inherits from his homeland, England. In short, Crusoe incorporates what Henri Lefebvre calls the perceived and conceived spaces to create his lived colonial space. He perceives the physical space of the island, explores its environment physically and mediates his experiences in this perceived space through the expectations of the conceived one to inscribe his social and political ideologies on the island. As a result, the island becomes his lived space which reflects his British colonialist background.

Boundaries like the sea that separate spatial markers such as England and the island which carry symbolic meanings as the center and the periphery, consequently, have a psychological influence on Crusoe that is revealed in his state of liminality. Ratiani argues that “a liminal phase in its essence and function is a transitional, dynamic, intermediate condition, placed between hardened and transformed structures” (1). Thus, Crusoe’s crossing the boundary between his homeland and the desert island renders him in liminality and the island as a liminal space that provides a salvation for a shipwrecked person against the dangers of the sea, yet, constitutes a space of isolation and detachment due to its geographical nature as it is surrounded by the sea which is in itself threatening. Accordingly, the island as a liminal space provides Crusoe with new possibilities of identity transformation. At the end of his fourth year on the island, he reflects, “I gained a different knowledge from what I had before. I entertained different notions of things. I looked now upon the world as a thing remote, which I had nothing to do with, no expectations from, and, indeed, no desires about” (Defoe 146). Crusoe’s separation from his society, his isolation on a remote island and his struggle for survival shape his new identity as he contemplates, “[i]n the first place, I was removed from all the wickedness of the world here; I had neither the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, nor the pride of life. I had nothing to covet . . . I might call myself king or emperor over the whole country which I had possession of” (146). It seems that Crusoe is aware and proud of his mental and spiritual improvement as he refers to his sense of contentment that he has moved away from bodily desires. And also, he is pleased to be the “king or emperor” of the island. This spiritual advancement and personal satisfaction demonstrate the positive influence of the island on the development of his personality.

Moreover, Crusoe's island can be treated as a heterotopia in line with Foucault's discussion on space. As stated in the introduction, heterotopias have two functions: "Either their role is to create a space of illusion that exposes every real space, all the sites inside of which human life is partitioned Or else, on the contrary, their role is to create a space that is other, another real space, as perfect, as meticulous, as well arranged as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled" (Foucault, "Of Other Spaces" 27). As Foucault suggests, heterotopias can create a space that is perfectly structured to function as an ideal that makes other spaces seem to be chaotic and disordered when compared to it. For this purpose, Foucault gives the example of the first colonies of the 17th century where, according to Foucault's example of the rectangular-shaped village in "Of Other Spaces" (27), social space was constructed in relation to the church, cemetery and school, and people were governed by strict rules and regulations that these three institutions produced. In this sense, Defoe's representation of the island that Crusoe appropriates seems to serve as a model of a perfectly organized colonial space that, though fictionally real, reflects utopian qualities which may not exist in actual colonies such as the transformation of the uninhabited island into an organized, civilized space, the exploitation of its natural resources which brings about economic achievements and the ordered work force that reflects the advantages of colonization. Besides, these colonial representations manifest how Crusoe and his companions define and are defined by the social space of the island that they produce, a process that categorizes the inhabitants into two parts: superior and inferior, colonizer and colonized.

As for Coetzee's novel, the representation of Cruso's island shows a similar process of social production through appropriation but a completely different one. The social space of the island shapes Cruso's identity as much as he demarcates it. Cruso's personality and his social practices characterize and are characterized by the simple geographical divisions of the island which he makes. In contrast to Defoe's island, Coetzee's one lacks several elements such as, "cannibals" (Defoe 142), "wild beasts or savages" (89), that render it an atypical desert island. In *Shipwreck in Art and Literature*, Carl Thompson notices that "inherent in all renderings of shipwreck motif is a sense of danger, crisis and suffering" (6). Thus, the absence of any sense of threat in *Foe* encourages a free and unconfined way of living which is reflected in how he organizes his

environment to establish his own social space. Crusoe establishes a “kind of encampment” (Coetzee 8) made of sticks and reeds surrounded by “[a] fence with a gate that turned on leather hinges” (9) unlike the permanent house that is surrounded by a strong closed fence⁶ of Defoe’s Crusoe. He does not have any modern tools or furniture apart from a small bed. He manages a very simple life, liberated from any obligations or unnecessary responsibilities. He tells Susan, “[w]e sleep, we eat, we live” (32) and it seems that he is satisfied with his life on the island as it represents his world, his center that he does not wish to leave. Accordingly, the island does not constitute a liminal space for Coetzee’s Crusoe as it does for Defoe’s Crusoe. He does not wait for a ship to save and move him to another place because he seems to have no life except on this island which is affirmed by his death when he unwillingly leaves it.

In terms of authority, similar to Defoe’s Crusoe, Coetzee’s Crusoe has control over the island that is indicated in Susan’s language when she reflects, “[h]e is a truly kingly figure; he is the true king of his island” (37) as well as when she uses words like “his island” and “your island”⁷. Yet, when Susan asks him “whether there were laws on his island” (36), he asserts that the only purpose to make laws is to keep their desires under control when they “grow immoderate” (36), and when Susan tells him about her uncontrolled desire to leave the island, he informs her that “[her desire] does not concern the island. On the island there is no law except the law that we shall work for our bread” (36). Susan’s dissatisfaction with his response makes her think that “certain laws unknown to [them]” or “the promptings of [their] heart” (37) for the rules of civilization might be adjusting their life on the island⁸. In other words, while Crusoe obtains his laws and regulations only from the spatiality of the island, Susan believes that these laws and

⁶ Unlike the simple fence of Coetzee’s Crusoe which he makes merely to protect his plantation from the apes, the fence in Defoe’s novel is completely closed with no door or entrance that when Crusoe wants to enter, he uses “a short ladder to go over the top” (Defoe 82) and as soon as he becomes inside, he lifts it to be “completely fenced in and fortified” (82). It seems that Crusoe senses that, in addition to the animals, dangerous creatures such as the savages exist on the island.

⁷ Both words are repeated 17 times.

⁸ Susan wonders “what held Crusoe back from binding [her] hand and foot and tossing [her] from the cliffs into the sea? What had held Friday back all these years from beating in his master’s head with a stone while he slept, . . . And what held Crusoe back from tying Friday to a post every night, like a dog, . . . or from blinding him”. She thinks that “certain laws” govern their life and make them “at peace one with another” (Coetzee36-37).

regulations transcend the physical space of the island, they exist outside spatial definitions, essentially in the British culture.

Susan portrays the island in a radically different way that subverts and calls into question *Robinson Crusoe*'s colonial space. According to her narration, Coetzee's desert island is not the prosperous version of a desolate land as that of Defoe's Crusoe, but the hostile fruitless place that serves as a counter-site for the expectations of the readers of travelers' stories,

For readers reared on travellers' tales, the words desert isle may conjure up a place of soft sands and shady trees where brooks run to quench the castaway's thirst and ripe fruit falls into his hand, where no more is asked of him than to drowse the days away till a ship calls to fetch him home. But the island on which I was cast away was quite another place: a great rocky hill with a flat top, rising sharply from the sea on all sides except one, dotted with drab bushes that never flowered and never shed their leaves. (Coetzee 7)

Susan's description of Crusoe's island corresponds with Lefebvre's ideas of "spatial code" (Lefebvre 17). Lefebvre argues that "a spatial code is not simply a means of reading or interpreting space: rather it is a means of living in that space, of understanding it, and of producing it" (47-48). So, these codes that define space should be understood as a way of explaining space and as a way by which space is grasped, inhabited and created. People who are foreigners to a specific space should negotiate these spatial codes in order to comprehend that foreign space. Accordingly, in order for Susan to make the space of the island intelligible, she needs to draw upon her fundamental knowledge and experiences in relation to these spatial codes and interpret them according to her ethical and cultural background. That is why instead of directly describing the "great rocky hill" and the "drab bushes" which are unfamiliar to her, she tries to mediate it through her conceived knowledge about "travellers' tales", so, she contrasts what she sees with the "soft sands and shady trees" where the castaway enjoys his idleness until being saved by another ship.

Susan deconstructs the clichés about a desert island by using words like "rocky hill", "drab bushes" and "brown seaweed". In this case, Coetzee calls into question the reliability of the representation of the island and its constructedness which may reflect an ideological notion. Susan's representation of the island by what "it is not" may indicate

the resistance of the African landscape to be interpreted in western tales. The island, then, can be represented differently according to who describes it, his/her pre-existing conceptual framework, and consequently, it acquires a different spatial form that is constructed and reshaped in accordance with the characters who inhabit and participate in its social spatiality like Cruso(e) and Susan, and metaphorically like the readers who interpret its spatial codes according to their own background.

Susan considers the island as a kind of prison where she fluctuates between perceived and conceived spaces between how she experiences the dimensions of the physical space of the island and her mental image of such spaces. As a topographical space, the desert island creates a sense of isolation, exile, alienation and liminality as it lies far away from her home, England, and is enclosed by the sea. As a social space that is constructed by Cruso, the island marginalizes her because it is Cruso's "kingdom" (13) and she is his "second subject" (11). She possesses nothing on it save for "a hollow in the rocks where [she] could lie sheltered from the wind and gaze out to sea" (26), aspiring to be saved so that she can go back to England. Though, Susan admits, "[i]n time I grew to think of this as my private retreat, the one place reserved for me on an island owned by another" (26), she does not have a sense of belonging to the island as she describes that "private retreat" as "hollow", an empty, marginal space within Cruso's space. Susan uses this hole to escape Cruso's authority by looking outside the geographical boundaries of the island into the uncontrolled space of the sea, yet, it is only a transient, metaphorical escape that enables her to transcend Cruso's spatial domain as it does not become a lived space for her.

On the island, Cruso establishes, "his terraces" (Coetzee 15), another physical space which has its own signification. They "covered much of the hillside at the eastern end of the island, where they were best sheltered from the wind" (33). Projecting her perceived knowledge on the purpose behind building such terraces, Susan asks Cruso about the kind of plant he would ingrain. He answers, "[t]he planting is not for us" "We have nothing to plant "The planting is reserved for those who come after us and have the foresight to bring seed. I only clear the ground for them. Clearing ground and piling stones is little enough, but it is better than sitting in idleness" (33). Unlike Defoe's Crusoe who attempts to project the English culture on the island and transform it into a

lived space, Coetzee's *Cruso* has no past, no previously conceived space outside the physical space of the island and no aim to produce a lived space. Thus, he builds the terraces as a projection into the future. He prepares the land for possible future dwellers who have seeds to implant.

1.2. THE SEA

The sea can be viewed as a “counter-site” that resists domination due to its position between England/the center/inside and the island/margin/outside which makes it an indocile, other space. In Defoe's novel, the sea constitutes an essential part of Crusoe's life. Although his father provides him with an adequate life, he declares from the very beginning of the novel that he “would be satisfied with nothing but going to sea” (Defoe 27). Crusoe's stagnant life does not satisfy him and he has a strong desire to go to the sea despite his parent's warnings. After a year of hesitation, Crusoe decides to take the risk and goes on a voyage to London that marks the beginning of a radical change in his life. As the ship leaves the port, “the wind began to blow and the sea to rise in a most frightful manner; and, as I had never been at sea before, I was most inexpressibly sick in body and terrified in mind” (32). It seems that Crusoe's first encounter with the sea frightens him, makes him remember his father's advice and regrets his decision to “go to the sea” (27). He even promises himself that “if it would please God to spare my life in this one voyage, if ever I got once my foot upon dry land again, I would go directly home to my father, and never set it into a ship again while I lived” (33). However, when the sea becomes calm, Crusoe enjoys a very beautiful day with his companions and admits that he “entirely forgot the vows and promises that I made in my distress” (34). After a few days, the ship faces a more dangerous storm that it starts to sink gradually after Crusoe and his friends are rescued. Despite these terribly perilous accidents and the captain's strict warning that Crusoe “ought never to go to sea anymore” (41), he cannot resist the temptation of the sea and insists on going on another voyage, this time to Africa. As this voyage makes him “both a sailor and a merchant” (43), he decides to go again to Africa in search of more profits. Unfortunately, this time his ship is captured by a Turkish pirate ship and Crusoe becomes a slave. Yet, he manages to escape slavery and go back to the sea in a small boat. Crusoe does not give up his desire to be at sea as he considers all these events “but a taste

of the misery [he] was to go through” (45). Crusoe’s final voyage faces “a hurricane” (65), his ship sinks and he becomes a castaway on a desert island.

Accordingly, the sea is directly connected with Crusoe. On the one hand, it changes Crusoe’s life dramatically as it is linked with his destiny. For Crusoe, the sea promises adventure and opportunity that tempts him to leave his family and lose a secure career in law to encounter a new life that starts at sea and ends in being a castaway on a desert island for twenty-eight years. On the other hand, the description of Crusoe’s indecisiveness about going to the sea, his frequent regrets parallel the unstable, ever-changing nature of water which keeps flowing.

Contrary to Defoe’s novel in which the sea plays a positive role in Crusoe’s life as well as in his narrative as it marks the beginning of his journey towards a new life, the sea in Coetzee’s novel has a negative impact on Cruso as it initiates the termination of his life. While they are at sea going to England, Susan comments on his deteriorated health condition,

On the island I believe Cruso might yet have shaken off the fever, as he had done so often before. For though not a young man, he was vigorous. But now he was dying of woe, the extremest woe. With every passing day he was conveyed farther from the kingdom he pined for, to which he would never find his way again. He was a prisoner, and I, despite myself, his gaoler. (43)

So, the sea is the space where Cruso loses his freedom as it makes him exchange roles with Susan and become a “prisoner” under her command. The sea is also the space where he is deprived of his authority, both as “the true king” (Coetzee 27) of the island because he is seriously sick and as the possible narrator of its story because he dies on the ship which grants Susan the opportunity to be the only possible narrator since Friday is mute.

Unlike Defoe’s Crusoe whose dreams of going to the sea when he is on land and his experiences at it prove to be almost identical as the sea helps him fulfill his dreams, Susan’s vision of the sea while she is on the island and her experience when she is at sea are completely different. Foucault argues that heterotopias can, in some cases, “create a space of illusion that exposes every real space” (Foucault, “Of Other Spaces” 26). In this sense, the uncontrollable nature of the sea renders it a heterotopia of “illusion” (26) for Susan in which she aspires to be liberated from domination. While she sits in her own

private place or walks along the shore, Susan spends long hours looking at the sea. It provides her with a space that has no fixed definition. It represents neither the center where she is marginalized as a female in a patriarchal society nor the periphery where she is Crusoe's second subject. It is where she may acquire her own self-definition, her freedom away from being the controlled other as is the case when she is on the island or in Britain. However, when they start their voyage, Susan is "known as Mrs Crusoe to all on board" because the captain recommends that she should claim the role of Crusoe's wife "to make [her] path easier both on board" (Coetzee 42) and in Britain. Accordingly, the sea that promises a temporary space of salvation for Susan while she is on the island, appears to be a mere illusion as she cannot acquire her independence away from the dominance of a male figure.

The heterotopic nature of the sea offers a comfort zone for Friday as it serves as an enacted utopia where all the authorial figures in the novel who used to control him are dead. In the last part of the novel, the sea where the wrecked ship, "the home of Friday" (157), lies, constitutes a space that harbors potentials for resistance in order to create other possibilities of being. The sea as heterotopia reconstructs its domain in a different spatial order that allows Friday's voice to be heard. The "slow stream" (157) that issued from his mouth in the last part of the novel surpasses the other authorial voices like Susan and De(foe) who are absent/dead at this stage and the unknown narrator who cannot stop the flow of Friday's stream as "it beats against [his] eyelids, against the skin of [his] face" (157). Friday's "slow stream" spreads throughout the sea and the land and "runs northward and southward to the ends of the earth" (157) to transfer the suffering of all the oppressed people.

1.3. THE SHORE

The shore is another physical space which can be considered as heterotopia. It is a liminal space between the land and the sea that resists strict definition. It can designate the end of a journey and the beginning of another. It can be an entrance into isolation or an outlet into freedom depending on each character's experience.

To start with Defoe's Crusoe, his experience with this physical space expresses the heterotopic nature of the shore. When he encounters "a ragging wave" (Defoe 68) near

the island, his boat turns upside down and he sinks into the water. Fortunately, that wave takes him “a vast way on towards the shore, and having spent itself, went back, and left [him] upon the land almost dry” (68). Crusoe immediately decides to run “towards the land as fast as [he] could before another wave should return and take [him] up again” (68) but it seems impossible to avoid a second strong wave, so, he swims towards the shore. As Crusoe expects, the wave comes again and carries him “with a mighty force and swiftness towards the shore” (68). The recurrent uprush and backwash of waves make Crusoe fluctuate between life and death, until the last wave dashes him “against a piece of rock, and that with such force, that it left [him] senseless, and indeed helpless” (69). Crusoe’s detailed description of his experience on the shore reflects the complex spatial characteristics of this physical space between safe land and dangerous sea, the space that embraces as well as rejects him and the entrance into a new life and the outlet to fatality. Accordingly, the shore represents a place in between. Crusoe, upon reaching the shore, cannot feel complete security. He states, “my greatest concern now being that the sea, as it would carry me a great way towards the shore when it came on, might not carry me back again with it when it gave back towards the sea” (68). For Crusoe, the shore is a liminal space where he is neither on land nor in the sea, neither inside nor outside; that is why it defies definition.

Unlike Defoe’s Crusoe, the shore for Coetzee’s Cruso does not constitute a liminal space. It represents the limit of his authority and the boundary of his social space which he never wishes to cross. This can be evident in Cruso’s refusal to leave his island. When one day a ship comes to the island to save them, Cruso is sick and nearly unable to connect with anybody. Yet, as soon as he realizes that the seamen are taking him to the ship, he struggles very hard to return to the island, but the men deliver him by force (39) and he dies on the ship. So, crossing the shore marks Cruso’s journey toward death and the end of his role in the novel.

As for Susan, in the beginning, the shore represents a chance of rescue, it characterizes her embarkment “to the New World” (26). After a long terrible journey at sea, she finally finds herself “carried by the waves” (5) to a desert island where she feels safe from the perilous sea just like Defoe’s Crusoe. Later, this place becomes Susan’s refuge where she “took to walking the shoreline every day, as far in either direction as

[she] could” (26). She keeps looking at the horizon in search of a sail. Susan aspires to cross this line again but in the opposite direction, towards her homeland, England.

The shore is also the physical space where Lefebvre’s concept of “spatial codes” are manifested. When Susan steps on the shore she first encounters Friday whom she describes as “[a] dark shadow”, “a Negro with a head of fuzzy wool, naked save for a pair of rough drawers” (5-6). So, being on a desert island with a Negro makes Susan think that she has “come to an island of cannibals” that when he touches her, she imagines that “[h]e is trying [her] flesh” (6). Accordingly, Susan’s first impression on the shore is the product of her socially constructed point of view about African people and lands, which reflects her racial prejudice and shows how she conceptualizes the shore under the influence of western ideology.

The other instance where Susan imposes her own knowledge on foreign “spatial codes” occurs also within the space of the shore. While she is exploring the island, Friday appears from among the rocks, launches his tree trunk upon the water and straddles it. Then “he reached into a bag that hung about his neck and brought out handfuls of white flakes which he began to scatter over the water” (31). Susan, first, thinks that he is fishing and that he is presenting some “white petals and buds from the brambles” as “an offering to the gods of the waves to cause the fish to run plentifully, or performing some other superstitious observance” (31). Initially, Susan admits that she “had given to Friday’s life as little thought as [she] would have a dog” (32) or any other animal due to his silence and his strange personality, but “[t]his casting of petals was the first sign [she] had that a spirit or soul . . . stirred beneath that dull and unpleasing exterior” (32). On the one hand, as Susan cannot understand Friday, she is obliged to produce an interpretation that is shaped by her culture. Despite the fact that, this space is defined primarily by Friday’s activity which cannot be understood except by Friday and his people, it is Susan who eventually defines it through her narration. On the other hand, Susan’s analysis elevates Friday from the animalistic identity that she initially perceives in him into more of a human as she imposes her own spatial definition upon his “ritual”. Comparing Susan’s two impressions can manifest the role of this cross line in these two instances. In the first one, Susan comes from the sea, she has not entered the island yet, thus, her impression is not affected by this

physical space, while in the second one, it seems that she changes her ideas, to some extent, as she enters the island and encounters its spatiality.

1.4. THE SHIPWRECK

The shipwreck is another transitional space that is most obviously embodied in what Foucault identifies as heterotopia, he elaborates on the spatial characteristics of a ship, saying:

[T]he boat is a floating piece of space, a place without a place, that exists by itself, that is closed in on itself and at the same time is given over to the infinity of the sea and that, from port to port, from tack to tack, from brothel to brothel, it goes as far as the colonies in search of the most precious treasures they conceal in their gardens The ship is the heterotopia par excellence. In civilizations without boats, dreams dry up, espionage takes the place of adventure, and the police take the place of pirate. (Foucault, "Of Other Spaces" 27)

Foucault uses the metaphor of the ship to refer to a space which has no definite place, yet, it combines all the contradictory aspects of heterotopia that connect it to all other spaces. For example, people on a ship are enclosed within its physical boundaries but they are outside the confinements of the conventional norms, because on a ship, people, to some extent, experience a kind of liberty from the spatiality of their homeland. According to Foucault, since the ship moves between different heterotopias such as colonies, gardens and brothels it becomes a vessel for imagination as it reflects on these unsettling spaces. It is the same vehicle that carries the utopian vision of the colonizer and the dystopian sight of the colonized.

In terms of space, heterotopia exists as a counter-site that characterizes, challenges and reverses all other traditional sites. It "presents a juxtapositional, relational space, a site that represents incompatible spaces and reveals paradoxes" (Sudradjat 29). In this sense, Friday's home, the shipwreck, brings together characters who belong to different authorial spaces⁹ in one place. Yet, the characters who are supposed to have authority over Friday, who have tried to colonize him and his history directly, such as Susan, and indirectly like

⁹ Susan who is supposed to be the author/narrator of the story of the island, and the unknown reader/narrator of *Foe* occupy this space.

Foe, are dead, while Friday is the only living person who has the ability of authorizing his story. Such narration upsets the binary opposition of the colonizer/colonized, marginalizes, silences the oppressor, and gives way to Friday to move to the center as the only hypothetical voice in this space where change and transformation take place, where the marginalized move towards the center.

So, with the death of those authorial figures, the shipwreck becomes a transitional heterotopia which, according to Foucault, constitutes the real places that work as counter-sites that represent, challenge and reverse all the other sites. In this respect, Friday's home may mirror the utopian dream of freedom from the colonizers. It is also "a place where bodies are their own Signs" (Coetzee 175), which offers other possibilities of expression for those people who are deprived of their voices like Friday who resists colonization through his silence.

In terms of language, as Foucault states in the preface of *The Order of Things*, the transitional nature of heterotopia has the ability to scatter language and disturb signification. As stated in the introduction, it "desiccate[s] speech, stop[s] words in their tracks" (Foucault xix). So, heterotopias, in this conception, function not only as physical spaces but also as textual spaces that demolish "syntax", "grammar" (xix) and consequently the order of language. As such, heterotopias provide a counter-site of meaning as they challenge the possibility of a single interpretation which acts as a "common locus" (xix) for the text.

Hence as heterotopia, the shipwreck "is not a place of words. Each syllable, as it comes out, is cut and filled with water and diffused" (Coetzee 157). The shipwreck, then, is a transitory space where all forms of representation are destabilized, faltered and floundered helplessly to deal with the unspeakable silence of Friday. As a counter-site, the shipwreck frustrates, counteracts and disturbs the order of names and connotations as it disrupts the authority of Susan and De(foe) and offers a space for the silent Friday to exchange roles with them as the only living witness to the whole story. It "is a place where bodies are their own signs" (Coetzee 157), where neither speech nor writing can survive. This state of disturbance which casts language into a space of transition can be revealed in the unknown narrator's attempt to convey Friday's history. He pushes "a fingernail

across [Friday's] teeth, trying to find a way in" (157), seeking to get words out of his mouth. The narrator reports,

His mouth opens. From inside him comes a slow stream, without breath, without interruption. It flows up through his body and out upon me; it passes through the cabin, through the wreck; washing the cliffs and shores of the island, it runs northward and southward to the ends of the earth. Soft and cold, dark and unending, it beats against my eyelids, against the skin of my face. (157)

It seems that Friday releases "a slow stream" that is neither spoken nor written. Friday refuses to communicate his history through the language of the oppressor and chooses to use his own way of silent representation which renders his history a mystery in speech as much as it is in writing. It is presented as *différance* that is neither present as it is "empty" of meaning and "waiting" to be revealed nor absent because it constitutes a "hole in the narrative" (121). According to Jane Tompkins,

Différance expresses the possibility of differentiation, the possibility of opposition, and so it doesn't belong to any realm that could be named as such. Why not? Because as soon as you want to assign it to a realm, say of the sensible or the intelligible, or of any two pairs, you have abrogated what Différance itself is, that which makes any such opposition come into being. Différance is something that cannot ever actually be given a name because as soon as you name it, you have unnamed it. (741)

Friday's silence functions as a space that offers the possibility of various stories which Susan suggests and the awareness of ever deferring meaning. Yet, Friday's resistance or inability to speak and write renders him a sign that escapes signification and continues to exist as delayed presence that is open to various interpretations.

1.5. FOE'S HOUSE

After she returns to England, Susan writes her story to Mr. Foe, the fictional author, in order to recast it in narrative form. Realizing the danger of being marginalized by the famous male author, she feels the need to assert her position as the narrator/writer of the story. So, she starts her struggle against the domination of Foe by invading his house, first, mentally and later physically.

On the 20th of April, Susan writes a letter to Foe to thank him for the money he sends her and to ask him whether she can be his “close servant” (Coetzee 49). She writes,

‘I climb the staircase (it is a tall house, tall and airy, with many flights of stairs) and tap at the door. You are sitting at a table with your back to me, a rug over your knees, your feet in pantoufles, gazing out over the fields, thinking, stroking your chin with your pen, waiting for me to set down the tray and withdraw. . . . ‘The room is barely furnished. The truth is, it is not a room but a part of the attic to which you remove yourself for the sake of silence. The table and chair stand on a platform of boards before the window (49)

Susan releases her imagination to visualize an intelligible, extremely evocative account of Foe’s writing space which gives the impression that she is now working as a servant in his house and that she is depicting his private space where he distances himself in a silent place to write “[t]he story of Cruso’s island” (50) along with other stories “most of them . . . riddle with lies” (50), but later in the novel, it appears that all her depictions are mere illusions of a place that she has never seen. On the 29th of May, when Susan moves to Foe’s empty house with Friday, she writes to Foe, “[i]t is not wholly I imagined it would be. What I thought would be your writing-table is not a table but a bureau The chest is not a true chest but a dispatch box. Nevertheless, it is all close enough. Does it surprise you as much as it does me, this correspondence between things as they are and the pictures we have of them in our minds?” (65). On the one hand, her imaginative description of the house resembles, to a great extent, the fictionally real house of Foe which corresponds to Lefebvre’s concept of “social codes”. Susan’s imagination concerning a writer’s place indicates her socio-spatial conceptions. And on the other hand, this letter may reveal her strong desire to invade his house, “climb” the ladder of authority and occupy his writing space as she imagines it to be the perfect space of a famous writer. In this sense, Susan is in a state of liminality in which she aspires to shift from the margin to the center as a woman writer, replace Foe and become the author of her story by usurping his space.

In Foe’s absence, Susan uses his table, pen and papers to write and she even keeps her writing in his dispatch box thinking that she eventually can assert her space as a writer. Yet, her physical presence in his space designates a metaphorical absence because, as she admits, “we have taken up residence in your house, from which I now write. . . . When

you return we will vanish like ghosts, without complaint” (64). So, her occupation of his space does not release her from liminality, as soon as he returns, she will disappear as a “ghost”. Susan wonders, “[h]ow much of my life consists in waiting! In Bahia I did little but wait On the island I waited all the time for rescue. Here I wait for you to appear, or for the book to be written that will set me free” (66). Though Susan inhabits the space of an author, she is still unable to authorize her story but depends on Foe to write it to her as she admits, “I seem to exist only as the one who came, the one who witnessed, the one who longed to be gone: a being without substance, a ghost beside the true body of Cruso” (51). Susan realizes that invading Foe’s house and using his possessions do not grant her independence to be the author of her writings because all that she uses belong to Foe and she does not try to turn his house into the lived space of her own. Thus, it is only through the male author that she can be released from her liminal state and regain her substantiality.

Susan’s situation can be scrutinized through the lens of Virginia Woolf’s essay, “A Room of One’s Own”, in which she highlights the absence of women’s voice in literature as, while wandering in the British Library, she observes that women are silenced in literary works as they are in society. The comparison that Woolf makes between William Shakespeare and his fictional “gifted sister, called Judith” (Woolf 39), points out Susan’s dilemma of marginalization. Judith could not go to school though she is as talented as her brother but being a female in a patriarchal society forces her to assume the traditional role assigned for women at that time which she refuses. As a result, and in order to escape her father’s insistence to marry and become a housewife, Judith runs away at the age of seventeen. Ultimately, she “killed herself one winter’s night” (Woolf 40) as she cannot survive alone. Similarly, Susan tries hard to be “a free woman who asserts her freedom by telling her story according to her own desire” (Coetzee 131) but the boundaries that the society imposes on her hinder her from becoming the author of her story. Susan acknowledges her limitations as she writes to Foe,

‘To tell the truth in all its substance you must have quiet, and a comfortable chair away from all distraction, and a window to stare through; and then the knack of seeing waves when there are fields before your eyes, and of feeling the tropic sun

when it is cold; and at your fingertips the words with which to capture the vision before it fades. I have none of these, while you have all'. (51-52)

Susan realizes that without possessing her own private place and appropriating the place for her own needs, she cannot have a voice in literature.

1.6. FOE'S REFUGE

Foe's refuge is another physical space that influences both Susan and Foe and exhibits Friday's resistance to communication. It marks Foe's first physical presence in the novel as well as his confinement as it is the place where he escapes from the bailiffs. So, Foe's absent presence because of his escape from authorities empowers Susan and provides a kind of equality which produces a metaphorical shift in both characters' position; the author/center is marginalized as a refuge and the one that seeks authority moves towards the center. This displacement is manifested through Susan's many brave discussions with Foe, her sexual encounter with him and her refusal to be appropriated in his story of her according to his desire which I will explain in the second chapter.

During Susan's attempt to teach Friday writing and reading and while they are in Foe's house, Susan comes to speak with Foe thinking that he is at his writing table but she grasps that "the man seated at the table was not Foe. It was Friday, with Foe's robes on his back and Foe's wig, filthy as a bird's nest, on his head. On his hand, poised over Foe's papers, he held a quill with a drop of black ink glistening at its tip" (151). It seems that Friday's occupation of Foe's authorial space, with Foe's clothes and wig on, is an attempt to proclaim authority. Moreover, the letter (o) that he draws on paper is a foreshadowing of the unknown narrator's dive into the water through the "hole" that "gives entry" (156) to the shipwreck where he starts his journey into "the home of Friday" (157) to narrate *Foe*.

1.7. THE DISPATCH BOX

The "dispatch box with brass hinges and clasp" (155) that the unknown narrator sees near the table in (De)foe's house seems to be the same one that Susan found long time ago when she occupied the house. In the second part of the novel, Susan admits that when her "sheets are completed they go into [Foe's] chest" (65), which appears to be a

dispatch box. So, it is another heterotopia in the sense that it destabilizes the relationship between time and place. The narrator opens it to find the decayed scripts of Susan's story, reads only the opening of it and then starts his own narrative. This dispatch box retains the past in the present as it reveals the records of past events, Susan's story, in the present narrative, *Foe*, which indicates continuity and discontinuity. It also belongs to the female writer but exists in the male author's house which challenges the realism and reliability of Defoe's story. The dispatch box bears the fifth principle of heterotopia suggested by Foucault, the quality of being enclosed but accessible. The dispatch box with a "clasp" has an opening and closing system that makes it private and at the same time penetrable. It belongs to De(foe) where Susan's story is kept from the public, yet, it is penetrated by the unknown narrator to be publicly known through *Foe*.

The concept of space as a social product and its ideological dimension are the basis of the discussion in this chapter in which I have explained that space constitutes an essential element for the comprehension of any social experience because, as Lefebvre argues, it is socially produced. In this respect, the thesis has underlined the differences in the representation of some of the physical spaces in Coetzee's *Foe* with respect to their counterparts in Defoe's novel in order to examine issues of colonization, authority, gender and racial marginality. In addition, in this chapter, the heterotopic qualities of these physical spaces, their interrelationship with each other and their impact on the characters have been discussed.

CHAPTER II

TEXTUAL SPACES

A literary text can be treated as a space on which allusions to many sources come together and create intertextuality, that produces a multilayered structure, a palimpsest¹⁰. Accordingly, Coetzee's *Foe* is a palimpsest on Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Susan Barton's story which, in turn, is a fictional creation of *Foe*. Since the process of rewriting involves the utilization of former text/s, Coetzee's *Foe* employs intertextuality as a narratorial technique to rewrite and reconceptualize the binarism associated with Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* such as colonizer/colonized, male/female, author/narrator as well as author/reader in a new textual space.

The more the reader becomes aware of the gaps and indeterminacies in the text or/and its intertext/s, the more s/he is able to compare, contrast, expect certain events to happen and even question the reasons behind the unfulfilled anticipated ones. Tisha Turk explains that “[w]hen we read a novel whose intertext we know, our expectations are activated, completed, reversed, or frustrated not only by the narrative and discursive events within the novel we are currently reading but also by events within the intertext and by points of congruence and difference between the texts” (297). Thus, a reader who reads Coetzee's *Foe* before Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* or *Roxana*¹¹ may still find it

¹⁰ A palimpsest is defined in the *OED2* as “A parchment or other writing-material written upon twice, the original writing having been erased or rubbed out to make place for the second; a manuscript in which a later writing is written over an effaced earlier writing”. This word is also used by Gerard Genette in his book *Palimpsests* in which he introduced the term hypertextuality to set the basis for the discussion of palimpsests.

¹¹ Unlike the intertextual connections between *Foe* and *Robinson Crusoe* which are explicit through the names of “Cruso(e)” and “Friday”, certain places, such as the island and the sea, and some events like the writing of an adventure, allusions to *Roxana* are implicit and obscure: The name Susan appears to be the real name of Roxana but it is mentioned only once and late in Defoe's novel. Other resemblances appear in the third part of *Foe* when Susan Barton's supposed daughter comes to claim that her father was a “brewer” who “haunts gaming-houses and loses his last penny” and abandons his wife and daughter. She also claims that her mother had “a maidservant named Amy or Emmy” (Coetzee 76). These allegations of the daughter correspond to certain events in *Roxana*, such as her marriage to “an eminent brewer” (*Roxana* 47) who loses his business and leaves his family with financial problems and she does have a servant with the name Amy.

interesting, but s/he will have a completely different perception of the novel from that when reading it with the knowledge of its intertext/s. Hence, intertextuality opens up an extra space for interpretation.

Texts created through rewriting involve explicit or implicit repetition of the source text and yet they are different from the source. María Jesús Martínez Alfaro claims that intertextuality invites the reader to treat “texts not as self-contained systems but as differential and historical, as traces and tracings of otherness, since they are shaped by the repetition and transformation of other textual structures” (268). The differences and transformations in these repetitions defer the meaning and suggest diverse interpretations of both texts. So, employing elements from *Robinson Crusoe* and modifying them can implicitly blur the binarism between signifier and signified, presence and absence, center and periphery, colonizer and colonized, oppressor and oppressed, and speech and writing by offering an in-between space that encompasses the possibility of meanings in these texts.

The title of the novel introduces the first clue of intertextuality. On the one hand, the word “foe” suggests a kind of opposition; the text may contradict with Defoe’s novel as it tries to undermine all the dichotomies, mentioned above, that exist in *Robinson Crusoe*. It borrows certain names and events from Defoe’s novel, modifies them and presents them in a different manner to create a space in which the meaning of a concept can be grasped through its divergent counterparts. The word “foe” can also refer to the implied struggle between Susan Barton and Defoe’s Crusoe; the female who invades his masculine author-ity of physical as well as narratorial space, the island and its story respectively, or it may indicate the controversy between Susan and the writer Foe that is reflected in her insistence on fathering her story. And on the other hand, it refers to the author of *Robinson Crusoe*, Daniel Defoe¹². The play with the author’s name evokes a paradoxical relationship between the two novels regarding originality; Coetzee’s *Foe* (1986) is supposed to be the rewriting of Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), yet, extracting Defoe’s original name indicates a retrospect that challenges the primacy of *Robinson Crusoe*. However, this paradox destabilizes the possibility of ultimate meaning as it blurs

In addition, Roxana’s daughter pursues her mother as Susan Barton does. Yet, the focus of this discussion will be only on *Robinson Crusoe* as it is the primary intertext in the novel.

¹² According to Homer Brown, Daniel Foe changed his name to Daniel Defoe in the 1690s (308).

both texts' authenticity by demonstrating that any of these texts can be the rewriting of another.

In the same manner, Defoe's author-ity is problematized as Coetzee introduces him as a real author within the fictional text of *Foe*, but his author function is restricted within a frame; "[a]t one corner of the house, above head-height, a plaque is bolted to the wall. *Daniel Defoe, Author*" (Coetzee 155). Moreover, the frame is at the "corner" of the house which doubles the invisibility of Defoe's author-ity and asserts the limits of (De)foe's authorial space within the novel. In his "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Science", Jacques Derrida explains,

[S]tructure-or rather the structurality of structure—although it has always been involved, has always been neutralized or reduced, and this by a process of giving it a center or referring it to a point of presence, a fixed origin. The function of this center was not only to orient; balance, and organize the structure—one cannot in fact conceive of an unorganized structure—but above all to make sure that the organizing principle of the structure would limit what we might call the freeplay of the structure. No doubt that by orienting and organizing the coherence of the system, the center of a structure permits the freeplay of its elements inside the total form. (278)

Being decentralized, (De)foe is inside the novel but also outside the authorial domain; his function as an author/origin is transformed into a character who has no actual authorial role. His ineffectual author-ity appears in the non-linear, inconclusive narrative of *Foe* that challenges the conventional plot structure which Foe suggests when constructing Susan's story: "We therefore have five parts in all: the loss of the daughter; the quest for the daughter in Brazil; abandonment of the quest, and the adventure of the island; assumption of the quest by the daughter; and reunion of the daughter with her mother. It is thus that we make up a book: loss, then quest, then recovery; beginning, then middle, then end" (Coetzee 117). Yet, it seems that Coetzee's *Foe* does not follow Foe's suggestion of how to "make up a book" and plays with the realistic style of Defoe's novel; it avoids a chronological order and starts with "[a]t last" (5), a word that indicates finality, but marks the opening of *Foe*, the beginning of Susan Barton's experience on the island and the end of the novel which is the beginning of the unknown narrator's story. With

respect to Derrida's idea of decentralization, *Foe* speaks of no beginning/no end because the opening of the novel, that suggests terminus with "at last", is repeated three times throughout the novel by different narrators, in dissimilar situations and for distinct narratees. These recurrences complicate the possibility of having an ultimate meaning because they render the beginning and the end of the novel obscure: Chronologically the first, literally the second use of "at last", is when Susan justifies her existence on the island for Cruso, stating, "[t]hen at last I could row no further. My hands were raw, my back was burned, my body ached. With a sigh, making barely a splash, I slipped overboard and began to swim towards your island" (11). The second on the chronological level, the first on the literal, marks the first line of the novel when Susan writes her story of the island and sends it to Foe "to put in a dash of colour" (40), and the third on both levels is in the last part of the novel by the unknown narrator.

Though the first two repetitions are written by Susan, they are slightly different due to their dissimilar addressees; in her speech with Cruso, Susan uses simple words and a direct style to justify being on "his island" (11) while when she addresses Foe, her style seems to be more figurative to befit the opening of a novel: she changes some of her words and uses similes to describe her state when she first reaches the island such as, "my long hair floating about me, like a flower of the sea, like an anemone, like a jellyfish of the kind you see in the waters of Brazil" (5). So, her attempt to appropriate her style to impress a hypothetical reader and her decision to choose a suitable title for her story, "The Female Castaway. Being a True Account of a Year Spent on a Desert Island. With Many Strange Circumstances Never Hitherto Related" (67) suggest that her story is the original source of *Robinson Crusoe* and give the impression that (De)foe excluded Susan as a character/narrator and changed certain elements on purpose. This impression is manifested in Susan's letter to Foe:

I write my letters, I seal them, I drop them in the box. One day when we are departed you will tip them out and glance through them. "Better had there been only Cruso and Friday," you will murmur to yourself: "Better without the woman." Yet where would you be without the woman? Would Cruso have come to you of his own accord? Could you have made up Cruso and Friday and the island

with its fleas and apes and lizards? I think not. Many strengths you have, but invention is not one of them.' (72)

Susan's expectation of Foe's reaction towards her letters foreshadows the events of the last part of the novel when the unknown narrator finds her letters enclosed in a dispatch box in Defoe's house and states, "[t]he yellowed topmost leaf crumbles in a neat half-moon under my thumb" (155). The existence of the shabby scripts of Susan's story inside a dispatch box near "*Daniel Defoe*['s]" (155) table in his house, the death of Cruso without meeting Defoe or having a record of the story of the island in addition to the muteness of Friday create a fictive chronology in which these scripts can constitute the invisible source of information for Defoe in his writing of *Robinson Crusoe*. As such, Hoegberg thinks that "[a]lthough more recent, Coetzee's novel creates the illusion of being first, of being a set of source materials out of which Defoe's work later emerged" (86-87). Accordingly, her story and letters that Coetzee presents in single quotations in the first and second part of the novel can be another intext that problematizes the originality of *Robinson Crusoe* and subverts its substantiality by presenting *Robinson Crusoe* as a rewriting of Susan's story which, in turn, occupies part of the textual space *Foe*.

Realizing the difficulty of being the female author of the story of the island, Susan is determined to write her story under (De)foe's author/ity. Yet, her presence in his physical space while he hides from the police increases her self-confidence as discussed previously. Susan starts to negotiate her right in the writing process of her story. She refuses (De)foe's suggestions to change/add some parts claiming that "[a]ll of which makes up a story I do not choose to tell. . . . I choose rather to tell of the island, of myself and Cruso and Friday and what we three did there: for I am a free woman who asserts her freedom by telling her story according to her own desire" (131). By deciding what to include and/or exclude, she attempts to restrict (De)foe's role as an author and affirms her authority on the content of her story.

Depicting the unknown narrator's experience inside the house of "*Daniel Defoe*" (155) in the last part of *Foe* reinforces the deconstructive nature of the text as he/she reads the third and last repetition of the story of the island; "Dear Mr Foe, At last I could row no further" (155) and establishes the narration of *Foe*. This neutral voice, with unspecified gender who seems to come across both intertexts, *Robinson Crusoe* and

Susan's letters, offers a third version of the same story in which the novel challenges the originality of a text. This means that the unknown narrator, who does not belong to either intertext, creates a new textual space in which s/he can combine and change certain parts of both texts and at the same time supply what is missing in them.

All three terminuses that indicate openings rupture the traditional structure of writing, postpone the meaning, undermine a closed system of interpretation and allow an open-ended play of signification/supplementation. The unknown narrator/reader encompasses the dichotomies of both intertexts within a new fictional space that "has the effect of showing the original relationship to be constructed and produces an alternative reading of the text" (Deodato 78). By this repetition with difference, Coetzee does not omit Defoe, the man/center/author of *Robinson Crusoe*, completely from the novel, neither does he present Susan, the woman/marginalized/writer, as the author of the story of the island, but he introduces an in-between textual space that repeats, questions and builds on the similarities and differences of both intertexts. This deconstructive process does not aim to substitute one meaning with the other but to illustrate the possibility of transcending the binary hierarchal logic and the reciprocal dependence of both poles.

The repetition of the names of certain characters such as, Crusoe and Friday displays traces of *Robinson Crusoe* in *Foe*, but, intertextual references are introduced with alterations, whether on the orthographical level or in the sense of personality. Using the same name by deleting (e) that is only apparent in the written form, introduces a "différance" that alters, delays and subverts the heroic image of the famous Crusoe/hero of *Robinson Crusoe*. This "mute irony, the inaudible but displaced character of this literal permutation" (Derrida, "Différance" 131) suggested by Derrida in his coined word explains how Coetzee's Cruso is different from Defoe's character.

To start with, Defoe's Crusoe is depicted as a castaway who has the potential to prevail over any difficulties; his initial feeling of regret and desolation when he finds himself alone on "The Island of Despair" (Defoe 93) does not last long. He states, "[a]fter I had solaced my mind with the comfortable part of my condition, I began to look round me, to see what kind of place I was in, and what was next to be done" (70), because he thinks, "[i]t was in vain to sit still and wish for what was not to be had; and this extremity roused [his] application" (73). Thus, he decides to overcome his feeling of

anxiety and adapts to his new situation. As stated in the previous chapter, Crusoe works tirelessly to shape his surroundings in order to preserve an approximation of European life on the deserted island. For example, he fortifies his yard, establishes another shelter for his hunting campaigns and learns some beneficial skills, such as farming, fishing and making furniture. According to Elizabeth Kraft, Crusoe is “a symbol of self-sufficiency and survival in solitary and strange situations” (37). He never surrenders and is able to reshape his life to cope with his new circumstances. Most importantly, keeping an account of the days and recording his story, seems to be his essential concern to the extent that he starts to keep a journal of his “every day’s employment” (Defoe 91) as soon as he furnishes his place with basic necessities. The journal that recounts his past as well as his present life on the island with exact dates and detailed events grants his narration reliability and renders him the author of his story, especially with Defoe’s declaration on the title page that he is a mere editor of Crusoe’s real account of his story.

Coetzee’s Cruso is not like the invincible protagonist of Defoe’s novel, but he is an apathetic old man who has no interest in developing his surroundings and “shows none of the practical ingenuity or the spiritual intensity” (Attridge 175) that characterizes Defoe’s Crusoe. As explained in the first chapter, this Cruso lives a very simple life. He makes a shelter “of poles and reeds” (Coetzee 9) with a narrow bed and no other furniture. He seems to be satisfied with his primitive life and has no desire to civilize his place that when Susan suggests diving to bring some tools from the wrecked ship in order to make their life easier, he tells her that they do not need more than a shelter and food which they already have.

Foe’s Cruso is depicted as a worn-out man who has lost even his awareness of time as Susan notices that he “kept no journal, perhaps because he lacked paper and ink, but more likely, . . . because he lacked the inclination to keep one, or, if he ever possessed the inclination, had lost it” (16). She could not even find any indication “that he counted the years of his banishment or the cycles of the moon” (16). It seems that the deletion of (e) in Cruso is a metaphorical castration that aims at questioning the change in the role of a character. Coetzee’s Cruso represents the opposite of what Defoe’s Crusoe stands for, of the optimistic, rational innovative colonizer, creator of his myth and the self-confident narrator/author of his story. In her letters to Foe, Susan writes,

I would gladly now recount to you the history of this singular Cruso, as I heard it from his own lips. But the stories he told me were so various, and so hard to reconcile one with another . . . and he no longer knew for sure what was truth, what fancy. Thus one day he would say his father had been a wealthy merchant whose counting-house he had quit in search of adventure. But the next day he would tell me he had been a poor lad of no family who had shipped as a cabin-boy and been captured by the Moors . . . and escaped and made his way to the New World. (11-12)

Susan's attempt to tell what is supposed to be the real history of Coetzee's Cruso seems to be unreliable. As soon as she starts to report what Cruso himself has told her, she refers to his old age, isolation and sickness which make him unable to distinguish between "truth" and "fancy". Cruso's contradictory stories arouse uncertainty that makes Susan admit, "in the end I did not know what was truth, what was lies, and what was mere rambling" (12). Moreover, Susan recounts Cruso's story after she returns to England by way of her memory which further suggests unreliability and adds more uncertainty to the story as she acknowledges, "[f]or surely, with every day that passes, our memories grow less certain, as even a statue in marble is worn away by rain, till at last we can no longer tell what shape the sculptor's hand gave it" (17). So, unlike Defoe's Crusoe, Coetzee's Cruso can neither narrate his past with certainty nor can he be the author of his present as he keeps no diary which renders Susan the only person who can tell his story within hers. This palimpsest, one story built on a previous one, allows many interpretations among textual spaces.

Susan's comments concerning what Cruso should have brought from the wreck¹³, her requests to fashion some equipment and her realization that Cruso has no journal invite the reader to recall the intertext, *Robinson Crusoe*, as it includes certain events that are directly connected with Coetzee's novel. This comparison process of the two Cruso(e)s accumulates in Susan's ironic contemplation on Cruso's temperament,

¹³ In her contemplation on Cruso's primitive way of living, Susan thinks that he would have lived a more comfortable life if he had brought some "carpenter's tools, and some spikes and bars and suchlike" (Coetzee 16) from the shipwreck. Moreover, she supposes that he might be able to construct a boat to leave the island.

Let it not by any means come to pass that Crusoe is saved, I reflected to myself; for the world expects stories from its adventurers, better stories than tallies of how many stones they moved in fifteen years, and from where, and to where; Crusoe rescued will be a deep disappointment to the world; the idea of a Crusoe on his island is a better thing than the true Crusoe tight-lipped and sullen in an alien England. (34-35)

It seems that Coetzee's Crusoe is a rewriting of Defoe's, "the idea of Crusoe", with alteration to challenge the image of an English colonizer, Crusoe, and his author-ity over his island, the physical space, as well as over his story, the textual space. Consequently, the pun with Crusoe's name deconstructs the myth of the European colonizer/hero by transforming his central position as the protagonist/narrator/author to a peripheral one that exists only in one part of *Foe* to create a new space for a postcolonial insight.

Apart from Crusoe, another major similarity between the two texts is Friday. Though the name is identical in both *Robinson Crusoe* and *Foe*, the differences between the two Fridays are manifested in their physical appearances as well as their means of communication. These dissimilarities mark the roles of both Fridays and indirectly influence the perception of both Crusoe's functions. In *Robinson Crusoe*, Friday is portrayed as a good-looking Carib, "handsome fellow, perfectly well made, with straight, strong limbs, not too large; tall, and well-shaped" (Defoe 222). Crusoe gives him the name Friday "which was the day [he] saved his life", teaches him some English words and instructs him to say "Master" (232) when addressing Crusoe. Friday shows a remarkable ability to adjust to change; he gives up devouring other human beings as soon as Crusoe rescues him from the savages and is converted to Christianity. It seems that the kind of relationship between Crusoe and Friday points out the duality between the colonizer/Crusoe and the colonized/Friday.

When Crusoe first encounters Friday in the accident of the cannibals, he admits, "[i]t came very warmly upon my thoughts, and indeed irresistibly, that now was the time to get me a servant, and, perhaps, a companion or assistant; and that I was plainly called by Providence to save this poor creature's life" (220). This quote indicates that he does not care about saving "poor" Friday as much as he desires to have a slave. Defoe's Friday stands for the savages who are colonized by the so-called civilized, Crusoe. After Crusoe

saves Friday's life, he tames him first by force and later by imposing his own cultural values. The first instance of Crusoe's subjugation of Friday is when Crusoe kills a goat which frightens Friday to the extent that he hurries to kneel to Crusoe praying not to kill him (229). Crusoe claims, "the astonishment this [accident] created in him was such as could not wear off for a long time; and I believe, if I would have let him, he would have worshipped me and my gun" (229). Crusoe's comment on Friday's reaction points out two important aspects: The first confirms the construction of a god-like image of Crusoe in the eyes of Friday who is ignorant enough to worship a person merely because he saved him, the second fact is that this show of power on the part of Crusoe accentuates the probable severity of the dominant figure of Crusoe that makes Friday dare not disobey any order or rebel against him realizing that Crusoe can kill him as he has killed the goat. Friday's blind obedience paves the way for Crusoe to erase Friday's culture. On the one hand, Crusoe criticizes Friday's own language and forces him to speak English, and on the other hand, he convinces him to become "a good Christian" (237) because for him Friday's religion is "a cheat" (234). Crusoe's colonial strategy enables him to conquer Friday which qualifies him to be the dutiful "servant" and "companion or assistance" (220). He represents the "ideal other" who exhibits "subjection, servitude and submission" (223) to his master. Friday's willing acceptance of Crusoe's domination is manifested through his speech with Crusoe; as he expresses his gratitude and loyalty to his master,¹⁴ which further indicates Crusoe's colonial position.

In *Foe*, the representation of Friday is completely different. Unlike Defoe's Friday who has "all the sweetness and softness of a European in his countenance" (222), in Coetzee's novel he becomes a "Negro with a head of fuzzy wool", thick lips and "dark grey" (Coetzee 5-6) complexion which marks a shift in geography from a Caribbean to an African, which, in turn, shifts his distinctive history. While Defoe's novel highlights the efforts and achievements of the Anglo-Christian colonizer, Crusoe, in cultivating the savage Friday, Coetzee's one underlines motifs of black identity.

¹⁴ Friday's loyalty and feelings of thankfulness can be seen in his speech when he states, "you teach wild mans be good, sober, tame mans; you tell them know God, pray God, and live new life" (242) and "[m]e die when you bid die, master" (248).

Like Coetzee's *Cruso*, Friday ostensibly seems to be the negative inversion of Defoe's *Friday*. Introducing him as a dumb character deprives him of his voice and his ability to defend himself against any endeavor to construct his story and makes him vulnerable to be "re-shaped day by day in conformity with the desires of others" (121). Ayobami Kehinde argues that "[t]he text seeks to uncover the silence and oppression at the heart of Defoe's classic novel in order to identify the power of anti-colonial as well as colonial discourse" (118) by means of sketching Friday as an emblem of the "other" that Edward Said describes as Oriental,

Along with all other peoples variously designated as backward, degenerate, uncivilized, and retarded, the Orientals were viewed in a framework constructed out of biological determinism and moral-political admonishment. The Oriental was linked thus to elements in Western society (delinquents, the insane, women, the poor) having in common an identity best described as lamentably alien. Orientals were rarely seen or looked at; they were seen through, analyzed not as citizens, or even people, but as problems to be solved or confined or – as the colonial powers openly coveted their territory – taken over. (Said 427)

In this sense, Coetzee's Friday can represent the black people who have been silenced, oppressed and marginalized. Yet, implicitly, his mutilation and the fact that he does not adopt the language of the colonizer renders his story "a puzzle or hole in the narrative" (Coetzee 121) that no character/narrator in the novel is able to solve. Hence, in this textual space, unlike *Robinson Crusoe*, Friday evades all interpretation.

Contrary to Defoe's *Friday* whose story on the island is narrated by *Crusoe*, in Coetzee's novel, Friday is presented as an ambiguous silent figure with an unanswered question concerning his story/history. When Susan wonders whether Friday is "incapable of speech" (22), *Crusoe* claims that Friday "has no tongue" (23) and he offers Susan to look into Friday's mouth, but Susan cannot figure out anything "save the glint of teeth white as ivory" as "[i]t is too dark" (22). This darkness proposes different indications. On the one hand, it can be a metaphor for the "darkness and silence" (60) which the African people are doomed to endure as Derek Attridge claims, "Friday's tonguelessness is the sign of his oppression; it is also the sign of the silence, the absolute otherness, by which he appears to his oppressors, and by which their oppression is sustained" (183). Or it may

indicate the deed of cutting Friday's tongue. When Susan asks Cruso who cut it, he does not provide a reliable answer but mere hypotheses¹⁵ which makes Susan suspect that Cruso, who believes that there is "no need of a great stock of words" (Coetzee 21) on the island, might have cut Friday's tongue. This assumption is one of the mysteries that Susan lists to Friday as she admits, "[y]our master says the slavers cut [your tongue] out; but I have never heard of such a practice, nor did I ever meet a slave in Brazil who was dumb. Is the truth that your master cut it out himself and blamed the slavers? If so it was truly an unnatural crime" (84). On the other hand, darkness in Friday's mouth may also suggest an ambiguity concerning Friday's relation to language. In her article entitled "To Speak or Not to Speak: An Encounter with J. M. Coetzee's *Foe*", Laura Tansley suggests, "[i]f Friday has a tongue but chooses not to use it, his mastery over himself is made greater. He is outside of discourse and so is unmisrepresentable. He has chosen to be untranslatable, which is very different to simply being untranslatable" (4). Thus, it might be Friday's choice to keep silent and to show no response. It might be a kind of silent outcry against the obliteration of his identity. And this ambiguity and gap in the textual space need to be interpreted and filled by Susan and the unknown narrator/reader which they cannot do as they do not have enough evidence.

Cruso's unreliable account of Friday's story and Friday's muteness constitute another deferral that causes a constant shift in the interpretation of Friday's story and consequently in the history of all the victims of race who have been depicted through the colonizer's language of authority to support their colonizing benefits. He is not the silent other like Defoe's Friday; he resists through his silence and refuses to be reconstructed in another identity which is not his. Thus, "it cannot be assumed that Friday merely lacks the physical capability of speech and indeed, human communication, but that he uses his silence as insubordination to protect the only thing that he has: his (hi)story before Cruso and Susan Barton reached the island, or more bluntly, before colonization" (Mullins 9). This silence, thus, can be interpreted as a positive resistance that prevents the others from

¹⁵ Cruso states that "Perhaps the slavers, who are Moors, hold the tongue to be a delicacy," . . . "Or perhaps they grew weary of listening to Friday's wails of grief, that went on day and night. Perhaps they wanted to prevent him from ever telling his story: who he was, where his home lay, how it came about that he was taken. Perhaps they cut out the tongue of every cannibal they took, as a punishment. How will we ever know the truth?" (Coetzee 23).

making him/his people part of the colonial system and reconstructing his/their identity as they wish.

Susan realizes the importance of telling Friday's story. She admits that to "be silent on Friday's tongue is no better than offering a book for sale with pages in it quietly left empty. Yet the only tongue that can tell Friday's secret is the tongue he has lost" (67). So, she decides to bring him into her narrative space by any possible means as she tells Foe that "many stories can be told of Friday's tongue, but the true story is buried within Friday, who is mute. The true story will not be heard till by art we have found a means of giving voice to Friday" (118). Susan refuses to construct an alternative justification of Friday's "true" (hi)story as she believes herself to write "a True Account of a Year Spent on a Desert Island" (67).

Susan's first attempt is to show Friday two sketches that may stir "some recollections of the truth" (68) and to read the reaction in his gaze. The first drawing displays "the figure of a man clad in jerkin and drawers and a conical hat Kneeling before him was the figure of a black man, naked save for drawers In his left hand the whiskered figure gripped the living tongue of the other; in his right hand he held up a knife" (68). The second one depicts "little Friday, his arms stretched behind him, his mouth wide open; but now the man with the knife was a slave-trader, a tall black man clad in a burnous, and the knife was sickle-shaped. Behind this Moor waved the palm-trees of Africa" (69). It seems that neither of these sketches triggers any reminiscence as "Friday's gaze remained vacant" (69) which makes Susan suspect the truthfulness of the pictures. She begins to think of all the possible interpretations which these representations may evoke with respect to customs and cultural values as she admits that her "stories seem always to have more applications than [she] intend[s]" (81). Susan's unsuccessful attempt to stimulate Friday's memory concerning the fact about his tongue is similar to her previous attempt to interpret his ritual on the shore, but this time in an overturned process. Instead of imposing her modes of representation on the "spatial codes" of the shore to interpret Friday's behavior, she uses them to decipher these codes in some drawings that reflect her own presuppositions about Friday's mystery. Yet, as Friday does not share Susan's "spatial codes", he seems unable to understand neither the drawings nor the purpose behind them as he does not respond. Besides, Friday's lack of reaction portrays

him as an absent presence; he has no voice but a present body within the textual space of the novel, he is neither present/inside the narrative nor absent/outside it. Yet, Friday uses his body as a counter-site of resistance which illustrates its heterotopic quality. He resists interpretation, refuses to be expressed by others and rejects the acquisition of a new identity which renders him a signifier that can only be interpreted by another signifier but without a signified. Friday occupies a liminal position that is manifested in his attempt to use Foe's physical space of writing that is discussed in the previous chapter.

Susan's second endeavor to bring Friday into the narrative is suggested by Foe. He advises her to teach Friday to write which arouses a philosophical discussion between them concerning the power of speech and writing. Susan's question to Foe reflects her phonocentric/logocentric point of view, "[h]ow can he write if he cannot speak? Letters are the mirror of words. Even when we seem to write in silence, our writing is the manifest of a speech spoken within ourselves or to ourselves" (142). Susan's privilege of speech over writing and the coherence of thoughts and speech echo the oral quality of the novel that is revealed by her previous question, the repetitive use of the verb "tell", as in "let me tell you" (9) and "I tell myself" (60), in addition to the employment of single quotations within the frame of her letters.

Contrary to Susan's phonocentric opinion, Foe appears to promote the power of writing as he claims, "[w]riting is not doomed to be the shadow of speech" and that "there are times when the words form themselves on the paper *de novo*, as the Romans used to say, out of the deepest of inner silences" (142-143). Foe's speech demonstrates his inclination to overturn the hierarchy of speech over writing as he goes further to claim that "[s]peech is but a means through which the word may be uttered, it is not the word itself" (143). He emphasizes that the written word, the mark on the page, is the means to access the spoken one. Both Susan and Foe's assumptions are logocentric as they privilege one concept over the other in the novel, but Susan's story cannot be a commodity unless it is written, and Foe's writing cannot be achieved without Susan's narration and both need to solve Friday's dilemma to achieve their ends which in its turn challenge the validity of their opinions.

Susan is frustrated to realize that all her efforts to teach Friday to write are futile. Friday's only sketches are "rows and rows of the letter *o* tightly packed together" (152).

Yet, “the letter *o*” in the textual space is suggestive and may connote various interpretations. For example, Spivak argues that (De)foe’s expectation that Friday’s ability to write the letter “*o*” “is a beginning” (152) and that he will learn the letter “*a*” in his next lesson is unsound, and the “the *o* could conceivably be *omega*, the end” (Spivak 15) that marks the uselessness of Susan’s efforts to teach him writing. Radhika Jones proposes that it may indicate “a self-portrait, the representation of his open, soundless mouth” (59). Other critics like Derek Attwell and Richard Begam try to decipher his sketches and relate them to various arguments, yet, such attempts appear to be misdirected as Friday’s role in the novel designates a kind of fictive resistance to textual space.

However, as discussed earlier, since Friday’s silence may constitute a positive resistance against interpretation, the (o) might be considered a sign, a figure not necessarily a letter, within the narrative that may refer to Friday’s position in the novel rather than signifying his story. Accordingly, the (o) may indicate a hole or a void which marks Friday’s voicelessness in the narrative.

Susan’s unsuccessful efforts to articulate Friday by any means of communication marks his silence as heterotopia. As discussed in the introduction, for Foucault heterotopias have a disruptive and transitional effect on language. I think Friday’s silence can be a space in Foucault’s sense, as it undermines language and representation and disturbs the textual space. Friday’s silence can be scrutinized in terms of Foucault’s idea of the mirror that produces a space where the utopian and the real are juxtaposed. His silence can be utopian in the sense that it may provide a space for possible meanings, a space that solves the “puzzle” (Coetzee 121) of Friday’s story. Yet, it is not utopian because it can be located in the textual space of the novel as a real site, “a hole in the narrative” (121) that obstructs this possibility of meaning. In addition, as a kind of resistance to Susan and Foe’s authority over his story, Friday’s silence, in terms of language, suggests a kind of rejection of the authority of the text as well.

In addition to the repetitions with differences that intertextuality provides, there are additions to *Robinson Crusoe*. In *Foe*, Coetzee’s insertion of Susan Barton as a protagonist/narrator of the story of the island, “enacts her erasure from the novel [*Robinson Crusoe*] to show how women are deprived of their rights and also to question the authenticity of Defoe’s text by suggesting that Susan was the true storyteller and Defoe

. . . has (mis)used her tale” (Merabadi and Pirnajmuddin 30). In this sense, Susan’s story is a kind of supplement that destabilizes certain issues of repression in *Robinson Crusoe* and an exclusion that Defoe eliminates to fit the spirit of the eighteenth-century patriarchal society. Thus, introducing Susan as a castaway in some parts of *Foe* constitutes a radical departure from *Robinson Crusoe* that authorizes a female to take up a space in the novel and transforms the story of the island from an adventure story of a castaway male hero into a story that is mainly about “a woman who, while searching for her daughter, encounters a master and slave on an island and, when returning to England, tries to convince an author named Daniel Foe to tell her story” (Turk 298). This deviation disturbs and calls into question certain issues such as gender, colonization, authority and authorship. In his article “Resurrecting ‘Her-Story’ from Robinsonnade ‘(Hi)story’: Coetzee’s *Foe* and (De)Foe’s ‘Making’ of *Robinson Crusoe*”, Jyotirmoy Sil argues that “Coetzee’s *Foe* reveals how the hegemonic patriarchal power-structure works in subordinating a woman, or in terms of Kate Millett, the ‘sexual politics’ worked in silencing a woman’s voice that deserved to be present in an adventure novel, namely *Robinson Crusoe*” (102). Accordingly, *Foe* suggests the possibility of an alternative plot for *Robinson Crusoe* that is erased by (De)foe and that can only be realized in Susan’s account of the story of the island. As such, Coetzee creates a space for authorial struggle between Susan and Cruso(e) as narrators on the one hand, and Susan and (De)foe as authors on the other hand.

Coetzee empowers Susan by making her the only source of information for the story of the island and in this way enables the marginalized to metaphorically inhabit a central space. Thus, the margin for Susan is rather a space of resistance and creativity in which various binary oppositions are questioned and rewritten to produce new ways of interpretation. Susan’s struggle with Cruso starts as soon as she enters Cruso’s spatiality. Ironically enough, Cruso, from the beginning, underlines the differences between a man and a woman even from the point of view of animals. He warns her “not to venture from his castle; for the apes, . . . would not be as wary of a woman as they were of him and Friday” (15) which makes her wonder at the ability of apes to distinguish between genders. He orders her to obey his rules as long as she lives with him, but she is not submissive. Susan’s resistance to Cruso’s spatial authority is manifested on two levels: The first is

physical, when she makes a pair of shoes to wander out of Cruso's domestic enclosure that marks a metaphorical challenge to his patriarchal control. She states, "if he thought by angry looks to inspire me to fear and slavish obedience, he soon found he was mistaken. "I am on your island, Mr Cruso, not by choice but by ill luck", I replied, standing up (and I was nearly as tall as he). 'I am a castaway, not a prisoner'" (20). By this speech, she tries to proclaim her freedom, demands equality with her oppressor and declares her protest to subjugation. The second level is textual, when she substitutes Cruso's role as a narrator/protagonist, turns from an absent witness/participant of the story of the island into a present protagonist/narrator of the same story and demands authority over the story she writes.

Listening attentively to Susan's story, Captain Smith, the person who saves them from the island, advises her to set it down in writing and present it to booksellers. So, as soon as Susan returns to England, she writes it and sends it in letters to (De)foe who is supposed to make artistic revisions without changing the events that she records. As a woman writer in a patriarchal society, Susan's position is similar to her position on Cruso's island where she resists being marginalized by male domination. Her struggle with (De)foe is revealed mainly in two ways: The first is manifested by Susan's desire to occupy his physical space and her actual residence in that space which is explained in the first chapter. And the second way is through the several theoretical discussions concerning whose story she should tell and how she should construct it logically. (De)foe recommends using a certain chronological pattern and a logical framework in writing, as it is the case in *Robinson Crusoe*. Moreover, he attempts to transform the story from a woman's exile's story on an island into a story that revolves around a mother and her lost daughter. In other words, De(foe) seems to be convinced that stories of castaways and adventurers belong only to men as Captain Smith once reflects, "[t]here has never before, to my knowledge, been a female castaway of our nation. It will cause a great stir" (40) and he tries to convince her to follow his advice. But Susan rejects, saying "[t]he story I desire to be known by is the story of the island. You call it an episode, but I call it a story in its own right. It commences with my being cast away there and concludes with the death of Cruso and the return of Friday and myself to England, full of new hope" (121). Susan's rejection is seen in the inconclusive narrative structure which starts with Susan's arrival on the

island then Crusoe's death and later their return to England. She also refuses to add events like "inventing cannibals and pirates" "because they were not the truth" (121). In her rejection, Susan claims the right to be the author of her story, in a sense, to replace Crusoe, the male author/father/ origin/center, as she suggests, "[i]t is still in my power to guide and amend. Above all, to withhold. By such means do I still endeavour to be father to my story" (123). Her authorial voice can be evident in the quotation marks that encase her narration of the island which, though encloses her narration in a limited textual space, emphasizes the fact that these words belong to Susan and set her in an equal position to that of Defoe's Crusoe. However, Susan's desire to "father" her story is problematic because it reflects the power of a male writer. It could indicate that she is aware of the obstacles which hinder female writers to authorize their stories and that only fathers can become the originators of stories which make her disregard her gender in her attempt to move towards the center. Nevertheless, *Foe* does not allow her to be the prominent author of the novel by introducing the unknown narrator in the text.

As Susan realizes the impossibility of substituting a patriarchal author, she makes a final attempt to retain her place in the novel as the muse of the male author who, as Susan tells, "is a woman, a goddess, who visits poets in the night and begets stories upon them" (Coetzee 126) in order to make their dry pens write stories. Yet, Susan rejects the role of a mother, she desires to reverse the conventional muse figure as she reflects,

When I wrote my memoir for you, and saw how like the island it was, under my pen, dull and vacant and without life, I wished that there were such a being as a man-Muse, a youthful god who visited authoresses in the night and made their pens flow. But now I know better. The Muse is both goddess and begetter. I was intended not to be the mother of my story, but to beget it. (126)

This quote displays Susan's anxiety about being a female author. It can be understood in terms of Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's discussion about woman writers trying to find place in male writing. They claim that "a woman writer . . . seems to be anomalous, indefinable, alienated, a freakish outsider" (48) who "does experience her gender as a painful obstacle, or even a debilitating inadequacy" (50). Thus, Susan struggles to control her story both as a muse and as a begetter; a source of inspiration and an author who has full control over the story. However, it is traditionally conceived in patriarchal societies

that “the text’s author is a father, a progenitor, a procreator, an aesthetic patriarch whose pen is an instrument of generative power like his penis” (Gilbert and Gubar 6). So, the ability to write mirrors the male power which deprives women of being authors due to their lack of a phallus.

Unable to accomplish her desire to be the author of her text, Susan manipulates De(foe) sexually. She explains, “So I coaxed him till he lay beneath me. Then I drew off my shift and straddled him (which he did not seem easy with, in a woman). ‘This is the manner of the Muse when she visits her poets,’ I whispered, and felt some of the listlessness go out of my limbs” (Coetzee 139). Susan wants to make (De)foe metaphorically in the place of a mother and herself of that of a “begetter” who, as she tells (De)foe, ““must do whatever lies in her power to father her offspring”” (140). Susan’s expectation to win her case against (De)foe goes even further that she says, ““I think of you as a mistress, or even, if I dare speak the word, as a wife”” (152). Despite her persistent struggle against Cruso and De(foe), from the very beginning of the novel, Susan realizes her limits as a female in a patriarchal society. She admits being Cruso’s subject on the island and acknowledges her inability to publish her story without the help of De(foe). Thus, she attempts to assume the role of the male in their sexual encounter thinking that writing is connected with the power of the pen(is) and as she “straddled him”, she can at least “father” her ideas. But (De)foe appears to be aware of his power because he replies, “[b]efore you declare yourself too freely, Susan, wait to see what fruit I bear” (152). (De)foe seems to refer to the text of *Robinson Crusoe* in which he effaces Susan’s role altogether and retains his space as a patriarchal author. This situation of (De)foe could be explained by Ronald Barthes’s discussion about the author in “From Work to Text”. He argues, “[t]he author is reputed to be the father and the owner of his work; literary science thus teaches us to respect the manuscript and the author’s declared intentions, and society postulates a legality of the author’s relation to his work The Text, on the other hand, is read without the Father’s inscription” (61).

To challenge the male center/oppressor/author over the female marginalized/oppressed, *Foe* presents an alternative view of who should tell the story of the island. As a result, neither (De)foe who is metaphorically enclosed on “a plaque” on the wall nor Susan who constitutes an absence in *Robinson Crusoe* has absolute authority

over the story of the island. *Foe* creates a textual space for both of them to have voice in the text: (De)foe through his famous *Robinson Crusoe* as an intertext and Susan through enclosing her story in quotation marks to assert her authorship of the story of the island as another intertext in *Foe*.

Moreover, the unknown narrator's voice in the final section erases any voice that claims absolute authority over the text, whether (De)foe the fictional/real author of *Robinson Crusoe* or Susan the fictional author of her story, by announcing their death. In a similar way, Barthes in "The Death of the Author" wonders about who speaks in Balzac's *Sarrasine*. He gives several answers none of which is certain,

Is it the hero of the story bent on remaining ignorant of the castrato hidden beneath the woman? Is it Balzac the individual, furnished by his personal experience with a philosophy of Woman? Is it Balzac the author professing 'literary' ideas on femininity? Is it universal wisdom? Romantic psychology? We shall never know, for the good reason that writing is the destruction of every voice, of every point of origin. (142)

Barthes concludes that no one can decide "who is speaking" (142) because as soon as the text is written it expresses itself in language which is a referential medium and the author at this point has no authority over it. In a similar manner, the final part of *Foe* destroys any voice of an author as both De(foe) and Susan who struggle for the authority of the story of the island are absent/dead. In line with Barthes's claim that "writing is the destruction of every voice, of every point of origin. Writing is that neutral, composite, oblique space where our subject slips away, the negative· where all identity is lost, starting with the very identity of the body writing" (142), the death of De(foe) and Susan marks "the birth of the reader" (148). So, the unknown narrator in this part narrates his transformation from a reader into a "scriptor" who "is born simultaneously with the text, is in no way equipped with a being preceding or exceeding the writing, is not the subject with the book as predicate; there is no other time than that of the enunciation and every text is eternally written *here and now*" (145). This suggests that the novel is narrated in retrospect as the scriptor is born in this part, "*here and now*", and he starts the novel with these words, "bringing the candle nearer, I read the first words of the tall, looping script:

“Dear Mr Foe, At last I could row no further” (Coetzee 155). So, reading Susan’s scripts indicates the birth of the scriptor and the death of any absolute author.

In short, Coetzee employs intertextuality as a narratorial strategy to create a palimpsest which retains traces of the canonical novel, *Robinson Crusoe*, but with difference to write a new version of the same story of a cast away on a desert island. This rewriting process of *Foe* involves, at the same time, a prior undertaking of rereading, questioning and reevaluating in order to put under scrutiny certain assumptions of a well-known canonical novel, *Robinson Crusoe*, comprehend some of the hidden ideologies embedded in it and inspect the text’s various complications. The textual space created through rewriting questions the issue of authority and authorship: the impact of the obliteration of (e) from Crusoe’s name which undermines the image of the colonial hero; the complexities of Friday’s voicelessness which brings to the fore the issue of the construction of the other; introducing the female narrator, Susan, as the only source of information and a substitute for Crusoe. All these textual changes destabilize the primacy and credibility of the intertext. Besides, the non-linear narrative style of *Foe* with an open ending novel withstands a closed system of interpretation.

CONCLUSION

John Maxwell Coetzee's novel, *Foe*, is a rewriting of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* in which Coetzee presents a different account of the famous story of a castaway on a desert island that destabilizes canonical authority and exploits the tension between colonizer and colonized, center and periphery, author and narrator and author and reader. This thesis discusses how the analysis of physical and textual space in the novel produces a counter-site that escapes an ultimate closure and provides the possibility of infinite interpretations.

In the first chapter, I have tried to identify, explore, and discuss the importance of certain physical spaces in *Foe* and *Robinson Crusoe*, their interconnectedness with each other, their influence on the characters who inhabit them and how those inhabitants effectively or ineffectively interact with these spaces in order to produce their social space. The representations of the physical spaces in both novels reflect two different points of view: one is from the perspective of the heroic colonial figure, Defoe's Crusoe, and the other is from the viewpoint of the marginalized female, Coetzee's Susan. Inspecting these radical differences, which I have explained in detail, unsettles Defoe's depiction of spatial adaptation and identity transformation, and, thus, challenges the colonial space of Defoe's Crusoe and highlights its discursively constructed nature.

Some of these physical spaces render its inhabitants in a state of liminality depending on their psychological encounter with them. For example, the island and the shore for Defoe's Crusoe and Coetzee's Susan represent a transition space where both characters feel caught and waiting to be rescued. It is not the case for Coetzee's Crusoe who willingly lives on the island which represents his freedom and does not aspire to cross its shore as it delineates his social space. Other spaces serve as heterotopias that though real, hold utopian characteristics. The sea can be heterotopia of illusion for Susan and of compensation for Friday, a space that is "other", where the oppressed can maintain other possibilities of being. The ship and the dispatch box are also heterotopic sites in the sense that, despite constituting a distinctive entity, they can combine contrasting elements. For

example, the ship in both novels carries colonizer and colonized and moves between centers and margins. The dispatch box keeps the old letters of the female writer to be exposed in the present space of the male author.

Moreover, heterotopic nature of some of the physical spaces are important in the narration of the story as well. For example, the sea in Defoe's novel plays an important role in the developments of the events as going to this physical space constitutes Crusoe's most important desire and the novel's main means to establish his adventure on the island. In addition, Crusoe's encounter with such a liminal space that resembles his unpredictable nature in its ups and downs and his ability to adjust himself to his environment renders him in a liminal position that helps to shape a great deal of his identity and contributes to his maturation. The heterotopic nature of the ship can also affect the textual space of *Foe* as it provides a counter-site where the possibility of various meanings thrives, as in the case with Friday who finds his freedom at sea where no authorial figure can oppress him.

The chapter studies the social construction of these spaces in terms of Lefebvre's spatial triad: the perceived, the conceived and the lived spaces. The characters explore their environment through their senses first, and project their distinct modes of representation on the spatial codes around them to construct their lived space differently. For example, Defoe's Crusoe, experiences his new lived space, the island, effectively as he appropriates his perceived space according to his conceived British background to create his own social space. Unlike Crusoe, Cruso and Susan in *Foe* do not try to transform the island into a lived space; they merely try to comprehend the unfamiliar spatial codes that they encounter through their conceived spaces and come up with a reasonable interpretation that enables them to be part of that social space.

The movement between physical spaces contributes to the metaphorical shift between two polarities. The journey of Defoe's Crusoe exhibits a symbolic journey from the center to the margin where he builds up his lived space and back to the center through which he fulfills his economic dream, develops his personal traits and returns as a heroic figure who symbolizes the typical British colonizer. While Susan's transformation from the margin/island to the center/England and her residence in Foe's two houses do not help her achieve her aim and gain her independence as a female writer as she does not own any of these spaces nor does she appropriate them for her own needs. Hence, the analysis of

physical spaces in Coetzee's *Foe* and its intertext displays *Robinson Crusoe*'s colonial aims unlike Susan Barton.

In the second chapter, I have explored how Coetzee interweaves intertextuality and metafiction to produce a textual space that involves the reader to step into. Intertextuality constitutes an essential narratorial strategy in creating an alternative account of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, and the discussion of the process of the fictive composition of the story of the island between Foe and Susan render textual space of *Foe* a self-reflexive counter-site. As a result, this counter-site produces a fictional chronology which undermines not only a famous canonical text, but also the conventional figure of the author/father in addition to certain characters and elements in *Robinson Crusoe*. Starting from the title, with its literal and referential meanings that blur both texts' authenticity, *Foe* decentralizes De(foe) to inscribe absence and indeterminacy on the figure of the author and portrays him as a symbol of authorial manipulation for his erasing Susan's account of the story and silencing Friday in order to write his "myth of the male pioneering spirit" (Head 115). Besides, introducing Susan, the female castaway/witness/narrator, in *Foe* to substitute Defoe's Crusoe challenges Crusoe's and Defoe's authority.

The repetition of the beginning of the story of the island as narrated by Susan in the textual space of *Foe* for three times defers and differs its meaning and makes it escape final resolution. Moreover, the unknown narrator's repetition of the same/different beginning in the last part of the novel emphasizes the deconstructive nature of *Foe* by exemplifying the same strategy of repetition with difference that Coetzee utilizes in rewriting *Robinson Crusoe*. By this, the role of the unknown narrator in *Foe* echoes the role of the reader who, has read or heard about *Robinson Crusoe*, reads *Foe* to construct his own interpretation of the novel away from any authorial authority.

The thesis has also depicted that absence, gaps and silence in *Foe* create a textual space where various meanings can be found as Foe argues, "[i]n every story there is a silence, some sight concealed, some words unspoken" (Coetzee 141). Hence, the novel does not aim at reassigning agency to the oppressed and marginalized. It neither fills the gaps in the canonical text nor vocalizes the voiceless but provides an in-between space for other possibilities of interpretation by incorporating Susan's voice with Defoe's traces as intertexts in the textual space of the novel to highlight the differences in both intertexts.

Exploring the concept of space in Coetzee's *Foe* could contribute to further studies on Coetzee's works and their connection with social spatiality and power relations.



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