The Absent Voice:
The Politics of Representation in the Canon and Responsive Texts

by
Kelly Jo Fulkerson

Departmental Honors Thesis
The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
Department of English

Project Director: Dr. Gregory O'Dea
Examination Date: March 30, 2006

Committee Members
Dr. Jennifer Beech
Dr. John Phillips
Dr. Chris Stuart

Examining Committee Signatures

____
Project Director

____
Department Examiner

____
Department Examiner

____
Liaison, Department Honors Committee

____
Chairperson, University Departmental Honors Committee

Abstract

Contemporary novelists appear to be increasingly interested in both examining the genre of the novel in relation to canonical texts, and also in studying the implications of narrative offered by these canonical novels. In their responsive texts, contemporary novelists raise questions concerning the politics of representation, or who gets to give voice to a story. These novelists may, for example, ask whether an author is the codifier of an idea, rather than its creator. The contemporary novelist may also explore how an author has a narrative right to give voice to a character, a history or even a nation. My departmental honors project dissects these questions, among others, by examining canonical texts and the way that these texts have been re-interpreted and reconstructed by modern novels. The first pairing I examine is Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and the responsive text *Foe*, by J.M. Coetzee, which acts to give new dimensions to the narrative authority of Daniel Defoe. The second pairing is Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* and Peter Carey's *Jack Maggs*. Using these four texts, I examine the ways in which the modern author has capitalized upon key plot elements of the canonical novel in order to develop a critical dialogue with these canonical authors. This criticism acts not simply to allow for a deeper reading of a pre-existing text, but rather demands the reader to ask larger questions of the society from which these texts were created. This critical process allows for the contemporary novelist to create alternate readings of the canonical texts, or to create meta-narratives, which point to absences or silences within those texts and thus investigate the processes of authorship.

Table of Contents

By Way of an Introduction ……………………………………………………………...5

I. Seeing: Recognition and Misrecognition…………………………...6

II. Writing: Centric and Ex-Centric…………………………………...8

Robinson Crusoe* and *Foe………………………………………………………...10

III. The Post-Colonial Subject and the Post-Modern Novel

Great Expectations* and *Jack Maggs……………………………………………….29

IV. Cartography, Criminology, and the Nation

Conclusion……………………………………………………………………......48

Works Cited……………………………………………………………………51

“*they do not read, they are there to be read, and if they are properly read, they create their own literature.*”

-Derek Walcott, “The Antilles: Fragments of Epic Memories”

By Way of an Introduction

Contemporary novelists appear increasingly interested both in examining the genre of the novel in relation to canonical texts, and also in studying the implications of narrative offered by these canonical novels. Two such contemporary novelists include J.M. Coetzee, whose *Foe* (1986) challenges paradigms within Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), and Peter Carey, who writes *Jack Maggs* (1997) in response to Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations* (1860-1). Both of these contemporary novelists place their texts in a position of response to the dominant ideas, or meta-narratives, found within canonical texts. The contemporary novelists alter popular narrative structure, change narrative vantage points and ultimately shift the reader's gaze away from the imperialist center and onto what Ato Quayson terms the "ex-centric." Coetzee, for example, relays the story of Daniel Defoe's Friday from *Robinson Crusoe* through the character of Susan Barton; Carey, similarly, re-writes Charles Dickens's Magwitch from *Great Expectations* to be Jack Maggs, the escaped Australian convict. The revision of these characters, and the movement from the "ex-centric" to the "centric" both challenge popular paradigms held as historical fact as well as raise questions about the role of the author in representation. Even from within this responsive role, a dialectical relationship exists between the contemporary novelists, Coetzee and Carey, and the canonical authors, Defoe and Dickens (between author and subject) as even the ex-centric shift into the center is a shift that is shaped by the oppressive elements of the canonical ideas. This dialectic can be extended also as an apt metaphor for the relation of an author to a subject as the he or she places the

subject in the center based upon certain linguistic and rhetorical biases. The act of authorship then becomes a relationship between the author and subject, the self and the other. This relationship then becomes a process of first seeing that subject and then representing that subject with language.

I.

Seeing: Recognition & Mis-Recognition

Its [genealogy's] task is to expose a body totally imprinted by history and the process of history's destruction of the body. -Michel Foucault

With the popularization of post-modernism and the heavy influence of post-structuralism, language has become a subject of continued and heated debate regarding the agency of words in defining and creating reality, identity and history. As language has undergone such critical attack, the "truths" or meta-narratives upon which modern society is built have also been re-examined for voices lost or absent behind linguistic and rhetorical biases. As a means of recovering these voices, the historical media of patriarchal and imperialist hegemony must be dissected and interrogated in search not of what is present, but rather, as Michel Foucault writes, to "expose a body totally imprinted by history and the process of history's destruction of the body" (356).

The Foucauldian approach to history then establishes the genealogy of an event or history and questions the way in which a person has been represented, or not-

represented, in accordance with social, political, and economic influence. According to John Berger, representation begins with the means to see;

> The relation between what we see and what we know is never settled… The way we see things is affected by what we know or what we believe…We only see what we look at. To look is an act of choice. As a result of this act, what we see is brought within our reach—though not necessarily within arms reach…We never look at just one thing; we are always looking at the relation between things and ourselves. (8)

As Berger points out, looking is an active choice that embodies not only seeing, but also comprehending "the relation between things and ourselves." A paradox exists, then, as on one hand, distinct boundaries exist between the viewer and the viewed, yet these boundaries are malleable as the viewer appropriates or adopts certain characteristics of the self onto or from the other (the viewed). Laura Mulvey talks of this paradox in terms of "scopophillia" and, adopting the Lacanian ideology of the mirror phases explains that

> Lacan has described how the moment when a child recognizes its own image in the mirror is crucial for the constitution of the ego…The mirror phase occurs at a time when the child's physical ambitions outstrip his motor capacity, with the result that his mirror image to be more complete, more perfect than he experiences his own body. Recognition is thus overlaid with mis-recognition: the image

> recognised is conceived as the reflected body of the self, but its misrecognition as superior projects this body outside itself as an ideal ego, the alienated subject which re-introduces as an ego ideal, gives rise to the future generation of identification with others. (9-10)

According to Lacan our perceptions of the other are formed by "recognition … overlaid with mis-recognition" and are constantly interlaced by our own sense of self/personhood; so seeing another is, as Berger explains, an active process that is under continual revision by our own relation to that person or other. For an author, therefore, a question arises as to whether or not authorship demands, or can allow, the representation of that person without a subjective lens that has actively seen, and ignored, certain aspects of a person.

II.

Writing: Centric & Ex-Centric

George Gissing wrote of *Great Expectations* that "no story in the first person was ever better told," but the issue of a first person vantage point is that implicitly there are those people who are left without a vantage point, or realm of influence upon the story. According to Ato Quayson, such characters are known as "ex-centric" or those who fall

> outside the perspectives of sanctioned historical tellings of the nation, whether these [tellings] are done from the standpoint of nationlists…[or] literary historians who seize the already available

> shapes of national history to account for the direction and rates of transition of the literature itself. (192)

Czech poet Czselaw Milosz writes “to whom do we tell what happened on the Earth, for whom do we place huge mirrors in the hopes that they be filled up and will say so” (414); his questioning of the “to whom” and “for whom” reflect the concern of contemporary novelists as they examine Ato Quayson’s question: “How is the narrative of the nation to be elaborated from the perspective of the ex-centric?” As the gaze of canonical authorship has been focused through a lens of imperial, patriarchal, Christianity, those who fall outside of this scope of “normalcy” have so been ignored in social, literary, political, economic and historical discourses.

While all of these discourses are intricately interwoven and nearly inseparable, the purpose of this research is to dissect the absence of voice in canonical literature and to explore the implications of these absences for the social, political, economic and historical treatment of minorities. The main character of Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight Children* opens by saying “I had been mysteriously handcuffed to history, my destinies indissolubly chained to those of my country.” Likewise, I ask, if a person is “indissolubly chained” to his or her country, what have been the implications of the canonical silences of people both on an individual and on a national level?

Robinson Crusoe and *Foe*

III.

The Post-Colonial Subject and The Post-Modern Novel

"The Story [of Robinson Crusoe] is told with Modesty, with Seriousness, and with a religious Application of Events to the Uses to which wise Men always apply them…The Editor believes the thing to be a just History of Fact; neither is there any Appearance of Fiction in it… he does them a great Service in the Publication." – Daniel Defoe, Robinson Crusoe (preface)

"But seen from too remote a vantage, life begins to lose its particularity. All shipwrecks become the same shipwreck, all castaways the same castaway, sunburnt, lonely, clad in the skins of the beasts he has slain. The truth that makes your story yours alone, that sets you apart from the old mariner by the fireside spinning yarns of sea-monsters and mermaids, resides in a thousand touches which today may seem of no importance" (18).- JM Coetzee, Foe

Publishedin 1719, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* relays the life of a mariner born in "the Year of 1632, in the City of *York*, of a good Family," who was shipwrecked alone on an island early in his life. Renowned as one of the best travel writers of his time, Defoe has elicited attention from several scholars, including Virginia Woolf who writes,

> the date of Defoe's birth, to begin with, is doubtful—was it 1600 or 1661? Then again, did he spell his name in one word or two?… Nobody who has any slight acquaintance with English literature needs to be told how many hours can be spent and how many lives have been spent in tracing the development of the novel and in examining the

> chins of novelists…The book itself remains…Until we know how the novelist orders his world…all alone we must climb upon the novelist's shoulders and gaze through his eyes until we, too, understand in what order he ranges the large common objects upon which novelists are fated to gaze. (xii)

According to Woolf, the attempt to unearth truth or objectivity from within a narrative can be found only when viewing the world through the framework of the author. Metaphorically, Coetzee's *Foe* does make this "climb upon" Defoe's "shoulders" to gaze into the world of seventeenth-century British travel writing. Coetzee, however, looks beyond the assurance of Defoe's "editor" that no "appearance of fiction" exists in *Robinson Crusoe*, and examines those "thousand touches" within Defoe's novel that reveal a world centered upon the growth of the British empire and Christian doctrine. If Defoe places seventeenth-century Britain at the ideological center of *Robinson Crusoe*, Coetzee shifts the gaze of readers away from Crusoe's singular vantage point to new interpretations of Crusoe and Friday, and introducing the female characters absent in Defoe's novel. This relocation of the narrative center forces what Karen Armstrong terms "contextual readings of his works [that] suggest not too much that he [Defoe] was duplicitous…but that historiography-- and narratives generally, whether fiction or fact-- cannot be other than subjective, particularly if they are written in response to current political, economic and social debates" (Armstrong 129).

Whether or not the subjectivity of Defoe as revealed by Coetzee reflects such "political, economic and social debates," this revelation gives new definition to the idea of the "other," or those placed out of the center within *Robinson Crusoe*'s center. Edward Said calls such contextual reading "contrapuntal reading," which "must take account of both processes, that of imperialism and that of resistance to it, which can be done by extending our reading of the texts to include what was once forcibly excluded (66-7). As Said suggests, *Robinson Crusoe* advocates seventeenth- and eighteenth-century imperialism through Crusoe's singular narrative voice, which mirrors the singularity, or authority, of historical narrative granted to the British Empire. Coetzee's interrogation of Defoe's novel allows for an "extended" reading of the imperial text by pointing to the historical genealogy of the ideas of the "savage" and "woman," and how this genealogy has allowed for confident statements that "the Editor believes the thing to be a just History of Fact; neither is there any Appearance of Fiction in it."

Defoe's novel, or "just History of Fact," arose just before a time that Elleke Boehmer terms "high (also called new or forward) imperialism," one reflecting "colonial experiences in India, Malaya, Australia, New Zealand, the West Indies, Canada, Ireland, Britain, and different regions in Africa" (i). While the reader is never privy to the exact location of Crusoe's shipwreck, or to the nationality of Friday, Crusoe immediately identifies himself as British being born in "the City of *York*" (1). Crusoe's introduction, like that of Dickens' Pip, reflects one process of imperialism: that of firmly positioning the self within a national and historical

tradition. By initially establishing his own locus, Crusoe—as Englishman-- remains the center of the novel both during his brief time in Britain and also once shipwrecked on the island. During his time in Britain, Crusoe upsets his father, who wishes that he would study law; Crusoe, however, "would be satisfied with nothing but going to Sea" (1). Crusoe continues to explain that as he did not acquiesce to his father's request, he meets his fate at sea and is shipwrecked on a presumably deserted island. Crusoe's fate resonates with an imperialist mindset on several levels. As he initially defies British tradition and refuses to study law, and thereby meets his demise, Defoe indicates the reverence paid to British law and custom. Crusoe's shipwreck, which he attributes to punishment from divine Providence, acts metaphorically, not only as punishment, but also as an indication of the polarity in thought concerning Britain and the rest of the world. Britain, according to this metaphor, represents safety, security, and God's blessing. The island, or the other, represents loneliness and punishment. Through this analogy, Defoe's own prejudices or misconceptions about the "savages" or islanders are immediately evident.

With these prejudices established early in the novel, Defoe has also established a general tone or binary thematic structure to Crusoe's story. These binaries emerge, for example, in the idea that all things British and Christian are positive and safe, while all things "other" are negative and frightful. This binary construction affects not only the plot of the novel, but also the way in which history has been constructed through British ideals of imperialism. Armstrong attributes this binary mindset not only to abstract value judgments, but also to Defoe's desire for the

British to expand their empire, as he regarded travel as "the key to untold profits. The natural and human resources of North and South America, Africa and the Pacific Islands were endlessly advertised in his fiction and non-fiction" (115). Defoe views native peoples as commodities because of his strictly binary views of Britain being positioned as the standard for correct civilization and others being measured in relation to their compliance to British culture, views that immediately allot power and justification to the imperialist. Defoe's idea that travel is the "key to untold profits" is reflected in Crusoe's idea of his own island empire, as when he refers to his home as his "castle" (153) or writes of the "year of my Reign" (127). In another instance, Crusoe writes "I was the Lord of the whole Mannor; or if I pleas'd, I might call myself King, or Emperor over the whole Country of which I had Possession of" (119). By using language like "king," "emperor," and "country," as well as including the idea of possession, Crusoe embodies the imperialist mindset; as he is the center of the historic narrative, or of the dominant ideology, he is due possession of or reign over others. As Ato Quayson notes,

> ethnic and nationalist discourses tend to draw on and centralize metaphors of the body, the links between the body and the nation operating at the level of organic metaphors of nationalist ideologies; these ideologies also by necessity "recruit bodies" to become meaningful historically. (192-3)

Crusoe does embody the "organic metaphors of nationalist ideologies" as his body is protected from harm by Providence; similarly, the British imperial movement was

spurred by a desire to spread Christian doctrine. Additionally, Crusoe, without question, is granted immediate dominion of the island over the "savage," just as the imperialist movement existed because of power structures formed by Europeans. Crusoe's body, then, becomes a metaphor of imperialism.

As Crusoe's body is the metaphor of the imperial, so the body of Friday, the island native, also becomes a metaphor of the "ex-centric" or colonized peoples. Just before their first encounter, Crusoe "was exceedingly surpriz'd with the Print of a Man's naked Foot on the shore…I slept non that Night…but was embarrass'd with my own frightful Ideas of the Thing, that I form'd nothing but dismal Imaginations to myself" (143). The mere sign of Friday's presence initially, and almost instinctively, becomes an object of fear formed entirely by Crusoe's mind. Crusoe, in fact, "fancy'd it must be the Devil" (143); this supposition emphasizes the binary construction between British and Christianity and others and evil. Friday's body, then, becomes a metaphor of fear to Crusoe. After meeting Friday, Crusoe conquers his fear and so assumes control of Friday who refers to Crusoe as "Master." The deference Friday shows to Crusoe resembles that which Crusoe exhibits towards his Christian god. Friday, for example, views his fate as lying within Crusoe's hand: "He [Friday] said, *Me die, when you bid die, Master*" (213). Crusoe supports this idea by crediting himself as the "Instrument under Providence to save the Life, and *for ought I* knew, the Soul of a poor Savage, and bring him to the true knowledge of Religion, and of the Christian Doctrine" (203). Crusoe exhibits a similar pattern of deference to God as he writes that "God wonderfully sent the Ship in near enough to the Shore,

that I have gotten out so many necessary things as will either supply my Wants, or enable me to Supply my Self even as long as I live" (61). By aligning Crusoe with God and Friday with a dependant or reverent servant, Defoe not only demonstrates that binary ideology that aligns Crusoe (or the British) with good, and Friday (or the "other") with bad, he also establishes an unquestionable authority behind Crusoe's story narrative, and so behind his novel.

In *Foe*, Coetzee questions this narrative structure and so questions the authority behind Defoe's imperialist mindset. Defoe structures his novel as a retrospective narrative with Crusoe recounting his mariner tales; Coetzee's novel, however, resists such a structure through a cumulative narrative as told by Susan Barton. Defoe's authoritative narrative arises from Defoe "portray[ing] himself as a historian…an impartial collector of facts" that allows him to write from the perspective of a "literary historian who seizes the already available shapes of national history to account for the direction and rates of transition in literature" rather than questioning those existing national shapes (Armstrong 129). For example, Defoe portrays Friday as the "savage" or the "barbarian" and so places him within those existing shapes of a recognized British history as written through seventeenth- and eighteenth-century travel writing. Coetzee's work is also historically sensitive, but not to writing historical "fact" or filling those "available shapes;" rather he examines process by which these shapes and "facts" were created. As Liden Lin writes,

> history in *Foe* takes on three levels of meaning. First history exists as a subtext surrounding the enigma and elusiveness of Friday's past.

> Second history exists as a displaced authority; although the slavers may have succeeded in erasing Friday's personal history and have made it impossible for Susan to write her complete story, Friday's past asserts its power by constantly setting limits on writing and, as the novel's end suggests, by even engulfing the writing completely. Third, history exists as a shared space of personal history and universal history (43).

Lin's first designation of the agency of history as a "subtext surrounding the enigma and elusiveness of Friday's past" emphasizes the very absence of Friday's history in *Robinson Crusoe*. Coetzee's method of silencing Friday differs from Defoe's, however, in the uncomfortable and painful image of Crusoe removing Friday's tongue to "punish him for his sins" (95). With this corporal image, Coetzee stresses the debilitating implications behind Defoe's imperialist account, an account that masks Friday's silence behind religious rhetoric and expressions of British generosity in anglicizing the "savages." On this level, the absence of history in *Foe* points to the absence of historical representation in *Robinson Crusoe*.

Lin secondly recognizes that the lack of historical representation gives power to Friday, rather than to Foe. Susan Barton, for example, writes of her inability to understand Friday's past in the following passage taken from a letter to Foe:

> I shiver as I watch Friday dancing in the kitchen, with his robes whirling about him and the wig flapping on his head, and his eyes shut and his thoughts far away, not on the island you may be sure, not on

> the pleasures of digging and carrying, but on the time before, when he was a savage among savages. (94-5)

Coetzee denies Foe the ability to construct a narrative by limiting Barton's comprehension of Friday to the present; in this construction, Friday holds the power as only he can understand "the time before, when he was a savage among savages." Coetzee's Friday, then, inadvertently silences Foe's narrative, while in *Robinson Crusoe*, Defoe denies Friday any narrative authority.

Finally, Lin points to Coetzee's rejection of the uniform, linear, historical perspective of Crusoe's insular account. As Lin notes, Coetzee writes *Foe* as a "shared space of personal history and universal history" (43). While Defoe constructed a one-dimensional historical account of Crusoe's life, Coetzee uses a disjointed narrative structure with Barton attempting to tell the story of Cruso to the elusive Mr. Foe, yet always being hindered by Foe's lack of response as well as Friday's painful silence and Cruso's death early in the novel. This disjointed narrative emphasizes Coetzee's re-interpretation of Defoe's linear narrative and that, for Coetzee, history does not exist, and cannot be told, as a sequence of events; rather it exists as the interaction of both personal and communal narratives. Coetzee expresses these sentiments as Barton writes to Foe that "the truth that makes your story yours alone, that sets you apart from the old mariner by the fireside spinning yarns of sea-monsters and mermaids, resides in a thousand touches which today seem of no importance" (18). These thousand touches are those details and modes of expression that are open to interpretation by both the narrator of an account and the

audience of the account; in this sense, the history of both the audience of a story as well as the story-teller must by taken into account, as each shapes history according to individual interpretation.

With a linear narrative, such as Defoe's, these other interpretations are excluded and so the biases of the author are expressed as a historic truth. As Judith Fetterly writes,

> power is the issue in the politics of literature, as it is in the politics of anything else. To be excluded from a literature that claims to define one's identity is to experience a peculiar form of powerlessness—not simply the powerlessness which derives from not seeing one's experience articulated, clarified, and legitimized in art, but more significantly the powerlessness which results from the endless division of the self against the self, the consequence of the invocation to identify as male while being reminded that to be male--to be universal—is to be not female [or not British]. (xiii).

While Fetterly does not speak directly to *Robinson Crusoe* or *Foe*, her reference to the division of the self against the self works aptly if one supplies "British" for "male" and "not-British" for "female" as the universal, or standard, for literature has been created by British imperialist texts. By using Lin's three-part definition of history as found in *Foe*, the positions of women, in the form of Susan Barton, and of the colonized, like Friday, can be examined against *Robinson Crusoe* as those who are denied power by being "excluded from literature." Power works in *Robinson*

Crusoe as that agent which allows Crusoe to ignore the humanity or individuality of Friday because Friday is excluded and so "experience[s] a peculiar form of powerlessness—the endless division of the self against the self." While Friday's division of the self against the self differs from Barton's division, as she is actually narrating a story and attempting to sell this story to Foe, Friday's division of the self lies within his acquisition of both English and Anglo-Christianity. In looking at the texts or narratives, of both the English language and Anglo-Christianity, each are founded upon a narrative structure that is inherently British. Friday's anglicization forces him to identify with a language and religious culture that has been structured to call those not-British "savage" and "barbaric." In this sense, Friday exemplifies Fetterly's idea of the division of the self against the self as he "experience[s] a peculiar form of powerlessness" when forced to adopt the British meta-narratives of language and religion. This division of the self against the self reflects Lin's idea that "history exists as a subtext surrounding the enigma and elusiveness of Friday's past." In *Robinson Crusoe* Friday's exclusion is not an actual void within the text, but rather exclusion by referring to him as an anglicized "savage," a dichotomy that demonstrates the existence of two "selves" or ideas of Friday. Coetzee questions this dichotomy; as noted by Brad Tabas, his

> critique [of Defoe's objectivity] lies exactly within the text—within the text's insistence on its own fictionality, within its preconstructed nature, and most importantly in the text's dramatization of its inability to know and speak for the other. Thus the drama of Friday's

> silence…must always remain questions to be answered until they are answered by the speaking subject himself—a subject who will refuse to speak until he can speak not as an emissary of darkness illuminating light, but as a human being speaking to other human beings. (2)

Friday's silence plays a painful and obvious role in Coetzee's text which, as Tabas says, inverts the power structure created by Defoe in *Robinson Crusoe*. While Defoe's account of Friday removes his power by prescribing him an English identity and an English voice, Coetzee's text empowers Friday as questions "must always remain…to be answered" by him.

Tabas points to the "drama of Friday's silence" as being the perpetuator of questions. Susan Barton narrates *Foe* in a series of letters and inquiries to the enigmatic Mr. Foe, and in these letters also perpetuates the questions of Friday's silence. This continual stream of letters from Barton, left generally unanswered, complicates Coetzee's narrative structure so that Barton, who has the ability to narrate, is denied this power by Foe. Underlying Coetzee's novel, then, is a dialectical tension between Barton's story and Foe's power to re-create the lives of Barton, Friday, and Cruso. Barton, especially, serves as a model for what Fetterly terms the "endless division of the self against the self" as she consistently writes the narrative of Cruso while ignoring her own story, particularly as her alleged daughter appears. Barton becomes so engrossed in writing letters to Foe that two narrative streams emerge—one of her daily life with Friday, the other of her life which Foe is supposedly crafting; she writes to Foe, for example, that

> More is at stake in the history you write, I will admit, for it must not only tell the truth about us, but please its readers too. Will you not bear in mind, however, that my life is drearily suspended till your writing is done? (63).

With these words, Barton allows Foe ownership of her life as she denies the relevance of her daily life in place of Foe's narrative. While Defoe's novel ignores Friday's story by omission, Coetzee places Barton in this position of narrator as a painful reminder to the reader that those subjects of patriarchal, imperialist writing have stories that have largely been ignored in canonical works. Barton's pleas to Foe that her "life is drearily suspended" encourages the reader to sympathize with Barton; Foe's dismissive attitude, then, highlights the dismissive nature of *Robinson Crusoe* towards objects of the British colonies.

As Barton sells her story to Foe, she alienates herself from her own life and submits to Foe, or metaphorically to the capitalist mindset that drives imperialism. The sexual encounter between Foe and Barton illuminates the tension of narrative power between the characters:

> Foe kissed me again, and in kissing gave such a sharp bite to my lip that I cried out and drew away…Then he was upon me, and I might have thought myself in Cruso's arms again …I closed my eyes trying to find my way back to the island, to the wind and wave-roar; but no, the island was lost, cut off from me by a thousand leagues of watery waste. I calmed Foe. "Permit me," I whispered … So I coaxed him

> till he lay beneath me. Then I drew off my shift and straddled him (which he did not seam easy with, in a woman). "This is the manner of the Muse when she visits her poets," I whispered. (139).

In the same manner in which Friday is made to submit his body to labor for Cruso(e), Barton uses her body with both Cruso and Foe as a form of labor, or a commodity by which she can have her story told. Despite her physical position of power as she "straddled him," she still refers to herself as a "Muse" visiting her poet. This reference indicates the limits Barton places on her own ability to express her story; as Cruso(e) alienates Friday's body from his labor by denying him the wealth or product of his labor, Barton similarly is still denied the ability to tell her story and so keep her life from being "drearily suspended."

Coetzee's construction of this relationship of commodity between Barton and Foe (and so by default between Friday and Foe) is reflected in Karl Marx's interpretation of *Robinson Crusoe*:

> Necessity itself compels him [Crusoe] to apportion his time accurately between his different kinds of work. Whether one kind occupies a greater space in his general activity than another, depends on the difficulties, greater or less as the case may be, to be overcome in attaining the useful effect aimed at. This our friend Robinson soon learns by experience, and having rescued a watch, ledger, and pen and ink from the wreck, commences, like a true-born Briton, to keep a set of books. His stock-book contains a list of the objects of utility that

> belong to him, of the operations necessary for their production; and lastly, of the labour time that definite quantities of those objects have, on an average, cost him. All the relations between Robinson and the objects that form this wealth of his own creation, are here so simple and clear as to be intelligible without exertion…And yet those relations contain all that is essential to the determination of value.

Barton, Friday, and Crusoe have become these "objects that form this wealth of his [Foe's] own creation;" while Barton allows Foe ownership of her life, she then affords him the opportunity to place a value on her life and commodify her life. This ownership raises questions about the authorship of any work. As Karen Armstrong pointed to the political, social, and economic impetus behind any written work, this example of commodity indicates the level at which authors function to produce work that will enhance personal material existence, even at the expense of others. Coetzee thus asks not only how the historic subject is created, but how this historic subject is relevant to the life of an individual author. In Defoe's novel, for example, Crusoe's power exists because of his ownership of property, as indicated by "his stock-book [that] contains a list of the objects of utility that belong to him, of the operations necessary for their production," as well as because of Friday's lack of property. As Friday labors for Crusoe, he is then alienated from his labor--and his body—so that his "life [is] drearily suspended" as he becomes an object of Crusoe's wealth. Similarly, Barton and Friday are property of Foe; the difference between each work is that Barton willingly submits herself to be the subject of Foe's book, rather than

Crusoe's unsolicited account of Friday. Barton's willingness to give her story when compared to Foe's distance in collecting that story incriminates the historian for ignoring Barton's available story. Coetzee uses this distance created by Foe to point to the distance Defoe had in creating Friday's character.

While Barton's story is told to the reader, Friday's story remains a void in the text. In his discussion with Barton, Foe says "in every story there is a silence, some sight concealed, some word unspoken, I believe. Till we have spoken the unspoken, we have not come to the heart of the story" (141). While Defoe deals with Friday as a "savage," he still allows the seventeenth-century reader to relate to Friday as he acquires the language and religion. Coetzee, however, positions Friday's void or absence of voice as a focal point of Barton's narrative. The following dialogue between Barton and Foe, for example, indicates the effect of Friday's silence on Barton's narrative:

> [Foe says,] "We must make Friday's silence speak, as well as the silence surrounding Friday."
>
> "But who will do it?" I [Barton] asked. "It is easy enough to lie in bed and say what must be done, but who will dive into the wreck?…if Friday cannot tell us what he sees, is Friday in my story any more than a figuring (or prefiguring) of another diver?" (142).

Barton's questions, especially as they are aimed at Foe, target the assumptions Defoe makes in his text concerning the story of Friday, or the colonized. The continuation

the conversation between Barton and Foe further implicates the assumptions made by Defoe. Barton says:

> "All my efforts to bring Friday to speech, or to bring speech to Friday, have failed…he utters himself only in music and dancing, which are to speech as cries and shouts are to words. There are times when I ask myself whether in his earlier life he had the slightest mastery of language, whether he knows what kind of thing language is" (142).

Barton, in this passage, uses the term "language," yet predicates this word by saying that language cannot be music and dancing. Foe and Barton ignore Friday's modes of expression in their own inability to comprehend language outside of a British framework. Ato Quayson writes of language and the colonized that

> the human body has to undergo a form of violence and dismemberment for the body politic itself to come into being…the colonised's quest for identity cannot be fully expressed without the dismantling of colonialism and since this dismantling, in this particular context, has to be achieved through so much bloodshed and violence, the quest for a language that seeks to shape reality is always undermined by the consciousness of the brutality and violence that attends the colonised's body (201).

The non-communicative nature of Friday's dances and speeches, then, are part of Quayson's theory that "the colonised's quest for identity cannot be fully expressed without the dismantling of colonialism." Quayson explains that this expression of

identity undermines “the consiousness of brutality and violence that attends the colonised’s body;” as in *Robinson Crusoe* Crusoe shapes Friday’s identity through a means of subjugation and violence in the sense that he took ownership of Friday’s body, the re-structuring of Friday’s body, and so his identity, according to Quayson must occur by re-constructing that reality of violence on the part of Crusoe. Friday’s body politic is shaped by violence and so cannot be re-formed or re-discovered without facing or actualizing that violence. By denying Friday a tongue, Coetzee asks if the identity of the colonized is ever recoverable. Can Friday’s story ever be fully expressed, or will the telling of Friday’s story always be an enactment of violences, as the narrative of Friday’s character revolves around brutality and destruction, so that re-creating his story will be a re-creation of such violence?

Coetzee closes *Foe* with an unnamed narrator finding Cruso’s ship with Barton and Friday aboard. The narrator writes

> I come to Friday. I tug his woolly hair, finger the chain about his throat. “Friday,” I say, I try to say… “what is this ship?” But this is not a place of words. Each syllable, as it comes out, is caught and filled with water and diffused. This is a place where bodies are their own signifiers. It is the home of Friday…His mouth opens. From inside him comes a slow stream, without breath, without interruption…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. (155)

Coetzee's questions surrounding Friday and the body politic in the creation of a colonized subject then raise further questions of authorship; does an author re-enact the brutality of colonialism by writing of a colonized subject? Does an author deny bodies the place "to be their own signifiers?" Is the process of narration an act of violence by inscribing upon the body certain rhetoric and personage? While Defoe represents Friday as an "anglicized savage," can Coetzee then represent Friday as a silent man without also imposing an identity upon the colonized? As Coetzee opens space at the close of his novel for Friday's body to become its own signifier, Friday's body is still "a symptom of the spasm of the violent coming into being of the nation-state. The emerging post-colonial nation is a threshold of disassembled identities which are its concomitant products" (Quayson 202). Can a narrative concerning the "post-colonial nation" exist without being conscious of these disassembled identities?

Great Expectations and *Jack Maggs*

IV,

Criminality, Cartography and the Nation

"He [Magwitch] lay in prison very ill, during the whole interval between his committal for trial and the coming round of the Sessions…The trial was very short and very clear…nothing could unsay the fact that he had returned and was there in presence of Judge and Jury. It was impossible to try him for that, and do otherwise than find him guilty…With a last faint effort, which would have been powerless but for my yielding to it, and assisting it, he raised my hand to his lips. Then he gently let it sink upon his breast again, with his own hands lying on it. The placid look at the white ceiling came back, and passed away, and his head dropped quietly on his breast. Mindful then of what we had read together, I thought of the two men who went up into the Temple to pray, and I knew there were no better words that I could say beside his bed, than 'O Lord, be merciful to him, a sinner!'" (Dickens 409-11).

"Mr Buckle calmly placed his reading glasses on the end of his sharp nose and began to peer very closely at the pages of his book. 'We have this morning, together, examined your sentencing and Mr. Makepeace has made himself well acquainted with the law as it pertains to your situation…There is a Jack Maggs of London transported for life in 1813. Might that be your situation, Sir?' It was heart-wrenching to witness the effect of this announcement upon this manly man. His shoulders slumped. He shook his head slowly. 'I'm a vermin, aint I?...I am a cockroach, isn't that so? It was very clear what would happen to me if I were to ever set foot in England again. I was transported for the term of my natural life. Weren't those the words? Did not his lordship wish to crush me with his heel?'" (Carey 140)

The theme of "disassembled identities" and the narrative implications of such identities reflect a shift in the genre of the novel as contemporary writers, like Coetzee, have become more sensitive to and question the use of narrative to signify a body, or to prescribe an identity to a person. Peter Carey, a contemporary of Coetzee's, offers perspectives on problems of narration as he raises similar questions concerning the agency of narrative in his novel *Jack Maggs*, which responds to

Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations*. Like Coetzee, Carey also writes of an author-figure, Tobias Oates, who takes particular interest in the Australian ex-convict Jack Maggs; Oates says "'what a puzzle of life exists in the dark little lane-ways of this wretch's soul, what stolen gold lies hidden in the vaults beneath his filthy street…it's the Criminal Mind…awaiting its first Cartographer'" (99). Ethnographer Ralph Cintron addresses the idea of cartography as an agent of control as he first questions "what are the political and economic motives that underlie the gatherings of these particular statistics?" (29). This question resonates with Karen Armstrong's questions about Defoe's own social, political and economic motives in telling the story of Robinson Crusoe. Cintron further writes that "the making of things material—a map as the material representation of space, or the transformation of thoughts and feelings into art objects—gives dominion to the eye and hand…we have transformed matter: that which has found its smaller representation—but not its equivalent" (29). The central concern behind both Armstrong and Cintron's writing lies in the "dominion" given to the eye and hand and the transformative power in authoring or "mapping" a person. Maggs is no longer a person to Oates, but rather, in the process of cartography, his body has become a *tabula rasa* onto which Oates can inscribe and prescribe an identity—specifically that of a criminal. What, though, are Oates's political, economic and social motivations, and how are these motives shaped and informed by Dickens's own motives?

Dickens wrote during the nineteenth-century in which the emerging industrial revolution set the social, political and economic tone of the British world. The

industrial revolution created distinct class stratifications as the growth in urban populations caused subsequent growth in the occupancy of working class jobs. These class issues pervade Dickens's novel, *Great Expectations*, which, according to Joseph Hagan, is

> The story of a restless young boy from the lower classes who comes into possession of a fortune he has done nothing to earn, founds a host of romantic aspirations upon it at the cost of becoming a snob, comes to be disappointed both romantically and socially, and, finally, with a more mature knowledge of himself and the world works out his regeneration. (169)

According to Hagan's summary, Dickens's novel traces the story of a young boy, Pip, into adulthood as he transcends class boundaries through a series of becoming "disappointed both romantically and socially" and finally reaching a point in which his conscience forces him to pray "O Lord be merciful to him" for the soul of the dying convict, Magwitch. Dickens complicates this narrative structure by beginning his novel with the beginning of Pip's consciousness and the reader slowly learning of factors and character connections prior to Pip's birth that have influenced and shaped his own life. *Great Expectations*, then, takes the form of Pip unknowingly working against his past in order to achieve social status; as Pip establishes these "great expectations" for class status, the reader begins to see these historic factors acting antagonistically to Pip's goals. Through this narrative structure, Dickens emphasizes the arbitrary nature of social class designation.

Great Expectations begins with an encounter between Pip and Magwitch. Pip introduces himself by saying,

> "My father's family name being Pirrip, and my christian name Phillip, my infant tongue could make of both names nothing longer or more explicit than Pip. So I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip. I gave Pirrip as my father's name, on the authority of his tombstone and my sister—Mrs. Joe Gargery, who married the blacksmith. As I never saw my father or my mother, and never saw any likeness of either of them…my first fancies regarded what they were like, were unreasonably derived from their tombstones." (1)

The autobiographical nature of this introduction, as well as the nature of information relayed, such as name, family name, family occupation, etc., contrasts with the reader's first encounter with Magwitch who, according to Pip, is

> In all grey with a great iron on his leg. A man with no hat, and with broken shoes, and with an old rag tied round his head. A man who had been soaked in by water, and smothered in mud, and lamed by stones and cut by flints and stung by nettles and torn by briars; who limped, and shivered, and glared, and growled; and whose teeth chattered. (Dickens 4)

While Pip's introduction affirms his position as a person in society with family connections, Magwitch enters the novel as an animal-like figure, drenched, and muddy, who "shivered, and glared, and growled." As Defoe establishes a dichotomy

between the "savage" Friday and the humane Crusoe, so Dickens also establishes this binary mindset between Pip and Magwitch. This contrast between Pip and Magwitch is amplified by Magwitch's aggressive threats of "'Darn me if I couldn't eat'em.'" and Pip's response that he "earnestly expressed my hope that he wouldn't" (4-5). Pip's naïve and childlike sentiments reflect his inability to comprehend the situation, which on one level reduces the gravity of Magwitch's aggression, and, on another level, heighten the reader's sympathy for Pip. The novel immediately positions the reader to sympathize with Pip, an innocent child who has fallen into the clutches of a criminal, and so Dickens re-enforces the distinction between what is criminal (dirty, animal-like, aggressive) and what is not-criminal (passive, innocent).

After initially establishing this dichotomy, Dickens also then reverses the binary as Magwitch

> came closer to my [Pip's] tombstone, took me by both arms, and tilted me back as far as he could hold me…After each question he tilted me over a little more, so as to give me a greater sense of helplessness and danger. "You get me a file.' He tilted me again. "And you get me wittles…or I'll have your heart and liver out." (5).

Pip does retrieve the file and "wittles" for Magwitch by stealing these items from his sister, Miss Joe Gargery; Pip is now a thief. The file, according to Joseph A. Hynes, ironically "serves to strengthen the chain of gold or iron linking Pip to Magwitch…it keeps us reminded that Pip and Magwitch are both thieves…The file, therefore is symbolically ironic since it only *seems* to have done a separating job" (267).

Dickens, then, toys with the idea of criminality as Pip, because of Magwitch's aggression, is forced into thievery. The reader who has begun to sympathize with Pip, now sympathizes with a thief, and so we must re-examine our feelings towards Magwitch.

As a recurring image, the file is an apt metaphor for the tension driving *Great Expectations* as it does not separate Pip and Magwitch, but rather causes Magwitch to be indebted to Pip. It does not separate Magwitch from his crime, but rather superficially allows him to be free of his bonds, and finally it becomes the object of Pip's crime, turning him into a thief. This sense of irony transfers into Pip's interaction with social class; just as Dickens calls definitions of criminality into question, he demonstrates the arbitrary nature and definition of social class. Class power structures are first brought into the novel as Dickens juxtaposes Pip's first meeting with Miss Havisham, "an immensely rich and grim lady," to Pip's spelling lesson with Joe (46). As Pip scribbles an almost incoherent note, Joe exclaims

> "Astonishing…you ARE a scholar."
>
> "How do you spell Gargery, Joe?" I [Pip] asked him, with a modest patronage.
>
> "I don't spell it at all," said Joe.
>
> "But supposing you did?"
>
> "It *can't* be supposed," said Joe. "Tho I'm oncommon fond of

reading, too." (41).

Dickens reveals in this exchange the emerging distinction between Pip's ability to attempt at reading and writing, or his potential to transcend class lines, and Joe's lack of education and seeming inability to comprehend the means by which to transcend class lines. The next chapter, however, stunts this class transcendence as Pip first meets Miss Havisham and Estella, her adopted daughter. In this chapter Pip's title of "scholar" is reduced to "boy" as, upon Miss Havisham's prompting her to play cards with Pip, Estella exclaims "'With this boy! Why he is a common labouring-boy!'"(53). Estella continues her degradation of Pip as they play cards by saying

> He calls the knaves, Jacks, this boy!...and what course hands he has! And what thick boots!" I had never thought of being ashamed of my hands before; but I began to consider them a very indifferent pair. Her contempt for me was so strong that it became infectious, and I caught it. (55)

Despite Estella's insulting demeanor, Pip becomes infatuated with her because the more she degrades him, the more he needs her to redeem his personhood. Dickens uses the relationship formed between Estella and Pip to demonstrate the nature of social class structures that function by depriving the lower class of humanity in order to assert more fully the humanity of the upper classes. As Magwitch entered the novel like an animal, or "varmint," so Pip is reduced to a nameless "boy" by Miss Havisham and Estella.

Pip continues to pine for Estella as she becomes the means by which Pip can move into high society, and leave the role of "boy;" similarly Magwitch uses Pip to

redeem his own social position. Having been sent to the penal colony in Australia, Magwitch later returns to England having acquired wealth through his brick-making business. Deciding it would be appropriate to "re-pay" Pip's kindness, he began a secret financial sponsorship of Pip in order to "made a gentleman on" him (286). Pip, thinking Miss Havisham is his sponsor, is upset to hear of Magwitch's generosity. Though Magwitch should not return to England, he decides that he must see the gentlemanly Pip and so in their first encounter says

> "Look'ee here!" he went on, taking my watch out of my pocket, and turning towards him a ring on my finger… "a gold'un and a beauty. *That's* a gentleman's, I hope! A diamond all set round with rubies; *that's* a gentleman's, I hope! Look at your linen; fine and beautiful! Look at your clothes, better ain't to be got! And your books too…You shall read'em to me dear boy! And if they're in foreign languages wot I don't understand, I shall be just as proud as if I did (287).

By transposing Magwitch's lower class dialect and obvious lack of education in foreign languages with the idea of gentry, Dickens shows the pretense in Pip's gentleman status as his benefactor does not actually know the construction of upper class life, but rather provides for the external ideals of London high society. This pretense returns to the symbolism of the file; though Pip thought he had shed his life in the marshes by becoming a gentleman, he actually becomes indebted and even more connected to that class. Similarly, the reader learns that Estella realizes her gentility has been created by Miss Havisham, or, as she says, "'I must be taken as I

have been made. The success is not mine, the failure is not mine, but the two together make me'" (274). In this statement, Dickens asserts that people in high society London have been "made;" class is not a natural formation, but rather the upper class becomes a position of luck or fortune not attributed to anything concerning the person in the upper class, but a series, or chain, of successes and failures that led him/her to such a place.

The file is again an apt metaphor as it relates to the idea of a social chain, or reactionary social constructions. As Hagan notes,

> Pip's career shows not only a hapless young man duped by his poor illusions, but a late victim in a long chain of widespread social injustice. The story's essential factors make this fact plain. We learn in Chapter XLVII that the prime mover, so to speak, of the entire course of events which the novel treats immediately or in retrospect is a man by the name of Compeyson, a cad who adopts the airs of a "gentleman." Significantly, he remains throughout the book shrouded in mist…Through his actions two people came to grief…he jilted and spoiled naïve Miss Havisham…he further corrupted a man named Magwitch who had already been injured by poverty…The connection of all this with Pip is plain. The young boy becomes for both Magwitch and Miss Havisham a means by which in their different ways, they can retaliate against the society that injured them. (170-1).

Compeyson, then, is the impetus behind every action in the novel. As Compeyson created both Magwitch and Miss Havisham, so they in turn created Pip and Estella. Dickens is pointing to the reactionary nature of social oppression that causes one person to enact a social injustice upon another. The title *Great Expectations*, then, appears to be an ironic twist as each character seems powerless in achieving the ends of their great expectations—Pip cannot become a gentleman, Miss Havisham will never be married, Joe will never write, Magwitch will always be a criminal. As the novel ends, however, with the burning of Satis House, so are symbolically destroyed the social structures that have kept Pip as "enough." Pip and Estella meet in the garden of Satis House with no intentions to part again; this meeting highlights the ineffective nature of the class structure as this hierarchy can no longer affect the decision of Pip and Estella to marry. By ignoring their socially sanctioned class differences, Estella and Pip negate class structures; the death of Miss Havisham and Magwitch represent the death of former social class ideals and Pip and Estella can now live in a society in which they are unrestricted by class in their social associations.

As novels of the British canon, *Great Expectations* makes distinct strides ahead of *Robinson Crusoe* by exploring and questioning those popular paradigms of social class and a hierarchical society that Defoe wrote as a "just fact." Dickens then has relinquished some imperialist ideals of the canon by asking *why* a person is in a particular situation, rather than simply stating the *who* of a person. Moreover, Dickens shifts from Defoe's narrative chronology of tracing linear events to

beginning with the story of Pip and allowing the narrative to unfold and demonstrate the historic factors that shape the current plot. This shift in canonical narrative style indicates fluidity in the genre, or the definition, of the novel. Coetzee and Carey, however, reject traditional narrative chronology and vantage point. While Defoe and Dickens allow their narrators a first-person vantage point that is authoritative and the decisive interpretation of a situation or event, Coetzee introduces two narrators: Susan Barton, who offers a tentative and questioning narrative view, and an unnamed final narrator who offers no answers to these questions. Carey, similarly, re-visits Dickens's authoritative voice of Pip by instituting a third person omniscient narrator who transitions between current action in the book and the history of title character Jack Maggs, an escaped convict who has returned to London in search of Henry Phipps, the recipient of his patronage.

Carey writes these two characters, Jack Maggs and Henry Phipps, so that they are not synonymous to Magwitch and Pip, but rather resonate with these two characters. This resonance relies on two assumptions, one being that the reader has some familiarity with Dickens's *Great Expectations* and the other being that the reader will make an attempt to explain this correlation between *Jack Maggs* and *Great Expectations*. While Coetzee uses a cumulative narrative style that is in constant revision with the motion of the plot and narrator, Carey's allusions to *Great Expectations* mirror the narrative structure of his novel which constantly raises questions, or correlations, and then revises these correlations by presenting a new narrative strand or technique. Carey's narrative, for example, has several layers; one

layer is the narrative sequence of the third person omniscent narrator, another is the narrative that arises from Tobias Oates's investigation of Jack Maggs's subconscious "phantoms" as well as Oates's own work entitled *The Death of Jack Maggs*, and finally the narrative found in the letters Maggs composes to Henry Phipps.

Where Magwitch enters *Great Expectations* as a man "who limped, and shivered, and glared and growled," Maggs first appears in *Jack Maggs* as

> a tall man in his forties, so big in the chest and broad in the shoulder that his fellows on the bench seat had felt the strain of his presence, but what his occupation was, or what he planned to do in London, they had not the least idea. One privately imagined him a book-maker, another a gentleman farmer and a third, seeing the excellent quality of his waistcoat, imagined him an upper servant wearing his master's cast-off clothing. (4)

While Dickens immediately introduces Magwitch as criminal, Carey creates an ambiguity surrounding Maggs's identity so that, like the characters on the "bench seat," the reader also wonders if Maggs is a disguised gentleman, a servant or—unbeknownst to the people on the bench—in an allusion to Magwitch, a criminal. By allowing the reader to bring his or her own knowledge of Magwitch to the novel, Carey demonstrates the means by which every text has an unwritten space outside of the narrative in which the reader complicates and adjusts history to his or her own perceptions. While Coetzee points to this subjectivity by removing Friday's tongue, Carey makes assumptions about Maggs's identity—both through the characters in the

novel and the allusions to *Great* Expectations--that then cause the reader to question the completion of truth in *Jack Maggs*, or even in literature in general. The imposing nature of Maggs's body in this passage, as he is "so big in the chest and broad in the shoulder that his fellows on the bench seat had felt the strain of his presence" resonates with Magwitch's initial entry into *Great Expectations* as he uses his body to "tilt" Pip over and to give him a "greater sense of helplessness and danger" (6). Just as in *Foe*, Friday's tongue-less body represents the silence of colonized people in the canon, Carey explores the implications of class through Tobias Oates's particular interest in the body of Maggs.

As Maggs's body acts as an imposing, uncomfortable force for the "fellows on his bench seat," so his body remains a pervasive, driving narrative in the novel. Oates transforms Maggs's body into a text;

> It had always been Tobias's method to approach his subject by way of the body. When he had set himself to the task of writing about Jack Maggs, he first produced a short essay on his hands, pondering not merely the fate of the hidden tendons, the bones, the phalanges, the intercarpals which would one day be liberated by the worms, but also their history: what other hands they had caressed, what lives they had taken in anger. (330)

This fascination with Maggs's body serves two purposes in the text, one being to expose an author's ability "map" or prescribe a certain identity or historical position for a person. The other purpose is to contrast Oates's experiments with Maggs's

body against the narrative stance of both the chronological plot of the novel and the historical, autobiographical account given by Maggs. This contrast between the emotional account of Maggs and the physical account of Oates indicates the de-humanizing affect canonical texts like *Great Expectations* have had by focusing solely on the "hands…hidden tendons…[and] bones," or physical attributes of a person, rather than taking a more holistic approach by examining, as Carey does, the physical, emotional and historical genealogy of a person.

Carey exposes some of the emotional aspects of Maggs through Oates's practices of mesmerism as he uncovers the "phantoms" and strange images of Maggs's past. Oates first convinces Maggs to participate in a mesmerism session by promising to introduce Maggs to a Thief-Taker to find Phipps if, for thirteen days, Maggs will allow Oates to "drag demons" out of his minds with "little magnets" (89). The mesmerism sessions exist, according to Oates's housekeeper because,

> Toby had always had a great affection for Characters…dustmen, jugglers, costers, pick-pockets. He thought nothing of engaging the most gruesome types in Shepherd Market and writing down their histories in his chap book. The subject of this Mesmeric Exhibition did not know it, but he was likely to appear, much modified, in Toby's next novel. There he would be Jack Much or Jock Crestfallen—a footman with a coster's voice and a chest like a strong man in a circus (90).

By using images of thieves, jugglers and circus-men, Carey asserts that, despite the presumed objectivity of an author, each writes with a specific identity or opinion in mind for each character, despite actual identities of that character. Similarly, by stating that “Toby had always had a great affection for Characters,” Carey demonstrates the space authors place between themselves and characters so that each character is the creation of a person, rather than a reflection or representation of a person. Just as Susan Barton imagines Foe as a collector of people, so Carey portrays Oates as a collector of “characters” from which he extracts, or mesmerize, pieces of a story, then supplemented with his own ideas. These ideas were manifest in his novel, *The Death of Maggs*, which he opens by writing “‘as certain birds do declare themselves unto their intended, so the Murderer returned to court his beloved England, bold as a cock robin in his bright red waistcoat’” (252). Carey offers this text as a means of critiquing the process of authorship as this passage is a blending of truth, such as the red waistcoat, with fiction, calling Maggs a Murderer. This amalgamation of truth and fiction is further emphasized by Maggs’s reaction to the mesmerism as he, using his body,

> pulls the writer’s face towards his own as if he meant to kiss it. “How am I to get those thoughts back out?”…Your notes are lies mate. Your notes say nothing about my shirt. The truth is: you have had me reveal secret information in my sleep.” (253)

Maggs’s speaks of his shirt in reference to their first mesmerism session in which Oates re-enacts the torture of the Australian penal colony; he asks

> "Can you see our Phantom, Mr. Maggs?...We are going to chase him away. What do you think frightens him?"
>
> "I don't think my phantom is frightened, Sir."
>
> Toby now put his hand into his jacket and produced a shortish horsewhip which he had, all that time, concealed under his person. He dangled it in the air, so its end waved inches above the Somnambulist's head…"Perhaps we should flog the Phantom?"
>
> "Oh God no, please…" (91-2).

These torturous activities continue with reference to flogging, hot sun, and whipping triangles and with each reference Maggs becomes more hysterical begging that the Phantom, an inner manifestation of himself, is not harmed.

As Coetzee's tongue-less Friday raises questions about the re-creation and imposition of violence upon subjects through narratives of violence, Carey directly exposes this danger in authorship through Maggs's violent reaction to facing his "Phantoms" and so allowing Oates's violent "cartography" to re-inflict this pain. The Phantom follows Maggs as he dreams of Captain Logan, presumably Maggs's warden, demanding

> One-hundred lashes…and lay them on till I see the bone. Maggs was standing, then he was falling…Weeping, Jack Maggs turned to the Phantom, and begged him to show mercy. Then the Phantom turned away, leading his horse by its bridle and brought it down upon the Phantom's head. The Phantom fell and the dreaming man lifted the

> rock high and flung it down onto the head so it split like rotten fruit. This action he repeated a good long while (123-4).

These violent dreams and the imaginary slaughter of the Phantom are noteable because they are both forms of expression and response that Maggs can never actualize in his life, but that nevertheless occupy and shape his subconscious. As these images of violence are so intricately woven into his subconscious, so they become an integral and inseparable part of his identity, both as seen by himself and others. This recurrent violence develops into a violence imposed both internally as well as externally in the form of Captain Logan and again in the form of Tobias Oates. While, as an author, Oates cannot relinquish or ignore the violence in Maggs's past, or in Australia's past, Carey indicates that he also cannot fully represent or convey this violent part of Maggs's identity because, even as Oates digs into Maggs's subconscious by the use of mesmerism, he tortures Maggs and fabricates the story to suit both his own concept of Maggs as well as creating a story that is marketable. As Marx points to the capitalist nature of Defoe's Crusoe in his need to place value on every item, Oates's intent to capture Maggs's life in a novel commodifies the violence enacted upon Maggs and so commodifies the implications of such violence. This commodification, or ability to market a person's life, mask the implications of such nationalist violence as it resonates on a personal and national level. Franz Fanon expands upon these implications as he writes,

> Hate is not inborn; it has to be constantly cultivated, to be brought into being … he who hates has to show his hate in appropriate action …

> that is why the Americans have substituted discrimination for lynching. (29).

Fanon uses the word "cultivation" to indicate the continual process by which hate and discrimination are narrated to and expanded within a culture, such as by canonical assumptions that are then actualized into tangible, physical violence against the hated, or other.

While this violence against Friday and Magwitch is not as overtly available in the canonical texts, Coetzee and Carey point to the denial, or absence, of violence within the canon, an absence that has allowed for that violence to be forgotten or lessened. The savagery in *Robinson Crusoe* belongs to Friday, Magwitch is never redeemed from his criminality in *Great Expectations*, but *Foe* and *Jack Maggs* place culpability on Crusoe and Pip as narrators. Coetzee and Carey both blame Britain. This metaphor, then, becomes larger than Jack Maggs and Magwitch, Friday and Crusoe; the metaphor relates the national implications of the canonical myths that excuse and deny the violence and inhumanity of patriarchal imperialism. Carey closes *Jack Maggs* by having Maggs return to Australia where, by returning to his natural sons (rather than the adopted Phipps), Maggs

> sold the brickworks in Sydney. In Wingham he set up a saw mill and, when that prospered, a hardware store, and when that prospered, a pub. He was twice president of the shire and was still the president of the Cricket Club when Dick [his son] hit the cover off a new ball match

> against Taree…amongst the succeeding generations of Maggs who still live on those fertile river flats (356).

Where Magwitch finds social redemption through Pip in England, Carey re-locates the narrative center by allowing Maggs to be redeemed as human in Australia, rather than condemned as criminal, in England. Just as Friday in *Robinson Crusoe* immediately assimilates to English, but in *Foe* cannot communicate in English, so Carey and Coetzee unmask the glory of imperialist Britain by revealing the violence enacted upon its colonies. History, then, becomes not a monolithic force of truth that covers the violence in structures of imperialism and patriarchy, but rather a process of what Paulo Friere terms emerging "*conscientization*… or 'consciousness raising' to explain the process of coming to understand how social structures cause injustice" (qtd. in Farmer 143). The novels of Coetzee and Carey undergo this process of conscientization in order to recover the voices and histories of nations and peoples whose identities are "drearily suspended" between the national imperialist consciousness and their own concept of the self. While Coetzee denies Friday a sense of self in *Foe* and Carey allows Maggs narrative space to express the self, each novelist attempts to unearth a deeper consciousness and to expose the identity suspension present in the canonical texts, *Robinson Crusoe* and *Great Expectations.*

V.

Conclusion

"[By] rejecting a monolithic History that defines and established boundaries of the nation…history, then, can be transformed into…a 'performative act'… [rather than just] serving the aims of the 'pedagogical'"-Mona Fayad

"The sigh of History rises over ruins, not over landscapes, and in the Antilles there are few ruins to sigh over, apart from the ruins of sugar estates and abandoned forts."-Derek Walcott

Derek Walcott's Nobel Lecture focuses on the relationship between the process of restoring an identity to the colonized Antilles and that of writing poetry. He writes:

> Break a vase, and the love that reassembles the fragments is stronger than that love which took its symmetry for granted when it was whole. The glue that fits the pieces is the sealing of its original shape. It is such a love that reassembles our African and Asiatic fragments, the cracked heirlooms whose restoration shows its white scars. This gathering of broken pieces is the care and pain of the Antilles, and if the pieces are disparate, ill-fitting, they contain more pain than their original sculpture, those icons and sacred vessels taken for granted in their ancestral places. Antillean art is this restoration of our shattered histories, our shards of vocabulary, our archipelago becoming a synonym for pieces broken off from the original continent. And this is the exact process of the making of poetry, or what should be called not its "making" but its remaking.

The process of authorship for Coetzee and Carey includes taking these fragments and "broken pieces" from within the canonical novels and placing these pieces into fragmented narrative structures that "are disparate, ill-fitting…contain more pain than their original structure" as each "cracked heirloom…shows its white scars." The characters of Friday, Barton, and Maggs are these pieces being carefully restored to their "shattered histories…shards of vocabulary, [their] archipelago becoming a synonym for pieces broken off from the original continent."

In the novels of Coetzee and Carey, then, we find not the "making" of literature, but rather the "re-making" that takes into account the violence and fragmentation of characters in their very narrative structures. Rather than conforming to canonical patterns, these narratives represent the narrative voices of the historically broken and fragmented. Coetzee breaks the vase, or story, of *Robinson Crusoe* and re-assembles the pieces of Friday and Barton not by weaving these two characters into an existing history, but by allowing the narrative "glue" and "white scars" to be those histories told, or withheld, by each character. Carey too restores the story of Jack Maggs by exposing the violence and pain that have caused him to be "fragments of an epic memory" both in his own consciousness and the imperialist canon.

Authorship is a restoration that allows the "monolith" of history to "be transformed into a 'performative act;'" this performative act views history not as a series of chronological events, but rather as an act of discovering and unearthing new dimensions to the past. An author follows this performative act by

> conjugat[ing] both tenses simultaneously: the past and the present…[because] There is the buried language and there is the individual vocabulary, and the process of poetry is one of excavation and of self-discovery. Tonally the individual voice is a dialect; it shapes its own accent, its own vocabulary and melody in defiance of an imperial concept of language. (Walcott)

Just as Salman Rushdie's Saleem Sinai expresses that he is "indissolubly chained" to his nation, so a person is "indissolubly chained" to the historical concept of that nation; Coetzee and Carey, then, have transformed the role of the author from being a creator of this history to one of "excavation and of self-discovery… [that] shapes its own accent, its own vocabulary and melody in defiance of an imperial concept of language." As Fanon closes *Black Skin, White Masks* by asking "O my body, make me always a man who questions!" (232), these contemporary novelists re-build the fragments of memory to become authors who do not write for the authority, but rather to question and to seek fragmented texts within the canon, and to begin the process of re-building or re-storing a voice and presence for those denied normalcy within a patriarchal, imperialist canon, and world.

Works Cited

Armstrong, Karen. *Defoe: Writer as Agent*. Victoria: University of Victoria Press, 1996.

Berger, John. *About Looking*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1980.

Boehmer, Ellke. *Empire Writings: An Anthology of Colonial Literature 1870-1918.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Carey, Peter. *Jack Maggs*. New York: Random House, 1999.

Cintron, Ralph. *Angels' Town:* Chero *Ways, Gang Life, and Rhetorics of the Everyday*. Boston: Beacon's Press, 1997.

Coetzee, J.M. *Foe*. New York: Penguin Groups, 1986.

Defoe, Daniel. *Robinson Crusoe*. New York: The Modern Library, 2001.

Dickens, Charles. *Great Expecations*. New York: Random House, 2001.

Durrant, Samuel. "Bearing Witness to Apartheid: J.M. Coetzee's Inconsolable Works of Mourning." *Contemporary Literature.* 40.3 (Fall 1999): 430.

Fanon, Franz. *Black Skin, White Masks.* New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1967.

Farmer, Paul. *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005. p. 143.

Fayad, Mona. "Reinscribing Identity: Nation and Community in Arab Women's Writing." *College Literature*. 22 (February 1995) p. 147.

Fetterly, Judith. *The Resisting Reader: A Feminist Approach to American Fiction*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978.

Foucault, Michel. “What is an Author?” *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism*. Ed. Josué V. Harari. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1979.

Hagan, John H. “The Poor Labyrinth: The Theme of Social Injustice in Dickens's *Great Expectations.*" *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*. 9.3 (Dec., 1954), pp. 169-178

Hynes, Joseph A. “Image and Symbol in Great Expectations**.”** *ELH* . 30.3 (Sep., 1963), pp. 258-292.

Lin, Lidan. "J.M. Coetzee and the Postcolonial Rhetoric of Simultaneity." International Fiction Review Jan 2001: 42

Marx, Karl. *Das Kapital*. *Marxist Internet Archive*. 19 January 2006. www.marxist.org.

Milosz, Czeslaw. “Annalena.” *New and Collected Poems: 1931-2000*. New York: Harper Collins, 2001.

Mulvey, Laura. “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema.” *Screen*. 16. (1975). p. 6-18.

Novak, Maximillian E. *Defoe and the Nature of Man*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963.

Quayson, Ato. “Symbolisation Compulsions: Freud, African Literature and South Africa’s Process of Truth and Reconciliation.” The Cambridge Quarterly 30.3 (2001):191-214.

Rushdie, Salman. *Midnight's Children*. New York: Penguin Books, 1980.

Said, Edward. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Random House, 1993.

Tabas, Brad. "Freedom in Madness: J.M. Coetzee and the Politics of Madness." Safundi: The Journal of South African And American Comparative Studies. January 2001. http://www.shunya.net/Text/Articles/CoetzeeTabas.htm.

Walcott, Derek. "The Antilles: Fragment of an Epic Memory." *Nobel Lecture*. NobelPrize.org. 15 February 2006. http://nobelprize.org/literature/laureates.