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The Female Crusoe, or,

the Story of the Island In-Between:

Feminine Transformations Of Identity And Value in the Castaway Narrative

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the Australian National University

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DECLARATION

I declare that, except where indicated, this thesis is my own work.

Christine Owen

June, 1998

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Abstract

The thesis examines the role of gender in the construction of *Robinson Crusoe* and later rewritings in the early eighteenth and late twentieth centuries, which feature female protagonists. Analysing the gendered construction of *Robinson Crusoe* is important because of its representation in literary criticism as iconic text of rational individualism and colonialism, and in economic discourse as exemplar of rational economic man. The tendency of feminist and psychoanalytic theory is to present such modern subjectivity as inherently masculine. My reading examines ways in which the 'feminine', given varying and similar attributes in the quite different texts I examine, forms the basis of the construction, and later deconstruction, of *Robinson Crusoe*.

In both periods, the castaway narrative performs a social critique in which certain 'feminine' values are represented as castaway and then form the basis of a 'rescue'. The title of the thesis emphasises that *Robinson Crusoe* was based on 'feminine' values, understood as 'the female goddesses of disorder', luxury and credit. In this period, these values which were associated with instability and artifice, were revalued and associated with social mobility and transformation. Such revaluing of the 'feminine' occurred at the same time as the rise of the novel and early arguments in favour of women's access to education. I use Defoe's conduct book, *The Complete English Tradesman* to show that *Robinson Crusoe* uses sexual difference, racial and cultural hybridity, and artifice to establish the authority and authenticity of the socially mobile tradesman. The female castaway narratives in both periods, draw on as well as critique *Robinson Crusoe* to establish authority for similarly marginalised positions. In both periods, *Robinson Crusoe* and the female castaway narratives link writing, subjectivity and materiality in response to a crisis of representation. In these quite different periods, the 'feminine' is given similar attributes and established as a valuable ground of transformation and authority.

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Introduction

Robinson Crusoe: iconic text of modern subjectivity

...to draw a line is to produce a space and the production of the space effects the line.

Rosalyn Diprose and Robyn Ferrell, *Cartographies*

...man is an invention of recent date.

Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*

After deciding that *Robinson Crusoe* would be the focus of my thesis, a young woman visitor to the Centre for Women's Studies challenged me with the question, "What has *Robinson Crusoe* got to do with women?" The exclusion of women from Crusoe's island in part provokes this question. In popular imagination, after all, the story is of a man's shipwreck and sole survival. That is, until he is joined by the cannibal, Friday, who becomes his companion.[1] The absence of "woman" has informed the representation of Crusoe in literary criticism as 'the embodiment of economic individualism'[2] and in economics as 'the exemplar of rational economic man'.[3] In this thesis, I take a closer look at the significance of the absence of women on Crusoe's island, by examining the role of the "feminine" in the text. I am interested in the way the category of "the feminine" functions in the castaway texts of early and late modernity.[4] I focus on

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[1] In the thesis I refer to the text as *Robinson Crusoe* and the protagonist as Crusoe. The references throughout are to the standard text, Daniel Defoe, *The Life and Surprizing Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, of York, Mariner*, edited and produced by J. Donald Crowley, Oxford University Press, London, 1972, (1st pub. 1719).

[2] Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1957, p. 63. Watt repeats this characterisation in his more recent *Myths of Modern Individualism: Faust, Don Quixote, Don Juan, Robinson Crusoe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996. Watt's influence in relation to the rise of the novel is discussed in Robert Folkenflik, 'The Heirs of Ian Watt', *Eighteenth Century Studies*, vol. 25, no. 2, Winter 1991.

[3] The phrase is used by Gillian Hewitson, *Deconstructing Robinson Crusoe: A Feminist Interrogation of Rational Economic Man*, unpublished discussion paper, La Trobe University, Bundoora, 1993. Watt points out the text's use as an 'illustration of homo economicus' in *The Rise of the Novel*, p. 63. Karl Marx commented on the novel as a 'favourite theme with political economists' in *Das Kapital* (1867), quoted in Pat Rogers, *The Critical Heritage*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1972, p. 166. See also Ulla Grappard, '*Robinson Crusoe*: The Quintessential Economic Man?', *Feminist Economics*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1995, pp. 33-52.

[4] Rather than continuing to place the word "feminine" in inverted commas throughout the thesis, I stress here that my use of the term refers to the specific meanings attributed to it in the castaway text, rather than to any natural attribute. On this basis inverted commas are used only where this meaning may be ambigious.

the feminine as a set of values rather than as a representative of "woman". In this way, it is possible, as Carolyn Burke points out, to see '"woman" not as man's other, as in the negative sense of "difference" but as a plurality of meanings, [in this way] we recharge the concept with a new, more positive valence'.[5] In the first half of the thesis, I examine the shaping presence of certain values classified as feminine in the early eighteenth century. I approach the task by reading *Robinson Crusoe* with Defoe's *The Complete English Tradesman*, and by examining castaway narratives featuring female protagonists written in the same period. In the second half of the thesis, I examine three late twentieth century texts which rewrite *Robinson Crusoe* and which feature female protagonists. I refer to female castaway narratives as "rewritings". This term covers texts which are radically different from *Robinson Crusoe* and from each other. My awareness of the range of literary texts which rewrite *Robinson Crusoe* in relation to female protagonists has led me to prioritise "gender" and "text" as categories of analysis.[6]

My investigations have led me to understand that the castaway narrative, in the early eighteenth and late twentieth centuries, not only represents an isolated, unitary, all controlling individualism, but also a gendered landscape and social critique in which a tentative and precarious authority is established for a marginalised identity. For example, I establish that key cultural terms, such as "credit" and "luxury", are represented in the period as feminine. I show that *Robinson Crusoe* is based on the problems and possibilities that this creates, in establishing authority and authenticity for the socially mobile tradesman. In its

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[5] Jane Gallop and Carolyn Burke, 'Psychoanalysis and Feminism in France' in Hester Eisenstein and Alice Jardine, (ed.), *The Future of Difference*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, 1980, p. 107.

[6] I use the term 'gendered concepts' or gendered language in relation to both periods, although historians such as Thomas Laqueur argue that the eighteenth century concept of gender is not enmeshed with the sexed body, and the late twentieth century texts are more likely to be based on contemporary understandings that 'socio-political structures construct particular kinds of bodies'. For the purposes of my discussion of both periods, I consider concepts of gender to derive from and inform concepts of the body. See Thomas Laqueur, *The Making of Sex*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1990, p. 124. For a critique of the concept of gender, see Moira Gatens, 'Towards a feminist philosophy of the body' in Barbara Caine, E. A. Grosz and Marie de Lepervanche, *Feminism and the Critique of Knowledges*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1988, the above quotation is from p. 62. Also Moira Gatens, 'A Critique of the Sex/Gender Distinction' in Sneja Gunew, *A Reader in Feminist Knowledge*, Routledge, London, 1991.

concern to establish a different set of values, the castaway narrative performs as a social critique. It is a role for which it is particularly suited and not only on the basis of its debt to the utopian narrative.

The nature of being castaway lends itself to constructive and deconstructive activity. The political edge of the rewritings of *Robinson Crusoe* is that both sets of texts negotiate binary or oppositional terms. That is, in relation to dominant binary oppositions, the castaway state is neither away nor home and occupies neither a positive nor negative term. It is an in-between, or liminal state in need of validation.[7] Each castaway is far from his or her point of origin and cannot get back. The castaway, however, does not reside "nowhere". For the castaway, the world that is known to him or her, the shape of what is familiar, gives sense to what is unknown and unfamiliar. The contrast allows values which are "foreign" to be justified. The castaway state is a situation where survival is at stake and the island scenario of scarcity allows certain neglected values to be represented as being of vital importance. The philosophical and political edge of the castaway narrative is that it is a text about who and what is to survive and on what terms.

In the early eighteenth century narratives, land and sea represent a contrast, as well as an alliance, between different value systems. These narratives depict a symbolic landscape in which what is substantial is associated with the land, domestic trade and gold, while the sea is associated with foreign trade, financial speculation and social mobility. In other words, the castaway narrative represented a contrast (and the need for an alliance) between an increasing materialism and the established order. Ideals and materiality are opposed in these texts through reference to a number of other oppositions such as visible/invisible, substantial/insubstantial and authentic/inauthentic. The castaway narrative evokes a crisis of value which enables new identities to come into being. In this

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[7] It is relevant that: 'Semiotics tells us that similarity and difference are relational categories, that they can only be established in relation to some term of reference, which is thus assumed as the point of theoretical articulation; and indeed that term determines the parameters and conditions of comparison'. Teresa De Lauretis, *Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics and Cinema*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1984, p. 17.

sense, there is an equivalence between the critiques of subjectivity which inform the twentieth century castaway texts and the negotiations of identity, which are evident in the early eighteenth century narratives. Generally, both sets negotiate a different relationship between subjectivity (or identity), materiality and ideals.

Robinson Crusoe is a text of early modernity and as such, Rita Felski's observation is an important one:

> the stories that we create...reveal the inescapable presence and power of gender symbolism. This saturation of cultural texts with metaphors of masculinity and femininity is nowhere more obvious than in the case of the modern, perhaps the most pervasive yet elusive of periodising terms.[8]

Felski's perspective, which understands that the feminine is an important aspect of the modern, is an example of the kind of feminist perspective that has informed this work. Felski points out that the commonplace association of masculinity with modernity and the positioning of women outside modernity is incorrect in that these positions are not fixed.[9] Her sense of 'mutual imbrication as well as points of contradiction' between the subject and the text has informed my own work.[10]

In the sections which follow, I discuss literary criticism on *Robinson Crusoe* and provide a brief account of the literary history of the female castaway texts which rewrite *Robinson Crusoe*. I then discuss the methodology I have followed before outlining the chapters of the thesis.

Robinson Crusoe and literary criticism

Robinson Crusoe tells the story of a man cast away on a Carribean island in the gulf of the river Oroonooko, off the mainland of Trinidad. The story is set in the late seventeenth century and was written by the trader and journalist, Daniel Defoe, and published in 1719. The author of the text is given as 'Robinson Crusoe',

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[8] Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1995, p. 1.

[9] Felski gives examples of instances in which gender disturbs apparently discrete entities, these include: working class women going into factories giving rise to speculations as to the sexualisation of the workplace; the articulation of consumer culture as feminised public space; and the assertion of 'a distinctively feminine morality' as the rationale for wider mobility in the public sphere. Felski, p. 19. The latter is particularly applicable to the early eighteenth century.

[10] Ibid, p. 18.

and he tells how he disobeyed his father and went to sea. After many adventures - involving storms and being taken as a slave by pirates - he establishes a plantation in Brazil. He is shipwrecked while on a trip looking for slaves to capture and is the only survivor. There are no women on Crusoe's island. After twenty odd years in isolation, Crusoe is eventually joined by a Carib native whom he saves from being eaten, and names 'Friday', after the day on which they meet. With the help of Friday, Crusoe saves several white men from the Caribs who visit the island for cannibal rituals. On the island, Crusoe variously calls himself 'King' and 'Governor', and his places of living, his 'castle' and 'country retreats'.

Crusoe is not rescued from the island, but he rescues the captain of a boat from a mutiny and commandeers the ship. He sails to Lisbon and returns to England by land and sea. By the end of the novel, Crusoe has accumulated great wealth, taken possession of the island, converted Friday to Christianity and taught him English. A good friend, a widow, has invested his money in his absence. In one sentence, Crusoe states that after leaving the island he married, had two sons and a daughter and that later his wife died. Crusoe had left the island in the hands of previously mutinous sailors and they were joined by the released Spanish prisoners of the Caribs. When he left the island, Crusoe sent these men, among other supplies, seven women 'proper for Service and or [sic] for Wives such as would take them', with a promise of English women for the English sailors.[11] At the end of the novel, Crusoe returns to sea with a nephew as 'a private Trader to the *East Indies*'.[12] This is the basic structure of *Robinson Crusoe*, the first and most well known of the three volumes produced by Defoe.[13]

There is little discussion of gender or of sexuality in the majority of criticism of *Robinson Crusoe*. There has been little or no consideration of the role of gendered values in relation to the text and the ideology of rational individualism, or with

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[11] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 306.

[12] Ibid, p. 305.

[13] The other volumes (which are not discussed in detail in the thesis) are *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, 1719 and *Serious Reflections during the Life and Surprizing Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, with his Vision of the Angelic World*, 1720.

regard to Crusoe's masculinity.[14] A recent exception is Ian A. Bell who looks at women's role in *Robinson Crusoe* and at their 'absence'. He concludes that it is both 'significant' and 'curious' that 'Crusoe's women represent the stable and enduring features of a world constantly put out of balance by the aggressive forces of male impulsiveness'.[15]

The major exception to the exclusion of gender in analysis is the work of Ian Watt in his early influential work, *The Rise of the Novel* (1957).[16] Watt devotes the first and longest part of his analysis of *Robinson Crusoe* to considering the relationship between rational individualism, capitalism and the text's treatment of women. In his examination of the content of the text, he points out that, in the three volumes of *Robinson Crusoe*, women are only mentioned in relation to economic exchange and that Defoe uses the language of commerce in his descriptions of them. Watt shows that elsewhere in his writings, Defoe scorns 'romantic love', 'even sexual satisfaction' and marriage.[17] He also points out that the ethos of economic individualism prevents Crusoe 'from paying much heed to the ties of family, whether as a son or as a husband'.[18] Watt advocates reading *Robinson Crusoe* as capitalist ideology, citing Weber's understanding that

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[14] Carol Houlihan Flynn examines the body in Defoe's work in *The Body in Swift and Defoe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990. Richard Phillips is also an exception, although his work does not look at masculinity as a construction, rather he examines various depictions of Crusoe as masculine. *Mapping Men and Empire*, 1997. A number of critics have examined *Robinson Crusoe* in relation to psychoanalysis and the body. The alimentary focus of *Robinson Crusoe* is discussed within a psychoanalytic framework in Martin J. Gliserman, 'Robinson Crusoe and the Vicissitudes of Greed: Cannibalism and Capitalism' in *Psychoanalysis, Language and the Body of the Text*, University of Florida, Gainesville, 1996. See also Alphonso Lingis, *Foreign Bodies*, Routledge, New York, 1994 and Roger Celestin, 'Can Robinson Crusoe find True Happiness (Alone)? Beyond Genitals and History on the Island of Hope' in Paula Bennett and Vernon A. Rosario (eds.), *Solitary Pleasures: The Historical, Literary, and Artistic Discourses of Autoerotocism*, Routledge, New York, 1996.

[15] Ian A. Bell, 'Crusoe's Women: Or, the Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time' in Lieve Spaas and Brian Stimpson, (eds.), *Robinson Crusoe: Myths and Metamorphoses*, Macmillan Press, Basingstoke, 1996, p. 44.

[16] In *Myths of Modern Individualism*, 1996 Watt reiterates and extends his analysis in order to link *Robinson Crusoe* as myth to human behaviour.

[17] Watt, *The Rise of the Novel*, p. 67.

[18] Ibid, p. 63 and p. 66.

> sex...is one of the strongest potential menaces to the individual's rational pursuit of economic ends, and it has therefore...been placed under particularly strong controls in the ideology of industrial capitalism.[19]

Watt's argument is a powerful description of *Robinson Crusoe* and the ideology of rational individualism. My argument with his treatment is that he reads *Robinson Crusoe* on the same terms that the text offers. That is, just as Defoe excludes women from the island and presents women in economic terms, so Watt considers women excluded from capitalism and from economics. Similarly, just as Defoe presents *Robinson Crusoe* as a self-made man, so does Watt. In this respect his criticism, though enormously important in articulating the ideology of the text, simply remains within that ideology. Joan Scott states of such a critical approach that:

> By remaining within the epistemological frame of orthodox [ideas]...these studies lose the possibility of examining those assumptions and practices that excluded considerations of difference in the first place.[20]

In Watt's analysis, "the individual" is discussed as if the term is inherently masculine. For instance, in his discussion of the eighteenth century individual, he states that '...he alone was primarily responsible for determining his own economic, social, political and religious roles'.[21] He also depicts the "self" as masculine, stating that 'every good Puritan conducted a continual scrutiny of his inner man for evidence of his own place in the divine plot of election and reprobation'.[22] Although this language may be understood in the broad generic sense that Watt no doubt intended, his intentions are undermined by his basing the rational individualism of Defoe's texts in Defoe's life itself.[23]

Watt's analysis is based on a normative reality. He presents *Robinson Crusoe* as a construction of realism in the broad sense of a genre in which "real life" is

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[19] Watt paraphrases Weber (*Essays in Sociology*, 1946). Watt, *The Rise of the Novel*, p. 67.

[20] Joan Scott quoted by Lisa Rado, (ed.), *Rereading Modernism: New Directions in Feminist Criticism*, Garland Publishing, Inc., New York, 1994, p. 276.

[21] Watt, *The Rise of the Novel*, p. 61.

[22] Ibid, p. 75.

[23] Ibid, p. 114.

portrayed with the 'the utmost fidelity'.[24] He describes the absence of women on Crusoe's island in psychological terms, as the expression of 'an extreme inhibition of what we now consider to be normal human feelings'.[25] The masculinity, realism and psychology of the text then combine as the ground for what is normal. On this basis, Crusoe becomes a 'universal representative'[26] and 'a model to us all in how he learns to manage his desolated state'.[27] This thesis owes much to Watt's analysis and depiction of Crusoe as a universal and rational individual, and to those critics who have subsequently developed that analysis. I do not disagree with Watt's depiction; rather I take issue with the mode of his analysis.

Watt's depiction of *Robinson Crusoe* is matched by feminist, psychoanalytic, deconstructive and poststructuralist readings which understand the rational individual to be a masculine subjectivity which is imposed on all "subjects" of Western culture and language. The problematic that is proposed is that this masculine, Protestant, white subjectivity gives all who are excluded from it no place "to be" on their own terms. In psychoanalytic readings, the "subject" of language is phallocentric and dominant, and the feminine is always and everywhere excluded. For example, Robyn Wiegman depicts *Robinson Crusoe* and *Roxana* as paradigmatic cases of texts based in sexual difference.[28] For Wiegman, sexual difference 'maps the terrain of the story before the story begins'. She states that:[29]

> a cultural and narrative economy...privileges masculine subjectivity - or, more accurately, equates subjectivity with the masculine, thereby exclud[es]..."the possibility- the theoretical possibility - of woman ever being subjects and producers of culture".[30]

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[24] Ibid, p. 61

[25] Watt, *Myths of Modern Individualism*, p. 169.

[26] Watt points out that the depiction of Crusoe as universal representative was first coined by Coleridge. Watt, *The Rise of the Novel*, p. 78.

[27] Watt, *Myths of Modern Individualism*, p. 167.

[28] Robyn Wiegman, 'Economies of the Body: Gendered Sites in *Robinson Crusoe* and *Roxana*', *Criticism*, Winter, 1989, vol. XXXI, no. 1, pp. 33-51.

[29] Ibid, p. 33.

[30] Ibid.

Wiegman's approach tends towards a structural reading of narrative. That is, one in which the text does not emerge from a particular society for particular reasons; in all instances, the same narrative is repeated. This approach reflects the "subject" as it appears to be, that is, as fixed and unchanging. In contrast, my attempt to read *Robinson Crusoe* in terms of an eighteenth century discourse on trade, is in part an attempt to emphasise the subject's cultural and historical construction.

In Wiegman's work, women are disempowered and men are all powerful. This is common to depictions of the subject as masculine. For example, Sidonie Smith refers to,

> the universal subject and the hard nut of its normative (masculine) individuality. It speaks...of the tyranny of the arid "I" which obscures through a gray and shapeless mist everything colorful that lies within its vision.[31]

Instead of focussing on positions of relative power, I emphasise that the "subject" is 'precarious, contradictory and in process, constantly being reconstituted in discourse each time we speak'.[32] The view that subject-positions are always in formation contrasts dramatically with the perception that there is an already formed "subject" outside of language controlling meaning, or that the masculine "subject" is unified and coherent. My argument is that protagonists (as "subjects") feature as one aspect of particular gendered and symbolic economies, and it is in this wider sense that they come to have meaning and significance.

There is an uncomfortable similarity between the ideology of the subject as masculine, unified and coherent, and the analysis of that ideology. That is, the critic's interpretative approach often reflects the values which are understood to define the text itself. This approach informs the work of Patricia Spacks who, for example, in *Imagining the Self* uses the masculine as the exemplary "subject" in her opening paragraph: 'The autobiographer, attesting his existence by the fact of his writing, lives through his explanations, tacit, or explicit, of how he came to be the

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[31] Sidonie Smith, *Subjectivity, Identity and the Body*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1993, p. 3.

[32] Weedon, p. 33.

person he is'.[33] Spacks uses *Robinson Crusoe* to show a 'conscious preoccupation with the role of imagination in spiritual and emotional development' in early eighteenth century novels.[34] She finds that any understanding of the self is inadequate without a consideration 'of society and its shaping force on identity'.[35] In spite of this contextual perspective, her analysis depends on a psychological and ahistorical understanding of Crusoe's experience as 'the direct product of human fantasy'.[36] Unlike her work on female identity, Spacks does not read *Robinson Crusoe* as a gendered text.

The overwhelming focus of feminist work on eighteenth century texts has been on women authors and female protagonists. Feminist criticism of *Robinson Crusoe* as a gendered text has been minimal. This reflects the early domination of feminist criticism by liberal humanist concerns in which a focus on gender meant a concern with female subjects and women's roles.[37] This work has resulted in criticisms of the place *Robinson Crusoe* holds in the canon of English literature, and criticism of Ian Watt for failing to account for the predominance of women novel writers in the eighteenth century.[38] The latter accusation is made by Nancy Armstrong in her important work on eighteenth century domestic fiction.[39] Her work is relevant to this discussion for its dismissal of *Robinson Crusoe* as a text capable of explaining the rise of the woman novelist.

Armstrong's starting point is, as it is for many feminists, Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*. By starting her analysis with *Pamela*, her thesis, like Watt's,

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[33] Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Imagining a Self: Autobiography and Novel in Eighteenth century England*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1976, p. 1.

[34] Spacks, p. 29.

[35] Ibid, p. 90

[36] Ibid, p. 39.

[37] On this basis, Defoe has been of interest to feminist critics in relation to *Roxana* and *Moll Flanders*; his progressive views on women and education; and more recently, with regard to his gendered discourse on credit.

[38] Gale Spender quoted by Catherine Belsey and Jane Moore, *The Feminist Reader: Essays In Gender And The Politics Of Literary Criticism*, B. Blackwell, New York, 1989, p. 27.

[39] Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel*, Oxford University Press, 1987, p. 7.

emphasises an origin and associates the arrival of the novel and the individual with 'the rise of the domestic woman as a major event in political history'.[40] It is important to Armstrong that *Robinson Crusoe* is placed outside the "domestication" thesis that she is arguing. It allows her to argue that 'we cannot say Crusoe inaugurated the tradition of the novel as we know it'.[41] With this statement it is as if Watt and Armstrong take up complementary masculine and feminine critical positions, the one concerned with *Robinson Crusoe* and masculine identity, and the other with *Pamela* and female identity. Each critic associates the rise of the novel with differently gendered protagonists and texts.

In spite of Armstrong's criticism of Watt's reading of *Robinson Crusoe*, she depicts her domestic woman as a Crusoe-like figure:

> Domestic fiction...introduc(ed) a new form of political power. This power emerged with the rise of the domestic woman and established its hold over British culture through her dominance over all those objects and practices we establish with private life. To her went authority over the household, leisure time, courtship procedures and kinship relations, and under her jurisdiction the most basic qualities of human identity were supposed to develop.[42]

Armstrong also points out that *Robinson Crusoe* was important to female education in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century. She remarks that 'curiously', *Robinson Crusoe* was recommended reading for girls even when fiction was not.[43] She also says that 'oddly', Erasmus Darwin recommended *Robinson Crusoe* for the education of girls.[44] Her overall explanation is that 'women were likely to learn to desire what Crusoe accomplished, a totally self-enclosed and functional domain where money didn't really matter'.[45] In her view, the late eighteenth century

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[40] Armstrong, p. 3.

[41] Ibid, p. 29.

[42] Ibid, p. 3. Others have noted the domesticity of *Robinson Crusoe*, Paul Zweig, *The Adventurer*, Dent, London, 1974 suggests that *Robinson Crusoe* praises domestic life. Pat Rogers states that the text is about home-making. 'Crusoe's home', *Essays in Criticism*, no. 24, 1974, pp. 375-90.

[43] Ibid, p. 16.

[44] Ibid, p. 106.

[45] Ibid, p. 16.

educator, Maria Edgeworth recommended the text to female readers on these grounds:

> It was no doubt because Crusoe was more female, according to the nineteenth century understanding of gender, than either Roxana or Moll Flanders that educators found his story more suitable reading for girls than for boys of an impressionable age.[46]

Armstrong's point that the rise of the novel must be considered in the context of a history of sexuality is a very important one. Her observation that *Robinson Crusoe* was considered suitable for female readers is also important. However, by dismissing *Robinson Crusoe* as relevant to her concerns, she ignores her own valuable insight. That is, if 'the historical dimension of desire' is ignored, there is no way to explain 'why, at the inception of modern culture, the literate classes in England suddenly developed an unprecedented taste for writing for, about and by women'.[47] She is also unable to explain her depiction of domestic woman as a Crusoe-like figure. In my thesis, I show that the problem of economic desire, for luxury and consumption, informs *Robinson Crusoe* and that such desire was represented as sexual and gendered. This suggests that, as desire is Armstrong's central category of analysis, *Robinson Crusoe* would not have been such a curious place for her to begin her analysis.

By skipping over *Robinson Crusoe*, Armstrong misses the fact that luxury and credit, both represented as feminine values, were changing society, and were being defended, in the same period that women's access to education was being argued. Without considering *Robinson Crusoe* in relation to the gendered language of economic desire in the period, Armstrong is unable to move beyond the view of the nineteenth century educationalists, who argued that women 'would never imagine undertaking Crusoe's economic adventures'.[48] I suggest that the defence of luxury and credit, which occurred in the early eighteenth century, may well have been related to the 'unprecedented taste' for writing by and about women in

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[46] Ibid, p. 16.

[47] Ibid, p. 7.

[48] Ibid, p. 16.

the period. That is, both writers and texts may have emerged from a crisis of value in which "woman" and the "feminine" were indicators not only of what was to be brought under control, but also of what was to be gained.

The work of historians

As the above discussion indicates, my approach is to read *Robinson Crusoe* historically. This means that works which have analysed early eighteenth century discourse have been crucial to my thesis. One such work, which like Armstrong's sets itself against that of Ian Watt, is Michael McKeon's *The Origins of the English Novel*, an analysis also based on a 'rise of the novel' thesis.[49] McKeon's work has been criticised for leaving out sexuality, but commended on the basis that it 'implies a gender politics'.[50] One of the ways in which McKeon's work is important is that it provides a way to understand how issues of truth, veracity and the status of literature are linked to gender, although he does not develop these connections. For example, he suggests, with respect to *Robinson Crusoe*, that in order for moral behaviour to be conveyed to the reader the work had to be read as true. However, he does not then read *Robinson Crusoe* in relation to the connection that he established earlier between 'fidelity of narration'[51], constancy and female virtue.[52]

A number of other historians have provided a way to situate the feminine in the context of the dominant economic and sexual discourses of the day.[53] One example will provide the reader with a context for understanding the early eighteenth century. In Stephen Copley's work, *Literature and the Social Order in the Eighteenth Century*, documents are reproduced which show that there were three

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[49] I broadly agree with Robert Folkenflik that responses which draw on social theory "largely Marxist, Bakhtinian, and Foucauldian' are all 'heirs' to Ian Watt's analysis even, as he says, when they disagree with his analysis. Folkenflik, p. 203.

[50] Ibid, p. 217.

[51] McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel 1600-1740*, The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1987, p. 121.

[52] Ibid, p. 148.

[53] Among the most significant are: J. G. A Pocock, Ronald Paulson, G. J. Barker-Benfield, Colin Nicholson and Stephen Copley.

dominant economic discourses in the early period. These were civic humanism, which included aristocratic and bourgeois humanism, Mandevillian economics, and political economy.[54] Aristocratic or civic humanism was defined in the period as 'an exclusive class of men [sic] with innate abilities who engross almost the whole reason of the species, who are born to instruct, guide and to preserve; who are destined to be the tutors and guardians of humankind'.[55] This rational and patriarchal view was contested by Bernard Mandeville, nerve doctor and prominent philosopher, who argued for a Hobbesian view of "man" as essentially self-interested. He argued for the virtue inherent in the "vice" of luxury and against the association of luxury and consumerism with effeminacy. Finally, influenced by both of these discourses, political economy emerged in the 1740s. In this discourse, luxury was no longer associated with effeminacy, but with "natural" desire.

The individualism of *Robinson Crusoe* appears to conform to the description of aristocratic humanism. In this sense, the failure of Crusoe's colony (in the second volume), which critics have puzzled over, is consistent with early eighteenth century warnings of the disastrous consequences should 'these men desert their divinely appointed duties in the social hierarchy'.[56] Nonetheless, I read *Robinson Crusoe* as part of an attempt by Defoe to expand aristocratic humanism to include commerce in its 'civic virtues' and the middle class in its ruling order.[57] According to Copley, one of the obstacles to the integration of 'aristocratic and bourgeois humanism' with commerce, was the moral equation of trade, configured as luxury, with vice and 'effeminacy'.[58] In this regard, I align

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[54] Watt considers *Robinson Crusoe* to be a precursor to Adam Smith's political economy, *The Rise of the Novel*, p. 63.

[55] Stephen Copley, (ed.), *Literature and the Social Order in 18th Century England*, Croom Helm, London, 1984, p. 6.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid, pp. 6-7. Defoe is not alone in this argument which is also put by prominent journalists, Steele and Addison.

[58] Ibid, p. 4.

Defoe with the views of Mandeville, and read *Robinson Crusoe* as a text which is concerned to associate virtue with luxury, commerce and increased consumerism.

Although the work of these historians often does not directly address gender, their work shows that the discourses of trade, literature and truth use gender to construct boundaries and values in which identities are formed. My study follows in the wake of works such as Laura Brown's *Ends of Empire.* Brown which argues that, in the eighteenth century, concepts such as mercantile capitalism 'cannot be understood without an analysis of the representation of "woman"'.[59]

Robinson Crusoe and the "feminine": A literary context

Robinson Crusoe's fortunes as a literary text have been charted by a number of literary historians.[60] Notable turning points in its history include its reification as a pedagogical classic late in the eighteenth century through the writings of Jean Jacques Rousseau and the Edgeworths, and its popularity since that time as a children's adventure story.[61] In the 1960s in France, *Robinson Crusoe* first became the focus of theoretically informed fiction.[62] As a classic of English literature, *Robinson Crusoe* has been translated into many languages and as such, has been significant in spreading the ideology of colonialism. A number of authors with a colonised and non-European perspective have engaged with the text.[63]

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[59] Laura Brown, *Ends Of Empire: Women And Ideology In Early Eighteenth Century English Literature,* Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1993, p. 10.

[60] Recent "histories" include Martin Green, *The Robinson Crusoe Story,* Pennsylvania State University Press, Pennsylvania, 1990; David Fausett, *The Strange Surprizing Sources of Robinson Crusoe,* Rodphi, Amsterdam, 1994; David Blewett, *The Illustration of Robinson Crusoe 1719-1920,* Colin Smythe, Gerrards Cross, 1995; and Lieve Spaas and Brian Stimpson, eds., *Robinson Crusoe: Myths and Metamorphoses,* Macmillan Press, Basingstoke, 1996.

[61] In *Emile, or On Education* (1762), Rousseau named *Robinson Crusoe* as the only text young Emile would be allowed to read. Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Emile, or On Education,* Allan Bloom (ed.), Penguin Books, London, 1979, p. 184.

[62] The most well known is *Friday or the Other island* by Michel Tournier in which the island as Speranza is 'the feminine nature' which is literally seeded by Crusoe. Michel Tournier, *Friday, or the Other Island,* Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1984, 1st pub, 1967, p. 89.

[63] Works which engage with *Robinson Crusoe* from the perspective of the colonised include Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea,* Penguin, London, 1966; Keri Hulme, *The Bone People,* Spiral collective, Wellington, London, 1985; Maxine Hong Kingston, *China Men,* Vintage Books, New York, 1989 (see discussion of *Robinson Crusoe* connection in Kai-chong Cheung, 'Maxine Hong Kingston's Non-Chinese Man',

Watt presents *Robinson Crusoe* as unusual in that its exclusion of women from the island is a 'break from the traditional expectations aroused by desert islands from the Odyssey to the New Yorker'.[64] On the contrary, *Robinson Crusoe* is linked to a long tradition of utopian fictions in which women are either excluded, marginalised or brought under the control of marriage.[65] In her work on utopias, Marie Louise Berneri comments that 'It is curious...to see how many utopias are conceived of as sexless societies'.[66] David Fausett's work, *The Strange and Surprizing Sources of Robinson Crusoe*, gives many examples of the presence of a gender politics in utopian fictions. However, his important insight that there is a link between language, gender and materialism remains undeveloped and inconclusive.[67] Echoing McKeon's focus on the symbolic and textual importance of sexual fidelity, Fausett argues:

Tamkang Review: A Quarterly of Comparative Studies between Chinese and Foreign Literatures, vol. 23, 1993, pp. 421-30); Patrick White, *Fringe of Leaves*, Cape, London, 1976; Derek Walcott, *The Castaway, and other poems*, J. Cape, London, 1965; Sam Selvon, *Moses Ascending* (1975), Selvon's text is discussed in Phillips, 1997. An earlier important Victorian text is Wilkie Collins, *The Moonstone: a romance*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1910, (see discussion in Lillian Nayder, '*Robinson Crusoe* and Friday in Victorian Britain: 'Discipline', 'Dialogue', and Collins's Critique of Empire in The Moonstone', *Dickens Studies Annual: Essays on Victorian Fiction*, vol. 21, 1991, pp. 213-31).

[64] Watt, *The Rise of the Novel*, p. 68. Watt repeats this statement in *Myths of Modern Individualism*, 1996, p. 169. Arnold Saxton says that Homer's *Odyssey* contains three examples of women identified with islands seeking to catch men who come to close, these are Circe, Calypso and the Sirens. He goes on to discuss the Greek legend of Ariadne who was abandoned on the island of Naxos before being taken by Dionysus as his lover. Interestingly, with respect to the arguments of this thesis, he describes the island and her cave as symbolic and vaginal, Arnold Saxton, 'Female Castaways' in Spaas and Stimpson, p. 144.

[65] Fausett cites the influence of Hendrik Smeeks, *The Mighty Kingdom of Krinke Kesme*, (1708) which featured separate 'sub-societies on offshore islands' for men and women. Fausett describes this phenomenon as a 'radically feminist solution' to the materialist trend of the time and its social impact in terms of the 'battle of the sexes'. Fausett, p. 98. Fausett also cites the influence of Robert Knox, *Historical Relation* (1681) who associates women with dissension and states, of the community he establishes on the coast of Ceylon, that 'only single Men and Batchelors should dwell there...'p. 79. Another utopian text which is said to have influenced *Robinson Crusoe* is Ibn Tophail's *Hagi ibn Yaqdhan*, the Hispano-Arabian story of a self-taught philosopher. *Ibn Tophail* was published in English in 1708 as *The Improvement of Human Reason Exhibited in the Life of Hai ebn Yoqhdan*, trans. Simon Ockley. A. T. S Goodrich, '*Robinson Crusoe*, Imposter', *Blackwood's Magazine*, 1908, suggests the story of *Robinson Crusoe* was 'stolen' from Henry Seville's *Island of the Pines* and 'the Spanish-Arabian tale of Ibn Tophail', p. 183. This influence is discussed more recently in Samar Attar, 'Serving God or Mammon? Echoes from Havy Ibn Yaqzan and Sinbad the Sailor in *Robinson Crusoe*' in Spaas and Stimpson, pp. 78-97. *Ibn Tophail* was advertised in *The Female Tatler*, a paper in which Bernard Mandeville later wrote under a female persona. *The Female Tatler*, Nos 1 and 2, 1709.

[66] Marie Louise Berneri, *Journey through Utopia*, Freedom Press, London, 1982, p. 188.

[67] Gender, for example is not discussed in his list of six conclusions in the final chapter.

> Many [Utopian fictions]...replac[e] the arbitrariness of real languages with a rigid one to one relation between signs and things, or an ascetic sexual morality (or its negative, the ribaldry seen in English Restoration fiction).[68]

Fausett argues that the characterisation of Crusoe as an asexual, rational, economic subject is part of a dystopian tradition reflective of major changes in what was considered to have value in the early eighteenth century. These include the shift to a secular society, increasing materialism and industrialisation, the crisis over truth and the rise of realism and the novel.

The story of being marooned on desert islands is, nonetheless, not confined to "masculine" utopian visions. While *Robinson Crusoe*, as described in literary criticism, may not appear to be a story conducive to women, the story of a desert island has been the location of female protagonists and the focus of both male and female writers before and since *Robinson Crusoe* was first written.[69] There is also some evidence to suggest that on its publication, *Robinson Crusoe* was most popular with female readers.[70] In the only work which discusses the female castaway narrative of the eighteenth century, Jeanne Blackwell points out that, in Germany, 'between 1720 and 1800, over sixteen female castaways appeared, followed by at least three French, three Dutch, three British and one American'.[71] My own work

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[68] Fausett, p. 23.

[69] In the seventeenth century Thomas D'Urfey, *Commonwealth of Women: A Play* (1686) was an alteration of the play, *The Sea Voyage* by Fletcher and Massinger, (1622). *The Sea Voyage* was a comedy featuring a group of women castaways who establish a "female commonwealth" on a desert island. Thomas D'Urfey, *Commonwealth of Women: A Play*, R. Bentley and J. Hindmarsh, 1686. *The Tempest*, which features father and daughter has been cited as one of Defoe's sources. Crusoe says that the mutinous sailors which land on the island think they are on 'an inchanted [sic] Island...there were Devils and Spirits in it'. *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 266. See discussions by John Robert Moore, '*The Tempest* and *Robinson Crusoe*', *Review of English Studies*, No 21, 1945, pp. 52-56; Michael Seidel who compares Friday to Ariel in Harold Bloom, *Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe*, Chelsea House, New York, 1988, p. 132; Dominique O. Mannoni who applies psychoanalytic theory to *Robinson Crusoe* and to colonialism in *Prospero and Caliban: The psychology of colonisation*, trans. P. Powesland, F.A. Praeger, New York, 1964, (1st published 1950) and Jeanne De Chantal Zabus, 'The Tempest and Robinson Crusoe: A Structuralist "Attention"', *English Studies in Canada*, vol. 9, no. 2, 1983, pp. 151-163.

[70] Pat Rogers states that the 'traditional literary public' were female and that Charles Gildon, a critic and contemporary of Defoe's suggested that *Robinson Crusoe* was popular 'below stairs'. *Robinson Crusoe*, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1979, pp. 102 -3.

[71] Jeanine Blackwell, "An Island of Her Own: Heroines of the German Robinsonaden from 1720-1800," *German Quarterly*, Winter 1985, pp. 21-2. There was a great interest in *Robinson Crusoe* in Germany in general. By 1760 more than 40 German "Robinsonades", (the term was coined by Hermann Ullrich in 1898) had been published. Roy Porter and Mikulas Teich, *The Enlightenment in National Context*,

confirms an additional four British narratives.[72] In the nineteenth century, the female castaway narrative continued to gain in popularity and in the twentieth century, the number of adventure stories featuring female protagonists are too many to enumerate.[73] Early in the nineteenth century, Fanny Burney concludes *The Wanderer* by describing her female protagonist as both independent and vulnerable:

> a being who had been cast upon herself; a female Robinson Crusoe, as unaided and unprotected, though in the midst of the world, as that imaginary hero in his uninhabited island; and reduced either to sink, through inanition, to nonentity, or

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Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981. In addition to the narratives I discuss in Chapters Two and Three, Henry Fielding features a female castaway story (Mrs Heartfree's story) in his narrative *Jonathan Wild*, 1743. At the end of the century there appeared, Marguerite Daubenton, *Zelie in the Desert, or the Female Crusoe*, C. Forster, London, 1789, an English translation of a French text written by the wife of an important French naturalist in 1787. The work is described as 'written in a natural style with engaging situations' and winning 'a fairly large audience', *Nouvelle Biographie Generale*. Charles Dibdin, *Hannah Hewitt, or, the Female Crusoe*, 1798. Dibdin, a noted song-writer, stated of this work that 'as women are more fertile in expedients than men, when put to...new trials, I had no doubt but the idea of a female Crusoe would excite curiosity'. Charles Dibdin, *Charles Dibdin*, vol. 3, 1803, p. 319. In a review, the work is commended 'in defiance of our better judgement' and incorrect geography. *The Freemason's Magazine*, 1796. M. Ducray-Duminil, *Ambrose and Eleanor, or, The adventures of two children deserted on an uninhabited island*, R. and L. Peacock, London, 1797, translation of French, *Lolotte et Fanfan*, 1788. The narrative, Unca Eliza Winkfield, *The Female American* was published in London in 1767 and in Massachusetts in 1798. Tremaine McDowell, 'An American *Robinson Crusoe*', *American Literature*, no 1, 1929, links *Robinson Crusoe* to *The Female American*, pp. 307-309. Many of these texts are mentioned by Blackwell.

[72] Of the five British narratives I discuss in Chapters Two and Three, Blackwell only includes Penelope Aubin's *The Life of Charlotta Du Pont* (1723).

[73] Some interesting examples in the nineteenth century are: Sarah Burney, 'The Shipwreck' in *Tales of Fancy*, Wells and Lilly, London, 1816; John Corry, *Sebastian and Zeila, or, The captive liberated by female generosity*, Crosby and Co., London, 1802; Lucy Ford, *Female Robinson Crusoe, A Tale of the American Wilderness*, J.W. Bell, 1837; Anon., *The life and adventures of Miss Robinson Crusoe*, E. Littel, Boston, 1846; Ann Fraser Tytler, *Leila, or, The island*, J. Hatchard and Son, London, 1849; Gus Williams, *Meta, the Girl Crusoe, or, the secret of the sea*, F. Tousey, New York, 1894. The period also saw a family shipwrecked in Johann David Wyss, *The family Robinson Crusoe, or, Journal of a father shipwrecked, with his wife and children, on an uninhabited island*, M. J Godwin and Co. London, 1814. This text became the popular *Swiss Family Robinson*.

Twentieth century examples include: Cornelius Shea, *A girl Crusoe, or, The wonders of the isle of gnomes*, Street and Smith, New York, 1903; Mary McGovern, *The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, Whitman Publishing Co., 1917; Elizabeth Baker, *Miss Robinson, a play in three acts*, Sidgwick & Jackson, London, 1920; Jean Giradoux, *Suzanne in the Pacific*, 1923; Ernest Protheroe, *The sister Crusoes*, The Epworth Press, London, 1925; Muriel Spark, *Robinson: A novel*, MacMillan, London, 1969; the South African author, Sheila Fugard, *The Castaways*, Macmillian, Johannesburg, 1972 and Margery Hilton, *Girl Crusoe*, Mills and Boon, MA., 1976. Notable poetry includes, Elizabeth Bishop, 'Crusoe in England' in *The Complete Poems 1927-1979*, The Hogarth Press, London, 1984, pp. 162-166 and Evelyn Palmer, *Verses Written by a female Robinson Crusoe*, 1944.

to be rescued from famine and death by such resources as she could find, independently, in herself.[74]

By the end of the nineteenth century, *Robinson Crusoe* was being used as a model for women's rights in America. In *The Solitude of the Self*, the women's rights activist, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, 'projects each woman as "an imaginary Robinson Crusoe with her woman Friday on a solitary island...Her rights are to use all her faculties for her own safety and happiness."'.[75] Blackwell suggests that the 'Female Robinson, with her initiative and autonomy, is a nearly forgotten model of the self-generating woman of the modern era'.[76]

As a text which establishes authority for a marginalised position, it is important to note that it has been rewritten as a black Crusoe story, a lesbian romance and a novel which graphically depicts Crusoe's sex life.[77] The absence of sex on the island has also contributed to its popularity in burlesque theatre.[78] As this brief history suggests, the world according to *Robinson Crusoe* is large, varied and imbued with sexual politics. As such, it is a potent site of investigation.

Methodology

My curiosity about the role of the feminine in *Robinson Crusoe* arises from the dominant representation of modern subjectivity as masculine. Edward Said

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[74] Fanny Burney, *The Wanderer, or Female Difficulties* (1814).

[75] Josephine Donovan, *Feminist Theory: The Intellectual Traditons of American Feminism*, Continuum, New York, 1985, p. 16.

[76] Blackwell, p. 21.

[77] Alfred Sequin, *The Black Crusoe*, Marcus Ward & Co., London, 1879. Translation of *le Robinson Noir;* A lesbian romance which positions itself in relation to Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* is Catherine Ennis, *To the Lightening*, The Naiad Press Inc., Tallahassee, 1988. Humphrey Richardson, *The sexual life of Robinson Crusoe*, The Traveler's Companion series, Olympia Press, New York, 1988, 1st pub. 1955. Also published as *The Secret Life of Robinson Crusoe*, 1962.

[78] See discussion of the first Crusoe pantomime in John McVeagh, 'Robinson Crusoe's stage debut: the Sheridan pantomime of 1781', *Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. 24, 1990, pp. 137-52. Later examples include: Henry J. Byron, *Robinson Crusoe; or, The injun bride and the injured wife', a burlesque. London*, The "Fun" office. n.d. British Library and I. Pocock, *Robinson Crusoe; or, The bold buccaneers, a romantic drama, in three acts*, J. Cumberland, London, 1800; *Robinson Crusoe: a Colonial and Subtropical Burlesque Pantomime in Three Acts and Nine Tableaux*, 1886; *Robinson Crusoe or Harlequin Friday and the King of the Carrobees*, 1860, also Frances H. Burnett, *Barty Crusoe and His Man Saturday*, 1909; J. R. Planche (1825-1871), *The Island of Jewels*, a play about 'a female Alexander Selkirk, thrown out of a situation - left alone', n.d.

calls *Robinson Crusoe* 'the prototypical modern realist novel' which is 'certainly not accidentally...about a European who creates a fiefdom...on a non-European island'.[79] Complementing this view, feminist, psychoanalytic, postcolonial and poststructuralist theories depict the "I" of language as a subject-position which is masculine and Eurocentric.[80] These theories oppose the perception of the "subject" as a unitary, humanistic self for whom language is a tool of communication.[81] This dominant subject-position, it is argued, posits 'the straight, white, Christian man of property [as]...the ethical universal'.[82] In doing so, it excludes all who are different to it.

Robinson Crusoe is not only the name of both character and text but also of the purported author. The "subject-position" of Crusoe, therefore, gives every appearance of being "natural" or self-produced. In order to go beyond the text's self-representation, I have assumed that the authority of the "subject" is gained through a negotiation with existing values in different discourses in society. In accord with this position, the thesis reflects the view that,

> the subject should not be entirely abandoned. It should be reconsidered, not to restore the theme of an originating subject, but to seize its functions, its intervention in discourse, and its systems of dependencies...we should ask what conditions and through what forms can an entity like the subject appear in the order of discourse, what position does it occupy; what functions does it exhibit; and what rules does it follow in each type of discourse.[83]

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[79] Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, Vintage, London, 1993, p. xiii.

[80] The psychoanalytic theories of Lacan and Freud have been enormously influential on feminist theory. See discussion in Chris Weedon, *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1987. Jacques Derrida coined the term 'phallogocentrism' to indicate 'a continuity of phallus in logos' indicating 'a certain sexual scene behind or before - but always within - the scene of philosophy'. Jacques Derrida, *A Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds*, (ed.), Peggy Kamuf, Harvester Wheatsheaf, Hemel Hempstead, 1991, p. 313.

[81] Jane Gallop usefully contrasts the two - 'The "self" implies a center, a potentially autonomous individual; the "subject" is a place in language, a signifier that is already alienated in an intersubjective network', p. 106.

[82] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Theory in the Margin: Coetzee's Foe Reading Defoe's *Crusoe/Roxana*' in Jonathan Arac and Barbara Johnson, *Consequences of Theory*, The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1991, p. 159.

[83] Michel Foucault, *Language Counter-Memory Practice: Selected Essays and interviews by Michel Foucault*, ed., with an introduction by Donald F. Bouchard, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1977, p. 138.

The above quotation by Michel Foucault comes from his discussion, 'What is an author?' in which he valuably shifts the emphasis away from the author as the sole originator of meaning, and instead understands the subject as 'a complex and variable function of discourse'.[84] By adopting Foucault's premise that subject-positions are produced in discourse, it is possible to look beyond the self-replicating terms offered by *Robinson Crusoe* to examine the ways in which such a subject-position achieves authenticity and substance.

In Foucault's approach, 'the name of the author remains at the contours of texts - separating one from another, defining their form, and characterising their mode of existence'.[85] In these terms, I have read the castaway narratives as produced within the ambit of an author's cultural background, which in turn is circumscribed by particular discursive conditions. When I use 'the language of intention' in the thesis, I refer to the textual and cultural production of meaning.[86] As such, I employ a broad poststructuralist understanding of subjectivity as 'forms which are produced historically and [which] change with shifts in the wide range of discursive fields which constitute them'.[87]

Foucault's analysis offers a justification for my "return" to *Robinson Crusoe* which is effected both in the thesis and in the female castaway narratives I examine. In discussing the importance of re-examining the original works of thinkers such as Freud or Marx, Foucault states that a return is important when there is 'a basic and constructive omission that is not the result of accident or incomprehension'.[88] Such a return provides the opportunity to pay 'particular attention to those things registered in the interstices of the text, its gaps and absences'.[89] It provides the opportunity to transform the original text and 'is an

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[84] Ibid, p. 138.

[85] Ibid, p. 123.

[86] The phrase is used by John Barrell, *The Dark Side of the Landscape*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1980, p. 18. Barrell's expression is particularly appropriate as he also examines indirect, and perhaps unintentional, representation.

[87] Weedon, p. 33.

[88] Foucault, *Language Counter-Memory Practice*, p. 135.

[89] Ibid.

effective and necessary means of transforming discursive practice'.[90] The return to *Robinson Crusoe* effected in this thesis and in the rewritings which I examine, is part of the project of challenging the ideological dominance of masculine, modern subjectivity.

The value of returning to *Robinson Crusoe* is complemented by the intertextuality which informs both *Robinson Crusoe* and its rewritings. That is, although the castaway is isolated and therefore singular, the scenario allows the castaway to return bringing "new" meanings into society. Just as the castaway returns from his or her journey with different values, so "foreign" texts are used to change or confirm existing values. Each of the castaway narratives uses some form of intertextuality to create certain associations and values which oppose, as well as represent, dominant values. For example, *Robinson Crusoe* draws on historical and fictional accounts, just as its rewritings draw on the structure and text of *Robinson Crusoe*. Each narrative is attempting to change one set of associations and to confirm another set. The use of intertextuality in both periods suggests that fiction is understood as an act of artifice which constructs rather than describes reality.

The texts I have chosen occupy two short periods, 1719-23 and 1982-86, and therefore allow for a more accurate depiction of influences affecting the texts. My focus provides me with three male and three female authors. It produces evidence that the castaway narratives use gendered values to give authority to a marginalised identity not only with reference to gender, but with regard to economics, religion, class and race. The choice of these two sets of texts may imply that a simple comparison is being made between past and present texts. However, this apparent symmetry is disturbed by a similarity of themes across the two periods and important differences between texts within the same period.

My emphasis on the specificity of the circumstances in which each text is produced has led me into some surprising channels. The most notable is that many of these rewritings challenge *Robinson Crusoe* not only from the perspective of

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[90] Ibid.

gender, but also of religion. This is consistent with my finding that both sets of texts are engaged in a negotiation of gendered values and that a crisis of value, that is, the question of what has value, is the hallmark of both periods.[91] I have discussed a tendency in criticism of *Robinson Crusoe* to simply oppose "woman" and the feminine to masculine subjectivity. The tendency to separate and oppose has not only applied to gender and, arguably to race, but also to economics and religion. McKeon points out that, in fact, 'spiritual and secular motives are not only "compatible"; they are inseparable'.[92] It is in this sense that gendered morals, which inform both economics and religion, construct the text and character that is *Robinson Crusoe*.

Broadly, the two periods and two sets of texts show *Robinson Crusoe* as respectively under construction and under deconstruction. The similarities between the quite different texts and periods can in part be explained by the deconstructive orientation of the later twentieth century texts. That is, according to poststructuralism, 'the only way in which you can deconstruct is by making the structure of that which you critique the structure of your own criticism'.[93] In this respect, the later texts confirm my historical reading of *Robinson Crusoe* and the early castaway narratives, which shows that particular feminine values had an important and active role in shaping identity and meaning.

In order to focus on the constructed nature of subjectivity, I have not addressed *Robinson Crusoe* as it was represented in the nineteenth century. It is a significant "absence" as the nineteenth century is the period in which *Robinson Crusoe* arguably reached its apotheosis as an iconic text of rational individualism. The similarities and differences between the texts I discuss, which roughly correspond to early and late modernity, are highlighted by this omission. As this

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[91] Lyotard and Habermas refer to the late twentieth century as having 'a crisis of legitimation'. Linda Hutcheon, *A Poetics of Postmodernism*, Routledge, New York, 1988, p. 8.

[92] McKeon, p. 319.

[93] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues*, (ed.) Sarah Harasym, Routledge, New York, 1990, p. 45.

indicates, I am not attempting to write a comprehensive history of female castaway narratives.

In the two periods, different values are attributed to gender. The importance of gender in the early eighteenth century castaway texts is that it evokes alliances and tensions between values through narratives of lost loves, absent or dead parents, marriage and family disputes, and thwarted or gained inheritance. Through these images, a rhetoric of instability, insubstantiality and inauthenticity, and then its resolution, is evoked. The rhetoric allows the castaway's island vulnerability and subsequent transformation to be expressed as a feminine, in-between state. The castaway is subsequently transformed through the establishment of alliances between values which were previously incompatible. The island is the place where differences are brought together and transformed. In this respect, the island and the castaway text are represented as feminine. In the twentieth century, the female "subject" is castaway by virtue of both her identification with masculine subjectivity and her bodily and cultural alienation from it. As Linda Hutcheon states about the post-modern text, these rewritings 'challenge the humanist assumption of a unified self and an integrated consciousness by both installing coherent subjectivity and subverting it'.[94] In this sense, the castaway texts of both periods are about establishing different values and ways of being.

While the castaway narratives in the early period critiqued society from the safety of a distant yet parallel land mass, the late twentieth century texts, more literally, although also allegorically, situate "the feminine" as castaway within Western society. The twentieth century narratives depict the white, masculine, Eurocentric subject-position as an historical and colonial fictional construction which is dependent on the subjugation of all others and which is central to Western culture. The masculine, Eurocentric subject-position of Western language is associated negatively with certain regimes of power such as pedagogy, history,

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[94] Hutcheon, p. xii.

individualism, realism and patriarchy. As in the early castaway narratives, these texts associate the feminine with a transformative, connecting, active space. The late twentieth century texts variously depict the feminine as a writing which has agency, as a transforming space of translation between material "reality" and its representation, and between the female body and textuality. That is, in all of the castaway narratives, the feminine is the transforming space between opposing binaries. Both sets of texts, in different ways, validate the text rather than the "subject" as a feminine site of agency and transformation.[95]

In the thesis, I suggest that the gendered values which inform *Robinson Crusoe* also inform the representation of the female as castaway and rescued. The appearance of a female "heroine" in the castaway narrative appears to confirm theories which understand the "individual" as a masculine and dominant subjectivity. However, the representation of the feminine, in these narratives, as a positive site in which values are realigned and transformed, suggests a different reading. I show that the defence of feminine values is implicit in *Robinson Crusoe* and common to the female castaway narratives. In the early period, the castaway texts renegotiate the negative social connotations attributed to feminine values such as credit and luxury. In the same period, women and men like Mary Astell, Defoe and Mandeville, were arguing for women's access to education.[96] This suggests that both were arguments with established patriarchal, social and

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[95] That the island space is a space of conversion with respect to *Robinson Crusoe* as spiritual autobiography will be familiar to critics. The idea that this transformative space is also feminine will not. See George Starr, *Defoe and Spiritual Autobiography*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1965. More recent texts have seen this space as significant to establishing masculine identity, Richard Phillips states 'Crusoe's island is literally liminal, as a marginal zone in which the hero experiences a rite of passage'. Phillips, p. 30.

[96] Mary Astell (1668-1731), a contemporary of Defoe wrote three books 'for an audience of women. In the first she discussed the need for women's colleges; in the second she gave women rules to train their minds for rigorous philosophical thought and in the third she examined the balance of power in the marriage relation'. Ruth Perry, *The Celebrated Mary Astell: An Early English Feminist*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1986, p. 8. Perry mentions Defoe as one of the writers Astell 'took seriously'. Perry, p. 8. Defoe credits Astell for her idea for women's colleges in his support of women's education in *Essay upon Projects* (1697). He thought there should be one in each county and ten in London. Perry, p 129. At the end of the century, Mary Wollstonecraft is an 'unmistakable invocation of the model of progress represented by *Robinson Crusoe*'. G. J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1992, p. xx.

economic values. Put another way, each debate was concerned with the role of the "feminine" in society. That luxury and credit were acceptable by the end of the century coincided with the increasingly articulated defence of women's public role. This does not simply suggest a rationalisation of the feminine, but an increasing acceptance of "feminine" values.

The late twentieth century rewritings of *Robinson Crusoe*, which feature female protagonists, also emerge from a gendered social and political critique of dominant values. The critique of the book in this period arises from the problem which modern subjectivity represents, not only for women, but for other races, cultures and religions, as well as for the environment. As in the early eighteenth century, a critique of materiality informs a crisis of identity and representation. In this respect, this thesis is informed by present conditions and has application in the present.[97] However, I do not consider this thesis to be a work of new historicism, as my main aim has not been to use the texts to interpret society. On the contrary, I have drawn on the work of a range of historians to enable me to interpret and contextualise the eighteenth century texts. The late twentieth century texts and the theories which inform them have also been contextualised in relation to the authors' background and the particular circumstances from which they emerge. My approach is not to impose an ahistorical, theoretical understanding upon these quite different texts. Rather, on the assumption that subjectivities are formed in language and culture, I aim to understand in each case what and how gendered values inform the text; how the "subject" and its identity gain authenticity and how the castaway narrative functions to facilitate that subject formation.

It is important to say also that this is not a thesis which attempts to revalorise the feminine as a utopian ideal. As Rita Felski points out, within nineteenth century culture and in contemporary feminism, the search for the feminine is often a nostalgic search for lost "natural" origins.[98] Rather, in the face

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[97] This is one of the premises of the work of Nussbaum and Brown, p. 18

[98] Felski, *The Gender of Modernity*, p. 38.

of ideological interpretations of *Robinson Crusoe* and of the subject as masculine, unitary and fixed, the thesis is an attempt to emphasise the fluidity and complex gendering of the rational, modern subject, in so far as *Robinson Crusoe* is its representative. I have avoided making assumptions about the feminine by examining its specific textual purpose and meaning in each instance.

Writing about two sets of texts in two different periods has meant that the terminology used in each chapter has quite different connotations even though the word used may be the same. Some words differ in their meanings between texts in the same period, and between their use in the fiction and their use in criticism. "Desire" is an obvious example of different uses in the two periods. In the early eighteenth century, it was important to the argument of the day that avarice was an inherent quality of being human. "Desire", therefore, is associated with a range of appetites, particularly economic and sexual. The term also extended to the distinction between "reality" and "fiction" or artifice, as 'an appetite of the imagination'. Such an appetite contained possibilities, as well as problems, for identity:

> In eighteenth century fiction, desire is sometimes equated solely with extravagant sexual passion, but its more subtle manifestations involve an attempt to extend the boundaries of the self.[99]

In the twentieth century texts, by comparison, "desire" can have a psychoanalytic meaning, which authors use to critically engage with its earlier manifestation. It must be recognised therefore that such is the critical nature of the later texts; distinctions are often deliberately and effectively blurred to suggest the earlier meanings.

Identity and subjectivity also mutually inform each other in the two sets of texts which I discuss. In the castaway narratives, the threat to identity in the castaway narrative is always a threat to the existence of the "subject". That is, the castaway narrative concerns the loss and recovery of communication and agency. The literal presentation of the loss, or refusal, of a position from which to speak in

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[99] Raymond F. Hilliard, 'Desire and the Structure of Fiction', *Studies in Eighteenth Century Culture*, vol. 9, 1979, p. 358.

the castaway narrative, explains why the later twentieth century texts use it to depict the precarious and constructed nature of subjectivity. Edward Said has argued that the 'narrative subject...is...a social act *par excellence* and as such has behind it the authority of history and society'.[100] The castaway narratives of early and late modernity are concerned with changing the terms of such authority. I refer to identity as well as "subject" to indicate that I do not assume a universal subject-position, but understand the construction of subjectivity to take place within a particular culture and society.[101]

I suggest the thesis can be categorised under the broad term of a 'feminist cultural politics'. The phrase is used by Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown who, in their work on the eighteenth century, distinguish '"woman"...as a historically and culturally produced category' from previous feminist work which focussed on archival retrieval and texts as reflective of women's experience.[102] In similar terms, this thesis reads texts and subjects as historically and culturally produced in two quite different periods. It also addresses "man" and "masculinity" as related concepts to "woman" and the "feminine". In this sense, I take the view that it is crucial for feminist scholarship to study male as well as female authors, protagonists and subjects.

The title, *The Female Crusoe*, recognises the importance of the feminine in the construction of *Robinson Crusoe* and the castaway texts I discuss. The title also refers to the female castaway narratives of the early eighteenth and late twentieth centuries. The phrase 'female Crusoe' not only refers to the importance of the feminine in the construction of masculine, modern subjectivity, but also to the role of values determined as feminine in the development of female independence in Western society. My aim is not to conduct a theoretical investigation into the

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[100] Said, p. 92.

[101] In the thesis, subjectivity is the process whereby a subject gains authority, while identity is treated as a specific instance of a subject-position.

[102] The phrase refers to 'how certain regimes of truth, of discourse, and of subjectivity are limited by the category of gender'. Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown, *The New Eighteenth Century: Theory/ Politics/ English Literature*, Methuen, New York, 1987, p. 15.

relationship between gender and subjectivity. Rather, I look at *Robinson Crusoe* and its rewritings in the early eighteenth and late twentieth centuries to investigate the work of gendered values in the castaway narrative.

The Chapters

The Early Eighteenth Century

In the first half of the thesis I discuss *Robinson Crusoe* and the female castaway narratives of the early eighteenth century. In Chapter One, I show that feminine values inform *Robinson Crusoe*. Specifically, I read *Robinson Crusoe* in the context of the early eighteenth century, which negatively associated trade and luxury with effeminacy and artifice. I suggest that in *Robinson Crusoe* these terms are re-negotiated to give authenticity to a marginal identity, the socially mobile tradesman. The negotiation of this new identity involves the transgression and re-establishment of boundaries on a different basis. The tension between values produced by the discourse of credit and those produced by the discourse of luxury allow Friday to be read as a literal consumer. Defoe's argument in the text for the sameness of humans and cultures is a strategy in his larger vision of a trading universe. The remaking of Friday into an Englishman mirrors Crusoe's own construction and obliterates difference in the interest of reproducible consumers and consumer nations. The negotiation of Crusoe's identity takes place in a society in which there is a crisis of representation. I show that for Defoe, this instability creates possibilities, rather than just problems.

In Chapter Two, I examine two works by an author of whom little is known, Ambrose Evans. In his work, the female castaway represents what is under threat in a society in which values are changing. Again the concern of the text is with what has value and authenticity. In the first text, *Martha Rattenberg*, the female protagonist is shipwrecked after being duped and cheated in England by romance and by various financial dealings. Evans' text, compared to Defoe's, reaches a compromise which favours domestic rather than foreign trade. In the text, Martha is the symbolic site of compromise and rejects the romance of financial speculation and her desire for wealth in favour of a pragmatic marriage

and establishing a tavern on the coast of France. The text critiques all forms of artifice, including credit, financial speculation, disguise and romance. In contrast, Martha is associated with pragmatism, control of emotions, reason and compassion, as well as with conventional bases for value - gold, domestic trade, presence and orality. She is also the intermediary between "old" and "new" values and as such, on the island, she is literally the interpreter between two different languages.

In Evans' second text, *Alexander Vendchurch*, moderation is again pitted against excess and luxury. *Alexander Vendchurch* is a pun on Alexander Selkirk, the eighteenth century castaway whose story was and is said to be the basis of *Robinson Crusoe*. The text again represents a clash of values between religion and commerce. Alexander's masquerade as a Spaniard causes him and his Spanish lover to be shipwrecked. As the object of his desire, his lover is associated with his dream of wealth and luxury. As such, the narrative demonstrates that the dream of masculine desire and deceit is fatal to the "feminine". I speculate that Evans' rejection of Crusoe's embrace of foreign trade, and his consequent use of a female protagonist to show its dangers, is based in religious differences from Defoe. Evans' texts confirm the value of the "feminine" and of domestic trade.

I complete the examination of early eighteenth century castaway narratives in the third chapter, by examining three texts by the first woman to adapt *Robinson Crusoe* to her own purposes. The Catholic writer, Penelope Aubin, depicts female castaways as survivors within the genre of romance. All of Aubin's protagonists revalue previously corrupted terms while on their islands. The island imagery is complemented in the text by feminine and Catholic images of enclosure and virginity. Aubin presents human figures and landscapes as internal and external spaces which correspond to femininity and masculinity, and to Christianity and its absence. Aubin's particular problematic is that she advocates the gaining of wealth, while criticising a world dominated by the values of trade. Like *Robinson Crusoe*, Aubin's texts establish oppositions which threaten the survival of the individual, but finally negotiate symbolic resolutions in order to survive. Unlike

Evans, she does not produce pragmatic heroines who shun romance. Like Defoe, artifice is presented as essential to survival. Aubin, like Defoe, negotiates a problematic social field in which earning money and immorality are related. I suggest that Aubin manipulates gendered values in order to establish value and authenticity for herself as a marginalised subject, that is, a woman writer and Catholic.

The Late Twentieth Century

In the last three chapters, I move to the mid-1980s and to three texts informed by contemporary theories of subjectivity. In Chapter Four, I examine Barbara Einzig's work *Robinson Crusoe: A New Fiction*(1982), which is an autobiography written in the language of *Robinson Crusoe,* from the perspective of a female, Jewish Hungarian American in the twentieth century. "Einzig" is castaway by virtue of being stranded between different languages, cultures, religions and authors. Like *Robinson Crusoe* and Aubin's narratives, her text aims to exceed boundaries without losing value. Her "protection" is the work of twentieth century theorists Hannah Arendt and Walter Benjamin. Using their work, Einzig positions herself as a translator between the different cultures that she and *Robinson Crusoe* represent. As occurred in *Martha Rattenberg,* the feminine is created as a transformative and interpretative realm. Einzig reorientates the relationship between oppositional terms such as "text" and "reality", "materiality" and "writing", "nature" and "history", "subject" and "object", "spatiality" and "textuality" by placing herself in the text. Like the earlier writers she uses the castaway narrative to construct a position from which to speak, that is, to rescue herself and to authenticate her own marginalised identity and writing. She performs her rescue by aligning herself within a symbolic matriarchal family structure, and with a theory and practice of writing in which agency is attributed to things as well as to subjects. Like the early eighteenth century narratives, she draws on established conventions in order to change them.

In Chapter Five, I discuss *Foe,* written by the white South African author, J. M. Coetzee. In *Foe,* the female castaway carries the ideology of individualism

which has come to characterise *Robinson Crusoe*. She is depicted as castaway in the context of *Robinson Crusoe* as a universal, masculine text and subjectivity. However, she differs from *Robinson Crusoe* because she is female and as such, her difference is bodily and discursive. Coetzee disassociates the feminine from the female subject by showing her conscious alignment with the masculine subject-position and her textual alignment with Friday. I show that Coetzee uses the castaway structure to portray the feminine as a middle voice of writing in which passivity and 'agentless sentences' express an agency and voice in language which is other than that of the subject or its excluded other. That is, as in Einzig's work, the text is a feminine site of transformation. I read Coetzee's work in the context of South Africa, where his writing has been criticised for its lack of engagement with politics. I suggest that in *Foe*, Coetzee produces a "feminine" text which counters a negative and masculine politics of writing.

Written by the English author, Jane Gardam, *Crusoe's Daughter* shows the female protagonist as castaway in a religiously informed, private domestic space. The text tells of a woman's life of isolation which spans the 20th century, and in it the story of the everyday is shown to construct History. The text critiques the Anglo-centric literary tradition by presenting *Robinson Crusoe* as a dominant paradigm which excludes consideration of the female body, sex and sexuality. Gardam literalises this exclusion as a lack of colour and vitality. Modernism, as a way of writing concerned with spatiality and with painting with words, is used to colour the text. Against Defoe's masculine 'sexless' realism, Gardam contrasts masculine modernism as having sexual vitality. She situates her protagonist in-between such depictions by associating her with a feminine modernism. Gardam's rewriting also confirms Defoe's realism as a writing capable of representing the materiality of the female body, sex and sexuality. The text shows the "female subject" as emerging from a history in which domesticity, colonialism, racism and industrialisation are not marginalised, but central to her construction, just as she is central to modernity. The text shows the marginalised female castaway moving to the centre of modern society, not through agency, but through

her passivity. That is, the text shows her to be constructed by a language in which she is denied sexual and economic desire on her own terms. The text depicts her isolation and passivity as the basis for her eventual resistance to the worst excesses of modernisation. In Gardam's text, the female protagonist is aligned and contrasted with two different masculinities. One represents a masculine tradition which derives from an aristocratic, land-owning patriarchy, connected with patronage and aestheticism. The other is a Jewish hybrid figure who represents not only modernisation, but the feminised and persecuted other of modernity. Again the female protagonist is depicted as a translator between two languages and the isolated space of the female protagonist is associated with a feminine, transformative space.

Chapter One

Gender and Value in *Robinson Crusoe* and *The Complete English Tradesman*

...this amphibious Creature, this Land-Water thing call'd, a Gentleman-Tradesman

Daniel Defoe, *Moll Flanders*

Introduction

In this chapter, I argue that in the early eighteenth century, luxury and credit are feminine concepts and that they shape both the text and character of *Robinson Crusoe*.[1] In the process of examining Defoe's views on credit and luxury, I will draw on historians such as J. G. A. Pocock who importantly argues that:

> Economic man as masculine conquering hero is a fantasy of nineteenth century industrialisation...His eighteenth century predecessor was seen as on the whole a feminised, even an effeminate being, still wrestling with his own passions and hysterias and with interior and exterior forces let loose by his fantasies and appetites, and symbolised by such archetypically female goddesses of disorder as Fortune, Luxury, and most recently Credit herself.[2]

In particular, I argue that there is a correlation between the language and values expressed in Daniel Defoe's conduct book, *The Complete English Tradesman* and *Robinson Crusoe* and on this basis make a number of propositions.[3] In summary these propositions are as follows. When Crusoe goes to sea to make his fortune, his identity is formed in against a cultural background which associates

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[1] The full title is Daniel Defoe, *The Life and Strange Surpizing Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, of York, Mariner who lived Eight and Twenty Years, all alone in an uninhabited Island on the Coast of America, near the Mouth of the River Oroonoque; Having been cast on Shore by Shipwreck, wherein all the Men perished but himself. With An Account how he was at last as strangely deliver'd by Pyrates. Written by Himself.* (1719)

[2] J. G. A. Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce and History*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985. p. 114. In the early eighteenth century, as Pocock says, '"Luxury"...is shorthand for culture leisure and choice; these goods carry their concomitant ill'. J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine political thought and the Atlantic republican tradition*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1975, p. 431.

[3] Daniel Defoe, *The Complete English Tradesman, in familiar letters; directing him in all the several parts and progressions of trade,* , vol. 1, 1726, second issue of the 1st edition 1726. *The Compleat English Tradesman, Volume. II, In two parts. Part I. Directed chiefly to the more experienc'd tradesman; . . . Part II. Being useful generals in trade,* 1st edition, 1727. Both volumes printed for Charles Rivington. Note that the spelling changed between volumes; I have used the spelling of the first volume throughout the thesis. The texts are cited in the footnotes as CET, vol. I and II. The subject of CET is referred to by Defoe as masculine and as "the tradesman" and I have followed this practice.

luxury, credit and trade with effeminacy, artifice and avarice. On the island in his fortifications without sex or women, his sensibility is that of a young tradesman protected from the gossiping and avaricious tongues of society. His symbolic isolation allows for the formation of a new identity. Using Defoe's trading language, I show that on his island he is symbolically protecting his credit, that is the integrity of his new trading identity, which is also his future profit. The comparison of the two texts makes it possible to see that, in terms of Defoe's trading metaphors, Crusoe is protecting his integrity like a woman protecting her virtue. The analogy is appropriate as, for both women and tradesmen in the period, the protection of reputation was essential to financial and often physical survival.

Crusoe as a figure of unruly desire is like Friday, a "savage". His desires must be civilised in order for him to become a figure of integrity. In opposition to Crusoe as trader, Friday as a cannibal is a literal consumer, a potential trading consumer (the exploitable markets of the Carribean) and potential consumable, that is, slave.[4] In developing these associations, I show that Friday, symbolically and actually, represents avarice and corruption, literally, "the tongues" that Crusoe must "tame" or "civilise" in order to re-enter the trading world. Their meeting presents Crusoe as both like and different from Friday and allows Crusoe to be depicted as a "natural" trading man. Friday's relationship with Crusoe provides an alternative trading masculinity to a masculinity based on military valour, or on the ownership of land. It allows him to distance himself from the charges of effeminacy that accompany the luxury trade upon which he, as a tradesman, depends. Crusoe's new found integrity and his self-reflecting conversation with Friday allows Crusoe to re-enter the ocean that is, for Defoe, trade on different terms to that of his father. In other words, as a socially mobile trader, his identity ceases being indeterminate and "unnatural", as the phrase

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[4] With regard to my presentation of Friday as consumable, it is interesting that in CET, Defoe mentions a 'Friday-street' which he says was the name of a London street of drapers. CET, vol II, pt 2, p. 167.

'Land-Water thing', with which I began this chapter, implies.[5] The identity of the tradesman is changing in this period due to the wealth created by foreign trade and investment, and its effect on the 'middle state'.

As a writer about trade, Defoe presented himself as 'whoring' for trade.[6] In this sexualisation of writing, the text is a commodity which Defoe must sell. The reader is therefore a consumer. In Defoe's terms, the consumer is ultimately responsible for the text's production and purchase and, by implication, its morality. Defoe's self-representation as a writer was not only compatible, I argue, with the construction of *Robinson Crusoe*, but it also sanctioned the controversial view of the day that private vices produced public benefits.[7] In summary, in *Robinson Crusoe*, Defoe responds to the female gendered associations of luxury and credit to produce a trading subject able to profit from luxury and gain social mobility through acquiring textual and trading integrity. I do not intend to imply that Defoe is consciously articulating the text in these terms. Rather I argue that the language and values with which *Robinson Crusoe* and *The Complete English Tradesman* engage are gendered.

Robinson Crusoe and *The Complete English Tradesman*

The Complete English Tradesman has been described as 'a conduct book designed to dignify the profession and polish the men who practice it'.[8] To rephrase Nancy Armstrong's definition of a conduct book, it provided:

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[5] The phrase is used in Daniel Defoe, *The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the famous Moll Flanders, &c...written from her own memorandums*, (ed.) with an introduction by G. A. Starr, Oxford University Press, London, 1971, p. 60.

[6] Daniel Defoe, *Defoe's Review*, vol. IX, no. 106, June 11, 1713, p. 214. Intro. and bibliographical notes by A. W. Secord, Facsimile Text Society, Columbia University Press, New York, 1938.

[7] The argument of this chapter is developed in relation to the writings of Defoe and Mandeville. In his work *The Fable of the Bees*, Mandeville linked the phenomenon of luxury to his understanding of the 'passions' (p. 4), his argument is epitomised in the sub-title *'Private Vices, Publick Benefits'*. The work argues the inevitability and profitability of vice and opposes the linking of luxury to effeminacy. Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits* with a Commentary Critical, Historical and Explanatory by F. B. Kaye, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1957, vols. 1 and 2. *The Fable of the Bees* is based on *The Grumbling Hive; or Knaves turn'd Honest* first published in pamphlet form in 1714.

[8] Michael Shinagel, *Daniel Defoe and Middle Class Gentility* cited in Thomas Keith Meier, *Defoe and the Defense of Commerce*, University of Victoria, Victoria, 1987, p. 90.

> A figure of...[a tradesman's] subjectivity, a grammar really...In such books one can see a culture in the process of rethinking at the most basic level the dominant (aristocratic) rules.[9]

The transposition that I have made in Armstrong's quotation from "female" to "tradesman" is not as incongruous as it may seem. Conduct books defined any number of identities, and the 'grammar' of male and female behaviour was not only produced in books which addressed social etiquette or female manners. Dominant ideas of sexual morality, sexual identity and appropriate gendered behaviour also informed books which purported to be about other subjects.

The suggestion that female gendered values are involved in shaping *Robinson Crusoe* requires that Defoe's writing be understood as allegory, symbolism, artifice and construction rather than as realism. On this point, I agree with the critic, J. Paul Hunter, who wrote that the 'Emphasis upon the "realistic" nature of...Defoe's choice of detail has obscured the emblematic meaning of Crusoe's physical activities'.[10] Hunter's emblematic approach leads him to stress the religious aspects of the text.[11] However, apart from travel, 'Trade was the other activity whose mundane details were most frequently spiritualised'.[12] The approach I have taken combines an analysis of the emblematic or symbolic with a study of the economic and historical, bringing the generic category of *Robinson Crusoe* closer to the 'Allegorick History' which Defoe ascribed to it.[13]

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[9] Armstrong, p. 60.

[10] J. Paul Hunter 'The conclusion of Robinson Crusoe' in Max Byrd, (ed.), *Daniel Defoe: A Collection of Critical Essays*, Prentice Hall Inc., New Jersey, 1976, pp. 92-3.

[11] I argue that trading language and morality are inseparable. My approach is compatible with Michael McKeon's view that spiritual and secular motives are inseparable'. p. 319.

[12] George Starr, *Defoe and Spiritual Autobiography*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1965, p. 25. The analogy between the dangers of the trade and dangers of the ocean would not have been missed by the trading population as the sea and trade were closely aligned in the period through the vast increase in imported goods from the colonies. An estimated one in five families were in trade. Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the nation 1707-1837*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1992, p. 56. Defoe estimates the trading population to be higher at 40 per cent and the gentry at 8 per cent, the largest category were the labouring poor. Peter Earle, *The World of Defoe*, Weidenfeld & Nicholson, London, 1976, p. 163.

[13] Defoe, *Serious Reflections*, preface. Defoe's description has been read by critics as evidence that *Robinson Crusoe* referred to Defoe's own life and has also been disputed on this basis. When the text is read as an allegory of the problems facing trade and tradesmen, as articulated later in *The Complete English Tradesman*, it remains likely that Defoe based *Robinson Crusoe* on his experience of trade.

The Complete English Tradesman was not published until eight years after *Robinson Crusoe* and contained no direct reference to it. I am not therefore arguing a causal link between the two texts, rather that the two texts emerged from a particular trading culture informed by similar issues and values. When they are considered together *Robinson Crusoe* emerges as a symbolic trading subject shaped by the trading concerns which Defoe, in *The Complete English Tradesman*, suggested may shipwreck the tradesman.[14] For Defoe, the dual dangers were credit and luxury, 'these are some of the most dangerous pits for a tradesman to fall into '.[15] For Defoe, 'Trade is an ocean'.[16] It is a metaphor which informs *Robinson Crusoe* and signifies instability of identity, as well as risk and profit.[17]

By putting Crusoe to sea, the identity and success of a trading subject is presented as at risk.[18] This is conveyed in the phrase 'Land-Water thing' in which the negotiation is between the apparently insubstantial and the apparently substantial.[19] This instability of identity is presented as a matter of life and death as the young Crusoe's sea journey involves a number of near death experiences and experiences of loss of consciousness. Another way to see this is that the process of establishing identity is seen as a threat to the body. The ultimate risk is

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[14] A number of writers have referred to CET as Defoe's primary explication of luxury and credit. 'In The *Complete English Tradesman* [Defoe] was justifying to the individual tradesman the profitable but morally questionable trade in luxuries'. Hans H. Anderson, 'The Paradox of Trade and Morality in Defoe', *Modern Philology*, no. 39, August, 1941, p. 40. CET was 'the manifesto of a new and ascendant social order, the *trading* gentry'. John Sekora, *Luxury: The Concept In Western Thought, Eden To Smollett*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1977, p. 117. 'The contingency of a world configured by credit inspired plays, poetry, and cautionary tracts (of which *The Complete English Tradesman* is the consummate example)'. Sandra Sherman, *Finance And Fictionality In The Early Eighteenth Century*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996, p. 23.

[15] CET, vol. I, p. 133.

[16] CET, vol. II, pt. 2, pp. 2-3.

[17] McKeon quotes Madeleine de Scudery (1601-1667) as writing 'The Sea is the Scene most proper to make great changes in, and ...some have named it the Theater of inconstancie', p. 139.

[18] Leo Braudy detects 'an anguish and uncertainty about human character' in Defoe's work. He states of Defoe's novels 'their inconclusive endings and elusive tone announce their preoccupation with uncertainty'. Leo Braudy, 'Daniel Defoe and the Anxieties of Autobiography' in Harold Bloom, *Daniel Defoe*, pp. 107-8. I suggest this is an instability of identity which Defoe both expresses and takes advantage of.

[19] As I will show, this is a negotiation which informs all of the castaway narratives I examine in this thesis.

that Crusoe's new trading identity will never be formed.[20] At the beginning of his journey, for example, he almost dies in a storm at sea and later recalls, 'no body minded me, or what was become of me...thinking I had been dead; and it was a great while before I came to myself.'[21] Similarly, on his first voyage he faints in a heavy storm and a sailor, 'let me lye, thinking I had been dead.'[22] On yet another occasion the ship fires a gun and Crusoe 'falls down in a swoon'.[23] This scene indicates the young Crusoe's "effeminacy" as, in the period, luxury was understood to weaken the military strength of a nation. Luxury was understood to be at the other extreme to "hardiness", and "endurance": 'The luxurious man is so 'soft' that he can endure no pain.'[24] The connotation was that luxury 'stood for the corruption of a virtuous manly life'.[25] The fainting scene contrasts with Crusoe's later "strength" when he fires on the cannibals and saves Friday.

Defoe's depiction of trade as an ocean helps make sense of the apparent contradiction of Crusoe's return to sea, at the end of the text, after he had become a successful tradesman. In Volume Two of *Robinson Crusoe*, when the Tradesman ends his trading, he also ends his voyaging.[26] Trade, physical life and journeying are therefore conflated.[27] This sense of *Robinson Crusoe* as a text of physical and

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[20] David Trotter argues a link between a bodily economy and the trading economy in Defoe's work, he notes that in *Robinson Crusoe* 'Departure from 'easy circumstances' is registered by loss of meaning, even loss of consciousness'. David Trotter, *Circulation: Defoe, Dickens and the Economies of the Novel*, Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1988, p. 12.

[21] *Robinson Crusoe*, pp. 10-12.

[22] Ibid, p. 12.

[23] Ibid, p. 35.

[24] Christopher Berry, *The Idea of Luxury: A Conceptual and Historical Investigation*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1994, p. 58.

[25] Berry, p. xiii. As Pocock succinctly puts it 'Commerce which makes men cultured, entails luxury, which makes them corrupt'. *The Machiavellian Moment*, p. 492.

[26] Defoe, *The Farther Adventures*, p. 220. In his work on the relationship between literature and money Cedric Watts states that 'taking Crusoe as an exemplar of "economic man"...is repeatedly compromised by his function as hero of a narrative of adventurous travel'. Cedric Watts, *Literature and Money: Financial Myth and Literary Truth*, Harvester Wheatsheaf, New York, 1990, p. 85. By examining the importance of the relationship between Crusoe's desire for fortune and travel, and luxury and credit, this thesis emphasises the importance of Crusoe's sea travel to his economic identity.

[27] McKeon points out that in Greek romances, 'travel, love and social change are ingeniously intertwined as though to suggest their interchangeability as emblematic experiences of mutability.' p. 139.

economic survival supports the idea that the text constructs a particular economic subjectivity. As such, both *The Complete English Tradesman* and *Robinson Crusoe* are conduct books or 'pilots' which address the development of a socially mobile, trading subject based on differently formed conceptions of trade and masculinity.[28]

Just as *Robinson Crusoe* is recommended for the 'Instruction of the Reader',[29] so *The Complete English Tradesman* is presented as a 'pilot' which will help the tradesman avoid shipwreck:

> ...I think 'tis the best service I can do the tradesman [sic] to lay before them those sunck rocks (as the seamen call them) those secret dangers in the first place, that they may know how to avoid them.[30]

Defoe addressed Volume One of *The Complete English Tradesman* to the young trader and Volume Two to the more experienced trader. This echoes the transition Crusoe makes from young man to mature man, or, from a subjectivity that is barely established to that which is well-established. Defoe presents the young tradesman as like Crusoe in his need for a pilot:

> At the first Entrance into Trade, the Tradesman, like a young Commander of a Ship launching into the Ocean for a long Voyage which he had never been before, should look out for skilful Assistants, as the Captain take experienced Mates, and if need be a good Pilot, that knows the Coast, to stand to him,...Our former work has been recommended as a Pilot or Guide to the young Tradesman of this Island.[31]

One of the contradictions of *Robinson Crusoe* is that Crusoe appears to spend most of his time in isolation and is therefore not engaged in trade at all. Nonetheless, although Crusoe is not engaged directly in trade on the island, his time there originates and results in trading. He is also a tradesman in his extensive

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[28] G. J. Barker-Benfield focuses on the culture of sensibility as it became important to women and identifies discourses of sex as central to eighteenth century British society. The term 'sensibility' 'denoted the receptivity of the senses and referred to the psychoperceptual scheme explained and systematised by Newton and Locke", p. i. He states that Lockean psychology promised men (specifically) 'wilful engagement and self-fashioning', p. xviii. See also Barker-Benfield, Chapters 2 and 4.

[29] *Robinson Crusoe*, preface, p. 1.

[30] CET, vol. I, p. 135.

[31] CET, vol. II, pt 1, p. 1.

use of trading language and in his activities and sensibility. He says that his first voyage away from the shores of England

> made me both a Sailor and a Merchant: for I brought Home L. 5. 9. *Ounces* of Gold Dust for my Adventure, which yielded me in *London* at my Return, almost 300 l... and this fill'd me with those aspiring Thoughts which have since so compleated my Ruin.[32]

On the island, Crusoe keeps his books, and records his tasks and his possessions like a tradesman. Such accounting and contractual activities have supported the view of Crusoe as rational economic man.[33] However, subtle differences of interpretation arise when Crusoe's subjectivity is read in the specific context of *The Complete English Tradesman* rather than of capitalism in general. For example, much of Crusoe's activity on the island involves tasks of self-sufficiency, such as craft-work, manufacturing, farming, building, husbandry. Ian Watt has suggested that this is because 'It would be somewhat contrary to the facts of economic life under the division of labour to show the average individual's manual labour as interesting and inspiring'.[34] However, in *The Complete English Tradesman* Defoe specifically advises the tradesman to know 'the Beginning and End of every Article in Trade'.[35] Crusoe's activity therefore can be read broadly as analogous to the tradesman who is told he also must be able 'to undertake any Trade, though not bred to it'.[36] As a consequence he will find that ' in all Places [he] can turn his Hand and his Head to any Trade, any Employment, as Occasion calls him out.'[37]

The first volume of *The Complete English Tradesman* is 'Calculated for the Instruction of our Inland Tradesman; and especially of YOUNG BEGINNERS'.[38] In

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[32] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 17.

[33] Watt, *The Rise of the Novel*, p. 64.

[34] Ibid, p. 72.

[35] CET, vol. II, pt. 1, p. 74.

[36] Ibid, p. 73. In Defoe's *Captain Singleton*, 'The twenty-seven men set down in Madagascar must "practice twenty Trades that we knew little or nothing of"'. Paula R. Backscheider, *Daniel Defoe: His Life*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1989, p. 440.

[37] CET, vol. II, pt. I, p. 73.

[38] CET, vol. I, title page.

this volume, Defoe recognises that 'the Shop-keeper is sometimes a merchant adventurer, whether he will or not, and some of his business runs into sea-adventures'.[39] The second volume concerns:

> all those People through whose Hands the Produce and Manufacture of *Great Britain* pass for Sale from their being finished and fitted for the Market to their immediate Consumption or Exportation...All those Tradesmen who are likewise employed in buying Goods of foreign Growth, from the Merchant who is the Importer; and selling them again as well by Wholesale or Retale[40].

On this basis, *Robinson Crusoe* and *The Complete English Tradesman* appear to be antithetical in that the former was set in the 'Oroonooko' basin and the latter was concerned with domestic trade. However, the two are linked by the focus in *Robinson Crusoe* on Crusoe's island domesticity and the island's setting in the Carribean. This aligns the texts as it suggests that in *Robinson Crusoe*, a 'home trade' sensibility is being shaped by credit and luxury, both of which were linked in the period to foreign trade. Defoe's enthusiasm for foreign trade is well documented.[41] The land-water, domestic-foreign oppositions which inform the castaway narrative are also related to the importance of maintaining the balance of trade.[42] In this respect, it is relevant to interpreting *Robinson Crusoe* that in the late seventeenth century, the balance of trade argument 'was...significant for providing a fund of rhetorical images useful for extolling restraint, frugality, and cooperation in economic life'.[43]

The descriptions of past and present trade in *The Complete English Tradesman* suggest that Crusoe's trials are a negotiation with a different trading world from

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[39] Ibid, p. xi.

[40] CET, vol. II, pt. 1, p. 3.

[41] Maximillian Novak points out that *Robinson Crusoe* was written in the wake of Defoe's plans for a project in the Orinoco basin. Maximillian Novak, *Economics and the Fiction of Daniel Defoe*, University of California, Berkeley, 1962, p. 36.

[42] Novak suggests that Defoe is a mercantilist who never abandoned the balance of trade arguments of the seventeenth century and considered the colonies to be part of Great Britain. *Economics and the Fiction of Daniel Defoe*, pp. 27-28.

[43] Joyce Appleby, *Economic Thought and Ideology in Seventeenth Century England*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1978, p. 259.

that of his father. Crusoe's father is in a fixed place, held between the immorality associated with luxury and the hardship of labour. He tells the young Crusoe that

> the middle State...was...the best in the world, the most suited to human happiness, not exposed to the miseries and hardships, the labour and sufferings of the mechanick part of mankind, and not embarrassed with the Pride, Luxury, Ambition and Envy of the Upper part of mankind.[44]

Similarly, in *The Complete English Tradesman*, Defoe tells the tradesman that:

> I know of no State of Life, I mean in that we call the Middle Station of it, and among the sensible Part of Mankind, which is more suited to make Men perfectly easy, and comfortable to themselves, than that of a thriving Tradesman.[45]

However, *The Complete English Tradesman* demonstrates that what it means to be in the middle state is undergoing change. The text emphasises that the present is different from the past because of the impact of credit and luxury. Defoe's rhetoric in *The Complete English Tradesman* emphasises the importance of luxury to trade. He echoes the views of the philosopher and nerve doctor, Bernard Mandeville when he tells the Tradesman, 'the Luxury of the People is become a Vertue in Trade'[46] and 'our Vices are become Virtues in Commerce'.[47] In view of the potential of luxury, his fear is that its ruinous effects will prevent the tradesman profiting from it. He expresses the view that 'open debaucheries and extravagances, and a profusion of expence, as well as a general contempt of business, these are open and current roads to a tradesman's destruction'.[48] He writes of the problem of tradesmen adopting 'expensive way[s] of living' including the purchase of 'articles of Foreign importation'.[49] He says that 'tradesman's tables are now the emblems, not of plenty, but of luxury, not of good house-keeping, but of profusion, and that of the highest kind of extravagancies'.[50]

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[44] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 4.

[45] CET, vol. II, pt 1, p. 106.

[46] The similarities and differences between Defoe and Mandeville have been acknowledged by a number of writers including Anderson, 1941, p. 33; Meier, p. 86; Novak, *Economics and the Fiction of Daniel Defoe*, Chapter VI. Barker Benfield states that 'Defoe had attempted to reconcile plenty with morality'. p. xxxii.

[47] CET, vol. II, pt. 2, p. 169.

[48] CET, vol. I, pp. 133-4.

[49] Ibid, p. 136 and p. 138.

[50] Ibid, p. 141.

Defoe complains of 'the extravagant keeping three or four maid-servants in a house, nay, sometimes five, where two formerly were thought sufficient'[51]; of expensive dressing - 'do we not see fine wigs, fine holland shirts of six to seven shillings an ell, and perhaps lac'd also; all lately brought down to the level of the apron, and become the common wear of tradesman'.[52] He also warns the tradesman about 'keeping company above himself', saying that, 'such conversation must necessarily take up a great deal of his time, so it ordinarily must occasion a great expence of money, and both destructive of his prosperity'.[53]

Defoe's problem is how the tradesman may benefit from luxury, which as I will explain is associated with "the feminine", without being destroyed by his own desire for it. One of his solutions is to advise the tradesman to be frugal: 'He that has been a frugal managing Man in Trade, can never, with his Senses about him, turn an unthinking stupid Extravagant when he leaves off'.[54] This effectively describes Crusoe's life on the island where frugality is required. As a result, he is able to partake of some luxuries without negative effect to his survival in trade. Defoe's frequent use of the word 'extravagant' suggests a number of 17th century meanings, it is cited in the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) as referring to 'an unrestrained excess', 'an irrational excess' and 'a wandering beyond bounds'. The meanings evoke Crusoe's desire to maintain as well as exceed his 'Middle State' position as evident in his desire to journey beyond existing boundaries and his consequent shipwreck and survival.

In *The Complete English Tradesman,* Defoe also presents credit as transforming the trading world, what is now an ocean was once a river:

> In the good old days of Trade, which our Fore-fathers plodded on in, and got Estates too at, there were no Bubbles, no Stock-jobbing, no South Sea Infatuations, no Lotteries, no Funds, no Annuities, no buying of Navy Bills and publick

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[51] Ibid, pp. 139-40.

[52] Ibid, p. 145.

[53] Ibid, p. 147.

[54] CET, vol. II, pt 1, p. 163.

> Securities, no circulating Exchequer Bills; in a word, Trade was a vast great River.[55]

In contrast to luxury which encourages the tradesman to exceed his social boundaries, gaining access to credit requires that the tradesman must 'resolve to live more under restraint than ever tradesman of his class used to do'.[56] Defoe advises him therefore to protect his reputation by keeping 'close within the verge of his own affairs'.[57] He must keep within 'his own diurnal revolution'.[58] The imagery is of self-containment and of the enclosed space that is Crusoe's island. The isolation Crusoe experiences reflects Defoe's advice to the tradesman and is related to the problems presented by luxury and credit. In the discussion which follows, I will show that luxury and credit are sexualised and gendered and that the depiction of Crusoe as a socially mobile trading subject is not only constrained by these phenomena, but also made possible by them.

'Man' as a 'Consuming Animal'

While Crusoe undoubtedly has characteristics consistent with his depiction as 'rational economic man', it is also the case that the narrative and Crusoe's journey are organised around his problematic 'Desires'.[59] Maximillian Novak, one of the main commentators on the importance of economics in *Robinson Crusoe*, suggests that the nature of the economic problem in the text is obscured because Defoe's economic ideas and Crusoe's fictional character have been neglected. Novak notes that Crusoe describes himself as a 'a mad rambling boy' who is

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[55] CET, vol. II, pt 2, pp. 7-8. The South Sea Bubble was an financial investment scheme which collapsed in 1720 leaving many people bankrupt. There was speculation that it would do so in the year in which *Robinson Crusoe* was published.

[56] CET, vol. I, p. 135.

[57] Ibid, p. 82.

[58] CET, vol. II, pt 1, p. 74.

[59] The term 'Desire' occurs throughout *Robinson Crusoe*. In this chapter, I use the term to refer to Defoe's usage and not in any modern, psychoanalytic sense. In Raymond F. Hilliard's examination of a number of early eighteenth century texts he names *Robinson Crusoe* as one of the texts in which 'desire...determines the protagonist's adventures', p. 360. Richetti also understands that 'Crusoe...manages to produce a world which is perfectly aligned with self and desires', John J. Richetti, *Defoe's Narratives, Situations and Structures*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1975, p. 23.

'possest with a wandring Spirit'.[60] As such, for Novak, Crusoe has more in common with Thomas Hobbes (and consequently I suggest with Mandeville) than with John Locke and others who understood virtue to be man's natural state.[61] I argue that Crusoe's 'Desire' for fortune, his apparent frugality, his self presentation as one who has tamed his desires, and his likeness and unlikeness to Friday, link *Robinson Crusoe* to the ideas expressed in *The Complete English Tradesman* and by Mandeville.

Crusoe's desire for fortune is evidence of his avarice, which Defoe presents in *The Complete English Tradesman* as an innate vice:

> ...Avarice is within the Man; 'tis mingled, as we say, with his Animal Life; it runs in his Blood; it has insinuated itself into his very Species, and he is truly, as the Text says, *drawn aside by his own Lust, and enticed.*[62]

At the commencement of Crusoe's journey his desire to go to sea to make his fortune is presented as exceeding his reason:

> ...I would be satisfied with nothing but going to sea, and my Inclination to this led me so strongly against my Will, nay the commands of my Father, and against all the entreaties and Perswasions of my Mother and other Friends, that there seem'd to be something fatal in that Propension of Nature tending me directly to the Life of Misery which was to befal me.[63]

When he is shipwrecked on the island, Crusoe gives up his desire for fortune: 'I looked now upon the World as a Thing remote, which I had nothing to do with, no Expectation from, and indeed no Desires about'.[64] Finally his 'Desires' return, but they are changed: 'I never felt so earnest, so strong a Desire after the Society of my Fellow Creatures, or so deep a Regret at the want of it'.[65] *Robinson Crusoe* is therefore a three stage narrative in which Crusoe's desire for fortune leads him to be shipwrecked; his time on the island teaches him about necessity and he learns to be without desire; and finally, his desire for conversation with Friday allows

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[60] Daniel Defoe, *Farther Adventures* quoted by Maximillian E. Novak, 'Robinson Crusoe's Original Sin' in Byrd, pp. 65-6.

[61] Novak in Byrd, p. 62.

[62] CET, vol. II, pt. 1, p. 22.

[63] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 3.

[64] Ibid, p. 128.

[65] Ibid, p. 188.

him to become a "civilised savage".[66] These three stages allow him to successfully return to trade as a figure of authority.

In this reading of *Robinson Crusoe*, the island as an apparent site of frugality contrasts with the ocean as symbol for 'Trade'. The ocean was conventionally the site of feminine Fortuna.[67] As the next two chapters demonstrate it was also a popular representation of masculine economic (and sexualised) desire. That is, it is the scene of masculine desire for luxury. In these terms it is significant that Defoe does not directly attribute a gender to the ocean in *Robinson Crusoe* or in *The Complete English Tradesman*. Crusoe's preference for a trading life is expressed as a desire to return to sea. After his experience of shipwreck, he chooses to travel home by land. However, when he is nearly killed, he changes his mind saying: 'I would rather go a thousand Leagues by Sea'.[68] To directly attribute a gender to the ocean would link his return by sea to a highly moral critique of trade which would threaten his hard won respectability.

The rhetoric about luxury and the desire for luxury goods places *Robinson Crusoe* within a gendered rhetoric of excess and control. As Pocock explains, the rhetoric of 'mastery', whether of the subject over himself or over others, was typically gendered in the Roman and Greek cultural inheritance made popular in the eighteenth century.[69] He presents the control of desire to be Machiavellian, gendered and concerned with trade:

> to pursue passions and be victimised by them was traditionally seen as a female role, or as one which subjected masculine *virtù* to feminine *fortuna*...in the

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[66] "Civilised savage" is my term for Crusoe as it demonstrates the importance of the Hobbesian juxtaposition of Friday with Crusoe. "Savage" in this context refers to the Hobbesian sense of unruly desires which have now been civilised.

[67] The Machiavellian figure of fortune is female and has the quality of water. 'Fortune is "a rapid torrent" which destroys whatever its current anywhere reaches, and adds to one place and lowers another, shifts its banks, shifts its bed and bottom, and makes the earth tremble where it passes', "Tercets on Fortune", lines 151-56 quoted in Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, *Fortune is a woman: gender and politics in the thought of Niccolo Machiavelli*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1984, p. 147.

[68] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 302.

[69] J. A. I. Champion remarks that 'The "classics" were ubiquitous in the education of the literate of the period. Editions of antiquity were available in both original languages and competent translations; the works of Cicero, Aristotle, Polybius, Plutarch, Tacitus and Plato were commonplace'. *The Pillars of Priestcraft Shaken: The Church of England and its Enemies, 1660-1730*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p 182.

eighteenth century production and exchange are regularly equated with the ascendancy of the passions and the female principle.[70]

A more productive presentation of the desire for luxury was provided by Mandeville, who showed how desires, passions, sins or 'vices' such as avarice and lust were profitable to society. He argued that "man" is a desiring animal and that, therefore, men's passions or desires were not only inevitable but profitable. Of the human subject, he said 'I believe Man...to be a Compound of various Passions, that all of them, as they are provoked and come uppermost, govern him by turns, whether he will or no'.[71] The young Crusoe fits Mandeville's description of the human subject as 'naturally selfish, unruly and headstrong'.[72]

Mandeville's view of luxury emerged from the economic debates of the late seventeenth century. The economic historian, Joyce Appleby, states that this was a key period of transformation.[73] Appleby says that the perception of 'Man as a consuming animal with boundless appetites capable of driving the nation to new levels of prosperity arrived with [the] literature of the 1690s'.[74] From this time on man as 'consuming animal' and the corresponding dynamic that was termed self-interest achieved an unprecedented importance.[75] It is relevant to understanding *Robinson Crusoe* that this conception ultimately 'led to the belief that the road to prosperity lay with expanding markets and encouraging consumption'.[76] In Appleby's view, by the end of the seventeenth century, 'The traditional notion of English men being secure in their persons and property had been subtly shifted to

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[70] Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, p. 37.

[71] Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees*, pp. 39-40. Barker-Benfield explains 'sensibility' as stemming from an interpretation of the importance of the nerves and Mandeville's views of the 'passions' can be understood as arising, in part, from his work as a nerve doctor. Barker-Benfield, p. 6.

[72] Bernard Mandeville, *Free Thoughts on Religion, the Church and National Happiness*, J. Brotherton, 1723, second edition, p. 44.

[73] Appleby, 1978. Shinagel similarly states that a 'sharp shift in values' separates Crusoe from his father. Michael Shinagel, *Daniel Defoe and Middle Class Gentility*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1968, p. 127.

[74] Appleby, p. 181. Appleby points out that discussions in the late seventeenth century 'were now claiming for nature what had formerly been the province of politics'. Appleby, p. 192.

[75] Ibid, p. 190.

[76] Ibid, p. 198.

include wealth-making activities'.[77] Defoe was 60 years of age when he wrote *Robinson Crusoe* and this fact together with his ideas on trade have led to him being described as basically a 'seventeenth century mercantilist'.[78] *Robinson Crusoe* itself is set in the mid to late seventeenth century. The debates of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries concerned the immorality of luxury, concerns over social mobility and the related problem of authenticity. The late seventeenth century was relevant to Defoe, because the process of justifying wealth and increased consumption was still in negotiation in the period in which *Robinson Crusoe* was produced.

Defoe's writings on the nature of "man" are contradictory enough to have been compared to Hobbes, who believed "men" to be moved by their 'APPETITE, OR DESIRE' and to Locke, who believed "man" to be a tabula rasa on which humanity is socially formed.[79] The image of Crusoe living frugally, without luxury, family or sex, suggests that Crusoe was an exemplary Protestant who would have condemned all 'outward forms of luxury' as being 'idolatry of the flesh'.[80] However, the 'frugality' of *Robinson Crusoe* can read as a part of his negotiation of opposing values, rather than as a criticism of luxury. The "private vice, publick benefits" of luxury argument provided a converse way for Defoe to argue that through frugality and constraint, the trader could profit from the excesses of others. With private vice depicted as the outcome of natural appetites, the trader who suppressed his own vices for his personal benefit would gain in virtue. In his apparent self-constraint and frugality he would then appear to be publicly virtuous, when in fact, in becoming a trader he is preparing to benefit from public vice. As Pocock writes:

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[77] Ibid, p. 198.

[78] Maximillian E. Novak, *Economics and the Fiction of Daniel Defoe*, p. 23.

[79] James Sambrook, *The Eighteenth Century: The Intellectual and Cultural Context of 1700-1789*, Longman, London, 1986, p. 63. Thomas Hobbes' view was that 'These small beginnings of Motion, within the body of Man...are commonly called ENDEAVOUR. This Endeavour, when it is towards something which causes it, is called APPETITE, or DESIRE. *Leviathan*, (1651) (ed.), Richard Tuck, Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 38.

[80] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1930, p. 171.

> Frugality could appear to be the civic virtue of the trader, assuming the circulation of the goods to be a public benefit, he displayed in frugality and reinvestment his willingness to subordinate private satisfaction to public good, of which he would be rewarded with a further share.[81]

Crusoe's apparent frugality is undoubtedly a Protestant response to the extent that it responds to the problem that a man 'engaged in increasing his wealth by exchanging quantities of fictitious tokens' had no civic virtue.[82]

Although Crusoe has no desire on the island, this is not a tabula rasa natural state, but a "natural" state of satisfaction in which the island and the ship's provisions provide Crusoe with everything he needed and wanted. It is, in other words, a balanced state.[83] It is consistent with Defoe's recognition of the importance of luxury goods that at the end of the text, after his years of frugal living, Crusoe purchases as a gift for his 'Partner',

> a very handsom [sic] Present of some *Italian* Silks for his Wife, and two Daughters...Two Pieces of fine English broad Cloath, the best I could get in Lisbon, five pieces of black Bays, and some Flanders Lace of good Value.[84]

In this quotation, Defoe notably balances exported and imported goods and in doing so blurs the distinction between foreign and domestic goods. As Mandeville expresses it, 'If...Imports are never allow'd to be superior to the Exports, no Nation can ever be impoverish'd by Foreign Luxury'.[85] One of the reasons luxury is attacked in the period is the negative effect of foreign goods on home trade. Both Defoe and Mandeville argue that balancing trade increases employment. In this context the above passage by Defoe is significant because he includes English goods in a range of foreign goods. The mention of English broad

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[81] Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, p. 445.

[82] Ibid, p. 445.

[83] Coleridge caught this well when he stated that Crusoe had the 'needs all men have and comforts all men desire', T. M. Raysor, *Coleridge's Miscellaneous Criticism*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1936, p. 300.

[84] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 288.

[85] Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees*, p. 116.

cloth is significant since Defoe was directly involved in defending English broad cloth against the importation of calico in this period.[86]

In his overview of the concept of luxury, Christopher Berry points out that part of Mandeville's 'subversive intent' was to define luxury as anything which is 'not immediately necessary to make Man subsist as he is a living creature'.[87] The limited supply of goods on Defoe's island gives him ample scope for demonstrating this aspect. In Mandeville's terms, items such as Crusoe's famous umbrella, though 'home-made', is a luxury good.[88] Crusoe therefore presents as living frugally while also living well and growing prosperous. For example, he "imports" many of his goods from the ship and establishes three places of living. In addition to his 'Home', he has 'a Seat in the Country as most Princes had' and a 'Sea-Coast house'.[89] His wants eventually exceed his needs and soon he considers that 'the whole Country was my own meer property'.[90] Even Crusoe's parrot can be understood as a foreign good and therefore a luxury item. In his writings, Defoe reported 'a lady of fashion' as saying: 'I hate everything that Old England brings forth...in short, I have all about me French or foreign, from my waiting woman to my parrot.'[91] Crusoe also yearns for 'the New World's abundance of rum and tobacco'.[92] I suggest therefore that Crusoe's island stay allows him to be presented as a figure removed from the problems associated with luxury, but his activities do not suggest a moral disapproval of luxurious living or luxury goods. Rather, Crusoe's representation is grounded in the luxury debate itself.

The island is an in-between or middle space. It reflects the changing position of the middle class, or as Defoe terms it, the 'Middle State'. Crusoe's

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[86] Legislation, to protect the woollen industry ,which refused the importation of linen and calico was introduced in 1720. Mandeville, *Fable of the Bees*, p. 113, fn. 1.

[87] Berry quoting Mandeville, p. 24.

[88] Both religion and the umbrella, now termed 'the parasol', are discarded as unnecessary for the young Emile. Rousseau, p. 185.

[89] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 258 and p. 102.

[90] Ibid, p. 258.

[91] Daniel Defoe, *The English Lady's Catechism*, quoted by Earle, *The World of Defoe*, p. 247.

[92] Paula Backscheider, *Daniel Defoe: His Life*, p. 427.

father associates luxury with the upper classes of society. He distinguishes the middle state from 'the ...Luxury, Ambition and Envy of the upper Part of Mankind'.[93] In *The Complete English Tradesman* however, Defoe points out that 'the Luxury of the Gentry is the Prosperity of the Tradesman'.[94] In these two statements a criticism becomes a positive factor and the difference is generational. Defoe presents social change in generational terms when he comments that the tradesman must constrain himself until he is wealthy when he himself will then raise gentlemen.[95] This is also clear in the contrasting attitudes presented at the beginning and end of *Robinson Crusoe*. When Crusoe first goes on board ship he says that he makes the mistake of dressing as a gentleman, and that this is a threat to his survival: 'I would always go on board in the Habit of a Gentleman; and so I neither had any Business in the Ship, or learn'd to do any.'[96] His education as a merchant results in generational social mobility when at the end of the narrative he raises his nephew as a gentleman.[97] He also meets another merchant's son who is a gentleman.[98] The "problem" of *Robinson Crusoe* is the desire to be both gentleman and tradesman.[99] In *The Complete English Tradesman* Defoe is concerned that luxury produces a confusion in social divisions. However, the social mobility shown in *Robinson Crusoe* suggests that his concern is not to maintain the status quo, but to change the terms upon which the tradesman's status is determined. This in turn has implications for how wealth and power are gained. While he is neither a valid tradesman nor a valid gentleman, Crusoe is in peril and the particular peril he faces is the charge of effeminacy.

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[93] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 4.

[94] CET, vol. II, pt. 1, p. 162.

[95] In CET, Defoe puts it bluntly 'trade in England makes gentlemen'. vol. I, p. 376. In *The Complete English Gentleman*, (1726), Defoe states more specifically that it is the sons of businessmen who will become gentlemen. pp. 258-59.

[96] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 16.

[97] Ibid, pp. 304-5.

[98] Ibid, p. 289.

[99] In CET, Defoe states that 'to say a Gentleman-tradesman is not so much a nonsense as some people would persuade us to reckon it', vol 1, p. 380. Crusoe depicts himself as having a country estate on the island. *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 258.

The "Problem" Of Luxury For Masculinity and Trade

In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, luxury was debated widely, due to the effect of increased foreign imports and consumption. The debates were characterised by a concern that luxury was changing society from a masculine society based on military strength, civic mindedness, stability of status and values based on land goods, to an effeminate society based on trade, self-interest, instability of status and the shifting values of paper credit and speculation. As several commentators have pointed out, the term 'luxury' allowed a range of issues to be fielded.[100] In these debates, the feminine is presented as excessive and linked to instability, corruption and a weak civic state.

The theme of the day was that 'Luxury...pampered the passions' and the 'objection to luxury had its basis in the belief, central in Puritan thought, that virtue consisted in transcending the demands of the passions.'[101] Such debates were invariably political; for example, Opposition satirists such as Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift identified luxury with corruption.[102] Mandeville responded by saying that actually corruption was simply a case of 'bad Politicks'.[103] These debates were fuelled by the increased consumption of foreign goods and of luxury goods: 'By the eighteenth century the chief source of corruption and virtue was thought to lie in the growth of credit and commerce'.[104] Historians state the view

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[100] See in particular, Berry, 1994, Chapter 6; James D. Shields, *The Theme of Luxury in early eighteenth century literature*, PhD, Columbia University, 1973; and Sekora, 1977.

[101] Anderson, pp. 29-30.

[102] Sutherland, editor of Pope's *Dunciad*, London, 1961, wrote that luxury was used by Pope as a criticism of the effect of the Walpole administration. Shields, p. 24.

[103] Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees*, p. 115.

[104] Berry, p. 75. Karl Marx also understood the decline of Roman society in relation to luxury, not in gendered terms, but in relation to excessive accumulation, stating that 'as soon as either their trade etc. develops, or, as in the case of the Romans, conquest brings them money in vast quantities...the more the decay of their community advances.' *Grundrisse* quoted by James Thompson '"Sure I have Seen That Face Before": Representation and Value in Eighteenth Century Drama' in J. Douglas Canfield and Deborah C., Payne, *Cultural Readings of Restoration Eighteenth-Century English Theatre*, University of Georgia Press, Athens, 1995, p. 284. The luxury argument was an effective tool against the Whigs for their support of trade.

that in the period, 'England's consumption pattern' was 'transformed'.[105] The doctor and philosopher George Cheyne is quoted as saying that:

> Since our Wealth has increas'd, and our Navigation has been extended, we have ransack'd all Parts of the Globe to bring together its whole Stock of Materials for Riot, Luxury, and to provoke Excess.[106]

His main concern was with the 'degradation of males' due to the consequences of the increased consumption identified with the feminisation of society.[107] As I will discuss in more detail later, the role of women as consumers was a favourite target in the period and Swift, Pope and Gay 'launched numerous attacks against women as paragons of luxury'.[108] Swift, notable for his misogyny, stated:

> Is it not the highest Indignity to human nature, that men should be such poltroons as to suffer the Kingdom and themselves to be undone, by the Vanity, the Folly, the Pride, and Wantonness of their Wives...whose whole study seems to be directed to be as expensive as they possibly can in every useless article of living.[109]

Bishop Berkeley stated the concern that 'women of fashion...enslave[d] men to their private passions'.[110] In the rhetoric of luxury, the traits of women and those of fashion became interchangeable:

> In the writing of Addison, Mandeville and Montesquieu, we find variously presented the image of the woman who wants a new gown for thoroughly selfish and whimsical reasons - woman as capricious consumer is a recurrent feature of the rather prominent sexism found in Augustan criticism.[111]

In *The Complete English Tradesman*, Defoe defends women from the charge that they are responsible for the increased spending on luxury goods. He argues:

> I am loth to make any part of my argument a satyr upon the women, nor indeed does the extravagance either of dress or housekeeping, be all, or always, at the door of the tradesmans wives, the husband is often the prompter of it; at least he does not let his wife into the detail of his circumstances, he does not make her mistress of her own condition.[112]

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[105] Barker-Benfield, p. 12.

[106] George Cheyne, *English Malady* (1733) quoted by Barker-Benfield, p. 12.

[107] Barker-Benfield, p. 12.

[108] Shields, p. 31.

[109] Ibid, p. 120.

[110] E. G. Hundert, *The Enlightenment's Fable: Bernard Mandeville and the Discovery of Society*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994, p. 210.

[111] Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, p. 465.

[112] CET, vol. I, pp. 145-6.

Politically, the ruin of Rome and Greece was attributed to luxury.[113] Mandeville is an important exception, 'Not once in *The Fable of the Bees* does Mandeville refer to Rome in terms of the injurious effects of luxury on empires, and considering the prevailing attitude of his time such an omission is in itself revolutionary'.[114] The association between trade, luxury and the feminine is based on these depictions of Roman and Greek societies. As Berry states, in the militaristic culture of Greece the association of luxury with effeminacy meant that there was 'common prejudice against artisans and traders since such individuals [were]...thought to be singularly lacking in courage, and thus in proper manly attributes'.[115] The luxury with which the tradesman was associated was a threat because 'the essence...of masculinity' was men's ability 'to fight, to risk death.'[116] The imagery of Rome served well to represent the tensions in early eighteenth century society between the military, land and trade.

The rhetoric which attacked luxury associated the qualities of citizenship with soldiering.[117] The increasing significance of commerce carried 'the danger that "economic man" would be seen as feminised or effeminate in relation to the traditional humanist paradigms of citizenship'.[118] Military valour was particularly important at the time in the context of England's continual battles with Scotland and with its ally France.[119] For half a century after the union of Scotland and England in 1707, Britain was faced with recurrent invasion threats from abroad

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[113] Shields states that in this period 'the fear of luxury that Swift and others evince is a direct bequest of Roman literature'. Shields, p. 20. Flynn argues of Swift and Defoe that 'both writers place their male characters on islands to secure them from desire', p. 5.

[114] Shields, p. 83.

[115] Berry, p. 59.

[116] Ibid, p. 59.

[117] Ibid, p. 75.

[118] Stephen Copley, 'Commerce, conversation and politeness in the early eighteenth century periodical', *British Journal For Eighteenth Century Studies*, vol. 18, no. 1, Spring, 1995, p. 66.

[119] 'England was at war for twenty-nine of the sixty-six years between 1688 and the outbreak of the great struggle with France in 1756'. P.G. M. Dickson, *The Financial Revolution in England: A Study in the Development of Public Credit, 1688-1756*, Gregg Revivals, Aldershot, 1993. First published 1967, p. 7. Linda Colley also discusses the significance of war in this period, p. 72.

and insurrection at home on behalf of the Stuart claimants to the throne.[120] Defoe himself participated in Monmouth's rebellion in 1685 and took an avid interest in the military and in military figures.[121] Most importantly, Defoe and others were involved in the debate as to how and whether a standing army should be funded. In this respect, Defoe shows his awareness of the charge of effeminacy when he is careful to point out that wealth cancels the need for personal strength:

> money raises armies, and trade raises money; and so it may be truly said of trade that it makes princes powerful, nations valiant, and *the most effeminate people that can't fight for themselves, if they have but money, and can hire other people to fight for them, they become as formidable as any of their neighbours*[122] [my emphasis].

Mandeville also refutes the connection between effeminacy and the military when he points out that 'embroider'd Beaux with fine lac'd Shirts and powdered Wigs have well stood up under fire'.[123]

The association of masculinity with the military contrasted the public interest of the military with the selfish interest of the trader. The rhetoric suggested that: 'The more such "selfish" pleasures are indulged, the less responsibility and commitment to the public good will be exhibited.'[124] This directly raised the prospect of a citizenry concerned with individual profit and self-interest as opposed to a citizenry based on defending the community. This suggests, in turn, that the depiction of Crusoe's altruism on his return to England may have been an attempt to counter such charges. When Crusoe returns after twenty-seven years, he gives money to his two sisters, takes his brother's two sons into his care, and settles his affairs with his 'true Friend, the Widow'.[125] Such morality also marks *The Complete English Tradesman.* The tradesman also returns, 'from an Absence of twenty Years, a long Banishment' and 'loaden with Honesty

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[120] Colley lists such military activity as small invasions of Scotland in 1708 and 1715; a 'major rising' in Scotland in 1715; and a major invasion by Scotland of England in 1745. Colley, p. 72.

[121] Earle, *The World of Defoe*, p. 6.

[122] Defoe, *Plan of English Commerce*, p. 40 quoted by Meier p. 43.

[123] Mandeville, *Fable of the Bees*, p. 122.

[124] Berry, p. 86.

[125] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 286 and p. 304.

and a Good Conscience, and without any evident Force, pays the Widows and the Orphans, whose families had suffer'd by him'.[126]

Both traders and landed gentry were in an environment of change in which foreign trade and the activities of 'money'd men' were influencing the values of an entire society.[127] Defoe and the gentry were responding to the fact that the economy and social system based on land was changing as 'trade was increasingly accepted as the motor that drove the whole economy'.[128] In Pocock's view, the rise of commerce meant that 'a morality founded on real property' eventually became a morality founded on 'mobile' property'.[129] Catherine Ingrassia similarly suggests that:

> In contrast to this idealised citizen motivated by virtue and rationality, the self-interested stockjobber abandons the land and the implicit tradition of civic humanism for a disordered and unstable world of paper credit and increasingly immaterial forms of property.[130]

The abandoning of a 'coherent moral structure' marooned the tradesman between the disenfranchised labouring poor and 'the upper Part of Mankind'.[131] Part of the problem that *Robinson Crusoe* addresses is that, although the trader may acquire wealth, he was still 'misunderstood and mistrusted' by the gentry and his 'pretensions to the denomination of gentleman' were not widely accepted.[132] Crusoe's father's view was that: 'the Landed Gentlemen, Yeomen and Farmers...are to be esteemed the most settled inhabitants and the Bulk of the nation'.[133] In opposition to this was the view put by Defoe in *The Complete English Tradesman* that: 'Trade is so far here from being inconsistent with a gentleman,

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[126] CET, vol. II, pt. 1, pp. 186-7.

[127] See discussion in Dickson, p. 26-27 and McKeon, p. 166.

[128] Pocock argues that the values based on the possession of land and property were being undermined by the values of commerce. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, Chapter XIII.

[129] Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, p. 441.

[130] Catherine Ingrassia, 'The Pleasure of Business and the Business of Pleasure', *Studies in Eighteenth Century Culture*, vol. 24, 1995, p. 193.

[131] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 4.

[132] Meier, p. 34.

[133] *The Landed Interest Considered...by a Yeoman of Kent* quoted by Dickson, p. 27.

that, in short, trade in England makes gentleman and has peopled this nation with gentlemen'.[134]

Luxury represented not only a clash of old and new values, but also instability of identity. In summary, the associations of trade with the feminine and with weakness and civic decline led to a redefining of masculinity. In the view of one critic, in this period, 'Men...gendered and sexualised sensibility, as they tried to make sense of a manhood now expressing itself more immediately in commerce rather than war.'[135] In his history of the concept of luxury, Berry states that it is significant that the eventual challenge to the perception of luxury as immoral was brought about within the discourse of trade.[136] Pocock similarly argues that in this period 'virtue' or that which 'qualified a man for civic capacity', necessarily acquired a different grounding. Land and property provided the means to 'dominate' history via continuity of inheritance and when commerce undermined this continuity 'virtue' had no 'coherent moral structure'.[137] As a result, a 'complex formula' was required 'in order to bring virtue and commerce together'.[138] I suggest that this complexity is found in Defoe's depiction of virtue as female on the one hand, and of nature as 'masculine' on the other.

Female Virtue and Credit

I have suggested that Crusoe's castaway island state enables him to shore up his defences against the implications of luxury. The second major area of concern that faced the tradesman in *The Complete English Tradesman* is credit. So essential is personal credit to the tradesman in *The Complete English Tradesman* that Defoe states, 'Credit is the Tradesman's life, 'tis...marrow to his bones'.[139] In Defoe's metaphorical landscape, Crusoe's island represents the virtuous state

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[134] CET quoted by Meier, p. 52.

[135] Barker-Benfield, p. xxvii.

[136] Berry, p. 59.

[137] Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, p. 467.

[138] Ibid, p. 470.

[139] CET, vol. I, p. 235.

recommended in *The Complete English Tradesman* as necessary to be in trade and to maintain credit.

Like luxury and trade, credit is feminised in the iconography of period. Joseph Addison, for example, famously portrayed public credit as a virgin seated in a golden throne.[140] Defoe created the figure of 'Lady Credit' to demonstrate the importance of national credit. While Lady Credit does not represent the private credit so essential to the tradesman, she has similar problems. She is introduced by Defoe as Money's younger sister, she is a 'coy lass, and wonderful chary of herself; yet a most necessary, useful, industrious creature'.[141] He goes on to say that Credit must be won and not offended and that once she is lost she is as difficult to persuade to return 'as to restore Virginity, or to make a W--re an Honest Woman'. He argues that 'nothing but punctual honourable dealing can restore Credit'.[142] Crusoe on his island can be understood as repairing his credit.[143] I suggest that the restoration of virtue depicted as virginity is the key to the images of enclosure which characterise the island and the various abodes which Crusoe establishes.

Defoe gives 'Credit' two sisters, 'Virtue' and 'Prudence'. This allegorical family 'asserts the essential relationship between reputation and credit as well as its necessary foundation in integrity and discernment'.[144] The tradesman is therefore like 'Credit' in that his reputation, like that of a woman's, must be protected from society and gossip. In these terms, Defoe advises the tradesman that 'the credit of a tradesman...is the same thing in its nature as the virtue of a Lady'.[145] One page earlier in *The Complete English Tradesman* he uses a more direct and cannibalistic analogy: 'a Tradesman's credit, and a virgin's virtue, ought to be

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[140] Joseph Addison, *The Spectator*, no 3.

[141] Daniel Defoe, *Defoe's Review*, vol. III, no. 5, p. 17.

[142] Ibid.

[143] Sandra Sherman represents Defoe's Lady Credit as a figure with a 'regenerative hymen', in 'Lady Credit No Lady; or, The Case of Defoe's "Coy Mistress," Truly Stated', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, vol. 37, no. 2, 1995, p. 188.

[144] Paula Backscheider, 'Defoe's Lady Credit', *Huntington Library Journal*, vol. 44, 1981, p. 90.

[145] CET, vol. I, p. 229.

equally sacred from the tongues of men'.[146] His reference to both class (lady) and sexual status (virgin) links the feminine to marriage and therefore to social mobility. Defoe is not adverse to using "feminine" and sexual allegories in his advice to the tradesman. On one occasion, he says of the young tradesman that, 'he that comes out of his time without a perfect knowledge of book-keeping, like a bride undrest, is not fit to be married; he knows not what to do, or what shop to take'.[147] On another occasion he says that, in a law suit, a tradesman without his books is like a married woman without her certificate.

Crusoe's isolation is a virginal and virtuous state which is both dependant on, and vulnerable to, the acts and speech of others. In *The Complete English Tradesman* the tradesman's character is depicted as determined as much by credit as by his relationship to luxury. He is constantly told by Defoe 'to 'keep up your reputation', 'preserve your integrity', 'maintain your credit'.[148] Defoe warns the tradesman that the gossip of others may ruin his reputation and therefore his credit. In a point I will return to, it is significant that Friday's tongue, that is his representation as cannibal has the double-edged potential of conversation and appetite, that is. desire. In order to survive, the tradesman needs access to credit and to gain credit he needs to be seen to be above reproach for 'The least hint of unreliability could bring a debtor's collapse as his creditors unceremoniously competed with one another to ensure the security of their assets'.[149] In response to this problem in *The Complete English Tradesman* Defoe describes the tradesman's ideal state as self-reliant and self-enclosed:

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[146] Ibid, p. 228.

[147] Ibid, p. 19.

[148] John Brewer notes that 'Whereas the language of personal trust had originally provided the metaphors for borrowing and lending, now, in a curious transposition, the language of finance...was employed metaphorically to depict moral and social worth'. John Brewer, 'Commercialisation and Politics', in Neil McKendrick, John Brewer and J. H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialisation Of Eighteenth Century England*, Europa, London, 1982, p. 214.

[149] McKendrick, p. 211.

> He is a safe Man, nothing can hurt him but himself: If he comes into any Mischiefs, they are of his own chusing; if he falls, 'tis his own doing, and he has no body to blame but himself.[150]

Credit for Defoe carries the connotation of "feminine" virtue and consequently, the enclosing imagery of virginity.[151] Consequently, safety comes for Crusoe when he is himself is enclosed: 'and so I was compleatly fenc'd in, and fortifyed, as I thought, from all the world and consequently slept secure in the night'.[152] Crusoe's concern with self-enclosure has been read as analogous to a religious retreat.[153] I suggest that in the context of the strong associations between the language of *The Complete English Tradesman* and *Robinson Crusoe,* Defoe's comparison of the tradesman's credit to a virgin's virtue allows for Crusoe's self-enclosure to be understood in gendered and sexual terms. As Ingrassia notes: ' the new qualities desirable for...a man of credit mirror those coveted by a woman of quality in the marriage market; both must rely on reputation (credit or virginity)'.[154] For Defoe the tradesman's integrity requires the maintenance of an "intact body". In this sense, the excessive character of luxury is the opposite of the enclosure necessary to credit, suggesting a tension between values that are gendered and sexualised in accord with a similar opposition between virtue and vice.

Defoe tells a story in *The Complete English Tradesman* which depicts the tradesman's vulnerability in sexual and gendered terms. In the story, the man's reputation is undone and the persecutor is a woman. Defoe tells of a 'lady' who

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[150] CET, vol. II, pt 1, p. 107.

[151] Virginity as a symbol of enclosure was particularly important in the period 1640-60 when '...the female virgin provided a symbolic model for the specifically seventeenth century image of the autonomous liberal self'. John Rogers, 'The Enclosure of Virginity: The Poetics of Sexual Abstinence in the English Revolution' in Richard Burt and John Michael Archer, *Enclosure Acts: Sexuality, property and culture in early modern England,* Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1994, p. 238.

[152] *Robinson Crusoe,* p. 59.

[153] Braudy states that Crusoe's caves constitute a Catholic retreat. He states Catholicism appealed to Defoe because of 'the combination of society and refuge encompassed by the concept of retreat', p. 123. Defoe criticised the retreat in *Serious Reflections,* writing 'all those religious hermit-like solitudes...are but an acknowledgment of the defect or imperfection of our resolutions', and 'The abstaining from evil...depends upon the man's limiting and confining his desires' pp. 6-8.

[154] Ingrassia, p. 194.

takes revenge on a tradesman who she thought had left her for a richer woman. Defoe says that the tradesman acted 'unworthily' and the Lady 'deserved her resentment'.[155] He shows the effect of her revenge on the tradesman's credit. The story is told as a conversation between two of her female friends at their tea-table. The ritual of tea drinking which accompanied increased consumption and luxury was associated with the risk of effeminacy for men and 'effeminate tea drinkers were "stock comic characters" of the period'.[156] In their gossip, the two women describe the man as 'a pretty Tradesman'.[157] Defoe is here using the Shaftesburian association between virtue and beauty to stress the importance of the tradesman's business acumen.[158] One friend favours the man's role in the affair, saying that it was the woman who was rejected (in other words, it was her fault). The other friend criticises the man saying that he had to marry for money, because his business was no good. This woman shows the other some letters (later proved to be forged) which show that the tradesman had 'the Foul disease'.[159] Defoe goes on to say that this kind of gossip spread until the man concerned was literally dis-credited. His business was ruined and he lost his wife to be (who, Defoe stresses, he wanted to marry and not for money). Defoe points out that, by turning the tables on the tradesman, the woman's reputation as desirable is salvaged, while the tradesman's is ruined. He points out that the woman can begin again: 'the Lady had not gone so far with him, that she could not go off again.'[160] Later, Defoe devotes a chapter of *The Complete English Tradesman* to advising the tradesman that, like the woman in this anecdote, 'no Condition is so low or so

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[155] CET, vol. I, p. 237.

[156] Barker-Benfield, p. 159.

[157] CET, vol. I, p. 238.

[158] For the philosopher, the Third Earl of Shaftesbury (1671-1713), 'What is BEAUTIFUL is *Harmonious* and *Proportionable*, what is Harmonious and Proportionable is TRUE, and what is at once both, *Beautiful* and *True* is of consequence, *Agreeable* and GOOD. *Characteristics*, (2nd ed.), 1714, vol. II, p. 395, pp. 426-7 and vol. III, pp. 182-3.

[159] CET, vol. 1, p. 238. The implication is that it is a sexual disease.

[160] Ibid, p. 243.

despicable in a Tradesman, but he may with Diligence and Application recover it.'[161]

In this anecdote about the danger of gossip, Defoe conflates business, sexual and physical health to convey the importance of reputation to the repair and ruin of 'virtue' and credit alike. On his island, Crusoe's virtue is safe because he has no conversation until the arrival of Friday, aside from his parrot, Poll, who reassuringly repeats his words back to him.[162] Crusoe on his island, as a man without women and without sexual cohabitation, has a reputation that is 'safe'. In evoking the importance of reputation and the association of credit with the feminine, the vulnerability of the tradesman's identity is represented.[163]

Just as luxury represents both a problem and a possibility for identity so does credit. For credit requires integrity on one hand and raises the problem/possibility of artifice on the other.[164] The association between credit and artifice is encapsulated in the event known as the South Sea Bubble which was the largest financial collapse of the century. In its essence, it captured the character and problem of credit which arose long before the crash itself. When the South Sea company offered 'the prospect of getting rich in the slave trade'[165] shares quickly rose in value and this attracted a number of investors:

> Several unchartered and under-capitalised companies began to take advantage of speculative fever by buying South Sea stock; a number of their investors bought shares with money borrowed against South Sea shares. After the South Sea company brought suit against a number of these companies they and their owners

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[161] CET, vol. II, pt. 1, p. xii.

[162] Eric Jager, 'The Parrot's Voice: Language and the Self in Robinson Crusoe', *Eighteenth Century Studies*, vol. 21, Spring, 1988, pp. 316-33.

[163] Pocock points out that Mandeville was less in trouble for pointing out that man was greedy, than for pointing out that 'man', as the majority thought about him, didn't exist. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, p. 465.

[164] Colin Nicholson states 'The paper money systems of public credit and the commodities thereby circulated seemed to be assuming sole and overwhelming command of all social valuation'. *Writing and the Rise of Finance: Capital satires of the early eighteenth century*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1994, p. 9.

[165] Meier, p. 20. One of the projects listed as a bubble in the print, "The Bubblers Mirrour or Englands Folly" (No. 1621, 1720) is 'The River Orinoco', it appears alongside satirically named projects such as 'Air Pump for the Brain'.

began wildly to sell...and shares fell from 1000 pounds to 175 pounds, ruining hundreds of overextended investors.[166]

This brief description of the South Sea Bubble suggests that, in *The Complete English Tradesman* and *Robinson Crusoe*, Defoe is not only warning against complacency in success, but is alerting the reader to the dangers of inflated and escalated values which have no substance.[167] In this sense, credit presents both the threat of inauthenticity, the loss of credibility as well as the corresponding possibilities opened up by artifice. The discourse of credit makes it possible for the tradesman to be socially mobile, while threatening the possibility of him ever establishing integrity as such a figure. As Pocock explains, 'Once property was seen to have a symbolic value, expressed in coin or in credit, the foundations of personality themselves are imaginary or at best consensual.'[168] The epistemology based on credit was 'terribly fragile' for its 'objects of knowledge' have only a 'fictitious value'. The possibility that this uncertainty opened up was that language itself, 'opinions...which we declare and shape our actions' was itself reified and manipulable.[169] The issue was one of representation, that is, of how one was to represent oneself.

The "Problem" of Artifice

In *The Complete English Tradesman* Defoe is sensitive to artifice as a problem. Credit itself was artifice in that it was the symbolic representation of gold or "real"

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[166] Meier, p. 20.

[167] At least two satirical references were made to *Robinson Crusoe* in relation to credit in the period after the South Sea Bubble. James Spiller (1692-1729), 'a popular but prodigal comedian' performed 'the Entertainment of Robinson Crusoe for 'the benefit of myself and my Creditors' in 1720. In the Hogarth print of the performance, 'For the Benefit of Spiller', Spiller stands between prison and alehouse under a large scales with Fortune overhead. The scale weighed towards the prison has on it gin, ale, beer and tobacco and on the other set of scales a few coins. A pile of theatre tickets, suggestive of artifice and paper credit, is about to go up in smoke in front of him. In another, more indirect reference, in the Hogarth print, "The Bubbler's Kingdom in the Aireal-World", Diogenes is shown looking for 'an honest man', instead he finds a 'parrot, dog and cat'. In a later version, this is changed and he finds a group of speculators. no. 1622, 1720.

[168] Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, p. 464.

[169] Defoe is exemplary in the manipulation of opinion: 'His response to the collapse of the value of the South Sea stock was to do the same things he had done during the economic crisis of 1710: he did all in his power to bolster public credit and to maintain confidence in the government', Paula Backscheider, *Daniel Defoe: His Life*, p. 457.

currency rather than currency itself. In his view, the tradesman in the middle ground, neither rich nor poor but dependent on both, risked being seen as fraudulent if he rose in social status. This was a risk which accompanied the wealth accrued from the sale of luxury goods. The tradesman literally could not afford to be understood as false, that is, as an impersonator of the gentry or of nobility. Such artifice would affect his integrity as a tradesman. The concern was that the outward signs of wealth were no longer reliable markers of social status.[170] Defoe saw that master and servant categories were becoming confused, as in the common practice of the lower class servant wearing her lady's cast off clothing.[171] He noted that a 'rich' appearance could equally mark the presence of a female member of the aristocracy, a prostitute, or a tradesman's wife.[172] Mandeville also observed that 'the Women of Quality are frighten'd to see Merchant's Wives and Daughters dress'd like themselves; this Impudence of the City, they cry, is intolerable'.[173] In *The Complete English Tradesman*, Defoe observes critically that: 'the tradesmen's wives now claim that title [ladies], as they do by their dress claim the appearance'.[174] All this implied, however, that just as luxury meant 'the subversion of proper social stratification'[175] and an 'exceeding of proper limits',[176] it also represented the possibility of social mobility.

The dilemma for Defoe was that because the trader was not "naturally" born into wealth, his social mobility was limited by the risk of fraudulent representation. Because of the need to maintain integrity, the tradesman could not,

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[170] Daniel Defoe, *Everybody's Business is Nobody's Business*, 1st published 1725, *Works*, II, Bohn's Classics, London, p. 504.

[171] Sandra Sherman rightly points out that Defoe is concerned that luxury has produced a slippage between master and servant identities. She points out that that on Crusoe's island no such slippage is possible, 'On Crusoe's island, neither Friday nor any of the successive waves of subjects could be misread as claiming proprietary status." p. 554. However as I will show there is however a complex 'sameness' occurring between Friday and Crusoe that complicates this reading. Sandra Sherman, 'Servants and semiotics', ELH, 62, 1995, p. 561.

[172] Daniel Defoe, *Giving Alms No Charity and Employing the Poor A Grievance to the Nation*, London, 1704 cited by Shields, p. 8.

[173] Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees*, p. 153.

[174] CET, vol. I, p. 145.

[175] Berry, p. 30.

[176] Ibid, p. 30.

for example, engage in the play of appearances that defined the masquerade, a favourite pastime of the wealthy.[177] For Defoe, the masquerade was associated with fraud and therefore it was an image which indicated the problem of establishing integrity for the trader:

> A tradesman dressed up fine, with his long wig and sword, may go to the Ball...like a piece of counterfeit money, he is brass wash'd over with silver...no body will deal with him...he is truly a tradesman *in masquerade*.[178]

Changing the appearance of the tradesman was a problem because his identity was linked to credit and luxury, rather than on the secure and traditional values of land and inheritance.[179] That is, there was a dominant social perception that land signified 'real property and human relations as they really and naturally were'.[180]

In *The Complete English Tradesman* Defoe suggests that the threat of artifice can be avoided if the tradesman is frugal, avoids society and cultivates every appearance of living in a state of nature. This cultivated state of nature is explicitly contrasted with the artifice of society:

> Trade is not a Ball, where people appear in masque, and act a part to make sport; where they strive to seem what they really are not, and to think themselves best dressed when they are least known: but tis a plain visible scene of honest life, *shewn best in its native appearance, without disguise; supported by prudence and frugality*; and like strong, stiff, clay land, grows fruitful only by good husbandry, culture and manuring [my emphasis].[181]

In this quotation, when the tradesman is advised that he must shun disguise, his undisguised state is described as a 'native *appearance*'. While he is told not to act a part, he is advised to present 'a plain visible *scene* of honest life'. The use of the language of the theatre suggests that Defoe is well aware of the importance of constructing the appearance of truth. Elsewhere he actually declared that it was

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[177] In 1735 Erasmus Jones comments with disapproval that 'the Mall, Playhouses and Masquerades are fill'd with Citizens and young Tradesmen, instead of Gentlemen and Families of Distinction', quoted by Shields, p. 7.

[178] CET, vol. I, p. 143.

[179] Nicholson states: 'the Bank of England and National Debt - transformed the relationship of citizen to state. In the writing of those who opposed these developments we detect a nostalgia for Aristotelian notions of freehold and real property as the foundations of personality and value'. Nicholson, p. 4.

[180] Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, p. 452.

[181] CET, vol. I, p. 143.

not the truth that mattered but the intention of truth.[182] In *Robinson Crusoe,* Defoe is like a 'Seller' convincing a customer as to what is true, through recourse to culturally valid signs of truth. In the text, the relationship of Crusoe with Friday is used to manipulate what is "natural" as well as what is "social".

On his island, Crusoe wears animal skins. His "wild" appearance not only relates to his desires, but is also a signifier of his "natural" state. When Crusoe sheds his English clothes and dresses himself in skins, this is civilised man dressed in the skin of nature. In this way, Crusoe becomes a "naturally" frugal and integral trader. As Pocock observes:

> The trader was asked to be frugal in just the way the primeval cultivator (who had needed no asking) had been; he was asked to imitate the natural man in place of his artificial self; and he was asked to do this to limit the negative effects of his own activity.[183]

This context is important for understanding the role of Friday. In the narrative, Crusoe is transformed from "social man" to "natural man", while Friday is conversely constructed as "social man". In contrast to Crusoe who wears animal skins, Friday wears European clothes.[184]

In *Robinson Crusoe,* neither natural reproduction nor social reproduction are prioritised, but both are manipulated in the interests of forming the trading subject. This is evident when Defoe emphasises Crusoe's "social" construction as a subject:

> I was born in the Year 1632, in the City of *York,* of a good family, tho' not of that country, my Father being a Foreigner of Bremen, who first settled at Hull. He got a good Estate by Merchandise, and leaving off his Trade, lived afterward at *York,* from whence he married my Mother, whose Relations were named Robinson, a very good Family in that Country, and from whom I was called Robinson Kreutznaer; but by the usual Corruption of Words in England, we are now called,

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[182] In Defoe's view, 'To desire to be honest, is Honesty'. He defends this view by referring to the disingenuousness of the customer, saying if 'the Tradesman is to be censur'd as dishonest, and that all Tradesmen that practice the Art of setting off their Goods by the Help of Words are Knaves, then I must add, that all Buyers, who...endeavours to depreciate and run down the goods he buys by the Help of the same Artifice, is a Knave too'. He goes on to say that on this basis, ' no Man...can be honest'. CET, vol. II, pt 1, p. 43 and p. 45.

[183] Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment,* p. 446.

[184] *Robinson Crusoe,* p. 208.

> nay we call ourselves, and write our Name Crusoe, and so my Companions always call'd me.[185]

The text's eponymous title and the opening of the text with the statement of Crusoe's birth, suggest that Crusoe is being written as both "natural" subject and as a constructed identity. This duality suggests that the text gains authenticity through its reference to what is "natural", while it identifies what is "natural" as that which is socially constructed. In this sense, the text refuses the natural/social binary in favour of a textual middle ground which sees both positions as constructed.

In telling of Crusoe's birth, Defoe refutes the naturalness of social status. Though Crusoe is English born, the text states that Crusoe's family 'is not of that country' as his family came from Bremen in Germany.[186] He also points out that Crusoe's birthplace, York, was not the family's point of origin, because his family first settled in Hull. These details constantly defer the point of origin and establish differences between Crusoe and his family. As such, Crusoe is both Crusoe and not Crusoe. He is not Crusoe because at birth he was given the name of his mother, Robinson, and the name of his father Kreutznaer.[187] The corruption of his patriarchal "birth" name through language and through conversation takes the reader away from "original" meanings and away from true names. What was true is now corrupted and what was the original case no longer holds true. In retaining his mother's name and changing his father's name, Crusoe establishes his first break with what was previously represented as "natural", that is, his father's name representing the dominant patriarchal social order. *Robinson Crusoe*, as character and as text, gains authenticity and value not through natural right, but through

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[185] Ibid, p. 3.

[186] Defoe, son of a migrant himself, criticised the concept of the purity of the English race, particularly with regard to the "natural born right" of the aristocracy. In 1701, in support of the Dutchman, King William, he wrote *The True Born Englishman*, a satire on the different races that constituted the state of being 'English'. He stated the view that 'from a Mixture of all kinds began, that Het'rogeneous Thing, An Englishman'. *The True Born Englishman. A Satyr*, 1701, p. 20.

[187] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 3.

social recognition. Although his name is 'corrupted' through its social usage it is also validated.

The "Natural Savagery" of Civilisation

Friday is a Carib and a cannibal and therefore different from Crusoe. Yet the apparent differences between the two figures confirm their sameness. Just as Crusoe is a Mandevillean figure of desire, so Friday is a symbolic figure of avarice.[188] Defoe presents the tradesman as benefiting from the desire and avarice of society. So Crusoe understands and forgives the cannibalism of the Caribs, saying that they 'had been suffer'd by Providence in his Wise Disposition of the World, to have no other Guide than their own abominable and vitiated Passions.[189] He understands cannibalism in the context of war and equates it with the 'Barbarities' of the Spaniards.[190] This equation allows him 'to conclude...it was not my Business to meddle with them, unless they first attacked me'.[191] It is significant that in Crusoe's consideration of the Caribs' cannibalism, he associates avarice and excess with war and with European 'savagery'. This allows him to adopt a military sensibility and ethic in order to deal with it. In doing this, the problematic 'unruly Passions' are made masculine in their association with war. These unruly 'Passions' are then presented as "natural" within different societies. The view is expressed that different cultures have different ethics, rather than right or wrong ethics.[192] Later Friday justifies Crusoe's approach when he tells him that his people only eat the enemies they capture and that there were a group of Europeans living safely with them over the sea.[193]

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[188] Friday also reflects another of Crusoe's desires which is literally for food. Martin Gliserman points out that in *Robinson Crusoe*, 'The hero's primary occupation and recurrent preoccupation...is with eating and being eaten, having and not having food or becoming food'. p. 59.

[189] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 170.

[190] Ibid, pp. 171-2.

[191] Ibid, p. 172.

[192] The use of the travel narrative to assert the validity of different views in response to the dominant views of society is evident in all of the castaway texts I have examined.

[193] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 223.

As a cannibal, Friday functions as a symbol of the innate avarice upon which Defoe's and Mandeville's theories of luxury are based. He symbolises the avarice of consumption, as well as the danger and importance of avarice for the trader. In this respect, it is significant that Defoe evokes the confluence of politics and religion when he argues that if cannibalism is a crime, it is a national crime and as such 'I ought to leave them to the Justice of God, who is the Governour of Nations, and knows how by National Punishments to make a just retribution for National Offences'. This seems to propose that the judgement of luxury should not come from individual morality, but should be assessed in relation to national interest.

Defoe creates Friday and Crusoe as fundamentally the same man with the same consuming appetites and therefore the same capacity for 'civilisation'.[194] Just as cannibalism is in Friday's nature, so is Crusoe a naturally 'consuming' and avaricious man.[195] The interdependent relationship between Crusoe and Friday is demonstrated by the similarities between the two figures. Friday's apparent differences in his culture, race and skin colour only serve to demonstrate his sameness and confirm Crusoe's perception that all men are the same:

> he [God] has bestow'd upon them the same Powers, the same Reason, the same Affections, the same sentiments of Kindness and Obligation, the same Passions and resentments of Wrongs, the same sense of Gratitude, Sincerity, Fidelity, and all the Capacities for doing Good, that he has given to us[196].

Crusoe makes Friday like himself in the explicitly European description that Crusoe gives of Friday: 'he had all the sweetness and softness of a European in his Countenance'.[197] In this respect Friday is like the artifice that is Crusoe, that

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[194] Schonhorn states that 'ferocious heathens or simple savages' are all Defoe could evoke due to audience expectations. To support this he states that 'No tale that has been unearthed as a possible source of, or background to, Crusoe's adventures provided Defoe's reader - or Defoe - with any counterpart to Friday', p. 159. Manuel Schonhorn, *Defoe's Politics: Parliament, Power, Kinship And Robinson Crusoe*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1991 p. 158. However *The Tempest* is a distinct possibility, Caliban is both savage and servant to Prospero. See Moore, '*The Tempest* and *Robinson Crusoe*', pp. 52-56.

[195] *Robinson Crusoe*, p 208.

[196] Ibid, p. 209.

[197] Ibid, p. 205.

is, the Crusoe who is not a "natural" Englishman, but whose behaviour is learned and whose name was changed from the German.[198] The relationship of Friday to Crusoe allows Crusoe to be equated with Friday as " natural" and "savage" and Friday to be equated with Crusoe as "civilised" and constructed.

The language of cannibalism can be used to refer to the language of literal survival. When he arrives on his island, Crusoe quickly understands that he might equally eat or be eaten: 'I had no Weapon either to hunt and kill any Creature for my Sustenance, or to defend my self against any other Creature that might desire to kill me for theirs'.[199] Similarly, in *The Complete English Tradesman*, when Defoe describes the climate in which the tradesman is to survive, he uses the imagery of cannibalism:

> I tell you all, gentleman, in your poverty, the best of you all will rob your neighbour; nay to go further,...you will not only rob your neighbour, but if in distress, you will EAT your neighbour, ay, and say grace to your meat too.[200]

Defoe goes on to depict tradesmen as analogous to men in a boat adrift at sea who kill a man in order to survive: 'they fall upon one, and kill and devour him...they draw Lots for Life and do the same Thing again.'[201] Defoe's metaphors link cannibalism to the effect of luxury on the tradesman when he states that 'Expensive living feeds upon the life and blood of the Tradesman'.[202] For Defoe, the removal of access to luxury would mean the death of trade for 'the Luxury of the People...is so incorporated with our felicity, that like a Limb of the Body an amputation wou'd endanger Life.'[203] The embodied language shows the extent to

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[198] Ibid, p. 3. In *The True Born English Man* Defoe states:'Since scarce one family is left alive, which does not from some Foreigner derive. Of Sixty thousand *English* Gentlemen, Whose Names and Arms in Registers remain, We challenge all our Heralds to declare Ten families which *English-Saxons* are'. p. 24. And as such he argues, 'England, Modern to the last degree, Borrows or makes her own Nobility'.

[199] Ibid, p. 47. Cannibalism as a motif of threat was also used in the period in relation to the poor and to women. See Jonathan Swift, *A Modest Proposal*, 1729 and Mary Astell, *The Christian Religion*, 1705, also, *Misogynus: Or a Satyr on Women*, 1682, p. 7 cited in Felicity Nussbaum, *The Brink of All We Hate: English Satires in Women, 1660-1750*, University Press of Kentucky, Kentucky, 1984, p. 179, fn. 19.

[200] Peter Earle, *The World of Defoe*, p. 231 quoting Defoe in *The Review*, September, 1711.

[201] CET, vol. II, pt 1, p. 194.

[202] CET, vol. I, p. 136.

[203] CET, vol. II, pt 2, pp. 101-2.

which Defoe understood that the capacity of the tradesman to remain intact depended on the resolution of the problems of luxury and credit.[204]

The turning of negatives into positives is a defining feature of *Robinson Crusoe.*[205] Likewise, Crusoe turns Friday as threat, the cannibal figure of avarice that could consume him, into a subject that will advantage him.[206] In this respect, Crusoe demonstrates the main propensity of the Mandevillean subject which is self-interest. Mandeville states that such subjects are 'naturally selfish...what makes them sociable is their necessity and consciousness of standing in need of other's help'.[207] Crusoe's impulse to rescue Friday is a combination of both need and desire, and in the text he makes it clear that the two are essentially connected:

> ...Gratitude was no inherent Virtue in the Nature of Man; nor did Men always square their dealings by the Obligations they had receiv'd, so much as they did by the Advantages they expected.[208]

A "civilised" Friday denotes a civilised relation between men in which the problem of luxury is contained, so as to remain profitable. The association between the two allows Friday to represent to Crusoe qualities which the younger Crusoe has rejected. In this sense, Friday is Crusoe's new 'Pilot' and facilitates his return to sea:

> this fellow will serve me as a Pilot, and will tell me what to do, and whether to go for Provisions; and whether not *to go for fear of being devoured,* what places to venture into to, and what to escape;[209] [my emphasis]

Friday is the loving son that Crusoe was not and, by extending this virtuous love to Crusoe, makes Crusoe himself appear virtuous. The day after noting Friday's cannibal nature, Crusoe says 'never Man had a more faithful, loving,

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[204] Fausett suggests that 'The relocation of ideas or ideals from the communal level placed new emphasis on the life of the body'. He notes the importance of Mandeville in this regard, p. 45.

[205] As the rhetoric of conversion, it also definitive of spiritual autobiography.

[206] Defoe is typically very slippery in his use of terms, his 'threats' act as warnings and then become recommendations in which advantages proscribe behaviour.

[207] Mandeville, *Free Thoughts,* p. 44.

[208] *Robinson Crusoe,* p. 244. Defoe's pragmatism and use of the idea that men are not inherently virtuous would seem to explain situations which other critics have seen as contradictory. A good example is Defoe's selling of the slave, Xury, both selling and keeping slaves and keeping Friday as his pilot are to Crusoe's advantage at the time of his decision.

[209] *Robinson Crusoe,* p. 198.

sincere Servant, than Friday was to me...his very Affections were ty'd to me, like those of a Child to a Father'.[210] The terms of Crusoe's and Friday's new subjectivities are that both leave their fathers. Crusoe's opposition to his father is termed by Crusoe his 'ORIGINAL SIN'.[211] This sin is the 'natural Propensity we all have to evil'. As such, as George Starr states: 'Crusoe is motivated by the wildness that Defoe found characteristic of unregenerate man in general, and of youth in particular'.[212] While Crusoe is the unruly son who gives in to his desires and abandons his father, Friday is the loving son who does the opposite; he does not leave his father but is taken from him by the desires of others. As in so much of Defoe's rhetoric, the opposite turns out to be an indication of the same and after Friday saves and tends his father, he leaves him. As Manuel Schonhorn points out Crusoe is 'a father and no father to Friday', and his 'relationship with Friday...becomes a dramatic illustration of the contention that fatherhood is not grounded on generation but is "acquired by...trouble and care...in Education"'.[213] This is an important 'refutation of indefeasible hereditary right' and can be understood as an important refutation of "natural", patriarchal rule by Defoe.[214]

Both Crusoe and Friday leave their fathers and become literally and symbolically mobile. Just as Crusoe has erased and transformed his place in his father's society, he also brings about Friday's social and cultural transformation. Both transformations result in and require mobility. Social mobility translated into the world of consumable objects becomes circulation which Defoe understands is 'the very life-blood of...Trade'.[215] Friday's potential as consumer of material goods is suggested when Crusoe becomes a tailor and makes Friday's clothes. In changing Friday's tastes for flesh, he feeds and houses him and teaches him

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[210] Ibid, p. 209.

[211] Ibid, p. 194.

[212] Starr goes on to say, 'The episode seems to rest on an orthodox Calvinist conception of man's innate waywardness and obstinacy'. George Starr, 'Robinson Crusoe's conversion' in Byrd, pp. 78-9. In this context, it is important to understand that 'Sin and vice are one and the same thing in the 18th century lexicon'. Berry, p. 89.

[213] Schonhorn, p. 160.

[214] Schonhorn quoting Tyrell, p. 160.

[215] CET, vol. I, p. 145.

religion and English.[216] Friday is an example of the financial benefits to be had from colonisation. As Defoe wrote in 1711 to Robert Harley on the colonisation of Chile:

> These Natives are a foundation of Commerce because they go cloathed and would generally cloath themselves, if they could obtain manufactures...By means of these natives a Correspondence of Commerce will of course be carried on with The people of Peru.[217]

The "improvements" that Crusoe makes to Friday mean therefore that Friday gains in value for Crusoe and for trade.

Prior to his conversion, Friday represents the idea that barbarism and animal nature underlie civilisation, an idea not only stated by Defoe and Mandeville, but by Plato:

> if desires were freed from control, either as internally imposed in the form of reason or as externally imposed in the form of law, then we eventually end up with parricide and cannibalism.[218]

Robinson Crusoe can be understood to evoke and overcome both of these proposed outcomes. Friday exemplifies Mandeville's view that 'Great Wealth and Foreign Treasure will ever scorn to come among Men unless you'll admit their inseparable Companions, Avarice and Luxury'.[219] As a Carib and cannibal Friday represents the relationship of the tradesman to foreign trade as a power relation. When Crusoe becomes Friday's 'Master' their relationship reverses Crusoe's experience of slavery which followed his first experience of shipwreck. When he is taken as a slave he describes his fall as being from 'a Merchant to a miserable Slave'.[220] Friday importantly is not depicted as a slave but as a kind of servant companion. In this sense, he too is "freed" from slavery, through the auspices of commerce.

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[216] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 208.

[217] Georg Harris,(ed.), *The Letters of Daniel Defoe*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1955.

[218] Berry, p. 62.

[219] Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees*, p. 201.

[220] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 19.

Importantly, Friday arrives in response to Crusoe's only remaining desire, which is for conversation:

> I cannot explain by any possible Energy of Words, what a strange longing or hankering of Desires I felt in my Soul...that I might but have had one Companion, one Fellow-Creature to have spoken to me, and convers'd with! In all the Time of my solitary Life, I never felt so earnest, so strong a Desire after the Society of my Fellow-Creatures, or so deep a Regret at the want of it. [221]

The importance of conversation and its potential role in societies no longer based on military valour was an important theme of Hobbes as well as of the Earl of Shaftesbury.[222] Crusoe's desire for conversation, his imagining the arrival of Friday in a dream, the homosociability of that conversation,[223] the emphasis on Friday's 'comely' appearance as a sign of his goodness[224], and the equating of Friday with European qualities all suggest Shaftesbury's ideas. Although Shaftesbury was Mandeville's opponent, it is significant that, like Mandeville, Shaftesbury created 'a system of ethics quite free from divine sanctions'.[225] The removal of such sanctions is linked to Shaftesbury's 'fear of effeminacy' which, as I will discuss in Chapter Three, contributed to his development of an ethics of disinterested desire.[226]

Prior to being on the island, Crusoe's lowest point occurs when he himself becomes a slave. In view of this, Crusoe's conversation with Friday can be seen as a renegotiation of the relationship between trader and consumer and trader and consumable. In this respect, their conversation can be understood to feminise (that

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[221] Ibid, p. 187-8.

[222] J. A. I. Champion points out that Hobbes published Aristotle's *Art of Rhetoric* as a successor to *Leviathan*. pp. 35-6. Conversation was also a theme of the philosopher Third Earl of Shaftesbury (1671-1713). Ronald Paulson states that 'Mandeville's strategy in the 1724 edition of *The Fable of the Bees* was to expose the desire, economic and sexual, under the supposed disinterestedness of Shaftesbury's civic humanist. Ronald Paulson, *The Beautiful, Novel and Strange: aesthetics and heterodoxy*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1996, p. 28.

[223] Paulson says of Shaftesbury that he 'substituted a Platonic figure of fraternal love and order...against the cavalier rake of the Restoration Court, a figure of disorderly pleasure whose object was a woman'. p. 27.

[224] In *Serious Reflections of Robinson Crusoe*, Defoe states that ' the fund of agreeable conversation is, and can only be founded in virtue;' p. 71.

[225] Sambrook, p. 41.

[226] Paulson, p. 27.

is, "civilise") Friday as consumer and masculinise the potentially effeminate trader.[227] Keeping in mind the earlier anecdote of the faithless trader, the desire Crusoe has for conversation carries the connotation of sexual congress.[228] This is not to say that there is sexual congress between Friday and Crusoe, rather that Friday as a symbolic (and actual) consumer symbolically replaces the classical negative associations between luxury goods and women.[229] Friday is described by Crusoe as 'a stout, lusty fellow'[230], 'a lusty, strong, fellow',[231] and 'a comely, handsome fellow'.[232] Friday's is a powerful, but deferential masculinity. Crusoe's gain from having conversation with Friday is in proportion to Friday's strength and beauty. Friday famously affirms Crusoe's masculinity when he places his head beneath Crusoe's foot in an act which is both feminine and submissive.[233] It makes Crusoe not only a master of men, but master of the "natural" world of flux and chaos. Their 'conversation' then enables Crusoe to produce himself as a masculine trader of integrity. The association of problematic luxury with effeminacy and artifice is the pretext for such a conversation. The homosocial

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[227] Martin Wechselblatt presents a slave narrative of the period in a similar fashion. In his discussion of Steele's popularisation of Yarico and Inkle in *The Spectator* (no 11, 13 March 1711), Wechselblatt states that, because Yarico is both female and native, she represents (as does Friday) 'both ends of the market, as both the source and ultimate consumer of its goods'. The essay 'links the sentimentalised slave to a much broader system of thought concerned with representing trade as a civilising agent of progressive 'refinement'. p. 107. Martin Wechselblatt, 'Gender and Race in Yarico's Epistles to Inkle: Voicing the Feminine/Slave' in *Studies in Eighteenth Century Culture*, vol. 19, 1989, p. 199. In Carol Pateman's argument that the social contract is a sexual contract she quotes Defoe's *Roxana* and Mary Astell, in the period, as comparing the position of woman in marriage to that of slavery and to being a servant. Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1988, p. 120 and p. 125.

[228] 'In the 1737 *New General English Dictionary*...the meanings of 'commerce' extend beyond the modern restrictive sphere of 'the commercial' to embrace other forms of social and sexual congress'. Stephen Copley, *British Journal For Eighteenth Century Studies*, p. 66. Hundert also points out 'The words "commerce", "intercourse" and "conversation" typically came to be employed equally as terms for social and sexual exchange', p. 209.

[229] It is worthwhile noting here that actual slaves were luxury goods, that is, had great commercial value, compared to English domestic servants.

[230] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 236.

[231] Ibid, p. 240.

[232] Ibid, p. 205.

[233] Friday's act of submission has gendered literary precedents. For example, William Shakespeare indicated, in a stage instruction, that Kate, in *The Taming of The Shrew*, 'laies her hand under her husband's feete' to indicate her submission. William Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*,(ed.), H. J. Oliver, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1982, p. 21. See also Laura Brown's discussion of the slave/female association in the context of race/gender in her introduction to *Ends of Empire.*, 1993.

conversation of Friday with Crusoe is one of self-reproduction which, importantly, maintains every appearance of taking place without congress with "the feminine". As such, it leaves the way open for both trader and consumer, now free of father-rule and safe in their virtue, to return to the ocean and to trading success.

"Feminine" Values and the Role of Women

It is important to note that a narrative which uses gendered terms to shape masculine subjectivity is not the same phenomenon as a narrative in which an author consciously marginalises women. Defoe's support for women's education, and his encouragement of the wives of tradesmen to get to know the business in *The Complete English Tradesman*, suggests that the exclusion of women in *Robinson Crusoe* did not emerge from a political perspective.[234] For example, Defoe is not antagonistic to women as traders. In his writings on women he tends to stay within accepted conventions on the one hand, while stating views which are progressive for his period on the other. For example, clearly against the views of some tradesman and their wives, he urges the tradesman to keep his wife informed of his activities so that she may take over the business should anything happen to him.[235] The importance of this role is observed in *Robinson Crusoe* in the character of 'the English Captain's widow' who takes care of Crusoe's money.[236] The widow's role in *Robinson Crusoe* is significant in that widows were a group of women who could and did own property and who traded and participated in

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[234] Defoe's views on women's education are expressed in *An Essay upon Projects*, (1697), pp. 282-304. One of the texts which *Robinson Crusoe* is supposed to have been based, Hendrick Smeek's *The Mighty Kingdom of Krinke Kesmes* (1708), featured two gender discrete islands where men and women are educated separately. Books are sent from the 'female academy' to the men's to criticise the men's ideas. Fausett, p. 50.

[235] CET, vol. I, Letter XXI, p. 348-368. Defoe consistently refers to the tradesman as male, except where he reflects on the considerable growth of Trade over the previous forty to fifty years and mentions the particular instance of the "two great Centers of the Women Merchants." CET, vol. II, p. 166. Both Defoe and Mandeville encourage women to participate in trade. Mandeville pointed out that 'In Holland women sit in their counting houses and do business, or at least are acquainted with everything their husbands do' quoted by Peter Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class: business, society and family life in London, 1660-1730*, Methuen, London, 1989, p. 164.

[236] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 303.

financial investment.[237] Defoe recognises that limitations placed on women are social. For example, when he observes that 'some trades' would not be 'proper for the women to meddle in'[238], he recognised that it was social custom rather than any innate difference between the sexes that brought the situation about:

> custom, I say, has made these trades so effectually shut out the women, that what with custom, and the women generally thinking it below them, we never, or rarely, see any women in those shops or warehouses.[239]

It is relevant to the argument of this chapter that Defoe realises that the problem of women in business is experienced as a problem for masculinity. He notes:

> our tradesman, forsooth, think it an undervaluing to them and to their business, to have their wives seen in their shops, that is to say...they will not have their trades or shops thought *less masculine* or less considerable than others[240] (my emphasis).

In *The Complete English Tradesman* the advice is that young tradesmen should not involve themselves in the expense of a family before 'they [are] in a way of gaining sufficient to support it.'[241] However, in support of the tradesman having a family, he says, 'None of my cautions aim at restraining a tradesman from diverting himself, as we call it, with his fire-side, or keeping company with his wife and children'.[242] And again:

> That tradesman who does not delight in his family, will never long delight in his business;...and the providing for the comfortable subsistence of his wife and children; so the very sight of, and above all, his tender and affectionate care for his wife and children, is the spur of his diligence[243].

Even though, as Watt observed, Defoe's depiction of the relationship between trading and the family can be reduced to the economic "spur" that a family gives

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[237] Peter Earle discusses widows and finance in *The Making of the English Middle Class*, pp. 50-1. Earle indicates that (like the widow in *Robinson Crusoe*), 'many of them having no practical business skills and thus relying for their incomes on the interest which they could earn by investing or lending out their former husband's business assets' Widows were also classified as 'feme sole [sic]' and therefore able to trade. p. 160. Earle states 'Real independence came with the husband's death'. p. 160.

[238] These trades include " linen and wool drapers, mercers, booksellers, goldsmiths, all sorts of dealers by commission'. CET, vol. I, p. 355.

[239] Ibid.

[240] Ibid.

[241] Ibid, p. 155. Defoe states that it used to be the case that the indentured tradesman who married would be refused their freedom, a tradition that he points out has now passed.

[242] Ibid, p. 152.

[243] Ibid, p. 152.

to business, the two aspects of trade and family are nonetheless portrayed as compatible rather than essentially incompatible. This suggests that Watt's view that 'the fundamental tendency of economic individualism...prevents Crusoe from paying too much heed to the ties of family' may require some qualification.[244]

At several points in *The Complete English Tradesman,* Defoe strives to give both male and female examples for errors the tradesman can make. His continual emphasis on not blaming women at these junctures suggests that quite different assumptions were being made about women in the wider community.[245] The fact that Defoe distances himself from some of these assumptions suggests that it is more beneficial to understand his writings as negotiated and produced within a particular historical set of social and moral values. It may in fact be the case that arguments as to the rights of women were linked to arguments which supported the 'immorality' of luxury. Defoe's views on luxury and women's education matched those of Mandeville who wrote in *The Female Tatler,* as a female persona on behalf of women:

> Why should we be treated almost as if we were Irrational Creatures; We are industriously kept from the Knowledge of Arts and Sciences, if we talk Politicks we are laugh'd at; to understand Latin is petty Treason in us; silence is recommended to us as a necessary Duty, and the greatest Encomium a Man can give his Wife is to tell the World that she is Obedient: The Men like wary Conquerors, keep us Ignorant, because they are afraid of us...[246]

The views of Defoe and Mandeville suggest that *Robinson Crusoe* should not be considered as a text which opposed women. To the contrary, there may be a quite active link between Defoe's efforts to free the tradesman from tradition, and the liberal views on women that he and Mandeville espoused. This idea has some resonance with the proposal that *Robinson Crusoe* is constructed on a gendered and sexualised framework of values.

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[244] Watt, *The Rise of the Novel,* p. 66.

[245] The frequent repetition of this view suggests Defoe is not in accord with his contemporaries. See for example, CET, vol. I, p. 237, p. 245, p. 348.

[246] *Female Tatler,* no. 88, 1 February, 1710 quoted in M. M. Goldsmith, '"The Treacherous Arts of Mankind": Bernard Mandeville and Female Virtue', *History of Political Thought,* vol. VII, no. 1, 1986. In his *Virgin Unmasked* 1709, Mandeville argues for women's education.

Writing, Whoring and the Importance of Artifice

In using the travel genre to construct an allegory of trade, Defoe was being consistent with his own image of himself as 'whoring for trade'.[247] In the period, the term 'whoring' was often used to refer to the writer's dependence on patronage. In its sexual and economic connotations, the term expressed the power relation involved in earning a living as a writer. Defoe's use of the term associated writing with both sex and trade and attributed responsibility for 'vice' with the reader/customer. He absolved the writer just as he had absolved the tradesman:

> Trade...does not introduce the Luxury, and Extravagance of the people; or their exorbitant expence in fine Clothes or fine Equipages, their Pride and Ostentation in either or any of these: But...the Pride is in the inside of the Beau, while his Embroideries, his Laces, his fine Clothes only flutter in the Wind from the outside of his Carcass...the tradesman does not bid him turn Peacock, and strut about to shew and spread his Plumes.[248]

In matters of sex also, it was the man and masculine desire, not the woman, who was to blame: 'in our general Pursuit of the Sex (sic), the Devil generally acts the Man, not the Woman; and, Gentleman, in all your Clamours against the Women, give me leave to say, 'tis your Devil, not theirs, that acts all the Mischief in the Case.' He goes on to state 'tis a pretty way we have got, to seek the temptation, and then blame the tempter'.[249] The writer then is like a woman who takes up prostitution, the loss of her virtue is not her fault: 'the primary guilt lay with the men who first seduced her'.[250] This is consistent with Defoe's rhetoric of trade in *The Complete English Tradesman*: 'the trade does not make the vice, but the vice the trade'.[251] Thomas Meier argues that for Defoe 'the needy prostitute is free of guilt and that her lustful customer is wholly responsible for the sin

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[247] Daniel Defoe, *Defoe's Review*, vol. 1 (IX), no. 106, June 11, 1713, p. 214. Thomas Cox who pirated *Robinson Crusoe* calls Defoe 'the most prostituted pen in the world'. Backscheider, *Daniel Defoe: His Life*, p. 435.

[248] CET, vol. II, pt 2, p. 119.

[249] Defoe, *Defoe's Review*, vol. III, Nov. 5, 1706, p. 527.

[250] Robert C, Elliott, ed., *Twentieth Century Interpretations of Moll Flanders: A Collection of Critical Essays*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 1970, p. 45.

[251] Quoted in Meier, p. 86.

committed.'[252] Such a view is consistent with Mandeville's arguement that brothels for 'female Traders' should be legalised as a measure to protect female virtue from male lust.[253]

In the last edition of his *Review*, Defoe chastises his readers for their engagement in 'Modern whoring', by which he meant 'the furious pursuit of Pride, Luxury, Avarice, Strife, Rage, Error, and all the avowed Mischiefs of the Age'.[254] His examples of 'whoring' all include men chasing after that to which they have attributed value. In his discussion, Defoe described that which was pursued as women, books and writing for trade. His argument recognised the social construction of value. He describes that which is desired as female and superficial: 'all her Intrinsick worth lies in the Back and the Binding.'[255] The 'whore' here is described as a book and her customer, a reader. In this scenario, the book functions as a desired object which is given value by the reader who desires it.

The depiction of 'whore' as having extrinsic worth notably opposes the imagery of virgin as having intrinsic worth.[256] That is, the construction of Crusoe and the text as being 'true' and 'integral' is here attributed to the desire of the reader. In other words, for Defoe private vice, whether that be luxury, sex or writing, stemmed from the public and it was in the public's interest to trade on it. This also suggests that both text and "subject" acquire value through circulation in society. That is, Defoe has done what he suggested was akin to a whore becoming a virgin, he has depicted Crusoe as a tradesman repairing his credit.[257]

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[252] Meier suggests that 'To Defoe the evil is in the consumer' and that such reasoning is in line with *Moll Flanders* (1722) and *Roxana* (1724), Meier, p. 87.

[253] Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees*, vol. I, p. 96. The work advocates following the Dutch system of licensing 'public stews'. When Mandeville was criticised for his views, he elaborated on them in an a pamphlet entitled *A Modest Defence of Publick Stews; or, an Essay upon whoring*, 1724.

[254] Defoe, *Defoe's Review*, vol. IX, no. 106, June 11, 1713, p. 213.

[255] Ibid.

[256] The sexual and gendered rhetoric used by Defoe was familiar in the period. The whore-virgin opposition was applied to a range of circumstances, Champion cites an historian of the period claiming that 'My Church history was so far from prostituting herself to mercenary embraces, she did not espouse any particular interest, but kept herself a virgin'. Champion, p. 27.

[257] Defoe, *Defoe's Review*, vol. III, no. 5, Jan. 10, 1706, p. 17.

Robinson Crusoe contains a range of related themes which are addressed in a variety of ways by later female castaway narratives in the same period and in the late twentieth century. These themes include the use of fiction as feminine and artificial to produce a subjectivity and a writing that has both virtue and integrity, and the use of feminised concepts as a ground of transformation. I began the chapter by comparing the conduct book, *The Complete English Tradesman*, with *Robinson Crusoe*. The similarities between the two texts and the crucial way in which artifice can be understood to produce 'truth' explain Defoe's contention that *Robinson Crusoe* was 'a just History of Fact; neither is there any Appearance of Fiction in it'.[258] In my reading, trade, luxury and credit as female terms work in complex ways to produce the figure and text that is *Robinson Crusoe*. In this chapter, I have sketched some of the ways in which Crusoe's apparent rationality was a response to the dangers presented by a feminised trading culture. In this respect, the feminine is not so much marginalised in *Robinson Crusoe*, as it is the frame upon which it is constructed.

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[258] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 1.

Chapter Two

Finance, Romance and Gender in the Castaway Narratives of Ambrose Evans

...all my thoughts and invention were taken up how to make my way into some condition of life which was more free and independent.

Ambrose Evans, *Martha Rattenberg*

Introduction

Defoe's exclusion of women on his island was an exclusion of the romance, in both social and literary senses. Defoe "fortified" his position, in favour of foreign trade, by his pragmatic language and his apparent telling of a "true" traveller's tale. In the period, according to the OED, the term "romance", whether applied to lovers or to fiction, referred to that which was unbelievable, insubstantial, 'a chimera'. Fiction, credit and romance were all open to being represented as feminine.[1] Romance was said to be like a woman, represented by Aphra Behn as 'a meer trick of the slight of hand'.[2] Credit and fiction were alike in that they implied excess, illusion and uncertainty. In Defoe's words:

> Credit has made Paper pay Millions instead of Money, doubled and trebled our Specie by Circulation; Credit has brought out our Hoards, melted down our Plate, sold our Jewels to take Air for Silver, and split stick for Gold; Credit has paid Interest for nothing and turn'd nothing into something, Coin'd Paper into Metal, and stampt a Value upon what had no Value before.[3]

In contrast to Defoe, two castaway narratives published in the same year as *Robinson Crusoe*, favoured domestic trade by establishing the traveller's tale, foreign trade and financial speculation as problematic "romances". These two narratives featured female protagonists and were written by Ambrose Evans. These are the only narratives ascribed to Evans of whom little is known, apart from the fact that his printer, Charles Rivington, printed several editions of *The*

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[1] In his discussion of the female castaway incident involving Mrs Heartfree in Henry Fielding's *Jonathan Wild* (1743), Michael McKeon depicts the values of credit and financial speculation as characterising the genre of romance. See discussion in *The Origins of the English Novel*, Chapter 12.

[2] Aphra Behn quoted by McKeon, p. 27.

[3] Quoted by J. S. Peters 'Currency, credit and literary property' in John Brewer and Susan Staves, *Early Modern Conceptions of Property*, Routledge, London and New York, 1995, p. 375.

Complete English Tradesman.[4] The narratives which were published in one volume are *The Lives, Adventures and Wonderful Deliverances of Mrs Martha Rattenberg and James Dubourdieu* and *The Adventures of Alexander Vendchurch And of his Ship's Crew Rebelling against him, and setting him on Shore in an Island in the South Sea, &c.*[5]

In the first of Evans' narratives, the female protagonist eschews romance and the romance of financial speculation and becomes a figure of reason. In the second narrative, the male protagonist's romance with a Spanish heiress ends in her death, enabling him to return home. Evans' texts evoke romance in order to show the threat that a corrupt masculine society represents to feminine moral society. In Evans' texts, female protagonists are central to his critique of masculine desire, which is presented as responsible for creating insubstantial values. His resolution is to find a compromise based on his protagonists' experience of the island, represented as a transformative feminine middle ground.

The importance of Evans' narratives lies not in their canonical value, or even in their popularity, as it is not known how many copies were sold. These texts are important to my thesis because they address the same gendered trading and social values which inform *Robinson Crusoe*. In Evans' narratives, desire is masculine and Hobbesian and in each case, such desire must be rejected or domesticated. The transformation effected in these castaway narratives is not the development of a new socially mobile trading identity, but the survival of an existing trading identity which is threatened by changing social and economic conditions.

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[4] Ambrose Evans is the signature on page 102 of the 1719 edition. Charles Rivington co-printed *The Complete English Tradesman* in 1725, 1726 and 1727. He also printed *A Plan of English Commerce* in 1728 and 1730. Catalogue notes from the *English Short Title Catalogue* database.

[5] These are the given individual titles rather than the title which covered both narratives. The narratives were published together in the period and are now in reprint with a text by Mary de la Riviere Manley. Michael F. Shrugue, ed., *The Adventures of Rivella by Mary de la Riviere Manley and The Adventures and Surprizing Deliverances of James Dubourdieu and his Wife and The Adventures of Alexander Vendchurch by Ambrose Evans*, introduction by Malcolm J. Bosse, Garland Publishing, Inc., New York & London, 1972, 1st pub. 1719. The narratives are referred to in the text and in the footnotes as *Martha Rattenberg* and *Alexander Vendchurch.*

The narrative of *Martha Rattenberg*

In *Martha Rattenberg*, Ambrose Evans is named as the narrator. He describes himself as a male, English visitor to a tavern in France. He meets Martha, who is described as 'a comely [English] woman of about fifty'.[6] Martha and her French husband, James Dubourdieu, run the tavern. They tell their visitor that ten years before, they and a priest spent sixteen years castaway on a small island. Martha tells the first part of the narrative, which refers to her experience in England of romance and her struggle to survive financially. Her experiences are notably marked by deceit and loss. When she finds out that riches are obtainable in other countries and accessible to women through marriage, she decides to migrate. She joins a ship with other migrants, most of them women. Her ship is wrecked on an island after it is taken by pirates. The pirates take many of the women as their lovers and when there is a volcanic explosion on the island, the pirates and their women are killed. Martha, who evaded the pirates, marries James, the ship's surgeon, who is also seeking his fortune.[7] They marry as a result of the pleas of others (priests and elderly people who die shortly after) that only they can populate the island. Martha's narrative ends when James discovers a hidden utopian society.

In James' narrative, he and a Catholic priest discover a utopian community when they follow strains of music. The community is separated from the centre of the island by a chasm. The two are kept there for three years while Martha survives alone.[8] The utopian society condemns the English society which they

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[6] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 2.

[7] A Catholic priest marries the English Protestant Martha to the French Catholic James using a Book of Common Prayer. In terms of the church, the 'marriages' in both of the Evans' texts would have been classified as clandestine in the period, although not illegal (with the exception of bigamy). In Evans' texts, one marriage is with a bigamist and two others takes place out of church without formal banns. Clandestine marriages avoided the calling of banns and were performed by a craftsman for a week's wages. Approximately a third of all marriages in the early eighteenth century were performed this way, 'by licence' and 'Informal marriages by mutual consent were acceptable'. Such clandestine marriages became illegal in 1753. W. M. Jacob, *Lay people and Religion in the early eighteenth century*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996, pp. 74-5.

[8] *Martha Rattenberg* appears to be the first narrative after *Robinson Crusoe* to show a woman surviving on a desert island alone. Although her actual island survival is not the main feature of the narrative, her

depict as populated by the 'children of wrath' who were cast out of heaven for following their 'passion' instead of their reason.[9] In their understanding, God sank the land around the island, and again around the utopian society to protect the 'children of love' who followed their reason.[10] When James and the priest are told to leave, they return to Martha to discover that the volcano has exposed gold dust. Martha and James use the gold, after they are rescued, to establish a tavern in France. The tavern, as choice of business, and its location in France is significant as it enables the couple to take advantage of the excess of others, while maintaining a distance from the society it produces. The importance of such excess to England is made clear by Defoe in *The Complete English Tradesman*, when he comments: 'What a Poor Nation must we have been if we had been a sober, religious, temperate Nation'.[11]

In *Martha Rattenberg*, England is dominated by masculine values and the utopian community by feminine values. In other words, Martha and James are each castaway within societies of opposing values. When the men are rejected from the utopian community, the castaways remain shipwrecked and are unable to return to England. They are stranded between the feminine "ideal" and the masculine "real", unable to attain either. In these texts, the feminine is not only that which is threatened in England, it is also the solution, as it was for Defoe. This is expressed most clearly when Martha Dubourdieu decides to migrate to become rich, although she recognises that 'being a woman...was some check to these imaginations'.[12] This understanding is put in a positive light when Martha becomes the key to transformation. That is, on the island, Martha becomes the interpreter between the French and English castaways and the sinful and virtuous castaways. As 'interpreter to them all', the "feminine" once a problem, becomes a

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arrival there is. It is more common in the period to present female castaways as castaway in a group of people as the Aubin narratives, discussed in the next chapter, demonstrate.

[9] The utopian society is compared to the Colony of Sidonians whose land is stolen by the Dan'ites, Judges 18, *The Holy Bible.*

[10] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 93.

[11] CET, vol II, pt 2, p. 106.

[12] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 25.

way to survive. Before considering the narratives in more detail it is relevant to look at the way in which *Martha Rattenberg* is represented to the reader.

Masculine desires/feminine fictions

Martha is a working woman which makes her an appropriate figure for demonstrating the vulnerability of "feminine" values to romance and financial speculation. Her financial and sexual vulnerability suggests that as a woman she 'ground[s] the parallel systems of romance and trade'.[13] As Laura Brown argues, 'in their mediatory role between heroic romance and mercantile imperialism, they [women] generate and enable the mutual interaction of these two otherwise incompatible discourses'.[14] In *Martha Rattenberg*, fiction and the written word share the characteristics of finance and romance. That is, fiction and the written word suggest uncertainty and instability. The unstable written word, associated with both credit and fiction, is represented as both necessary to Martha's survival and instrumental in her fate. The focus on representation in these early eighteenth century texts is important to understanding why the castaway narrative is receptive to deconstruction in the late twentieth century.

Martha Rattenberg is written in the form of a letter from 'the author' to an English lord.[15] Presenting the narrative as such a letter provided the authenticity necessary to counter the narrative's problematic status as a traveller's tale, told to yet another traveller.[16] The "problem" that writing, fiction and the travel narrative present is evident in the contrast between *Martha Rattenberg*'s preface and content. The preface acknowledges the popularity of the travel account: 'What delight particular accounts give, is plain from the general reception of travels and

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[13] Laura Brown is discussing Aphra Behn's narratives [1640-1689], Brown, p. 48.

[14] Ibid, p. 48.

[15] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 1 and p. 102.

[16] Such authenticity could also be achieved by representing a character as the author, as was the case in *Robinson Crusoe*. John Brewer comments that it wasn't until the late eighteenth century that 'the professional author had become a recognisable type...His creativity ...conferred on him a public authority to explain how it should be interpreted...' John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century*, HarperCollins*Publishers*, London, 1997, p. 151.

voyages'.[17] In the narrative itself, however, Martha's view is quite different. She says:

> But had I any children of my own, I would never suffer them to read those idle books, since they fill'd my head with so many wandering notions, that I have never been able to settle my mind ever since to my present condition, always filling my self with vain hopes of bettering my fortune, by my change of place, tho' I still found, at least for the most part, that this change was for the worse.[18]

This tension as to the problem and benefit of traveller's tales parallels the destabilising effects of foreign trade and financial speculation. In the above quotation, Martha's language links the changing of social status with that of geographic movement. As such, 'so many wandering notions' are equated with 'vain hopes of bettering my fortune, by my change of place'. These traveller's tales can be understood as allegories which present shifting values as affecting social change and mobility. In this sense, Martha's tale is ultimately cautionary, recommending moderation over dangerous attempts at social mobility. While this is a more conservative message than that contained in *Robinson Crusoe*, it is one which shows the castaway narrative using geographic space in a similar allegorical fashion.

In *Martha Rattenberg*, the unstable features of the romance and travel genres are countered by references to status, superiority, authenticity and masculine prowess. The latter conveys a sense that this particular traveller's tale is feminine, hard-won by the author and therefore valuable. As such, a resistant Martha is presented as won over by the narrator. The narrator describes how he acquires Martha's story, while the acquisition of James's story is represented as a consequence of Martha's permission. The narrator's acquisition of Martha's story is couched in the financial and sexual language of obligation and debt. He explains that after sending 'several of the most extraordinary incidents of it' to his patron, he managed to get the whole story because 'I had been too good a customer since my discovery of the house, and brought too many of my acquaintance thither to let

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[17] *Martha Rattenberg*, preface.

[18] Ibid, p. 6.

her venture the disobliging me a denial'.[19] The overcoming of Martha's resistance suggests that the (male) customer is responsible for the story, which is the product. This representation echoes Defoe, who states: 'if the Buyer comes and directs him to make this or that particular thing...it is his business to perform it'.[20] The language aligns the reader with the acquisitive position and status of 'his Lordship' and sexualises Martha's position as the reluctant 'good woman'. As the critic Jon Stratton states: 'In reading an epistolary novel, the reader is forced to occupy the position of the character to whom the letter is sent.'[21] The description of how the narrative is acquired creates a desire in the reader situated as a consumer in relation to the narrative as desirable commodity. That the incident is obliquely sexual and obtained for a patron suggests Defoe's whoring analogy which was also commonly used to describe author-patron relations.[22]

The masculine desire for the tale is complemented by Martha's virtue. This is confirmed in an incident in which Martha discusses her gullibility after a near escape from bigamy:

> Tho' I was vex'd at my forwardness in listening to the love of a strange man, whom I had never seen before, yet I was not without a secret satisfaction that I had behav'd my self with so much virtue and courage against all his villainous attempts, and was heartily glad that I was got rid of him so.[23]

In the telling of her story to the narrator, Martha is effectively giving in 'to the love of a strange man'. In the "seduction" of Martha, Evans as author/narrator is therefore engaged in an act of private vice to benefit the public. That is, images of masculine desire and feminine virtue are used to produce an essentially moral tale.[24]

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[19] Ibid, p. 4.

[20] CET, vol 2, p. 151.

[21] Jon Stratton, *The Virgin Text: Fiction, Sexuality and Ideology*, The Harvester Press, Brighton, 1987, p. 31.

[22] John Brewer states that, in the period, there was a tension between individual patronage and authorial independence and patronage was often referred to as whoring. John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination*, p. 162.

[23] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 20.

[24] Ross Chambers also suggests that, in general, it is necessary for the novelist to manipulate desire where awkward questions are being raised. Ross Chambers, *Story and Situation: Narrative Seduction and the Power of Fiction*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1984, pp. 12-3.

The acquisition of the narrative is also conveyed through reference to art as a commodity. The male narrator solicits the story from Martha and James by asking about the framed picture of an island in one of the tavern's rooms. The narrative is therefore framed by the picture and acquires quality and integrity through the ensuing discussion of the quality of the picture and the room in which it is housed. The room is one which 'might pass even in London itself'.[25] The impression of quality and authenticity is confirmed by the surrounding pictures which are painted 'by good hands' and the narrator's recognition of one of the artists.[26] The implication is that the 'framed' narrative is not only worthy and acceptable but is a saleable commodity having monetary value.

References to commodities complement the text's emphasis on physical presence and materiality over the uncertainty of the spoken and written word. This emphasis is also used to suggest the authenticity of the narrative. At the end of the narrative, for example, the author promises his patron an oath from the priest who was on the island, and who is said to be arriving shortly. This promised arrival of a fictional character contributes to the justification of an unreliable traveller's tale and written document. Although the anecdote uses a priest to provide this authenticity, the text makes it clear that he is unlike other priests since his transformation on the island. Similarly, the author\narrator defines and defends the distinctive quality of this particular narrative. He says he is struck by the 'oddness' of the picture in which the story is framed, rather than its aesthetic quality 'which was but indifferent'.[27] The narrative suggests that what might appear as "odd" , that is, as a novelty to the English reader, is in fact, the normal cultural practice of another country. The desire for novelty was a defining characteristic of the period.[28]

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[25] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 3.

[26] Ibid, p. 2.

[27] Ibid, p. 3.

[28] J.S. Peters, in his analysis of the phenomena of novelty in the late seventeenth century, states 'The "Augustan" mistrust of things novel is merely the flip side of the general collective enthusiasm, in the 1690s , for novelty'. He also comments on the paucity of analysis of the early eighteenth century concern with novelty. J. S. Peters, 'The Novelty; Or, Print, Money, Fashion, Getting, Spending and Glut' in J.

The redemption of novelty, through reference to cultural difference, occurs through the discussion of Martha's name change. Martha, the narrator explains, has kept her own name after marriage, as is the French custom. This explanation effectively counters any opposition to a textual detail which, without this explanation, would appear to be false. What might appear to be wrong, the text suggests, is actually only different. As I indicated earlier, Defoe also uses the travel narrative in this way to challenge the dominant views of society. Martha's retention of her name is the opposite to Crusoe's act, which was to change his name, but it has the same effect. That is, in both texts, the name of things, whether retained or changed, identical or different, suggests that names are dependant on social custom, rather than on a universal truth. The significance of Martha's name is depicted by the uncle who refuses to help her. Martha says her uncle is depicted in a proverb, 'as covetous as old Rattenberg'. This indicates that Martha's own name is synonymous with greed. The narrative therefore is concerned with changing the associations of given terms.[29] The point that names depend on social custom is important in relation to the position *Martha Rattenberg* takes against the dominant truths of its society. In the utopian society, these "truths" are depicted by James in the following terms:

> envy, malice, ambition, avarice and lust, rul'd absolutely in our parts of the world; and he who was not in some measure a slave to any of them, was look'd upon either as contemptible, or indeed very miserable.[30]

Martha Rattenberg is presented to the reader through seduction, and through a range of appeals to authenticity and status, including masculine desire. This suggests that the narrative is concerned with depicting and negotiating a crisis of

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Douglas Canfield and Deborah C,. Payne, *Cultural readings of Restoration and eighteenth-century English theater*, University of Georgia Press, Athens, 1995, p. 169, fn 1.

[29] This locating of her uncle's avarice in a proverb is interesting in relation to the concerns of the text given that the critic, Rosemary Kegl points out that proverb books were popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and formed a textual middle ground between oral accounts and the novel. p.128. Kegl reads the proverb as an hegemonic process. p. 147. In this sense Martha's uncle is a character, a master shipwright, who as a sign of foreign trade, represents the covetousness of the period. Rosemary Kegl, *The Rhetoric of Concealment: figuring gender and class in Renaissance literature*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1994.

[30] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 78.

value in which the feminine, and all that is associated with it, is under threat. The fact that this travel and romance narrative exists at all gives the sense that a compromise will be found and survival will be the outcome.

Martha's story: a profit and loss account

The narrative keeps a constant tally of Martha's finances alongside her trials in romance, her experience of inheritance, and her speculative activities. As such, Martha's life is represented as a profit and loss account of love and money.

Martha's Account

PROFIT	LOSS
Her father leaves Martha 'one hundred broad pieces of gold, all my mother's apparel and all his household goods.'	She is cheated of all but five gold pieces by her step brother.
She is helped by a landlady (business).	She is refused help from an uncle (family).
Because she can read and write she gains a rich female employer who gets fifty pounds back from her brother. Her guardian places her money out 'on good security' then dies leaving her fifty pounds more. She now has one hundred pounds again plus her original five gold pieces.	After her rich female employer dies, she names the landlord as her guardian who then loses the one hundred pounds except for twenty pieces which she kept to travel with.
Her loss is countered by her winning 'near one hundred pounds' on the Royal Oak Lottery.[31] She is persuaded against continuing and gains employment.	She marries and gives 100 guineas to her husband who then disappears. He has already married twenty other wives. She thinks she is pregnant but isn't. She is left with three guineas, five pounds in silver and 'my own old hoard of the five broad pieces'.
She is given some money by her employers and sails for Barbadoes. After buying clothes and her ticket she has only two broad pieces left and says she has no need of money on the voyage.	She is castaway and marries. James and a priest leave her for three years on her own. The volcano reveals gold dust which is used to set up a tavern in France. Martha refuses to return to sea.

[31] Lotteries were part of the government's new approach to revenue raising in this period and are linked to the various 'bubble' schemes of the period. Nicholson, p. 58.

The rational economic language of the text suggests a compromise between the masculine excesses of the age, and the idealised pure feminine represented by the non-commercial values of the utopian society. The table above shows that Martha is cheated by individual men and by her own family and rewarded by domestic tradespeople after the death of her father. The era, which is depicted as ending with the death of her father, is one of patriarchal 'protection'.

Her father's death means that he can no longer authorise Martha becoming married and settled like his other daughters. Symbolically and actually, the feminine is vulnerable because Martha is no longer under the control and protection of the father. Correspondingly, she now also has the capacity to be independent. The loss of patriarchal protection in the early eighteenth century castaway texts I examine is the pretext for becoming castaway and for advocating some kind of change in response to changing social values. In *Martha Rattenberg*, it is one of the preconditions for Martha becoming castaway, that is, having to survive on her own and her subsequent relative independence as a trader. The loss of protection leads to her problematic relations with the "masculine", depicted as men with a desire for wealth and for Martha.

The vicissitudes which affect Martha are not shown as individual, villainous acts, but are presented as endemic to a system in which the acquisition of wealth, and the consequent basing of value on speculation and paper money, are dominant and problematic practices. Martha's experiences with money reflect a range of actual financial problems which existed in the period. For example, as in the text, there was a problem of inheritance for daughters of second marriages; it was expensive to regain money through the legal system, and investment and winning money on the lottery were commonly presented as precarious.[32] In

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[32] Martha's reluctance to sue her brother is a moral and religious position. Clerical advice given at the time suggested that in 'matters of Contract, Estate, Inheritance, or Money, it must not be for any small matter, nor for a light injury, nor for any thing easy to be born, that a Child can implead his parent; the hardship must near be intolerable; the injustice great and pressing.' Bishop William Fleetwood, 1705 quoted by Susan Staves, 'Resentment or resignation? Dividing the spoils among daughters and younger sons' in Brewer and Staves, pp. 203-4. The point is made in *Martha Rattenberg* that suing her brother is only possible due to the wealth of her patron.

Martha's account it can be seen that, just as physical presence is used to offset the vagaries of language, the mercantile preference for gold is emphasised over different forms of speculation. The opposition established in the narrative between gold and letters of credit contrasts the fantasy of financial speculation and foreign trade with the solidity of gold and the domestic trade. This scenario reflects views of the period. For example, Charles Davenant, an influential writer on trade, just prior to Defoe, wrote 'Of all beings that have existence only in the minds of men, nothing is more fantastical and nice than Credit'.[33]

The problem of gaining and retaining value is expressed directly when Martha learns to keep her money hidden. Eventually, she realises, however, that 'keeping it by me was not the way to improve it'.[34] The problem of value which the narrative must resolve is, as it was for Crusoe, how can a body (that is, anything of substance) circulate, yet retain and increase its value? The similar problem for Defoe was, how can a identity (like a tradesman) be socially mobile and still retain integrity. For Defoe, the tradesman's integrity or reputation needed protection, as did a woman's virtue. In *Martha Rattenberg*, similar associations are established. For Martha, what is valid must be protected, if necessary through distance and isolation, from society's ruinous values. Defoe resolves his dilemma by manifesting the social in the figure of Friday, who serves Crusoe faithfully and therefore reflects back to him his own values. For Evans, the solution is similar, yet more conservative. When Martha, for instance, is matched with James, masculine protection is reinstated. Unlike Defoe, the values of domestic trade which Evans wishes to see protected can only be protected by not circulating. Hence, at the end of the narrative, Martha refuses to return to sea. She and James run a tavern on the coast of France, taking advantage of the English passing trade.[35] The solution is therefore, a marginal, in-between site in relation to two different cultures, one

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[33] Quoted in Peters, 'Currency, credit and literary property'. p. 375.

[34] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 24.

[35] Defoe points to the in-between status of the tavern when he points out that by placing an 'Ale-house' under licence it implies that they need be 'under the eye of the magistrate'. He deems it necessary to insist that an 'Ale-house keeper might be a very honest Tradesman'. CET, vol. II, pt 2, p. 96.

domestic and one foreign. In Evans' depiction, the foreign becomes the domestic site of the tavern while the English become the foreign trade. The castaway state which Martha experienced in society, prior to being shipwrecked, is transformed into more positive terms.[36] That is, through being castaway, the "feminine" enables and is associated with a more powerful position.

Romance and financial speculation

The consequences of the loss of patriarchal power are expressed through Martha's experience of romance and marriage. Martha is vulnerable to being cheated when she looks for romantic love and dreams of becoming rich. In such a context, marriage is shown as dangerous. In a text which symbolises the masculine as the desire for wealth and the feminine as the value which needs to be protected, marriage is a symbolic act. Excess and desire, which I have shown in *The Complete English Tradesman* are integral to the problem of luxury, appear in Evans' work as characteristic of wealth and foreign trade. In *Martha Rattenberg*, the quality of excess is marked by bigamous marriage which links masculine desire to the accumulation of wealth.

When Martha first travels to London, she is seduced on the voyage by a musician who proposes marriage. The combination of music with declarations of love and Martha's 'mighty love of the sea' suggest a heady mixture of romance and seduction. Martha says she cannot 'disguise' her 'satisfaction'.[37] Disguise, it is inferred, would have been the safest option (like hiding one's money) as the man then persuades her to leave the ship and attempts to seduce her. When she refuses him he agrees to marry her, but is prevented from doing so by the arrival of his wife. Again physical presence is given a redeeming quality. The wife makes it clear that the man was going to take Martha's money. Various women present themselves to Martha as wives of the man she nearly marries, or of the man she does marry (separate incidents). Both of these men turn out to be already married.

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[36] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 19.

[37] Ibid, p. 17.

She marries the second man because he is 'handsome, and his talk agreeable, which, joyn'd with the importunity and the solicitations of his friend in the house, made me at last agree to marry'.[38] After marriage, her husband borrows money from her and then leaves her. She subsequently meets four of his existing wives, all of whom have been cheated of money by him. Multiple marriages in this text are like travel and social mobility in that they demonstrate excess.

After being cheated by her family and then by men, Martha's situation is like that of Crusoe prior to being on the island, when he describes himself as a castaway. Martha too is 'all alone, in a strange place, without any friends to advise or assist me'.[39] At one point Martha is referred to as 'a bubble', in other words, 'one who is duped', like the investors in the South Sea Bubble.[40] Fiction, vulnerable lovers and speculative projects are all depicted as 'bubbles' in the period. The opposition between such insubstantial values and substantial values informs the metaphorical landscape of land and sea in the castaway narrative. As such, when Martha learns that money must circulate in order to gain value she acquires a desire for independence and travel which she understands will increase her own value.

Martha's desire for fortune parallels her reading of 'books of travel and voyages' which give her 'a mighty desire of seeing the world'.[41] It is a desire which is marked by excess, it 'grew greater and greater every day'. Martha wishes to be 'more free and independent'.[42] Her desire is to move beyond her own boundaries, that is, to increase her value, depicted as threatened by the masculine values dominant in England. The association of geographical and social mobility

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[38] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 26. Before 1753 it was possible to marry without consent of parent or guardian. Randolph Trumbach, *The Rise of the Egalitarian Family: Aristocratic Kinship and Domestic Relations in Eighteenth Century England*, Academic Press, New York, 1978, p. 101.

[39] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 19.

[40] Ibid, p. 21. The OED definition of 'bubble' reads, 'Anything fragile, unsubstantial, empty, or worthless, a deceptive show. From 17th century onwards often applied to delusive commercial or financial schemes'. *Johnson's Dictionary* includes 'A cheat: a false show' and 'Anything which wants solidity and firmness; anything which is more specious than real'.

[41] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 15.

[42] Ibid, p. 25.

are marked when she meets 'a man of quality [whose] father was a shoe maker' and whose father made his money in 'the Barbadoes'.[43] This son of a man who made his money in foreign trade is now 'a gentleman, and a companion for Lords'.[44] The theme of a tradesman's son becoming a gentlemen, and travelling in foreign lands as a motif of social mobility, wealth and foreign trade, feature in both Evans' texts and in *Robinson Crusoe.*

Fathers, daughters and younger sons

One of the main connections between the female castaway narrative and *Robinson Crusoe* was the similarities between the social and legal positions of daughters and younger sons. The historian Susan Staves quotes a 1713 legal case in which the court stated, 'Every one but the heir is a younger child in equity, and the provision which such a daughter will have is but as a younger child'.[45] Like Crusoe as younger son, Martha is disadvantaged in relation to her family as the youngest female child and child of the second marriage. In matters of inheritance, it was common in this period for the son to take precedence over the daughter, the older child over the younger, and the first marriage over the second.[46]

In both *Robinson Crusoe* and *Martha Rattenberg* the father's death indicates a loss of certain values. Martha's father's status is pragmatically described by her according to his income, occupation and the number of children he raised:

> I can't say he was a gentleman, but he farmed his own estate, which was about forty pounds a year...and...brought up six daughters and one son, all of whom he saw married and settled before he married his second wife, my mother at which time he was fifty-five years of age and she was not six and twenty: I was told she was very handsome, for I never saw her;[47]

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[43] Ibid, p. 25.

[44] Ibid, p. 24.

[45] Brewer and Staves, p. 195.

[46] Trumbach's discussion focuses on aristocratic examples, but he states that 'In England the opposition to second marriages often centred on the care of the children of the first marriage'. p. 51. The fact that Martha's father waits until his children are married before marrying again can be understood as a sign of his propriety. Trumbach also notes that the practice of inheritance in this class was 'Among one's lineal descendants, sons inherited before daughters, and the eldest before the younger sons. p. 42.

[47] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 5.

In the description, the status of 'gentleman' is refused, suggesting doubt as to its value. Instead, a description of the more material evidence of her father's responsible character and association with the land is favoured. Her father's dying concern, which immediately comes true, is that Martha will be left 'friendless and unprovided for'.[48] Before her father dies he gives to Martha 'one hundred broad pieces of gold, all my mother's apparel, and all his household goods except what he had already disposed of to my brothers and sisters'.[49] She goes on to say that this was not a formal bequest, her father 'mention'd them not in his will, by which he only bequeathed me his household goods'. This gives the brother the opportunity to cheat Martha and she is only able to rescue five pieces of gold by hiding them. When her brother breaks the promise he made to his father, it is a sign of the times. The era is presented as one in which promises made to fathers by succeeding sons are not honoured.[50] Disobedience to the father's wishes is also a defining feature of *Robinson Crusoe.* In contrast to that text however, it is not Martha as castaway who has disobeyed. Martha's castaway state is brought about by the eldest son's disobedience and greed. This makes sense in terms both of Defoe's positive endorsement of financial speculation and foreign trade and Evans' criticism of it. In *Robinson Crusoe* the challenge is to justify a son's behaviour and in *Martha Rattenberg* to criticise it.

The refusal of the son to honour the father's word results in an immediate loss of status for Martha: 'I who 'till now had been mistress of the house, could after my father's funeral scarce be admitted to any share in it'.[51] The fall in status results in her becoming homeless and dispossessed when her brother 'turned me

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[48] Ibid, p. 6.

[49] Ibid, p. 6.

[50] Because Martha's 'settlement' was not in the will she was able to be cheated out of her bequest. Susan Staves states that by the late seventeenth century it had become the practice to alter descent by individualistic family settlements. Up until 1544 inheritance had 'simply "descended" from father to eldest son at common law'. She also states that 'the extreme freedom of property owners to decide...how family property would be divided' was 'One of the most idiosyncratic features of English law in the period' It is not clear from the discussion how this differed between different land-owning classes. Brewer and Staves, p. 199.

[51] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 6.

out of doors with only the cloaths to my back'.[52] This feminine loss of domestic power is equivalent to Crusoe's fall in status from merchant to slave.[53] In this sense, Crusoe as younger son (that is, in his disempowered state) is like Martha in that he too has no direct inheritance of power or wealth, but must leave his family and make his own way. The young Crusoe, like Martha, is not only unprotected by previously established values, but is also under threat from the 'new' society.

As in *Robinson Crusoe*, Martha and most of the tradespeople she meets are exemplary, offering assistance, paying debts, working hard.[54] As the profit and loss account shows, it is women in business who are honourable figures and essential to her survival.[55] The depictions are reminiscent of Defoe's honest widow. Martha herself is also markedly fair-minded. When previous wives turn up to extort money from her, she is told to ignore them, but gives them money in pity. In this regard, Evans' takes a similar position to Defoe in that he does not blame the women for the vice they become involved in. When her employer offers to sue her brother to get her money back for her, Martha again offers a compromise.[56] Martha is notably not associated with the inconstancy of the society being critiqued. However, she is depicted as not yet mature in her business acumen. That is, she is still able to be duped. The fact that Martha learns to survive suggests that this narrative functions like the exemplary tales which constitute *The Complete English Tradesman.*

Immoral and infertile values

The coincidence of Martha's father's death with her puberty characterises Martha's vulnerability, which is also that of her era, financial, sexual and moral. Martha's vulnerability is pronounced because, like the female castaways discussed in the next chapter, she has no mother. Her mother died shortly after she was

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[52] Ibid, p. 7.

[53] Ibid, p. 7.

[54] Defoe has Crusoe speak of fellow merchants and business partners as scrupulously honourable.

[55] *Martha Rattenberg*, pp. 20-1.

[56] Ibid, p. 14.

born. This stresses further the powerlessness and vulnerability of the feminine. It is worth recalling that Crusoe's mother, though still alive, was powerless to influence his father.[57] As I have shown, the stability of Crusoe's identity is depicted in sexual, moral and financial terms. It is significant therefore that his ultimate success is indicated by his successful reproduction. That is, on his return he marries and has children. In contrast, doubt is cast over whether Martha will be able to reproduce.

Martha clearly expects to have children as she states that, when she does, she will not read them traveller's tales. The text suggests, however, that the speculation and uncertainty which mark such tales, as well as financial speculation and foreign trade, will prevent her from having children. For example, in England, she is told by a fortune teller that she is barren. In contrast, on the island, she marries James so that they may populate the island, though no children eventuate in the narrative. The fortune-teller is a figure of speculation. In this sense, it may be significant that Martha is told she is barren in England, the site of financial speculation, and appears to regain the possibility of reproduction on the island. The text seems to suggest that on the island, speculation itself is barren and that it is only outside of a society dominated by financial speculation, that Martha regains the possibility of reproduction.

Barrenness is also linked to financial speculation through the text's focus on sexual impropriety and immorality. The text's position on sexual immorality and the connection with financial speculation is evident in the relationships between the pirates who capture Martha's ship and its female passengers. On the ship heading for Barbadoes, there are nine other women among the passengers. All of them have taken the voyage to search for 'love' or 'riches'.[58] Before commencing her trip, Martha says she will have no need for money on the ship. In this sense, she and the other passengers are themselves the cargo. Her ship, (powerless, as it has no weapons) is taken by a Spanish ship masquerading as English and

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[57] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 7.

[58] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 4.

captained by an Englishman. The masquerade shows that the "true" culprit of the crime is England's involvement in foreign trade. The Englishman assigns a crew and sails away. He is positioned as irresponsible for leaving their ship with few provisions, sick crew members, and a group of already captive French prisoners. The pirates' activity, like that of financial speculators, is in the South Sea. In a manoeuvre which reflects the unpredictability of the South Sea financial ventures, the ship is blown off course in a storm and they do not make their intended destination which was another South Sea island, significantly named Providence. In so far as Providence was the revelation of the intention of God, the pirate ship represents vice being 'blown off course' by God. Figuratively, the pirates are the problematic 'money'd men', financiers, projectors and stock-jobbers making money from foreign trade and as such, the ship has on it 'sailors of all nations'.[59] In the context of the concerns of the text, this connects foreign trade to financial speculation.[60]

After the ship is wrecked the mutually informing themes of sexual and financial desire continue as the masculine crew seduce most of the female travellers. Sex between the female travellers and the pirates connects the vice of overseas trade with corruption and the loss of virtue. In contrast to Martha, who presents herself as 'not agreeable to their eyes', some women go off willingly with the ship's crew.[61] Evans humorously comments that they 'thought the island needed populating and did all they could to make this happen'.[62] One of these women, the Governess, becomes powerful through her alliance with the Captain. The island is a microcosm of society in which the pirates, as financial speculators, are in charge and all those on it are referred to as slaves.[63] As the female embodiment of excess and luxury, the Governess is a dominant figure, having

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[59] Ibid, p. 36.

[60] As Joseph Addison observed of the Royal Exchange, 'all the languages of Europe [are] spoken in this little Spot'. Nicholson, p. 57.

[61] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 37.

[62] Ibid, p. 44.

[63] Ibid, p. 48.

'render'd herself mistress of the inclinations...of the principal of our masters'.[64] She is described as 'an old face in London, and quite out of credit [seeking] a new fortune abroad where she is less well known.'[65] That is, her being out of credit is a euphemism for her bad reputation. The drunken scene in which she insists that the virtuous women are slaves like her and must therefore be taken as lovers by the sailors, successfully connects the corruption of virtue with drinking. This indicates the kind of compromise which is reached when at the end of the text Martha and James open a tavern.

When the sailors get drunk they want more women. Martha and others hide, with the help of some male passengers, in shrubbery which was so thick 'there was not room for even a mouse to get in'.[66] The sinful drinking and 'whoring' crew members and their women are subsequently 'swallowed' up by a volcanic explosion, reported satisfactorily as 'in the midst of their sins'.[67] The volcanic explosion which covers and kills those implicated in 'vice' is the reverse image of the virtuous Martha hiding in the coppice. Martha and her virtue are protected in an enclosed, pure and safe space, which suggests the enclosed space of virginity. This enclosure is later emulated in the utopian society which is discovered hidden in the middle of the island. Drawing on imagery derived from female virginity, this sense of enclosure, as in *Robinson Crusoe*, represents female virtue as a site of security and value.

In the volcanic explosion, the land reclaims part of the sea. Martha refers to similar 'alterations that happen in earth'. She tells of a time when the land was swallowed up by the sea and says sea shells have been found inland. She suggests that historically the land and sea may have changed places. In other words, she refers to a time when the values associated with the land, and not the sea, were dominant. In contrast to *Robinson Crusoe*, the ocean represents masculine desire

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[64] Ibid, p. 45.
[65] Ibid, p. 45.
[66] Ibid, p. 49.
[67] Ibid, p. 52.

that must be rejected or domesticated. Like Defoe, Evans associates the sea with foreign trade. As such, unlike Crusoe, Martha refuses to return to sea. By choosing to stay on the coast of France and run a tavern she occupies a marginal place which allows her to take advantage of the social traits that the text critiques, while she is distanced and protected from them.

Translating between cultures

Martha's experiences in society have made her an exemplary trader in the style of *The Complete English Tradesman*. For example, on the island, she recognises the importance of the relationship between private vice and 'publick benefit', and makes friends with 'the Governess' in order to gain fresh clothing, tools and materials for building and supplies.[68] In a pragmatic Defoe-style gesture, she states that:

> I from the beginning determin'd to make my advantage of the interest she had in him, therefore much against my will, made my court to her, and persuaded her to engage our captain, not only to furnish us with all that was necessary for our lying on shore, but to furnish us with materials to keep us at work; which she the more easily yielded to, by my promising that she should have a large share, not only of my cargo of linen, but in my work to make it up.[69]

Martha's statement emphasises pragmatism and practicality, that is, making use of the society as it is. It is the combination of Martha's morality and practicality that is her most important virtue. Importantly, Martha's virtue is not related to her actual virginity, for when she arrives on the island she is no longer a virgin; she has been married. She also does not have to defend herself as she says the pirates do not find her desirable.[70] However, this view of her own desirability has changed since in England she understood herself to be attractive enough to 'come back wife to some wealthy planter'.[71] This suggests that it is her moral virtue

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[68] Ibid, pp. 45-7.

[69] Ibid, p. 45.

[70] Ibid, p. 37.

[71] Ibid, p. 25.

which the pirates/speculators/foreign traders do not find desirable. That is, the text emphasises her morality and practicality over her sexual desirability.[72]

Just as the narrative equates masculine greed and lust with financial speculation, so Martha's practicality is conversely marked by a refusal of emotion. That is, her strength is her ability to overcome emotion. She makes statements such as 'having cried out my cry I began to recover my spirits', and on another occasion, 'there was no longer any grief to be found in my face, but all was jocund and easy'.[73] She represents herself as 'I, within whom, grief and uneasiness never dwelt long.'[74] Control over emotion is generally understood to be a sign of rationality and, as such, the figure of Martha is comparable with depictions of Crusoe as rational economic man.[75] However Martha's stoical nature actually differs from Crusoe's, who experiences dramatic outbursts of emotion in relation to his 'complicated good fortune'.[76] In comparison, Martha not only has her emotions under control, but is also possibly infertile. Her control is evidenced by her refusal to go to sea again. In contrast, the emotional Crusoe is a fertile and (colonially) expansive character. When he is nearly killed after travelling overland home, he says: 'I would much rather go a thousand Leagues by Sea, though I were sure to meet with a Storm once a Week'.[77]

Simply to oppose Martha to Crusoe, as domestic trader versus socially mobile trader, would be to miss the important role Martha has as the feminine mediator between old and new values. *Martha Rattenberg* expresses the view that it is impossible to live out either masculine reality or feminine ideals, and that compromise is necessary in order to survive. In this regard, the representation of

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[72] The introduction to the Garland edition states that 'Having maintained her own virtue she is providentially saved from assault by an earthquake which swallows up all the sinners and leaves her with good people.' p. 8.

[73] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 9.

[74] Ibid, pp. 31, 72.

[75] Ian Watt commenting on *Robinson Crusoe* states that 'The hypostasis of the economic motive logically entails a devaluation of other modes of thought, feeling and action'. *The Rise of the Novel*, p. 64.

[76] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 304. See discussion in Benjamin Boyce, 'The Question of Emotion in Defoe', in Max Byrd, *Daniel Defoe: Collection of Critical Essays*, 1976.

[77] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 302.

Martha as the translator of two different languages and cultures is significant. Martha's ability to "translate" is related to the text's approval of pragmatism. As such, writing itself in all its forms is accorded a pragmatic, although uncertain, value. Martha is able to negotiate in circumstances in which she is under threat because she has learnt to read and write two languages.

Martha's pragmatism is evident when she learns French cooking and French language in order to get 'the most beneficial places that a servant could hope for'.[78] Speaking French in the text is a symbol of Martha being positioned between two sets of values. The contrast between England and France could be based on different attitudes to marriage and to luxury. France is associated with luxury goods and England with their consumption.[79] This suggests that when Martha settles in France, she like Crusoe, is being aligned with supply and distanced from problematic demand. Berry suggests that although luxury was associated with French products, the French had 'a morally censorious attitude toward luxury' up until the end of the nineteenth century.

As in England, luxury in France was seen to be problematic in the blurring of social distinctions.[80] Evans' disapproval of romance can also be seen in the context of an increase in romantic marriages in England in the period and a decline in arranged marriages. In contrast to England, the French still favoured arranged marriages and therefore '[t]he English Channel had become the great divide between romantic and arranged marriages'.[81] Martha's pragmatic marriage to a Frenchman and her entering trade on the coast of France places her and James

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[78] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 24.

[79] Every year from the 14th century until the Napleonic wars, a full size French fashion doll (also called mannequin) travelled to England to display the latest French court fashions. Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J. H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialisation Of Eighteenth Century England*, Europa, London, 1982, pp. 43-4. In Sir George Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) Sir Fopling Flutter admired and displayed French luxuries.

[80] Berry, p. 8 and p. 82.

[81] Trumbach, p. 113.

between the two positions.[82] The couple are also effectively in the "Middle State" in that they reject both wealth and poverty.

On the island Martha's French aids her survival as she is the only person able to speak to both the English castaways and the French prisoners. She brings about agreement as: 'most of the conversation run through my hands, I being interpreter to them all'. The two other sides she is placed between are the passengers as objects of wealth and the pirates as takers of wealth. They represent the two choices presented by her experience in England, that of being a cheat or being cheated. When Martha marries and runs a business, a transcendence of both poverty and wealth is achieved.

The representation of Martha as interpreter presents the castaway state as both feminine and positive. In its renegotiation of what it is to be castaway the text also reflects the position of the author situated between patron and reader. The risks and benefits reflected in Martha's pragmatic activities as a translator, and in Evans' role as an author, are reflected in the text's presentation of letters and language as uncertain conveyors of meaning.

Martha Rattenberg is written in the form of a letter and letters are important to Martha's survival, in that they either vouchsafe good character or destroy it. In this sense, letters have the character of credit in establishing or destroying reputation and character. Letters (and by association language, representation and writing) are depicted as powerful producers of truth. As in Defoe's depiction of gossip, the letters show that meaning is an agreement between reader and writer over which the writer has little control. Whether Martha is duped, deceived or advantaged depends on the way letters are read.[83] For example, when Martha's

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[82] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 54.

[83] Much work on early eighteenth century epistolary fiction revolves around Richardson's *Pamela* (written twenty years after *Robinson Crusoe* in 1740) and around the figure of the woman as moral or immoral icon. Many of these readings look at epistolary fiction in the context of social and epistemological issues of sexual inequality and are less concerned with the sexualisation of allegory. The sense of politics in these reading tends to be consequently narrow. Ros Ballaster, for example, connects sexual to 'party politics' in amatory fiction in order to show there is 'a struggle for a specifically feminine authority'. Ros Ballaster, *Seductive Forms: Women's Amatory Fiction from 1684 to 1740*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1992, p. 16. The discussion in this and the following chapter shows that

avaricious uncle reads the letter intended to ensure her protection, he responds by throwing her out. In another incident, Martha's lover gets her to stay with him at the inn, by showing her a letter from the master of the ship stating that the crew stayed there when they were on shore. Martha says that this letter 'made me pretty easy'; she agrees to stay and is cheated. Letters, like credit, are subject to authentication by others, as when a false letter of credit allows her first husband to cheat her of money:

> pulling a letter out of his pocket, (which I knew was not his hand writing) shew'd it to me; there appear'd upon the outside something like a Post-mark; the contents were to ask his pardon for not returning the two hundred pounds he had order'd till a month after.[84]

While the narrative criticises language as deceptive in contrast to material presence, it also points to the power of the written word in society. Through the letter, the written word is shown to be an instrument of influence. For example, letters to strangers and letters of 'Reference' act as credit and enable Martha to gain food, lodging and employment.[85] In this sense, the narrative recommends a way to survive in a period in which value is unstable and points out the risks involved.

In contrast to the unstable and unpredictable quality of words, silence is presented as a reliable space, equivalent to solid gold and feminine virtue. The significance of the silence that Martha experiences when she is isolated on the island for three years is presaged throughout the text. When Martha hides her five broad pieces, she says: 'Out of the wreck of my fortune I had taken care secretly to convey five broad pieces into my pocket, and which I did not own even to my cousin'.[86] Her language suggests Crusoe's gleaning of what is valuable from his

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the struggle for 'female authority' is itself subject to (and a reflection of) the tensions produced by the feminisation of fiction, finance, aspects of trade and trade itself. To speak of 'the struggle for female authority' is to speak of the struggle for a particular identity and requires an engagement with the same gendered issues of authority and value (the conditions of production) which produce masculine identity, in this instance, *Robinson Crusoe*. Separating gender from 'politics' is impossible when the female gender is understood as a precondition for the terms of masculine authority and identity.

[84] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 27.

[85] Ibid, p. 22.

[86] Ibid, p. 7.

shipwreck. That is, Martha learns to be silent about what is most valuable, and silence itself, therefore, is presented as having great value.

Without writing and speech, however, Martha faces extinction as a subject. In this sense, silence is like writing, reliant for its continued value on social custom and circumstance. When Martha resumes her narration, at the end of her husband's narrative, she says that while the men were away she worried about losing 'the use of my tongue...[so]...I frequently talked to myself.'[87] She also sings (in both languages) in case she loses her speech. She reads the Bible and writes 'an account of all that I could remember had happen'd to me during my whole life, to that very time'.[88] This life story, the reader is meant to understand, as in *Robinson Crusoe*, is the account which has been told to the author. In the space between the "real" and the "ideal", that is between England and the utopian society that her husband, James discovers, Martha's Bible is the "guarantee" of her identity and the "truth" of her narrative.[89] In this sense, Martha is the absent presence that gives value to James' narrative. In this way, both silence and absence and speech and presence are validated. Silence, like the feminine and like the gold dust used to start the tavern, acquires a pragmatic value. The silence takes pragmatic shape when it indicates a space in the narrative which can be usefully crossed, as when incidents are not developed and the comment is made: 'I shall pass over it in silence'.[90] When James starts his narrative, such a silence or absence is literally depicted in the chasm he crosses:

> I have nothing to acquaint you with, Sir, relating to my self or family or any of my affairs in France. I shall therefore begin my narration at our passing the gap in the mountains of which she has told you.

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[87] Ibid, p. 36. The fear of losing one's language is a common trope of castaway stories and was commented on in the period in relation to Alexander Selkirk, the Scottish castaway said to be the inspiration for *Robinson Crusoe*.

[88] *Martha Rattenberg*, pp. 65-66.

[89] As McKeon comments: 'The reliance of Protestant thought on the figurative language of the Bible as the one true sense and "literal" Word of God is profoundly analogous to the new philosophical argument that in nature's book was to be found the register and signature of divine intent. McKeon, p. 75.

[90] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 21.

The narrative stresses that journeying itself is unexciting. A rough road or a short journey by sea, for example, is practical, "uneventful" and unelaborated in contrast with the journeys described in romances and in travel narratives.[91]

James' narrative: the utopian society

The utopian society is in the centre of the island and separated from it by a chasm. Only James and a Catholic priest are able to cross this chasm. Martha is left alone on the rest of the island for three years. In the utopian society, James is brought to task against a set of ideals based on feminine virtue and purity. In accord with this, the sea, associated with masculine desire, is depicted as under control. That is, it is channelled into a sculptured pool where the visiting men are confined. The men discover that the water is brackish and 'must have some secret communication with the adjacent sea.'[92] The masculine ocean is now domesticated and associated with the feminine and with purity. Each day, the two men are required to purify themselves in the pool and everyone 'purify'd' themselves twice a year.[93] This inner "island" was created when the land sank, forming a chasm all around it, and protecting the inhabitants, described as the 'children of love'. The utopian society has no money and is the opposite of Martha's society.[94] In this society, values associated with love are feminine, domestic and pure.

The desires which inform Martha's society, that is England, are depicted as 'natural', wild, out of control and masculine. In contrast, in this utopian society masculine desire is tamed. This is represented by the domesticated 'Lyons' that keep guard over the two men when they arrive. These 'Lyons' are described as

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[91] Ibid, p. 8.

[92] Ibid, p. 76.

[93] Ibid, p. 76. The 'purification' suggests baptism which, in different periods, was a contentious issue and fundamental objection of certain Dissenting sects. Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1978. p. 114.

[94] Love and money was a familiar opposition in the late seventeenth century theatrical productions. For example, James Thompson discusses Congreve's *Love for Love* (1695) in which love is money's opposite, that is, it has no speculative character, 'love does not respond to profit or loss, gain or threat, but that love is only matched by love in equal trade or barter'. Thomson reads Locke's writings on money and Congreve's text as 'conservative responses to capital relations, that is, both texts are representations and resistances to a historical moment in the history of capitalism'. James Thomson in Canfield and Payne, p. 281.

'like dogs, tamed domestick animals'.[95] In *Robinson Crusoe*, these Hobbesian 'Lyons' were 'ravenous Creatures [who] seldom appear but in the night...we found the people terribly frighted, especially the Women'.[96] The taming of desire is also represented by their food as the utopians do not, like Friday and Crusoe, eat flesh, but eat 'fruit and herbage'.[97] The priest gives up eating meat on his return to society. Just as Defoe sought to develop a value system which was based in trade rather than in war, the utopian society is noticeably opposed to war. Their vegetarianism is a sign of their opposition to killing 'any living creature'.[98] The domestication of masculine desire is represented by the men's occupation which is taming nature, that is, they prune trees into hedges. It is within these 'hedges' that the visiting men are initially confined.

The emphasis in the utopian society is on the shaping of what is natural rather than the covering of nature (artifice). As such, when the two men remove their clothes, the utopians assume that they are removing their skins. The utopian men are also 'tame' in that, in contrast to the European men, they are naturally hairless and naked, explicitly differentiated from what is naturally wild and animal-like. The visiting men are depicted as uncivilised animals: 'they took us for a sort of impure animal'.[99] In contrast, in *Robinson Crusoe*, Friday is initially depicted as 'savage' and Crusoe as 'civilised'.

The utopian society is marked by a notable lack of difference. The people are surprised by the visitors' differences from each other (in particular, they note one man has hair all over his body and one does not). This representation stresses the difficulty caused by different value systems. It emphasises the sameness evident in the utopian society and addresses the issue of desire. As before, the

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[95] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 78.

[96] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 30.

[97] *Martha Rattenberg*, pp. 78-9. In Steven Rosen's discussion of vegetarianism and world religions he states that literal interpretations of the earliest Christian texts do not condone meat eating and that this emphasises the creed of all creatures living in harmony. Steven Rosen, *Food for the Spirit: Vegetarianism and the World Religions*, Bala Books, New York, 1987, p. 28.

[98] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 94.

[99] Ibid, p. 74.

problem of economic desire is addressed through reference to male-female relations. In the utopian society, the men are handsome and the women are beautiful. Such moral and aesthetic perfection is associated with the absence of adultery.[100] In other words, this is a society in which desire is not a problem. The utopian society is like Crusoe's island, described by Coleridge as having a perfect balance of wants and needs.[101] The utopians comment, 'How happy are we, who want nothing that's necessary to life, nor have any desire or wishes for what we do not want'.[102] Without the desire so important to the 'consuming animal' of Mandeville's conception, the people cannot understand the men's description of the pursuit of wealth:

> we could by no means make them comprehend what gains and riches were. They asked us whether we wanted food in our own country...We told them it was not that but the earnest desire of having more than what was absolutely necessary, that made us venture so far; since large possessions and great abundance did not only gain the respect and veneration of those who had not the same advantage, but even an authority over them. This likewise seem'd to puzzle them, for they could not form an idea of any pleasure and satisfaction that there should be in those things.[103]

The major value which was absent in Martha's society exists in this society. That is, the society is patriarchal. Old men are the most influential citizens and wives are regarded as 'sacred' property.[104] Patriarchal power is benign as the old men direct discussion rather than control it and there are no magistrates or laws.[105] The theme of direction rather than coercion is also addressed through the role of music in the society. In Martha's narrative, music is a sign of desire, seduction and fantasy. In James's narrative, the men find the utopian society by following the sound of 'sweet music'. Music in this society is associated with goodness,

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[100] Its perfection is also suggested when James remarks that no one dies in the three years they are with them. This suggests the Calvinist belief in a state of eternal bliss. Watts, *The Dissenters*, p. 187.

[101] Quoted in Chapter 1, p. 52, fn. 83.

[102] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 78.

[103] Ibid, p. 77.

[104] Ibid, p. 81. In England the wife's 'presumed inferiority and incompetence *vis a vis* her husband spelled a life of second class citizenship'. Janelle Greenberg, 'Legal Status of the English woman in Early Eighteenth-Century Common Law and Equity', *Studies in Eighteenth Century Culture*, vol. 4, 1975, p. 179.

[105] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 79.

sweetness and harmony, and when Martha hears it she ceases to worry about the men's safety.[106] Like the society, singing is harmonious and the music is so sweet that the birds, 'very like our parots [sic]' join in and sing the words.[107] This suggests a harmony of animal and human worlds as well as a control over nature, understood as masculine desire. Such control over nature, gendered through reference to Friday, defines *Robinson Crusoe*.

In the utopian society, young people are able to decide who they will marry. This is possible because all are equally beautiful and virtuous. Through the image of marriage, female virtue is central to the text's critique. In the utopian society, relationships between men and women are monogamous and women are valued. In Martha's society being free to choose is the pretext for disaster. In the utopian society, both mothers and fathers give the couple to each other in the marriage ceremony. This unites in power a benign patriarchy with the value of the "feminine". The reduction of avarice and desire is equated therefore with equity between the sexes, even though depicted in patriarchal terms. The division of labour is that men prune hedges; the women mind the children and teach religion.[108] This difference and "equality" is evoked in a text in which gender functions in a highly symbolic manner. The society combines a feminine religion understood as mutual love with a masculine polity, together presented as guiding and controlling wild, masculine nature. This depiction is complemented by the sense that the utopian society is both socially and naturally constructed. Work and nature (as desire) are ultimately in balance, equally valued and undifferentiated; as such, 'the virgins often accompany'd their lovers to work'.[109]

The narratives of James and Martha are contrasted by the gender of their narrators and by the differences between the two societies. The pursuit of wealth has led to both Martha and James becoming castaways but it is James who finally

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[106] Ibid, p. 60.

[107] Ibid, p. 79.

[108] Their religion is the worship of that which is 'infinite and everywhere' and of 'Thou Being that has no name', ibid, p. 88.

[109] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 82.

embodies, in his hirsute body, the impurity and vices of his society. Eventually, just as her circumstances require Martha to leave England, so the visiting men are asked to leave the feminine, utopian society. The saving of Martha and James and their subsequent taking up of trade suggests the Calvinist ethic which appears to inform *Robinson Crusoe*. The Calvinist belief was that 'if many were to be damned, but a few (the Elect) were to be saved, the achievement of worldly success in one's business could be regarded as evidence of election'.[110] As such, when the castaways are rejected from the utopian society, they discover the gold which they use to set up business. As is the literary tradition of the romance narrative; fortuitous good fortune is visited upon the virtuous. Martha's entering trade is a middle position between being in service, and the dream of being rich. It is also a compromise between the two gendered sets of values, one which gave her no money and overvalued it, and one which had no money and gave it no value. Although the narrative is an anti-romance, it is also in its fictionality and engagement with the travel genre, a romance. While advocating the rejection of desire associated with romance and speculation, Evans produces a romance and travel narrative which capitalises on such desires. In this sense, the text itself is a compromise and site of transformation.

Aesthetics and belief

Martha Rattenberg focuses on the problem and potential of aesthetics as the basis for value in contrast to belief (that which can't be heard or seen). This is evident in the text's representation of fashion. Martha's status is marked throughout the text through reference to her access to clothes and fashion. That is, clothes comment on whether she is valued or devalued. Martha's encounters with bigamy convey a sense of novelty and fashion. That is, wives are portrayed as collected and discarded like clothes, and their worth depicted as in the having, not in the keeping. Martha's lowest state is when she first leaves home with just 'the clothes on her back'. The pinnacle of her achievement occurs when she secures a

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[110] Watts, *Literature and Money*, p. 73.

position with a fashionable young female employer whose clothes will be handed down to her.[111] In contrast, the scarcity of resources on the island allows for clothes to be revalued in relation to need. As discussed, Martha trades with the 'Governess' to get fresh clothes. She is then able to clothe the men in linen when they reappear naked after their long absence. The linen clothes mark the return of the men to society. As the linen itself is a commodity associated with foreign trade, its use is a sign of compromise.[112] The shirts are also a sign of compromise in that they were obtained from the Governess. In contrast to England, the utopian society is a place where no clothes are worn. The implication is that in the utopian society, there is no contradiction between outward and internal values. Outside the utopian society, the island is a between state where clothes are valued to cover nakedness. That is, clothes protect the naked, virtuous state. In England, clothes were handed down and were therefore a form of wealth which was inherited. The castaway state values 'need' over desire, just as sex is valued for procreation over pleasure.

The critical attitude to fashion as an aesthetic is supported in the text by the utopian society's criticism of Catholicism. A young virgin is chosen to tell the visitors of her society's religion. The men interpret this as an insult, which demonstrates to the reader the lack of value they attribute to virtue. When the Catholic priest responds and talks of his own religion, he is unsuccessful in his attempts to convert the people. In particular, 'their ears could not hear of the Deity being split into three; and that a man who he confess'd dy'd, was however the living God'.[113] In these remarks the criticisms of fantasy, fiction and excess are

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[111] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 24.

[112] In order to encourage home manufactures, linen was a forbidden import in the late seventeenth century. Gordon Marshall, *Presbyteries and Profits: Calvinism and the Development of Capitalism in Scotland, 1560-1707*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1980, pp. 132-3.

[113] *Martha Rattenberg*, p. 90. This may have meant that Ambrose Evans was sympathetic with the Freethinkers who, like him, were critical of the role of priests and of the concept of the Trinity. See discussion in J. A. I. Champion, *The Pillars of Priestcraft shaken: The Church of England and its enemies, 1660-1730*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992, Chapters 4 and 5. According to Watts the objection to the Deity was an Anabaptist and General Baptist view, (both Dissenting religions), *The Dissenters*, p. 13.

linked to Catholicism. This is in accord with contemporary accusations that the church was corrupt and excessive in its concern with ceremony and ostentatious display. The critique of luxury focuses, as I have shown, on fashion in particular. The Dissenters criticised priests for wearing special vestments. This was a criticism of both Catholic and Anglican churches and, since the sixteenth century, it had been a key part of the cause of dissent from the established church.[114] As such, both "fashion" and the Roman Catholic church were signs of artifice which mediated the "natural" word of God.[115]

It is known that Defoe came from a Protestant Dissenting background. Nothing is known of the practices or beliefs of Ambrose Evans, except that his texts are critical of Catholicism. Protestant Dissenters were generally opposed to both the Anglican High Church and the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church was represented, among other objections, as having an association with pomp (luxury) and therefore artifice. In Defoe's *The New Family Instructor* (1727), a father tells his son 'I derive the word Romance...from the Practice of the Romanists, in imposing Lyes and Fables upon the World; and I believe...that Popery is a *Romantick Religion*'.[116] Martha's relgious faith is exemplified by her reading her bible while James and the priest are in the utopian society. Her religion is therefore "natural and not dependent on the organised church. Her act of reading the bible and and writing her "spiritual autobiography" confirms both writing and silence, speech and absence.

In *Martha Rattenberg*, Martha and James are women and men who must compromise between a pure feminine ideal and a masculine corrupt reality. They choose a pragmatic compromise. This compromise is made possible by the in-between castaway space which is presented as feminine, virtuous and religiously

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[114] Watts, *The Dissenters*, p. 18.

[115] A. Henry Stubbes was concerned with the invalidation of history. He stated the problem was what to believe, he stated that they would 'all be reduced to that pass, as to believe the story of *Tom Thumb* and all the *Legends* and *falsifications of History*, which the *Papists* obtrude upon is'. Quoted by McKeon, p. 71.

[116] Quoted by McKeon, p. 89.

based. As Martha shows in her role as interpreter, the feminine is the ground of transformation itself.

The narrative of *Alexander Vendchurch*

In this narrative, just as Martha is a victim of masculine desire, so the main protagonist, Alexander Vendchurch, is a victim of his own desire. He is taught to reject wealth, foreign trade and speculation when his actions result in the death of his female lover, the Spanish merchant's daughter and heir, Elvira. Elvira's death, which results in Vendchurch's corruption, also brings about his reformation and return to domestic trade. In the narrative, through language and false representation, Vendchurch, a Scotsman, becomes a Spaniard in Panama, a Spanish-held port. Vendchurch is taken there by his Spanish merchant employer who encourages him in his deception by calling him his nephew. Because this man and Elvira's father are enemies, Elvira deceives her father to see Vendchurch. When their duplicity is discovered, Elvira escapes and is shipwrecked, followed fortuitously by Vendchurch. After Elvira dies on the island on which they are castaway, Vendchurch is rescued and becomes a pirate before returning home where he receives a small, but equal, share of his dying father's estate.

Alexander Vendchurch is a short text, described in the 1972 facsimile edition as 'a travel story of novella length'.[117] The narrative is indirectly linked to *Robinson Crusoe* through the name Alexander Vendchurch, which is a play on the name Alexander Selkirk.[118] Selkirk was a Scottish castaway whose narrative and experience was, and still is, widely represented as the inspiration for *Robinson Crusoe*.[119] The name Vendchurch suggests a tension between foreign trade and religious values, to vend (vendre is French) is to sell and 'church' is an anglicised version of the Scottish 'kirk'. Vendchurch's name can be understood to symbolise

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[117] The narrative is thirty five pages long.

[118] I have referred to the main protagonist as Vendchurch and not Alexander to prevent confusion.

[119] This long association does not, of course, make it true. In fact some prefer to connect *Robinson Crusoe* with the Dutch text, *Krinke Kesmes* (1708) or with another Scottish castaway figure, Robert Drury. Earle, *The World of Defoe*, p. 299, fn. 68.

the corruption of religion by commerce and perhaps, of belief, by the Anglican church.

Alexander Vendchurch is important to this thesis, because it engages with the values which I have suggested inform *Robinson Crusoe* through a parody of the "factual" story upon which *Robinson Crusoe* was said to be based. It was printed with *Martha Rattenberg* and in this sense, Evans can also be understood to be parodying his own work. The text is interesting because it rejects the compromises which mark the castaway narrative, in favour of absolute value. This is indicated by Elvira's death and Alexander's return home.

Although *Alexander Vendchurch* is presented as a romance and travel narrative, it is opposed to both. It demonstrates this by parodying Selkirk's account. There are a number of similarities between Selkirk's narrative and *Alexander Vendchurch.* Selkirk was a minor celebrity in the period, a sailor who demanded to be put off his ship on Juan Fernandez island because of bad treatment.[120] He assumed that the next passing ship would soon pick him up but this didn't happen for over four years. Captain Woode Rogers, the captain of the ship which rescued him, wrote an account of Selkirk's experience, as did William Dampier, who was on both ships. Both the original ship and the rescue ship were engaged in trade in the South Seas. In this period, Spain had rights over certain lands and seas, including the right to trade in slaves from those areas.[121] Vendchurch the protagonist is, like Selkirk, castaway in Spanish-held lands where he is not supposed to be.[122] Both figures are castaway for approximately four years and arrive on their islands with some tools and weapons. Both narratives feature

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[120] Woode Rogers wrote: 'a difference betwixt him and his Captain which together with the ships being leaky, made him willing to stay here, than go along with him at first and when he was at last willing, the Captain would not receive him'. *A Cruising Voyage Round the World* (1711) Da Capo Press, New York, 1969, p. 125.

[121] Robinson Crusoe is castaway on a slaving journey. He points out to his fellow planters that 'the buying *Negroes*, which was a trade at that time not only far enter'd into, but as far as it was, had been carried on by the Assiento's, or Permission of the Kings of *Spain* and *Portugal*'. *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 39.

[122] Edward Cooke, a ship captain refers to Alexander Selkirk as being on the Cinque Ports galley, 'An English privateer' prior to his isolation'. *A Voyage to the South Sea and Round the World in the years, 1708 to 1711*, N. Israel, Amsterdam and Da Capo Press, New York, 1969, p. 125.

sea lions which seasonally drove Selkirk off the safety of his beach. In *Alexander Vendchurch* they become lions that kill people with their 'paws'.[123] Both figures survive by eating turnips and feral goat and both are rescued by a ship which goes on trading in Jamaica before returning to Scotland after many years.

The parallel between the Selkirk and Vendchurch narratives effectively parodies the travel account by giving it the qualities of romance and fiction while the travel account lends authenticity to the fiction. *Alexander Vendchurch* is a romance, which is also the account of an unsuccessful masquerade. As such, it effectively displaces the focus of the Selkirk narrative on hardship and mutiny with a critique of the elusive dream of great wealth. That is, Evans pushes to the fore the 'romance' of Selkirk's castaway account, associated as it was with the foreign trading activities of Rogers and Dampier. In doing so, he rewrote it as a narrative of masculine desire, loss and above all, deceit.

As in the previous text, Vendchurch and Elvira each narrate their experience of being castaway. Vendchurch is the son of a tradesman. After improving his social position through education, he runs away at age twelve because he is unable to 'bear the ill-temper' of his 'mother in law'.[124] His 'mother-in-law' is his father's second wife and therefore his step-mother. His dislike of her suggests a symbolic rejection of a non-natural and therefore, non-virtuous mother. At this time he, like Crusoe, refuses the possibility of an apprenticeship.[125] That is, he rejects domestic trade in favour of foreign trade. The way to improve one's social standing in both of Evans' texts is presented as the learning of a foreign and Catholic language. These languages are associated with luxury, artifice and foreign trade.

As a youth, Vendchurch learns to read and write in English and Spanish. He also learns music and business skills and is eventually employed as a 'factor'

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[123] *Alexander Vendchurch*, p. 26.

[124] The term mother in law refers to his step mother. *Alexander Vendchurch*, p. 1.

[125] *Alexander Vendchurch*, p. 2.

by the Spanish merchant in Cadiz.[126] Music, as in *Martha Rattenberg*, is again associated with romance as it is used to woo Elvira. Through education, Vendchurch says, 'I soon grew a perfect Spaniard'.[127] This imitation of being Spanish becomes reality when his master takes him to Panama where only Spanish citizens are allowed to go. In its isolation and 'purity' the Spanish colony is a similar, but opposite, situation to James' utopian society, in that its sole business is trade.

His master, who renames him Roderigo, is 'a great marriage-hater' and has no children. Again the implication is that societies based on values of foreign trade and wealth are symbolically unreproductive. 'Roderigo', an imposter, now has an apparent claim to inheritance. Roderigo is an artifice and he deceives his uncle by conducting a romance with his enemy's daughter. This problem appears to be resolved when the 'Unkle' dies and leaves Vendchurch a fortune. As in *Martha Rattenberg*, inheritance in a stable, patriarchal system guarantees "natural" identity, but in a society in which such values are destabilised, authenticity of identity can no longer be guaranteed. In *Martha Rattenberg*, when Martha is cheated out of her inheritance, it indicates the decline of patriarchal values. On a similar basis, Alexander/Roderigo, an imposter, is left an inheritance. In neither case can wealth eventuate. When a relative turns up to expose Roderigo, he leaves to contest his claim in the Spanish courts. That he intends to take this action indicates that the corruption of society is also in the legal system. Vendchurch says that his problem is: 'I could be neither heir nor executor, in prejudice to a native Spaniard, and a true Catholick'. In other words, in a society dominated by the values of foreign trade, Vendchurch can only be an imposter even though he might aspire to the same values. For Evans, there is no way to imitate and become real, and the real values the text aspires to no longer have currency.

Vendchurch causes Elvira to deceive her father: 'she knew her father too well to suffer either her looks or words to give him the least suspicion of the

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[126] Ibid, p. 2.

[127] Ibid, p. 4.

truth'.[128] Her father discovers her romance and puts her on a boat for Spain and she is castaway. After she has been on the island a week Roderigo arrives and they 'marry'. Elvira is never told of Roderigo's other identity. Consequently, scenes such as their passionate reunion in which Elvira greets 'her unfortunate Roderigo' become a parodic romance by virtue of the reader's knowledge. There are no parents and no church to regulate Roderigo's time with Elvira.[129] After Vendchurch persuades Elvira that it is acceptable, the marriage is held without a priest:

> having convinced her we were really man and wife before heaven...she seem'd less averse. I told her that as for the priest, and the other formalities of the church, they were mere ceremonies and wholly political.[130]

The priest that is not wanted is a Catholic priest, whose religion and practices were so criticised in *Martha Rattenberg*.[131]

Alexander Vendchurch criticises the social aspirations of a younger generation of tradesmen. Love and money, as in *Martha Rattenberg*, are characterised as profit and loss. The island idyll is a natural paradise which contrasts with the trouble that love, within the context of a society dominated by wealth and foreign trade, has brought them. On the island Roderigo says:

> ...I began to set my gains against my losses, and found myself in possession of that dear woman, without whom I could not hope for any happiness, that I had her without rival, without awe of parents, entirely to myself, and full of equal love; that as I wanted the pomp and equipage of the world, so I was on the other side free from all disquiets.

The island in other words is their utopia. The couple are described as living in complete happiness on the island and love, subsistence and nature are opposed to deceit, wealth and society. It is clear, however, that because their romance is

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[128] Ibid, p. 10.

[129] Ibid, p. 31.

[130] Ibid, p. 29. The Dissenters and the Catholics protested against the Marriage Act of 1753 as it required marriage in a parish church. Colin Haydon, *Anti-Catholicism in Eighteenth-century England*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1993, p. 246.

[131] Champion points out that '"Let us detest all priestcraft" was the rallying cry of the early English enlightenment'. p. 133.

founded on deceit, the idyll cannot last and the two protagonists must be rejected, as James was from the utopian society.

Elvira's experience on the island is one of downward social mobility as indicated when her maid dies after their arrival and Elvira dons her clothes.[132] Her survival and her status are dependent on her servants and then on Vendchurch. Her initial survival rests literally on the back of Diego who swims with her to shore.[133] She is dependent on the labour of others. When she has the support of her servants she describes herself as 'a perfect campaigner' and without them she is 'all alone, a poor helpless woman'.[134] The images suggest the inherent importance of the materiality of labour to the accumulation of wealth.

When Diego dies from the bite of a sea lion Elvira is alone and unable to bury him. Diego being eaten by wild 'Lyons' is comparable to Martha being cheated in London. The wild 'Lyons' again suggest Vendchurch's desire (the cause of the couple being castaway) as Hobbesian, masculine, natural, wild and dangerous. However, these are sea lions which are also 'Land-Water' creatures. They suggest therefore the danger of the hybridity which informs and constructs Defoe's construction of *Robinson Crusoe* and the castaway narrative per se. It suggests a rejection also of the compromise which informed *Martha Rattenberg*.

The burial of Diego is Roderigo's first act on the island. The clearing of the dead servant literally clears the way for a new start as Roderigo makes the hut in which Diego lies available to them. Elvira's commonality with her servants, that is, her mortality, is emphasised when she dies three years later and the 'stench' of her dead body recalls the 'horrid stench' of Diego's corpse:[135] Her death reverses the symbolism of Diego's death by effecting a break with the "new" and a return to the past. The narrative places Elvira at the site, downfall and recovery of

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[132] *Alexander Vendchurch*, p. 23.

[133] This rescue scene is echoed in the rescue of Aubin's Teresa by the slave Domingo (discussed in next chapter) and is taken up in the twentieth century in the rescue of Susan Barton in Coetzee's *Foe* (see this thesis, Chapter 5).

[134] *Alexander Vendchurch*, pp. 25, 27.

[135] Ibid, pp. 29, 33.

Vendchurch's dream of social mobility and great riches. At the end of the narrative, the only two women in the story, Elvira and Alexander's step mother, who ostensibly caused Alexander to leave home, are both dead. The latter's death brought about his journey and the former, his return.

In this narrative Elvira is the dream which must die, as it was sustained only through imitation and artifice. The problem of artifice is the same problem that concerns Defoe in relation to fashion and masquerade. Defoe was ever alert to the possibilities of artifice. For Evans the problem of artifice in this text is, more fundamentally, that of being false. In *Alexander Vendchurch*, the dream of and desire for wealth is rejected in favour of the moderate gains to be had from maintaining one's position. His texts show that fundamental questions as to what was true and what was false, and how these should be represented, were being raised and manipulated in the wake of society's increased wealth and social mobility.

As in *Robinson Crusoe* and *Martha Rattenberg*, the central theme is the negotiation of contrasting cultures and value systems. In the text, Spain and England are aligned and equally rejected. This is evident when Alexander is rescued and recovers his English speech after hearing some of the sailors on the ship curse in English.[136] The return of his speech allows him to shed his usurped Spanish identity. However, the curse and the nature of the ship's business (trade) implies he is returning to a vice-ridden world. When he is rescued he states, 'Private gain seldom has much regard to publick tyes'.[137] This is a comment on the isolation which his 'adventure' has led to and is a direct refutation of the views of Mandeville and Defoe.

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[136] The depiction of Vendchurch's speech as returning after hearing men curse is a possible reference to Caliban's 'You taught me language, and my profit by it is, that I know how to curse'. Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, p. 12.

[137] *Alexander Vendchurch*, p. 34.

Conclusion

Both Evans' texts and *Robinson Crusoe* are negotiating a similar set of social and economic circumstances and gendered values in the early eighteenth century. The narratives participate in ancient associations between sex, gender, money and value.[138] I have argued that the gendered values which inform the texts are inextricably related to differing attitudes to foreign trade and financial speculation and therefore, to artifice. Each text has a differing position on social change which, in turn, affects its presentation of gender and value.

Evans' narratives are about the survival and adjustment of an already existing subjectivity and identity, that of a domestic trading sensibility adjusting to new social conditions. For Evans, the two sexes have different natures and this is exemplified in his giving his narratives differently gendered narrators. In *Martha Rattenberg*, both male and female narrator are expelled from feminine utopia and 'masculine' England respectively. The pragmatic, asexual and similar trading figures of Martha and James are a compromise between polarised masculine and feminine values. Like Friday and Crusoe, Martha and James mirror each other and thereby confirm their identity as domestic traders who take advantage of, while remaining protected from, foreign trade. In *Alexander Vendchurch*, masculine desire destroys what is represented as feminine, to allow the male protagonist to return to his old life. At the end of the text, he is a singular figure. As such, like the early Crusoe on his island and like the utopians encountered by James, he is undisturbed by difference.

In contrast, Defoe's different political views lead him to quite complex manoeuvres in his presentation of artificial man as natural man. Defoe's narrative

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[138] Historian and critic, Marc Shell shows that in Greek thought analogies of sexual reproduction and images of women are significant to discussions of the value of coinage and generally, arise in literature with regard to questions of representation, reproduction and value. Marc Shell, *The Economy of Literature*, The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1978. See in particular, Shell, Chapter 1, pp. 11-62. Generally, the literature on the relationship between money and fiction does not develop the gendered aspects of the relationship. However useful discussions include: Marc Shell, *Money, Language and Thought: Literary and Philosophic Economies from the Medieval to the Modern Era*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1982; Watts, *Literature and Money*, 1990; and John Vernon, *Money and Fiction: Literary Realism in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1984.

shows that a new subjectivity is being constructed out of emerging values and conditions. Given that both Defoe and Evans have a different view of the changes in society, it is not surprising that each presents gendered values differently. Defoe associates the ocean positively with foreign trade while Evans associates the ocean and foreign trade with the negative and with masculinity. For both, the ocean is a transformative space, which Evans rejects and Defoe embraces. Within this ocean of problematic change, the island is a feminine space of transformation and revaluation for both Defoe and Evans.

Defoe's text is more complex in relation to gender as befits an author whose work is considered to be characterised by 'narrative transvestism'.[139] Crusoe, like Evans' female protagonists, is vulnerable and that vulnerability is symbolically sexual, with implications for the symbolic and actual reproduction of society. The feminine figures that are created by both Defoe and Evans are figures which find different degrees of accommodation with masculine desire. Martha has a pragmatic marriage, starts a modest business and is apparently without children. Vendchurch is left without a female partner and returns to live on his father's inheritance. Crusoe makes his own fortune, marries and has children.

Defoe's desire to make domestic and foreign trade compatible changes what he associates with the "feminine". This is marked most of all by the very different figures of Crusoe's mother and widow at the beginning and end of the text respectively. As I have discussed, his mother is presented as powerless while the widow was an independent woman in the period.[140] Crusoe's widow is involved in foreign trade and investment and as his 'True Friend', she successfully invests his money for him. Like Vendchurch, the widow is singular, that is, "undisturbed" by sexual difference and therefore strengthened. However, she is an innately

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[139] Sandra Sherman refers to Defoe's 'narrative transvestism' in his depiction of 'Credit as a woman...enacting through the unsettling turns of her sex life Defoe's parlous connection to narrative honesty'. *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, p. 193.

[140] In private law the widow was a *feme sole*. 'The *feme sole* enjoyed for the most part, the same rights and responsibilities as did men. She owned property and chattels, which she could bequeath by will. She made contracts; she sued and was sued'. Greenberg, p. 172.

hybrid figure. She symbolically unites feminine virtue with masculine 'desire' by being in business on the one hand and sexually 'pure' on the other. Her inability to reproduce becomes her ability to be productive and influential in business. In this sense, in *Robinson Crusoe*, the mother and the widow explicitly mark a different valuing of the "feminine" in relation to trade discourse. It was a revaluing which presaged changes to women's lives, which were just beginning to be debated, and which would lead to a feminist movement founded on access to equal rights to men. In this sense, Defoe's construction of *Robinson Crusoe* complements his advocacy of women's rights. That is to say, both Crusoe and the figures of the independent woman emerge from these gendered negotiations of identity and value.

Chapter Three

Female Virtue, Disguise and Transformation: The Veil Works Both Ways

...orthodox Christian virtue as a humanised, sexually desirable young female is a surprisingly provocative metaphor...

Ronald Paulson, *The Beautiful, the Novel and the Strange*

Introduction

Penelope Aubin was the first woman writer to produce castaway stories after the style of *Robinson Crusoe*.[1] She was a popular writer, producing seven novels between 1721 and 1728, most of which achieved a second edition in their first year.[2] This chapter focuses on three of these novels which feature shipwreck and castaway themes with female protagonists. *The Strange Adventures of Count de Vinevil*, (1721)[3], *The Noble Slaves*, (1722)[4], and *The Life of Charlotta Du Pont*, (1723)[5]

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[1] Penelope Aubin, b.1685 - d.1731. Although she was about twenty four years younger than Defoe, she died in the same year. Paula Backsheider states that 'Aubin seems to have seen the originality of *Robinson Crusoe* more clearly than her contemporaries'. *Daniel Defoe: Ambition and Innovation*, University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, 1986, p. 225.

[2] Cheryl Turner, *Living By the Pen*, Routledge, London, 1992, p. 50.

[3] Full title of 1721 edition: *The Strange Adventures of the Count de Vinevil And his Family. Being an Account of what happen'd to them whilst they resided in Constantinople. And of Mademoiselle Ardelisa, his Daughter's being shipwreck'd on the Uninhabited Isle of Delos, in her return to France, with Violetta, a Venetian Lady, the Captain of the Ship, a Priest, and five sailors. The manner of their living there, and strange deliverance by the arrival of a ship commanded by Violetta's father. Ardelisa's Entertainment at Venice, and safe return to France.* Garland pub., New York, 1973. Referred to in the text and footnotes as *Count de Vinevil.*

[4] Full title of 1722 edition. *The Noble Slaves: or, The Lives and Adventures of Two Lords and Two Ladies, who were shipwreck'd and cast upon a desolate Island near the East-Indies, in the year 1710. The Manner of their living there: The surprizing Discoveries they made, and strange Deliverance thence. How in their return to Europe they were taken by two Algerine Pirates near the Straits of Gilbratar. Of the Slavery they endured in Barbary; and of their meeting there were several Persons of Quality, who were likewise Slaves. Of their escaping thence, and safe arrival in their respective Countries, Venice, Spain, and France, in the Year 1718. With many extraordinary Accidents that befel some of them afterwards. Being a History full of most remarkable Events.* Referred to in the text and footnotes as *The Noble Slaves.*

[5] Full title of 1723 edition. *Life of Charlotta Du Pont, An English Lady; Taken from her own Memoirs. Giving an account how she was trepann'd by her stepmother to Virginia, how the ship was taken by some Madagascar pirates, and retaken by a Spanish man of war. Of her marriage in the Spanish West-Indies, and adventures while she resided there, with her return to England. And the history of her several gentleman and ladies whom she met withal in her travels; some of whom had been slaves in Barbary, and others cast on shore by shipwreck on the barbarous coasts up the great river Oroonoko: with their escape thence, and safe return to France and Spain. A history that contains the greatest variety of events that ever was publish'd.* Referred to in the text and footnotes as *Charlotta Du Pont.* All three texts were reproduced in a collected edition in 1739 with a

were produced in the five years after *Robinson Crusoe*. Aubin was one of the few female picaresque writers of the period and has been acknowledged for her originality in combining the romance and travel genres.[6] In these three texts, Aubin creates a moral allegory based on her female protagonists' protection of their virtue.[7] Each protagonist is rewarded by being reunited with her lover and with wealth. Aubin's emphasis on the compatibility of virtue and wealth makes her work similar to *Robinson Crusoe* and different in emphasis from the work of Evans.

Aubin's narratives have been described as having 'thematic as well as circumstantial resemblances' to *Robinson Crusoe*.[8] William H. McBurney refers to Aubin's narratives as 'pure Defoesque' and calls her 'the most productive imitator of Defoe's works'.[9] Both her narratives and *Robinson Crusoe* 'emphasise filial disobedience, explore the manifestations of Providence in the human world, and endorse the economic rewards of virtue'.[10] Her borrowings from *Robinson Crusoe* are distinctive, and include a figure that has 'a strange fashioned Straw-Hat upon his head'[11] and another that has 'bear skins ty'd about his legs with twigs; a strange fur cap on his head'.[12] McBurney states that Aubin's borrowings from Defoe include not only specific details but devices such as 'catastrophe caused by disobedience of parental will', 'moral digression', and 'general resemblances of

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preface alleged to be by Samuel Richardson, author of *Pamela*. See Wolfgang Zach, 'Mrs. Aubin and Richardson's Earliest Literary Manifesto (1739)', *English Studies*, no. 62, 1981.

[6] B. J. MacCarthy, *The Female Pen: Women Writers, 1621-1744*, University of Cork, Cork, 1946, p. 254. The *Dictionary of Literary Biography* [DLB], vol. 39, describes her as combining the 'narrative strains' of Haywood and Defoe. p. 10.

[7] The use of 'morality' to refer to sexual behaviour came about in the late 17th century. Alasdair MacIntyre argues that in the period 1630-1850 '"morality" became the name for that particular sphere in which rules of conduct...are allowed a cultural space of their own.' *After Virtue: a study in moral theory*, University of Notre Dame, London, 1981, pp. 37-38.

[8] DLB, vol. 39, p. 13.

[9] William H. McBurney, 'Mrs Penelope Aubin and the Early Eighteenth Century English Novel', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, no. 20, May, 1957, pp. 254-6

[10] DLB vol. 39, p. 13.

[11] *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. 149.

[12] Ibid, p. 158.

style and structure'.[13] However, as I will discuss, Aubin's female protagonists do not disobey their fathers, rather, as in *Martha Rattenberg* they are castaway after their father's absence or death. The *Dictionary of Literary Biography* (DLB) suggests that Aubin's borrowings from *Robinson Crusoe* border on plagiarism. I am not concerned with this charge, rather that it indicates a level of use of *Robinson Crusoe* which is compatible with her extensive use of disguise.

Aubin uses *Robinson Crusoe* to vouch for the moral truth of her work. As she states in the preface to *Count de Vinevil*:

> As for the Truth of what this narrative contains, since *Robinson Cruso* [sic] has been so well receiv'd, which is more improbable, I know no reason why this should be thought a Fiction.[14]

A way to understand this quotation is that Aubin is using *Robinson Crusoe* as a cover for her own artifice. In this sense, *Robinson Crusoe*, or more broadly, the travel genre and castaway narrative, both disguise and guarantee the truth of her work. Mary Anne Schofield argues that Aubin is 'masking her moral tale in the deceptive guise of an adventure story and romance'.[15] However, Schofield does not account for why the romance and travel genres are her choice of disguise or, why Aubin should produce female castaway narratives. In this chapter, I argue that the castaway narrative allows Aubin to depict moral values as "feminine" and to link this with social mobility and the gaining of wealth. The image of a distant island in foreign and dangerous seas, where the protagonists are isolated, but where they also gain strength by reconsidering their values, serves her dual purpose well. The land/water, foreign/domestic (England) oppositions emphasise a geographic, as well as moral, opposition between external and internal states. That is, the imagery applies to individuals as well as to England itself. Such rhetoric is complemented by her use of disguise in a "corrupt" world. In her work,

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[13] McBurney, p. 258-259.

[14] *Count de Vinevil*, p. 6.

[15] Mary Anne Schofield, *Masking and Unmasking the Female Mind: Disguising Romances in Feminine Fictions*, University of Delaware Press, Newark, 1990, p. 37.

internal virtue combats external corruption and redemption results in real and symbolic marriages of material interest and virtue.

Her work is important because she uses both Catholic and Protestant figures as symbols of powerlessness and artifice. As well as producing fiction and poetry, Aubin translated and edited other works and preached in public as a Catholic in London.[16] It has been suggested that one of her parents was a Huguenot, that is, a Protestant.[17] Aubin, by virtue of her gender and religion, would have been aware of the negative representations of the feminine and of Catholicism. I suggest that she uses the female castaway narrative to revalue these negative representations.[18] Her focus on religion may also have been motivated by her social circumstances and pecuniary interests as a woman writer. In this sense, Aubin's narratives combine the ideal (Christian morality) with the material (Aubin's need to earn money). The necessity to combine moral ideals and material interest was one of the "problems" faced by both Defoe and Evans. When Aubin brings together the romance with the traveller's tale, she associates wealth (which Evans associated negatively with romance) with "truth" and virtue. In her work, wealth is associated with all that is feminine, Christian and virtuous. Aubin's moral justification of her role as a women writer was necessary in the period. In the decades 1730 to 1750 'for women to appear in print was improper either

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[16] Roger B. Dooley, 'Penelope Aubin: Forgotten Catholic Novelist', *Renascence*, 11, Winter 1959, p. 67. Apart from the seven narratives, the DLB lists Aubin as author of three published odes and one play; editor of a moral treatise and translator of four other texts. Her work was produced posthumously in three volumes in 1739 and editions of three of her narratives were published in the 1970s. It is pointed out that four of these novels, two translations and the edited moral treatise were produced in two years. William H. McBurney quotes the *Universal Spectator* (16 Aug 1729) on her activity as a lay preacher, p. 245.

[17] DLB, p. 11. The DLB suggests that Aubin's family may have moved to England in the Huguenot migration from France in 1685. Huguenots were French Protestants and the mass diaspora of Huguenots occurred after the Edict of Nantes, which protected them from discrimination, was withdrawn. The incongruity of her family background with the evidence of her Catholicism is not commented on. Some of her characters have mixed Catholic/Protestant religious parentage. For example, Ardelisa in *Count de Vinevil* and two characters from *The Noble Slaves.* Others, such as the French Berlanger in *Charlotta Du Pont* are shown returning to Catholicism. Charlotta's father is a Huguenot and her mother English. The evidence of her Catholicism comes mainly from the writing of Abbè Prevost which is discussed in McBurney.

[18] Jane Spencer comments that at this stage of the century, the novel was still associated with immorality and Aubin's work did much to change this association. *The Rise of the Woman Novelist: from Aphra Behn to Jane Austen,* Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1986, p. 86.

because this made their worth the visible object of admiration, or because it associated them with the "low affair" of commerce.'[19] This context suggests that Aubin's narratives can contribute to understanding the work of gender in the castaway narrative to construct new economic subjectivities in the period.

Aubin's moral and political tales appear as romances which culminate in the regaining of lost wealth. Under cover of the romance and travel tale, Aubin condemns the masculine and powerful as vice-ridden and reverts this situation by associating the feminine and the Christian with power and wealth. As Jerry Beasley notes of Aubin and other female authors of this period: 'the political content and appeal, and sometimes the explicit political value, of a great many of the early stories by women, has not been sufficiently noticed, even by feminist scholars'.[20] In Aubin's narratives the ideal values which were once associated with the aristocracy, referred to by Aubin as the Court, are now associated with an internal, Christian and feminine state. In this sense, Aubin's narratives are 'anti-romances' which challenged 'the hypocrisy of aristocratic culture by testing it according to its own courtly ideals'.[21]

Ur stories of feminine abduction

In the following brief synopsis of Aubin's three castaway narratives, I focus on the stories of the main characters. Aubin's narratives, organised as a series of first person accounts, are long, repetitive and episodic.[22] Each story is of confinement or imprisonment, transformation and escape. Each character tells his

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[19] Harriet Guest, 'A Double Lustre: Femininity and Sociable Commerce, 1730-60', *Eighteenth century Studies*, vol. 23 no. 4, 1990, p. 483.

[20] Jerry C. Beasley, 'Politics and Moral Idealism: The Achievement of Some Early Women Novelists' in Mary Anne Schofield and Cecilia Macheski, *Fetter'd or Free: British Women Novelists, 1670-1815*, Ohio University Press, Athens, 1986, p. 216.

[21] McKeon, p. 147 dates the tradition of 'anti-romance' back to the fourteenth century. Mary Anne Schofield also terms Aubin's narrative an 'antiromance' saying that 'however, the texts were disjointed, little closure occurred, and they seemed all facade', Schofield, *Masking and Unmasking*, p. 28. This description is consistent with my understanding of Aubin's use of the romance and travel genre as a disguise.

[22] Overall her work averages fifteen chapters, McBurney, p. 255. These three narratives are between 250 and 300 pages long. Defoe was accused of putting religion into his narratives to 'swell the bulk' as writers were paid by the word, on this basis the length of Aubin's narratives suggests a pecuniary interest.

or her own story when they meet the main female protagonist as she travels through her own narrative adventure.[23] In this sense, the virtuous female protagonist is the focus and main organising principle of each narrative. The island is an important place of confinement and conversion as the virtuous are pursued around the world by their enemies and by their lovers. The island is mirrored by other places of confinement, such as huts, caves and prisons, in other parts of the narrative. The episodic narrative and the repetition of images gives a sense of an ongoing struggle for survival and the need to transform values.[24] Through the pursuit of the female protagonists, feminine virtue is shown to be valuable and in high demand.

The first narrative, *Charlotta Du Pont*, is framed as an autobiography. Charlotta is thirteen, an 'innocent young virgin'.[25] She is 'an English lady' and 'beautiful and ingenious'.[26] Charlotta's story is that she was drugged and tricked on to a ship bound for Virginia by her step-mother, Dorinda.[27] Dorinda previously worked as a prostitute and pretended to be a widow in order to marry Charlotta's father. Later in the narrative, Dorinda's own daughter tells of the seduction which led to her mother becoming a prostitute. Charlotta's father is a Protestant who left France for England so as to 'enjoy his religion without molestation'.[28] Charlotta's mother, who Charlotta was named for, died when she was five. On board ship, Charlotta falls in love with Berlanger, a wealthy merchant and friend of her father.

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[23] Aubin clearly understands variety to be an important aspect of the pleasure of reading. As such her work meets Addison's definition of 'novel' in that they provide, 'Variety, where the Mind is every Instant called off to something new, and the Attention not suffered to Dwell too long, and waste itself on any particular'. Paulson, p. 49. For Aubin the stories' variety is underlined by their sameness, that is they all repeat the same moral tale of the triumph of virtue.

[24] I agree with Schofield that there is a lack of closure which occurs due to the serial nature of the narratives and suggest that this complements the sense of ongoing survival. Unlike Defoe and Evans, it could also refer to a collective female problem rather than an individual one. Schofield's comment that the narratives are all facade concurs with the idea that Aubin uses the romance and travel genres as a disguise. Schofield, *Masking and Unmasking*, p. 28.

[25] *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. 29.

[26] Ibid, p. 3.

[27] I have focussed on those narratives which depict literal island castaways; Aubin's narratives also feature otherwise isolated female figures, such as Madame de Beaumont who with her daughter, lived in a cave in Wales. *The Life of Madame de Beaumont* (1721)

[28] The implication is that he left in the Huguenot expulsion. *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. 2.

He has been tricked out of his fortune. Pirates capture their ship and when the pirate captain tries to seduce Charlotta by disguising himself as Berlanger; she stabs him with a hair pin.[29] The ship is then taken by a Spanish trading ship. The Spanish captain also falls in love with Charlotta and tricks Berlanger onto a French ship so that he can have her to himself. The ship goes to an island to undertake repairs and subsequently, the ship goes down in a storm. Charlotta, the captain and some of the crew are saved. On the island, they meet a black Prince, Domingo, his Spanish "wife" and their, 'Molotto' (sic), child hiding in a cave. Previously, Domingo was a slave to his "wife's" father. When they are rescued, the two couples formally marry. Charlotta marries the Spanish captain because she is compromised by being with him on the island. Fortunately for Charlotta, he turns out to be a nobleman who fought for the Catholic King James II.[30] They settle in St. Domingo where the Protestant Charlotta converts to Catholicism. Charlotta has a child but it dies after birth. Meanwhile, Berlanger is in prison. He escapes and is carried up the River Oroonoko where he is captured by 'Indians'.[31] He escapes, again in disguise.[32] Before the captain dies, he tells his father that Berlanger is a Huguenot (like Charlotta's father) and must not marry Charlotta. She now has a daughter and a son. His father dies, but his friends will not part with her children. She leaves them and marries Berlanger. She remains a Catholic although 'a Protestant at heart'.[33] On their return home, they rescue Charlotta's father from the debtor's prison. Dorinda has died 'a horrible death'.[34] Berlanger and Charlotta reclaim Berlanger's fortune.

In *The Noble Slaves*[35], the ten year old Spaniard Teresa is 'admired by all the men and envied by all the women'.[36] The story is told to the author by 'a West

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[29] Ibid, p. 47.

[30] Ibid, p. 40. King James II was the deposed Catholic King who fled to France in 1688.

[31] Ibid, p. 143.

[32] Ibid, p. 127.

[33] Ibid, p. 100.

[34] Ibid, p. 263.

[35] This text has been compared to Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko, The Royal Slave*, (1688), 'a powerful subversive commentary upon some of the most controversial political issues that were swirling about at

Indies Sea captain'. Teresa's father takes her to Mexico because he is refused a position by the King of Spain. A few years later, Teresa is castaway after a storm capsizes her pleasure boat and she is carried out to sea. She is rescued by her black servant, Domingo, who carries her on his back to a nearby island. This action is similar to the servant Diego's rescue of Elvira in *Alexander Vendchurch*. The island, like Crusoe's, is near the River Oroonoko. The two are helped by a castaway 'Indian' family, the father of whom is 'a Crusoe-like figure'[37]: 'an old Indian man dressed in beasts Skins, a Hat of Canes, and Sandals of Wood upon his feet'.[38] In a significant revision of the biblical story, on a walk in the woods, Teresa resists Domingo's seduction and he dies from eating a strange pear. Teresa then meets Emilia who is reunited with her lover, another castaway. Emilia was tricked on board a ship to Canada by her lover's father and her 'evil' aunt. Her lover invested his inheritance in the East India Company in order to follow her. He is saved from drowning by clinging to his treasure chest. Like Crusoe, they live on goats until more provisions arrive on the shore. Teresa's admirer, Don Lopez, son of the Governor of Mexico, is then castaway on the island.

They are all rescued after they say Christian prayers in a pagan temple. The pagan god (who speaks French) is thereby destroyed. This leads to the discovery of a 'Mahometan' nobleman and his wife, Maria, a Christian slave. The nobleman says that when they met, Maria was thirteen and described herself as a virtuous Christian.[39] She converted him to Catholicism and they escaped from the Emperor who wanted Maria as his mistress. In order to get away, Maria tore out her eyes and he ran away in the disguise of a slave. Before his conversion the nobleman had a harem in which he states 'five women of great beauty served my

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the time of its composition and publication: the maladministration of king and government leaders, their violations of the people's trust, their undermining of the ideals of public virtue'. Beasley in Schofield and Macheski, *Fetter'd or Free*, p. 222.

[36] *The Noble Slaves*, p. 2.

[37] DLB, vol. 39, p. 13.

[38] *The Noble Slaves*, p. 4.

[39] Ibid, p. 28.

pleasures'.[40] The main protagonist, Teresa, marries Don Lopez on the island, but their rescue ship is taken by pirates and they are separated. Teresa, who is now pregnant, and Emilia are imprisoned in a harem. They stab their potential sexual attackers and escape in disguise. Meanwhile Teresa's father has died leaving her a vast estate.[41] The couple are reunited and return home where Teresa has a child.

In *Count de Vinevil*, the shipwreck is one of a series of trials which occur due to exposure to the 'corrupt' regime of the 'Turks and Infidels'. Ardelisa is French and her narrative begins when her father, a Count, is 'neglected by his Sovereign' and enters trade. Ardelisa is promised in marriage to the Count of Longueville, an orphan, who her father 'look'd on as his own son', and who is an heir in his own right.[42] When the three arrive in Turkey, to participate in trade, Ardelisa is pursued by 'a lustful *Turk*'.[43] In the ensuing escape and defence of Ardelisa, her father is killed. She is then separated from Longueville, whom she marries before he leaves to get help. Ardelisa and her servants adopt various disguises, as men and as 'Moors', but are eventually taken prisoner.[44] In a harem, Ardelisa meets Violetta, who is also 'noble' and has been forced to become a Turkish nobleman's mistress. The two women adopt disguises and escape. They receive help from a Catholic hermit and find a ship. After escaping from pirates, they are shipwrecked with a ship's captain, a priest and five sailors for five months. Eventually, Ardelisa is reunited with Longueville. Before they reunite she asks the priest to tell Longueville that she is dead in order to test the constancy of his feelings for her.

Aubin's narratives have a uniformity of style and many common themes, a characteristic which has led to them being named 'Ur-stories of feminine abduction'.[45] In all the narratives, after many incidents, the loved suitors or

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[40] Ibid, p. 26.

[41] Ibid, p. 40.

[42] *Count de Vinevil*, pp. 11-13.

[43] Ibid, p. 18. It is important to point out that Aubin's portrayal of the danger of Turkey, although fanciful, was less so in the period. McBurney states that a news article in 1721 reported that 280 English captives released from Morocco marched to St Paul's in London to give thanks. McBurney, p. 257.

[44] *Count de Vinevil*, pp. 41, 42, 47, 62.

[45] Schofield, *Masking and Unmasking*, p. 35.

husbands rejoin the female protagonists and eventually the couples are given their inheritance and return home. In each of the narratives, the female protagonist is castaway as part of a series of incidents which occur once she has lost the protection of her father.[46] Each of the 'noble' fathers have or has had wealth and status. The absence or death of the father is a defining feature of all the castaway narratives I have so far considered. As Raymond Hilliard argues:

> Typically, the father in eighteenth century stories...is delinquent or incapacitated, ...in Augustinian terms, there is a failure of the "will,"...a failure of a partially emblematic character whose double function should be to uphold social or religious standards and to prohibit the fulfilment of wishes which violate them.[47]

For Aubin, Defoe and Evans, the state of being castaway is also preceded by a rejected, powerless, absent or dead mother.[48] All of the mothers die when Aubin's protagonists are young and some of the protagonists are named for their absent mothers. This suggests that, given their own exemplary moral characters, they are named for their mothers as female figures of virtue, a symbolic value for which they now have responsibility.[49] This tradition continues in the naming of the protagonists' own children. The protagonists begin their voyages as virgins and those that marry at the point of separation from their fathers are immediately separated from their husbands or lovers. Their ages range from twelve to fourteen years old when they are shipwrecked. As I have shown, for Evans, the protagonists' vulnerability is both sexual and financial and this is also the case in Aubin's narratives. Evans' texts propose that there is a social crisis because financial speculation is affecting the security of the patriarchal system of inheritance. Aubin's texts also suggest this, with the important difference that in her narratives, inheritances are regained.

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[46] Stone states that in the Early Modern period the majority of children 'were bereaved of at least one parent before they were fully adult. Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800.* Weidenfeld & Nicholson, London, 1977, p. 58. See also Hilliard, pp. 359-60.

[47] Hilliard, p. 360.

[48] High mortality rates provide the necessary 'realism' of Aubin's narratives, 'the family itself was a loose association of transients, constantly broken up by the death of parents or children or the early departure of children from home.' Stone, p. 81.

[49] The continuity of an idealised 'tradition' is emphasised in the use of naming. Charlotta is named for her mother. *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. 3. At the end of *Count de Vinevil* the two female protagonists have a daughter and a son, each named for one of their parents. p. 138.

One of the most important differences between Aubin's narratives and *Robinson Crusoe* is that the young girls who are shipwrecked are not, like Crusoe, sinners in need of redemption.[50] These shipwrecked figures are described as female, pure, good and virtuous, shipwrecked through no direct fault of their own. They are also, as in *Martha Rattenberg*, shipwrecked as an effect of the loss of masculine protection, a vulnerability made complete by the deaths of their mothers. The loss of masculine protection and feminine guidance shows the young women to be threatened as they circulate in public spaces in which Christian values are not recognised. On this basis, Aubin's texts argue the need for disguise. Aubin's main protagonists adopt different appearances in order to survive in non-Christian spaces. To be disguised as a female Turkish slave was a favourite of Aubin's and as Turks were 'Infidels', it implied that female virtue was a slave to masculine vice.[51] The female protagonists also disguise themselves as men. In *Count de Vinevil*, Ardelisa survives by covering her 'fatal face' and disguising herself in 'the Habit of a Man.'[52] In *Charlotta Du Pont*, the women are imprisoned in a 'Seraglio' where they escape by dressing as 'Eunuchs'.[53] Aubin humorously writes: 'it would be the safest disguise we could put on'.[54] In all the texts, in the absence of patriarchal protection, brought about by vice, the young, female protagonists defend their own virtue. [55] As well as using strategies of disguise, they stab, jab, wound and sometimes kill their attackers.[56]

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[50] Richetti points out that Aubin's heroines are not depicted as fighting against their own desires as Haywood's heroines are. He suggests that Aubin's version of *Robinson Crusoe* may be due to her incompetence as an interpreter. *Popular Fiction Before Richardson*, p. 222. The evidence of a tradition of regendering *Robinson Crusoe* suggests this explanation is inadequate.

[51] In *Count de Vinevil*, a Catholic priest disguises himself as a Turk and the heroine and her lover are separated by a 'vile Infidel'. See discussion, McBurney, pp. 251-2.

[52] *Count de Vinevil*, p. 40.

[53] *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. 145.

[54] Ibid, p. 145.

[55] The autonomy of romantic love as against arranged marriages was a theme of the Evans narratives. The father is typically absent in Aubin's narratives and the protagonists are often not able to ask permission to marry, although the father's approval has usually been indicated beforehand. This was not common among nobility and would appear to be part of Aubin's construction of the loss of authority of the nobility through their lack of virtue. It also may have suggested a trend toward the increasing autonomy of young people. Stone, p. 186.

[56] *The Noble Slaves*, pp. 48-49; *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. 35 and pp. 48-49.

In Aubin's work, virtue is characterised as an internal, feminine, valuable and Christian space. This is so whether the virtuous protagonists are male or female, 'foreign' or English, or whether such as space is within a society, a human being, or a geographic landscape. The rhetoric is of a multi-layered disguise. For example, in *Charlotta Du Pont*, when the black Prince and his white wife are first discovered, they are hiding inside a cave, inside a bear skin.[57] The man is depicted as jealous and so hides the woman from public view. The man is eventually revealed to be a prince and says:

> tho' my outside is black and distasteful, I fear to your eyes, yet my soul is as noble and lovely as your own. I was born a prince, and free; tho' chance made me a slave, and the barbarous chieftains bought and sold me, yet my mind they could never subdue.[58]

This is a story of multi-level concealment and protection of virtue: inside a cave, inside a bear skin, inside black skin. The woman herself is virtue, hidden in the cave, as the man's prize possession. Their "mulatto" child is the outcome of masculine nobility and feminine virtue.[59] The arrival of the other 'noble' and 'virtuous' castaways and a priest allow the two to marry and eventually they leave the island, and resume their social status and wealth. In this anecdote a marriage

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[57] *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. 59. Animals skins in literature are often used in the period as 'mediators of social transformation'. McKeon, p. 148.

[58] *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. 62. The character is strongly reminiscent of Behn's *Oroonoko* which Beasley describes as a narrative which 'almost allegorically projects the lately emerged political ideal of individual worth on a black man'. As in Aubin's narratives, Beasley finds that Oroonoko is not a literal denunciation of the slave trade. Instead, it is a look at 'the consequences in individual human suffering' caused by corruption. Beasley, p. 222. Beasley also discusses Manley, author of *The New Atalantis* as making 'insistent reference to the ideal of female virtue' Virtue which is 'synonymous with Toryism, and wickedness with the Whig leaders who control the government.' Her novels he states 'associate perfect and beauteous womanhood with ideals of order and public morality'. p. 223. The major difference, of course, between Aubin and Manley is Manley's novels make explicit criticisms of public figures of the day. As such, Manley exploits the 'fable' of beleaguered female virtue while Aubin exploits it by expounding it. Haywood also is included by Beasley as producing narratives which 'reinforced conventional ideals of the virtuous society by locating and then exposing the apparent sources of corruption in the government itself. p. 225. Haywood's narratives although 'anti-Walpole fictions' are also 'fantastic satire'. p. 226. It is Haywood's *Love in Excess* that is the rival to *Robinson Crusoe* as that decade's most popular narrative. Beasley represents the narrative as directly critical of the Whig government of the day, 'She projected archetypal figures of good and evil locked in a moral conflict already familiar to her readers from their own experience in a real world of embattled idealism. p. 227.

[59] This presentation of identity as composite layers is similar to that in Defoe's poem, *The True Born Englishman*, with the significant difference that, in the poem, Defoe does not evoke an essential virtue within the subject.

of black and white skin produces a new and ideal identity which reconciles apparent opposites. In this depiction the oppositions include Christian and 'Mahometan', freedom and captivity, nature (animal-skin) and society. The depiction complements my reading of the mirroring of Friday and Crusoe, which produces an identity different from either "subject" in isolation.

Aubin uses disguise to reduce the significance of appearance, as well as alter it. In particular, this reduces the ability of appearance to show what is true and what is false. Her work converts appearances as a strategy of survival.[60] In her work, what appears as evil can be changed to appear as good; what appears as 'heathen' can be changed to 'Christian'. Such disguises enable circulation and survival.[61] The hidden spaces which disguise protects are symbolically virtuous places such as the island, where redemption or revaluation is achieved. Such places are depicted as feminine.

Disguise and "Feminine" Transformation

Aubin evokes virtue as representing a set of values which are pure, feminine, Christian, noble and ultimately essential to the successful reproduction of a virtuous class of people. Metaphorically, she depicts these values as a young and beautiful female deprived of masculine protection and at risk of violation. As Lloyd Davies says of virginity in relation to the Victorian period:

> while set up to be a subjected body, the virginal also affords a social identity under the guise of which apparently fixed social myths and institutions may be questioned, revised, or even evaded. The veil works both ways.[62]

In Aubin's work, the depiction of virtue as virginity is never literal and can be used, for example, to describe the virtue of a married woman. In *The Noble Slaves*, Teresa becomes pregnant and is then separated again from her husband. In a harem, her potential "seducer" describes her as virginal:

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[60] Schofield argues that 'Under the artisan of these minor women writers, the romance genre is transformed into a documen of female assertion, woman, and writer'. *Masking and Unmasking*, p. 17.

[61] Aubin's use of disguise is discussed in detail by Schofield, *Masking and Unmasking*.

[62] Davis, p. 15. Lloyd Davis affirms the possibility of understanding virginity as a Christian and symbolic reference to the transformation of values in the edited collection, *Virginal Sexuality and textuality in Victorian England*, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1993.

> Teresa's Youth, and the charming Innocence that blooms in Virgins Faces at fourteen which she had not lost by being a Wife [and 'big with Child' [63]] wonderfully struck him.[64]

Wives remain virgins in Aubin's polemic because of their moral virtue. At the end of the narrative, the husband or marriage appears to guarantee the protection of that virtue.[65] As the above anecdote indicates, the protection offered by actual and symbolic marriage does not preclude the possibility that the heroine may have to defend her virtue again. The episodic style of the narrative also indicates that such defence will continue to be necessary. It is relevant to understanding Aubin's imagery that the hymen in the period referred to both marriage and membrane. This complements Aubin's texts in which the sense is of marriage as a symbol which unites meanings and protects virginity. In her work, virginity also suggests disguise in the sense of the hymen as a symbolic and protective veil. Aubin's text uses both marriage and disguise to unite the virtuous protagonists, as well as to unite aesthetics and morality, virtue and wealth. This sense of unity is evident later in the century when, according to the OED, in 1789: 'The existence of the hymen becomes a collateral confirmation of the same opinion.' In the seventeenth century, virginity was also a metaphor for 'the autonomous liberal self'.[66] Depicted as such a physical space, actual and symbolic marriage provided an appearance of unity between inside and outside states.

Virtue as a chaste or virginal space is, for both Defoe and Aubin, a space of strength and transformation.[67] Although in the text both men and women can be

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[63] *The Noble Slaves*, p. 41.

[64] Ibid, p. 45. In *Count de Vinevil* Ardelisa is married to her father's ward and immediately afterwards the father is killed and the pair separated.

[65] Rogers, 'The Enclosure of Virginity', p. 238. Relevant OED meanings for hymen in this period are 1) The god of marriage represented by a young man carrying a torch and a veil. 2) Marriage 3) Wedding song 4) Membrane, 'Hymen is a circular folding of the inner membrane of the vagina. (1704).

[66] Rogers suggests that, 'The liberal image of the virginity finds perhaps its most fascinating consequence in its capacity to represent the newly formulated ideal of liberal individualism...the antimarital figure of virginity provided the image for privacy par excellence'. He suggests that the female was 'a figurative embodiment of the private realm itself'. Rogers, 'The Enclosure of Virginity', p. 238.

[67] Celibacy itself functioned as an image of strength in different circumstances, periods and places. Rogers discusses the 'elevation of the sustained life of virginity to a moral ideal' for men in the period of the English Revolution. Rogers, 'The Enclosure of Virginity', p. 229.

virtuous, for Aubin, virtue itself is a powerful female s[illegible]ce that must be protected.[68] In Aubin's work, this is evident in the success of the virtuous young heroines in overcoming masculine vice, as well as in the virginal, enclosed spaces in which redemption occurs. Redemption or transformation occurs in the texts, not only in convents and monasteries (which also feature as places of imprisonment) but in caves, huts, and of course, on the island. These places, although some are arguably conventional and Christian, are also symbolically female and sexual when depicted within these narratives of threatened sexual violation. On this basis, Aubin's island is a transitory mental, social and physical space which reflects the female protagonists' transition from vulnerable, unprotected puberty to marriage. The island is a pure and virtuous state where values are transformed in order to realign virtue with wealth.

As in the other castaway narratives, the launching of the female protagonist on her journey across the ocean signifies a sense of freedom from the old order. On the island, away from society, the virtuous protagonists learn to value what is essential to their survival, before returning to their previous comfort. In *Count de Vinevil*, for example, a hut becomes a 'Tarpaulin palace' and castaways are described as sleeping 'as if they had lain in Palaces on Beds of Down.'[69] In *Charlotta Du Pont*, 'two Ladies' are described as 'better pleas'd to eat scraps...than dwell in a Fine Palace, and sleep on beds of down with infamy.'[70] Because the protagonists do survive, their essential virtue and nobility is confirmed. Once this revaluing has occurred, as in *Robinson Crusoe*, rewards immediately follow in the form of luxury goods which relieve their basic subsistence.[71]

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[68] April London mentions that Eliza Haywood's *Philidore and Placentia* (1927) also features a desert island scene. However, in the Haywood narrative 'amorous passion is given precedence over the defensive manoeuvres for preservation'. 'Placing the Female: The Metonymic Garden in Amatory and Pious Narrative, 1700-1740' in Schofield and Macheski, *Fetter'd or Free: British Women Novelists, 1670-1815*, 1986, p. 11.

[69] *Count de Vinevil*, p. 97.

[70] *Charlotta Du Pont*, p.161.

[71] *The Noble Slaves*, p. 39.

In these texts, the island is not an idyll or a utopia, however, nor is it a threatening place of violence. It is where the castaways have 'no enemies to fear, no inhuman Turks to murder or enslave us; we may sleep in Security.'[72] Crusoe's island was a place where he too slept soundly.[73] For Aubin, the island is a place where lovers reunite in 'Paradice' [sic], although it is also a place which is experienced as 'desolate'.[74] For Aubin, it is also a place of safety and confinement. This reflects her theme of the redemptive powers of isolation necessary in a world which is corrupt, due to the effects of increased wealth and luxury.[75] For example, a hermit living among tombs states that he would 'rather sleep and eat amongst the Dead, than live luxuriously amongst Infidels.'[76] In Aubin's narratives, islands and other places of "deprivation" such as prison and the 'Desart'[77] are places where that which is negative is transformed. These are places which are retired to after one experiences loss or when a sin has been committed. They are places of safety and concealment when danger threatens.[78] They can either be freely chosen retreats or places of imprisonment. The recuperative powers of these spaces have the effect of turning powerlessness into a strength. In *Charlotta du Pont*, for instance, one man states to his fellow prisoner:

> Consider how many brave Men have perish'd for want abroad, and how many pious Persons have retreated to dismal Caves and Desarts, and left all the Delights of this Life, to enjoy that Quiet and Repose which we may here possess'[79]

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[72] *Count de Vinevil*, p. 97.

[73] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 94.

[74] *The Noble Slaves*, p. 21. In *Charlotta Du Pont* a female figure is deliberately abducted to an uninhabited island to force her into marriage. p. 62

[75] Schofield states of Aubin's protagonists that ' they suffer the torments of isolation and persecution.'. *Fetter'd and Free*, p. 230.

[76] *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. 148.

[77] Richetti describes Aubin's use of such tropes as 'a bower of virtue...a freely chosen retreat from a vile world'. *Popular Fiction Before Richardson*, p. 221.

[78] Isolation as a chosen retreat features strongly in Aubin's work. See such hermit figures in *Charlotta Du Pont* , p. 91 and p. 150; and in *The Noble Slaves*, p. 21 and p. 30. Places of retreat are also places of imprisonment and in *Charlotta Du Pont* they include monasteries; convents, p. 50; huts, p. 65; in 'a cavern in a rock' p. 57; in a hut or 'Cottage made of a few Boards and Branches', p. 62.

[79] *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. 118.

John Richetti writing about Aubin's characters, argues that 'Mrs Aubin will always make their retreat a deliberate rejection of the world or a self imposed penitential exile'. He argues that her work is a 'counter statement' to the depiction of 'Crusoe's internal struggle between acceptance of the penitential fitness of his situation and his daemonic energy to survive and escape'.[80] However, it must be remembered that before his desire for conversation, Crusoe comes to accept his situation.[81] For Aubin, Defoe and Evans, the island is a transitory space where values are established which enable a successful return to public life with their preferred identities confirmed.

Once the values of Aubin's protagonists are transformed from an association with wealth to that of virtue for its own sake, then each can be rewarded with wealth. The shores of Aubin's islands wash up figures who are saved from drowning by clinging to their 'Treasure' chests.[82] 'Treasure' is also the term Aubin uses for 'virginity'. In *The Noble Slaves,* the dying Domingo (Teresa's black slave) comments 'May no other rob you of that Treasure which I no longer can protect'.[83] Wealth is now validated by its association with female virtue and with virginity. The location of 'Treasure' in the bodies of her female protagonists effectively combines wealth, virginity and power.[84] Wealth and female survival are therefore equated. Conversely, the ever present threat of sexual assault is synonymous with the threat of the loss of power.

Conversion and Corruption

When Aubin uses the feminine as a space of transformation of masculine vice, she establishes an association of wealth with corruption and then changes it

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[80] Richetti, *Popular Fiction Before Richardson,* pp. 221-2.

[81] *Robinson Crusoe,* p. 148.

[82] *The Noble Slaves,* p. 22.

[83] In the late seventeenth century virginity is analogous to gold, the comment is made, 'Maidenheads are as scarce as our mill'd half crowns'. Peters, 'The Novelty', p. 175.

[84] The connecting of chastity with power has a long history. Aristophanes suggested that 'The withholding of sexual favours is a woman's only source of power of men' quoted by Stone, p. 636. Stone links 'pre-chastity' to 'the degree of social hierarchy and property rights' which he understands as 'a bargaining chip.'

to associate wealth with religious conversion. In this sense, conversion and corruption are opposed yet aligned and both are transformed by the association. Aubin, like Evans, associates vice with masculine corruption and the related pursuits of pleasure, wealth and status. When Aubin refers to the Hanoverian Court for taking 'Pleasures this Town and our dull island can ill afford',[85] the 'pleasure' is presented in terms of profit and loss. Using the language of accounting, which marks all of the castaway narratives considered so far, she warns that 'extravagant gaming' cannot continue unless 'our private Credit outlives the Publick'.[86] This, of course, appears to oppose the view, held by Mandeville and Defoe, that private vice reaps public benefit. I suggest, however, that her prefaces disguise other intentions.

For Aubin, 'private credit' is virtue, understood as feminine. Her rhetoric is similar to that used by Defoe in his depiction of the tradesman's credit as equivalent to 'the virtue of a Lady'.[87] In this sense, it is feasible that Aubin, like Defoe, had material rather than moral intentions. Nonetheless, her texts emphasise that wealth or pleasure must not be valued for its own sake. For example, when in *The Noble Slaves*, Teresa's pleasure boat containing herself and her slave Domingo is blown out to sea, the result is shipwreck and the state of being castaway.[88] Teresa is the only child of her widowed and noble father. A judgement on pleasure taken for its own sake and the danger of circulating in public is also inferred in *Charlotta Du Pont* when a woman dies from smallpox because she has attended the Opera.[89] In a wry comment on having the "wrong" values (in this instance, ambition), the narrator also observes that Charlotta's father is taken at his

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[85] *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. vi.

[86] *The Noble Slaves*, p. xii.

[87] CET, vol. I, p. 188. McBurney points out that Bettesworth, one of the syndicate which published Aubin, also had a share in 'Defoe's King of Pirates' and that this may have indicated that Aubin 'was deliberately groomed as a rival to that "complete English tradesman"'. p. 252.

[88] *The Noble Slaves*, p. 3-6. The theme of disaster occurring in relation to a ride in a pleasure boat occurs again in *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. 151.

[89] *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. 134.

word when he 'resolv'd to sacrifice all he had, rather than not place her nobly in the world'.[90]

Corruption is exemplified in Aubin's description of the man who caused Dorinda, Charlotta's step-mother, to enter prostitution. In this depiction, the typical threat to feminine sexual virtue is masculine, deceitful, lacking Christian values and unfaithful:

> had he not been a hardened Wretch, and one of those heroick Rakes that have been vers'd in every Vice this famous City can instruct our Youth in, he would have relented; but he was a complete Gentleman, had the eloquent Tongue of a Lawyer, was deceitful as a Courtier, had no more Religion than Honesty, was handsome, leud, and inconstant [91]

Just as she compared her work profitably to *Robinson Crusoe*, so Aubin uses such images of vice to declare her own honesty. For example, in her preface to *Charlotta Du Pont*, she states: 'as I am neither a Statesman, Courtier, or Modern Great Man or Lady, I cannot break my word without blushing, having kept it as a living thing that is sacred'.[92] Aubin's association of virtue with the feminine and vice with the masculine is consistent with McKeon's argument that in the period, 'the detachment of "honor as virtue" from male aristocratic honor, ... simultaneously encourage[d] its relocation not only in commoners but in women'.[93]

Aubin's texts suggest that corruption severs the connection between words and their true meanings and this in turn has disastrous moral and social effects. Disguise itself is an example of one such problematic deceit. For example, when Dorinda works as a prostitute she unknowingly has sex with her uncle who doesn't recognise her and doesn't give his name. On the same basis, Aubin's fictions are deceitful and she can be understood to be blaming her own use of fiction and disguise on masculine vice. Her response to this dilemma is to appear to convert words back to their "true" meanings. Such a conversion requires artifice

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[90] *The Noble Slaves*, p. 3.

[91] *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. 8. The description is of Dorinda's lover who cheated her when she was thirteen causing her to enter prostitution.

[92] *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. vi.

[93] McKeon, p. 159.

which, in Aubin's terms, is not a corruption of the truth, because it ultimately serves virtue. Aubin's conversion of meanings is most evident in her presentation of nobles as slaves, the state which results from the corruption of values. In the preface to *The Noble Slaves*, Aubin associates the threat of slavery, one of the major threats in all three narratives, with threats to the 'constitution'. She states, 'our excellent constitution will always keep us rich and free, and it must be our own faults if we are enslaved, or impoverished'.[94] In an Edenic scene in the woods, it is the figure of man as slave that presents the first biblical threat to virtue. Teresa warns Domingo not to eat a fruit 'not unlike a European pear'; he ignores her and dies. This is a significant reversal of Eve tempting Adam to eat the apple. The death of Domingo is the problem of masculine desire creating a society in which feminine virtue is ignored. The anecdote shows a man reduced to slavery as a result of his own vice. The threat is presented as sexual when Domingo confesses that, 'I brought you to the woods with thoughts my Soul now sinks at'.[95] Afterwards, Teresa reflects that she has had a lucky escape, for Domingo was 'her father's slave'.[96]

Aubin's narratives have been interpreted as 'xenophobic', as well as advocating anti-slavery.[97] This apparent contradiction actually complements Aubin's rhetoric of opposites and of inverse power.[98] While she represents Turkish figures as 'Infidels', she also has a character in *Charlotta Du Pont* say, 'we ought to visit those countries to convert, not buy our fellow creatures, to enslave and use them as if we were devils, or they not men.'[99] Domingo's dying speech in *The Noble Slaves* contributes to understanding Aubin's texts in terms of anti-slavery. He says, 'I was born free as you and thought I might with Honour ask your love, since

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[94] *The Noble Slaves* p. vii.

[95] Ibid, p. 6.

[96] Ibid, p. 7.

[97] McBurney, p. 247.

[98] McBurney states that 'Mrs Aubin lends a crusading fervour to her anti-slavery propaganda'. p. 257.

[99] *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. 64.

Heaven singl'd me out to save your life.'[100] In expecting to be rewarded for his virtuous act of saving Teresa, Domingo is not acting virtuously and is therefore a symbolic as well as an actual slave.[101] As William McBurney points out, Aubin names both of her black slave figures 'Domingo'.[102] Rather than understanding her work as either anti-slavery or racist, her generic naming suggests that her main interest was with the symbolic state of powerlessness that slavery conveyed to the English reader.[103] As in all the cases of symbolism I have cited, however, the symbolic weight of meaning was achieved by referral to recognisable circumstances.[104] In this period, for example, Catholicism influenced and was influenced by the missionary activities of its priests. Aubin's rhetoric of conversion was therefore highly complimentary to such conversion and colonising activities.[105]

Aubin's conversion of meanings reflects most closely the work of Shaftesbury, whose deism would have otherwise made his work antithetical to Aubin as deism tended to be 'anti-Popery'.[106] Nonetheless, for Shaftesbury, as for

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[100] *The Noble Slaves*, p. 6.

[101] Aubin could be acknowledging Shaftesbury's 'primary moral insight' that 'an action is not virtuous if influenced by thoughts of reward.' Paulson, p. 2. The rewards that accrue to her main protagonists and to herself as author can therefore be singled out as virtue accruing wealth on its own terms.

[102] McBurney, p. 254.

[103] Aubin's approach draws on a readily available rhetoric of foreign trade and corruption in order to revalue virtue as a non-material and not always visible value. Her work is allegory and her use of terms symbolic. This is confirmed by a confusion of geographical references, nationalities (a 'Japanese' family are described as 'Indians' who speak Chinese); and the generic naming of characters. McBurney notes that Aubin has no sense of geography. p. 254.

[104] There is a resonance for example between Aubin's depiction of the 'heathenous Turks' and the banning of Catholicism in Turkey in 1722. Charles A. Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans*, Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 155.

[105] Aubin's narratives feature several missionary figures who help the threatened protagonists escape. *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. 205. Sheils argues that from the late seventeenth century the missionary work of the priests led to a new emphasis on 'living the devout life fully in the world'; a commitment to conversion and a compassion for the poor. W. J. Sheils, 'Catholicism from the Reformation to the Relief Acts' in Sheridan Gilley and W. J. Sheils, eds., *A History of Religion in Britain: practice and belief from pre-Roman times to the present*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1994, p. 249. Aubin's emphasis on circulation of her virtuous figures in the world; on the conversion of non-Catholics and non-Christians; and the valuing of non-material wealth, all suggest she is working within an accepted Catholic theological framework as it was envisaged in the period.

[106] In *Count de Vinevil* Aubin complains that in society, 'Religious Treaties grow mouldy on the Booksellers shelves' and 'Pope's Homer' is neglected in favour of Toland, p. 5. Toland was a deist and as such anti-Popery, 'Popery' he said 'in reality is nothing else but the Clergy's assuming a right to think

Aubin, 'the idea of wealth had to be inverted so that it no longer referred, as in everyday usage, to material riches but referred instead to wisdom'.[107] Aubin's aesthetics, or specifically, her interest in the transformation of words is important to understanding her use of the castaway narrative.

The corruption upon which Aubin's narrative rely would have been evident to the reader of her narratives as the period itself was a time of general chaos and immorality in government:

> The visible moral shabbiness of important officials and, above all, the threat posed by the continued exercise of arbitrary power: these facts of the period's politics produced outrage and, if the varied public forms of expression may be trusted, a genuine cultural anxiety over the weakening moral structure of a perplexingly changing society. In all kinds of popular art - including countless ballads and satirical prints - the men governing the land are projected as agents of chaos instead of stable order, as treacherous servants of villainous impulses in human nature - avarice, cruelty, power-lust, promiscuity, deviousness, and dishonesty - rather than the instruments of goodness they should be.[108]

Aubin's focus on corruption was similar to the Tories, particularly, to the Viscount Bolingbroke who criticised 'a corrupt and venal society'.[109] Her advocacy of a virtuous 'nobility' was a generally held Opposition view. Shaftesbury, for example argued that:

> a virtuous administration, and an equal and just distribution of rewards and punishments, is of the highest service...by making virtue to be apparently the interest of everyone.[110]

In the period 'parliament itself, a governing institution, [was]... seen to be both a corrupting agency and an object of corruption'.[111] Aubin, as a Catholic, may also have been a Jacobite, one who 'dreamed...of a second restoration of the

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for the Laity.', Paulson, p. 7. However, as Roger Emerson points out, Catholicism and deism were seen as equally subversive and sometimes linked.' Roger Emerson, *English Deism 1670-1755: An Enlightenment Challenge to Orthodoxy*, PhD Thesis, 1962, p. 9.

[107] Lawrence E. Klein, *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness: Moral Discourse and Cultural Politeness in Early Eighteenth-Century England*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994, p. 87.

[108] Beasley, p. 218.

[109] Isaac Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and his circle: the politics of nostalgia in the age of Walpole*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1968, p. viii.

[110] Paulson, pp. 2-3.

[111] Nicholson, p. 2.

traditional order symbolised...by the Stuart monarchy'.[112] In any case, her criticisms of a 'Court' who 'supinely sit [and] reflect on the Great things they have done for the publick Good, and the mighty Toils they have sustained from sultry Days and sleepless Nights, unravelling the horrid Plot', would have resonated with the Jacobites who were critical of government. Her depiction of beautiful, female Catholic protagonists may also have suggested to her readers the Stuart cause. In political iconography in the period, 'the Beautiful [had] Stuart associations - the female nation, the debauched Britannia...the gender of the last Stuarts, Mary and Anne'.[113] All this suggests that there was an available political and critical context for the views that Aubin's texts conveyed.

Gendered and inverted landscapes

For Aubin, corruption was not only a specific charge against a particular government, but also indicated that the wrong people and values were being recognised. For example, in *The Noble Slaves,* Teresa's father is refused a position in the Spanish Court. In *Count de Vinevil,* Ardelisa's father '[was] neglected by his Sovereign...whilst other less worthy were put into Places of Trust and Power'.[114] Aubin's rhetoric of conversion allowed her to evoke and invert inside and outside, internal and external states. As such, in her work the English court is "disguised" as the corrupt nobility of a non-Christian country. The alignment suggested that the corruption of the English court was related to the effect of luxury and foreign trade:

> The Grand Signor knowing that Money is able to procure all earthly things, uses his Grandees likes a cat's paw, to beggar his people, and then sacrifices them to appease his Populace's fury, and fills his own coffers with their wealth.[115]

Aubin presents outside as foreign, dangerous and masculine and inside as domestic, feminine, vulnerable. That is, what is external (foreign countries and

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[112] Beasley, p. 218.

[113] Paulson, p. 50.

[114] *Count de Vinevil,* p. 10.

[115] *The Noble Slaves,* p. x.

trade) not only threatens what is internal (England and its constitution), but also stands in for it. In *The Noble Slaves*, this non-Christian state is a place where:

> the Monarch gives loose to his Passions and thinks it no crime to keep as many Women for his use, as his lustful Appetite excites him to like; and his Favourites, Ministers of State, and Governors, who always follow their Master's example, imitate his way of living. This caused our beautiful Heroines to suffer such Trials.[116]

This is a "world upside down" in which the English and Christian court is presented as conducting itself like a court in a non-Christian country. The implication is that powerful people have become slaves to wealth.

For Aubin, as for Defoe and Evans, the shipwreck and castaway themes allow her to represent the desire for luxury and wealth as values which literally threaten the body and endanger the authenticity of subject and nation. In Aubin's work, the female 'Treasure' that must be protected was also the English constitution. Such fears were echoed by Jonathan Swift, a High Churchman and Tory, in relation to the rise of the 'Monied Men' whose '... Principal and Interest it was to corrupt our Manners, blind our Understandings, drain our Wealth, and in Time destroy our Constitution both in Church and State'.[117] The threat to virtue comes not only from corrupt courtiers, but from masculine, non-Christian figures, who are described as 'sinners', because they are 'Mahometans' or Muslims. As such in *Count de Vinevil*, when Ardelisa arrives with her father in Turkey to trade, she is considered to be sexually under threat and advised to stay inside. Her future husband says to her, 'as you prize your Vertue, and my Life, show not yourself in publick'.[118] Ardelisa in her father's house is a feminine space threatened by foreign trade: 'so many Bashaws and Persons of Quality, came to her Father's to traffic in European Goods, that she could not avoid sometimes being seen.'[119] She 'now kept in her Chamber, and would no more be seen by

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[116] Ibid, p. x.

[117] Quoted by Nicholson, p. 57.

[118] This emphasis indicates the centrality of internal virtue to masculine virtue. *Count de Vinevil*, p. 18; also *The Noble Slaves*, p. 30.

[119] *Count de Vinevil*, p. 20.

strangers.'[120] The location of Ardelisa's virtue within her father's house suggests that the threatened body of the heroine symbolised the vulnerability of public and civic life, represented by the Constitution. This conveys the sense that feminine and Christian virtue had no power in public life.

In Aubin's work, the negative description of the 'Infidel' is a reference to the vice of English society, which she compares with an older more virtuous England. Although Aubin works in the form of the amatory novel, her work enacts a shift from the individual victimisation of the female heroine to 'a social reflex directed against the heroine as exemplar of piety and virginity'.[121] This 'localised danger' for the female protagonist is conveyed as an 'endemic catastrophe' for society.[122] Aubin's romances are appropriate to the representation of an heroic England; she states that she looks forward to a time when:

> the English would be again (as they were heretofore) remarkable for Vertue and Bravery, and our Nobility make themselves distinguish'd from the Crowd, by shining Qualities, for which their Ancestors became so honour'd, and for Reward of which, obtain'd those Titles they inherit.[123]

This quotation, which evokes nostalgia and flattery, points out that nobility's 'Titles' and rewards were gained for a 'Vertue and Bravery' which they no longer exhibit. Aubin here is imagining an ideal nobility against which she criticises the current regime. It must be noted that the third of her narratives, *Charlotta Du Pont*, does not feature a literally 'noble' daughter as its major protagonist. This depiction suggests that she is not concerned with literally defending the aristocracy, but is rather using the rhetoric of defence to revalue what it means to be noble, before paradoxically bestowing on the virtuous the usual material benefits.

By giving her main characters 'noble' qualities, Aubin promotes the qualities of fidelity, loyalty and love over riches. For instance, in *Count de Vinevil*, she has several virtuous male characters declare in favour of love and, in a criticism of foreign trade and expansion, over gaining 'the Empire of the Eastern

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[120] Ibid, p. 22-23.

[121] London, p. 112.

[122] Ibid, p. 112.

[123] *Count de Vinevil*, Preface, p. 7.

World'.[124] These associations lead Aubin to appear to criticise foreign trade and the pursuit of wealth for its own sake. In *Count de Vinevil*, Ardelisa's father enters trade when his estate becomes 'impoverished', after he is 'neglected by his Sovereign'.[125] He says that in going into trade, 'I am going amongst Mahometans to avoid the seeing of those, who have been my Vassals, lord it over me'.[126] His decision leads to his death and to the shipwreck of Ardelisa. Ardelisa's father, in his role as "upholder of values", can be understood as a figure symbolic of masculine public *virtù* and as such, neglected by the Court. In the narrative, both daughter and adopted son question their father's wisdom in trading in Constantinople. Trade, for Aubin, is clearly only a problem when it is not accompanied by virtue. As such, one of her masculine, noble and virtuous characters invests his money in 'the India Company' to fund his honourable pursuit of a virtuous female.[127]

For Aubin, the corruption caused by trade produces artifice and artifice indicates the way to wealth. As Defoe's work indicates, such a sleight of hand is not unusual in the period. Christopher Hill states that, at this time, the peerage were 'participating or benefiting from England's greatest capitalist industry, its money invested in the Bank of England'. Quoting Hill's views, McKeon concludes that 'It was through the wholesale adoption of anti-aristocratic elements [financial speculation and trade] that the aristocracy persisted in England'.[128] The common thread here is that of survival. As the adopted son says to Ardelisa, 'what will our Father's Ambition and Resentments cost both him and us?' and Ardelisa replies, '...who shall protect me from the Infidels Insolence'.[129]

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[124] Ibid, p. 14. Sentiment repeated on p. 124. Laura Brown points out that the renunciation of 'Empire' was common in 'late heroic drama'. *Ends of Empire*, p. 38

[125] *Count de Vinevil*, p. 10.

[126] Ibid, p. 13.

[127] *The Noble Slaves*, p. 13.

[128] Quoted by McKeon, p. 167.

[129] *Count de Vinevil*, p. 19.

Aubin's narratives are engaged in a process which has been termed 'the feminisation of ideas about public virtue'.[130] Ruth Bloch identifies the tradition of literary sentimentalism as significant in producing virtue as feminine in early 18th century America. She finds that in this tradition females were:

> valued for a kind of self-discipline. The sentimental conception of female virtue was closely linked to chastity and the maintenance of simple tastes and manners. Often the word virtue was used simply to mean chastity, and in the didactic literature of the period women were repeatedly enjoined to protect their sexual purity.[131]

This tradition is evidently informing the narratives I have discussed so far, but the representation of moral and civic virtue as feminine differs from most analyses of the early eighteenth century. Public virtue in this period is nearly always presented by critics as a masculine phenomena.[132] Richetti is one of the few who presents Aubin as evidence of a 'new persona', although he limits her significance by describing her as a 'lady novelist' and 'moral censor of the age'.[133] The moral role which is attributed to women later in the century has only recently been understood as a basis for power in this earlier period. It is still rarely discussed as a factor in relation to female public and social mobility, in either symbolic or actual terms. Aubin's rhetoric, which converted both the meanings of words and places, may have allowed the eighteenth century reader to see these female protagonists as symbolically negotiating the perils of English public space. Schofield states that *The Noble Slaves* is startlingly negative in the picture it presents

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[130] Ruth Bloch uses this phrase with reference to America and England. It is demonstrably applicable to the early eighteenth century narratives under discussion in this thesis. Ruth H. Bloch, 'The Gendered Meanings of Virtue in Revolutionary America' in Barbara Laslett, Johanna Brenner, and Yesim Arat, (eds.) *Rethinking the Political: gender, resistance and the State,* University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1995, p. 27.

[131] Bloch, p. 24. The character of Martha Rattenberg is the most explicit female figure to embody feminine virtue as a kind of self-discipline.

[132] Pocock defines virtue as deriving from "vir" which means man. In Rome, it referred to 'the quality of personality that commanded good fortune and...that dealt effectively and nobly with whatever fortune might send'. In Greece it referred to 'the power by which an individual or group acted effectively in a civic context'. *The Machiavellian Moment*, p. 37. Pocock does not address the representation of virtue, in the early eighteenth century, as a threatened and pursued female. However, in *Virtue, Commerce, and History*, he says that 'With the rise of commerce and culture, new forms of social relationship emerged and virtue in the antique sense became archaic'. p. 114.

[133] Richetti, *Popular Fiction Before Richardson*, p. 229.

of woman's fate in the early eighteenth century. In this sense, although the actual lives of Aubin's eighteenth century female readers would have enabled a reading of Aubin's narratives as being "about" social and sexual danger, this is clearly not the limit of the narratives' interest.[134]

Constancy and infidelity of meaning

In her work, Aubin sets up an tension between constancy and inconstancy. In Aubin's narratives, men corrupt and women convert. In contrast to this depiction, her stated ideal is perfect resemblance, between male and female virtuous protagonists, between words and things, between religion and aesthetics and between inner and outer states. On the one hand, the ideal is that words and their meanings reflect Christian values, and on the other hand, inconsistency of appearance and reality is necessary to survival. The crisis of constancy and fidelity which Aubin's narratives express is linked to the issue of the 'fidelity of narrative' discussed by McKeon.[135] Aubin states that she expects opposition to her work to come from 'Atheists, Wits, Letchers, young Debauchees [who will] all join to decry it'. The basis for their opposition will be that:

> It is all a fiction, a Cant they cry, Virtue's a bugbear, Religion's a Cheat though at the same time they are jealous of their wives, mistresses and daughters and ready to fight about Principles and Opinions.[136]

In this quotation, fiction is a sign of deceit. Her response to this audience is to say that there is a hypocrisy between what they say and what they do.[137] This criticism emphasises the problematic mismatch of words and meanings and refers to her narrative attempts to revive 'constancy'. When Aubin appealed to the precedent and cover offered by *Robinson Crusoe*, she referred to 'the Truth of what this narrative [*Count de Vinevil*] contains'.[138] Her phrasing refers to the "truth"

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[134] Schofield states that *The Noble Slaves* is startlingly negative in the picture it presents of the woman's fate in the early eighteenth century. However, I suggest this reading underplays the symbolism of virtue in relation to trade and wealth. Schofield, *Masking and Unmasking*, p. 38.

[135] McKeon, pp. 120-1. See the introduction to this thesis.

[136] *The Noble Slaves*, Preface, p. xi.

[137] Ibid.

[138] *Count de Vinevil* p. iiv.

content of her narratives and as such her narrative is like the virtuous female protagonist whose mind was 'well suited to the cabinet that contained it'.[139] That is, ideally, internal truth must match external appearance. Correspondingly, the narrative of sexual pursuit suggests that the reader must desire to violate the text in order to discover its 'truth', while the narrative must be disguised to prevent such an act. Aubin's rhetoric is a play on Defoe's sexual metaphor of the writer as whore. In Aubin's narratives, the pursuit of "truth" is the sexual pursuit of female virtue. The analogy of sexual pursuit retains Defoe's sexual imagery while apparently replacing his commercial interest with moral interest.

Constancy, for Aubin, is the state in which ideal meanings are "married" to words and appearances to values.[140] Her protagonists' marriages are therefore ideal matches.[141] For example, in *Count de Vinevil*, Ardelisa is described as:

> tall and slender, fair as Venus, her Eyes blue and shining, her Face oval, with Features and an Air so sweet and lovely...she was Humble, Generous, Unaffected, yet Learned, Wise, Modest, and Prudent above her Years or her Sex; Gay in Conversation, but by nature thoughtful; had all the softness of a woman with all the Constancy and Courage of a Hero: In fine, her Soul was capable of everything that was Noble.[142]

Her future husband, 'a young gentleman of extraordinary Parts and Beauty', is described in similar terms:

> he was tall delicately shaped, his eyes black and sparkling, and every feature was sweet, yet majestick; he was learned beyond his years, and his soul was full of truth and ingenuity; he had received from the best education the best principles,

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[139] Ibid, p. 13.

[140] Aubin's analogy of the complementarity of masculine and feminine in the symbol and practice of marriage is reflected in the changing views of marriage in the period in which, according to Stone, marriage is coming to be understood as a 'contract [of] mutual rights and obligations'. p. 240.

[141] Marriage is both symbolic and actual in that material benefits will arise from the joining of correct values. Stone comments that in the period marriage among 'the landed classes' had the objectives of continuity of the male line, the preservation intact of private property, and the acquisition through marriage of further property. Stone, p. 42 and p. 135. The marriages of Aubin's protagonists are similarly represented as having the potential to gain all this, even though the marriages are typically between those most disadvantaged by the system, that is younger sons, orphans and fatherless daughters. In *The Noble Slaves* one of the protagonists, a young French woman, has an 'evil aunt' who will not let her inherit her fortune 'the estate was entailed and could not pass to a daughter'. As in the Evans narratives disinheritance was a common Aubin fear. *The Noble Slaves*, p. 33. Entailing an estate establishes provisions to ensure that certain people will inherit outside the immediate family. It was commonly used to direct inheritance to male heirs when the inheriting family member was female.

[142] *Count de Vinevil*, p. 13.

> was Brave, Generous, Affable, Constant, and incapable of anything that was base and mean.[143]

In these depictions, ethics and aesthetics reflect each other. Aubin's ideal of a coincidence of internal values and external appearance most closely resembles that of Shaftesbury for whom virtue was defined as a love of order and beauty. In her insistence on the equivalence of beauty and virtue, Aubin's work reflects Shaftesbury's ideal that 'virtue and beauty are as homologous as the moral and aesthetic senses'.[144] Aubin's ideal is a 'Sympathy of Souls' achieved through actual and symbolic marriage.[145] Likewise, each protagonist is a "marriage" of external beauty and internal virtue. When they marry, they not only match each other, but inside values match external appearances. It is a mirroring which recalls Defoe's use of Crusoe and Friday and Evans' marriage of James and Martha. The result is a singularity in which differences are made to disappear (albeit, as a result of artifice and disguise).

The desire for masculine and feminine to "marry" is most clearly stated in *Count de Vinevil*, on the occasion of being shipwrecked:

> In all our affections and Friendships here with one another, we should have a future view, and manifest that love, by being instrumental to another's eternal welfare...Our wise Creator inclin'd us to love one another so tenderly, with a more glorious Design than that of only propagating Mankind; it was to render us useful to each other.[146]

The pragmatism of the statement is by now familiar. Her insistence that the lives of men and women are about more than the literal reproduction of the human race also complements her production of a society which reflects certain values. For example, in the text, Ardelisa's future husband was adopted as her father's son. Adoption and marriage within the same family secures patrilineal descent not only by social, but by contrived "natural" means. As an orphan, the son is isolated

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[143] Ibid, p. 11. That the youth is given the value of constancy contradicts the idea that Aubin 'charges only women with the responsibility of sexual morality'. Jean B, Kern, 'The Fallen Woman, from the Perspective of Five Early Eighteenth-Century Women Novelists', *Studies in 18th Century Culture*, vol. 10, 1981, p. 456. Rather I argue that moral virtue itself is gendered female.

[144] Paulson, p. 3.

[145] *Count de Vinevil* p. 12

[146] Ibid, p. 59.

in society as if on a desert island. His adoption allow him to join other virtuous members so that a noble class of people is represented and "reproduced".

Disinterested desire

It has been said of Aubin that 'she endows her females in particular with a kind of moral energy that foreshadows what the author of *Pamela* and *Clarissa* would achieve with his heroines'.[147] Wolfgang Zach suggests that Aubin's 'high moral and even religious tone' is 'reminiscent' of Richardson's and unusual for her time. He states that her literary aims are 'highly suggestive of Richardson's central tenets',[148] and argues that Richardson wrote the preface to the 1739 collection of Aubin's work, published after her death.[149] He concludes that 'if we regard Richardson as the 'father' of the modern English novel, we may dub Aubin its 'grandmother'.[150] Zach suggests that like Aubin's work, Richardson's *Pamela* was 'Published in order to cultivate the Principles of Virtue and Religion in the Minds of the Youth of both Sexes'.[151] Critics have suggested that Aubin's Catholicism and morality were the probable reason for her exclusion from the *Dunciad* in which Alexander Pope (also Catholic) lampooned other contemporary women writers.[152]

Another way to look at Aubin's depiction of feminine virtue, however, is in relation to representations of the desire for wealth. Aubin's depiction of virtue as a besieged female was a common trope of the period. It is evident in images which focussed on the nature of "desire" in the context of the morality of wealth and pleasure.[153] One set of images defended the desire for wealth by showing that all desire, even for virtue, was interested desire, that is, self-interested. These images

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[147] Beasley, p. 230.

[148] Zach, p. 272.

[149] Ibid, pp. 272-6. The printer Charles Rivington is a strong link between all of the eighteenth century authors mentioned in this thesis. In the last chapter he was mentioned as printer for Evans and of Defoe's *The Complete English Tradesman*. He also published Aubin's collected editions and was 'an intimate friend of Richardson'.

[150] Zach, p. 281.

[151] Ibid, p. 277.

[152] McBurney, p. 245.

[153] Paulson, p. 29.

promoted the Hobbesian view of "man" and were related to Mandeville's argument that material wealth and luxury were profitable and desirable. William Hogarth represented 'Virtue' as a female to show the presence of desire in Shaftesbury's depiction of Hercules choosing Virtue over Pleasure.[154] Joseph Addison presented virtue as a 'beautiful young girl' from the country 'seduced by a bawd'. Henry Fielding produced a feminine and sexualised Virtue which required 'not only dressing and undressing Virtue' but the "embrace" and "pursuit" and "pleasure" of her.[155] Ronald Paulson states that Fielding's argument was that 'virtue has to do with interested relationships', that is, relationships distinguished 'by appetite.[156] Such images satirically showed an 'appetite' for goodness. These depictions give added resonance to Friday as a figure representative of avarice and consumerism. In contrasting images, Christian virtue was depicted as a female to criticise the desire for wealth. For example in *Harlot's Progress* (1731), Hogarth depicted virtue as a Roman Catholic, 'a Jacobite innocent destroyed by the new money men of the rising commercial class'.[157]

Aubin, and later Samuel Richardson, also represented feminine Christian virtue as sexually desirable.[158] However, in contrast to the image of feminine virtue destroyed by wealth, Aubin's protagonists, as in *Robinson Crusoe* and Richardson's *Pamela*, survive and prosper. Aubin's depiction of a beautiful woman pursued and rewarded directly opposes the 'disinterestedness' which defines Shaftesbury's aesthetic, as her work maintains masculine interested desire for the feminine as its central rationale. According to Paulson, Shaftesbury considered that:

> The beautiful female threatened the crucial disinterestedness that he posited as what distinguishes a civic humanist and a man of taste from the vulgar: as a

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[154] Ibid, p. 5 and p. 12

[155] Ibid, p. 121.

[156] Ibid, p. 122.

[157] Ibid, p. 51. Paulson points out that Hogarth's depiction joins spectatorship to voyeurism and makes the female figure 'the object of male desire'.

[158] Paulson is here referring to Henry Fielding's image of virtue in his Champion essay. Fielding's image of Virtue as a young, desirable virgin, according to Paulson, preserves heterosexual male desire.

> property owner he is above considerations of ambition, possession, consumption, and desire, indeed of gender'.[159]

In contrast, Aubin's texts present virtue as feminine and her female protagonists as capable of defending the virtues that Shaftesbury associates with civic humanism. In Aubin's texts, it is the female protagonists who maintain the respectable appearance of disinterested desire.

Aubin's representation of feminine virtue as surviving and successful is achieved in part by identifying the feminine with the ideal. That is, the depiction of Aubin's female figures as disinterested allow her texts to associate the feminine with the equivalent of the "man of taste" that Shaftesbury advocates. Through her resistance, the female defeats all interested desire that is not virtuous. In this way, she transforms herself from a state of powerlessness to a position of strength. Like Evans, Aubin proposes that 'the passions can be controlled by virtue'.[160] Aubin's use of the romance genre allows her to place the feminine at the centre of a narrative of success and survival. Her disassociation of the female from explicit interest in sexual desire makes her virtuous figures comparable to the figure of Crusoe. This disinterestedness is shown as a matter of self-control which results in wealth. In this sense it becomes clearer why the image of virginity was associated with the new 'liberal self' and why it provided a stock of imagery which appealed to Defoe and the satirists of his day.

Aubin presents herself as disinterested. That is, she distanced herself from more salacious writers such as Eliza Haywood by her stated refusal of her printer's request to write:

> [in] a Style careless and loose, as the Custom of the present Age is to live. But I leave that to the other female Authors, my Contemporaries, whose Lives and Writings have I fear, too great a resemblance.[161]

It has been pointed out that Aubin 'cares very little for the precise psychological-physiological symptoms of passion and declines numerous opportunities for

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[159] Ibid, p. 50.

[160] Spencer, p. 88.

[161] *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. vi.

erotico-pathetic fashion'.[162] It is likely that Aubin is referring to writers such as Eliza Haywood when (in *The Noble Slaves)* she describes a Spanish Captain as:

> one of the most beautiful and accomplished Men of his Nation, which I mention out of respect to those unfortunate ladies, whose Vertues are to be the more admired in resisting the passionate Sollicitations of such a Man'.[163]

Importantly, Aubin depicts her females' disinterest as based on moral strength rather than on inclination.[164] She appears to recognise that her readers were likely to be women with a vicarious sexual interest in romance and makes the point that it is not that the female protagonist does not have desire, but that she has the moral strength to resist temptation. Her narratives also assume female desire in that they are clearly indirectly salacious, relying as they do on close encounters with sexual danger. Aubin did not eschew the sexual in her moral rhetoric, but used it to reconcile virtue with wealth. In this sense, in her writing Aubin profits from her association of symbolic feminine virtue with the threatened female, material body. In this way, her work reconciled the material and the ideal. In *Martha Rattenberg,* Evans also used his female protagonists to achieve such a reconciliation.

Aubin's literal and symbolic use of the female body is evident in *The Noble Slaves.* Maria tears out her eyes to preserve her virtue and achieves her release.[165] The act has been understood as a sign of the masochistic self-sacrificing role Aubin outlines for women in her period.[166] However, the image can be also understood with respect to a period which 'more definitively than ever before identifies truth

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[162] Richetti, *Popular Fiction Before Richardson,* p. 220. This point is also made by McBurney, p. 260.

[163] *The Noble Slaves,* p. 45. Aubin may have heard of the Spanish Chief Minister's stay in Scotland in 1719. He was said to have 'such an effect on the female population of Edinburgh that the British Government deemed it advisable to ship [him] to Spain as soon as possible'. No source is given for the information stated by the historian Harcourt Smith in 1943 and quoted in Lawrence Bartlam Smith, *Spain and Britain 1715-1719: The Jacobite issue,* p. 340, fn 183.

[164] Defoe after *Robinson Crusoe* produces *Moll Flanders* who has no problem reconciling all facets of the feminine, (with the important exception of maternity) with the trading culture she lives in.

[165] *The Noble Slaves,* p. 33.

[166] Schofield states, of Maria and others, that the 'the number of tortured women is staggering' and concludes that *The Noble Slaves* is startlingly negative in the picture it presents of the woman's fate in the early decades of the eighteenth century. p. 38. I have tried to make sense of Aubin's texts in more non-literal terms while accepting that the different circumstances of men and women in the early eighteenth century would have given credence to Aubin's work.

with the evidence of the senses'.[167] That is, Maria is a sign of virtue for others which she herself need not see.[168] In other words, being seen and read by others is the "power" of the feminine for Aubin. This reflects the importance of gender to the social construction of identity, as is evident in Defoe's analogy between sexual and trading reputations in *The Complete English Tradesman.*

Pious polemicist?

Aubin has been read as a writer of pious polemic based in part on the knowledge that she was a Catholic orator.[169] More recently, her equally important pragmatic purpose has been pointed out.[170] As Aubin herself stated:

> My Design in writing is to employ my leisure Hours to some Advantage to myself and others; and I shall forbear publishing any work of greater Price and Value than these, till times mend and Money again is plenty in England. Necessity may make Wits, but Authors will be at a loss for Patrons and Subscribers whilst the Nation is Poor.[171]

This claim to be writing for money is then played down as she goes on to say that 'I do not write for Bread...but I am very ambitious to gain the Esteem of those who honour Virtue'.[172]

Information about Aubin comes mainly from her various prefaces, journal items from the period and from her contemporary, the French author, Abbè Prevost.[173] The DLB states that the Abbè remarked that 'the short lived fame of novelty had been sufficiently enduring in Aubin's case to ensure her the highest pleasure of avarice, which is to die in the midst of wealth'.[174] Prevost also stated

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[167] McKeon, p. 127.

[168] London describes Maria as denied subjectivity and defined as an erotic object. p. 13.

[169] See discussion in Richetti, *Popular Fiction Before Richardson.*

[170] Prescott points out that both preaching and writing may have been related to financial survival. Sarah Prescott, 'Penelope Aubin and The Doctrine of Morality: a reassessment of the pious woman novelist', *Women's Writing*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1994.

[171] *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. vi.

[172] Ibid, p. vi. Spelling is inconsistent and both Virtue and Vertue are used by Aubin.

[173] Virginia Blain, Patricia Clements, Virginia Helen, eds., *Feminist Companion to Literature in English*, B. T. Batsford, London, 1990. p. 39.

[174] Abbè Prevost, *Le Pour et Contre*, Paris, 1736, asserts that Aubin died rich, Prescott, fn. 28, p. 111. See also DLB, vol. 39, p. 12.

that Aubin wrote because, towards the end of her life, she was in financial difficulties.[175] Both comments can be understood as part of the moral rhetoric of the era to which Aubin, as a woman writer, would have been particularly subject. Rather than view Aubin as solely an author promoting certain morals or only as an author driven by pecuniary interests, I argue that in her work, the two are inextricable. That is, like the virginity upon which her work is based, Aubin's work can be read, not only as a response to threat, but as a profitable transformation of meanings. In her work, as in the state of virginity, which for Aubin implies an enclosed hidden and valuable space as well as the possibility of a perfect marriage of meanings, 'the veil works both ways'.

Although Aubin was a Catholic, she and most of her protagonists, like Crusoe, had mixed religious and national parentage. Most of her Protestants convert to Catholicism, although this is not uniform.[176] As in the narratives of Defoe and Evans, Aubin uses different backgrounds to bring about a symbolic compromise between opposing value systems. However, Aubin's use of the feminine as a site of transformation is inseparable from the images of Christianity and ultimately Catholicism. Further, her narratives all relate masculine to feminine values through the use of broadly Catholic themes - conversion, retreat, redemption.

It has been said that Aubin's favourable treatment of Catholics was 'a highly unusual attitude in the literature of Georgian England'.[177] When Aubin's contribution to Catholic literature was examined for the Catholic journal *Renascence* in 1959, the author Brian Dooley concluded that:

> Not only do her works contain the only favourably depicted conversions, the only miracle and the only martyr but all her heroes and heroines, except Madame de

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[175] All of these narratives were produced in the last ten years of her life.

[176] Dooley, p. 67. B. J. MacCarthy describes her as 'A staunch Catholic, it was her object to win her readers towards the Catholic point of view'. p. 253. Not all Catholics however are treated complementarily, the Spanish coming off as badly as the Turks. 'It is the nature of Spaniards to be close and very subtle in their designs, very amorous and very vengeful'. *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. 38.

[177] DLB, vol. 39, p. 11.

Beaumont and one other, are active Catholics whose lives are at some point influenced by their faith.[178]

Aubin appears to be like Richardson who taught 'not theological but moral truths'.[179] As Dooley comments: 'Aubin steered clear of any vexed contemporary religious issues and embodied all the most attractive Christian virtues in her Continental Catholics'.[180] As I have indicated, Richardson is said to be influenced by Aubin and he was an author noted for his lack of criticism of Catholics. Dooley states that apart from those depicted in the work of Richardson, Aubin's were the last positive depictions of Catholic priests in novels for fifty years.

It is important to keep in mind that, as with all of Aubin's terms, Catholicism had social as well as symbolic implications. Aubin was part of a minority in England as only 1% of the population were Catholics, and these were potentially aligned with 'Stuart absolutism and the Jacobite cause'.[181] Catholics were legally discriminated against and had been since the mid-fifteenth century. During Aubin's lifetime there were an estimated 60-70,000 Catholics in England and Wales.[182]

In the year of Aubin's birth, 1685, the Catholic James II came to the English throne and subsequently attempted to remove the obstacles facing Catholics in public life. His use of the Royal prerogative brought about a constitutional crisis and he was removed from the throne, retiring to France to mobilise support for his return. As mentioned earlier, one of Aubin's characters fought for James II. William and Mary of Orange, who replaced James, were both Protestant. The resulting Jacobite movement brought Catholics into opposition to the throne. Aubin's critical view of the Court suggests that she may have been a Jacobite. As a group, their influence in society had declined with a now Protestant-dominated

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[178] Dooley, p. 71.

[179] Paulson, p. 129.

[180] Dooley, p. 67.

[181] Ibid, p. 66.

[182] Sheils, p. 248.

Court.[183] Under Protestant reign, Catholics were excluded from the Act of Toleration introduced in 1689 to make the law more liberal with respect to various religious denominations.[184] In 1692, a double land tax was introduced for Catholics and in 1695 they were barred from entering professions.

The castaway narratives of Aubin, Evans and Defoe were published between the Jacobite risings of 1715 and 1745, a period of renewed Jacobite effort and militancy.[185] These military actions failed to restore the son of James II, known as the 'Pretender', to the throne and revived the distrust of Catholics in England. From 1716 onwards Catholic land had to be registered, and from 1753 marriage before a Catholic priest had no force in law.[186] A study of anti-Catholicism in the period has defined such prejudice as 'political distrust; theological disagreement' and popular fear'.[187] Defoe was one of those critical of the way in which Popery was the popular scapegoat for all kinds of social ills:

> 'Tis the universal scare-crow, the hobgoblin, the spectre with which nurses fright the children and entertain the old women all over the country, by which means such horror possesses the minds of the common people about it, that I believe there are 100,000 stout fellows, who would spend the last drop of their blood against popery, that do not know whether it be a man or a horse.[188]

It is possible that the popular condemnation of Popery was more significant to Aubin's work than any direct discrimination Aubin may have experienced. The legal discrimination applied to Catholics would have already affected her, as women had only limited rights to own or inherit property or to enter professions.[189] Aubin may not have experienced direct discrimination since she

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[183] Ibid, p. 248.

[184] Ibid, p. 236.

[185] In 1719 a printer was hung for publishing the claim that the exiled Stuart monarchs were England's true monarchs. Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination*, p. 131.

[186] Sheils, p. 235-7.

[187] Haydon, p. 3.

[188] Quoted in Earle, *The World of Defoe*, p. 34. Earle points out that Defoe does attack Catholics but typically for political reasons. Defoe is, he says, unusual for not hating them as most Protestant writers did. The quotation is from *The Great Law of Subordination considered; or, the Insolence and Unsufferable Behaviour of Servants in England duly enquir'd into.* (1724) Crusoe makes a point of being notably tolerant of all religions.

[189] See Greenberg, 1975.

lived, and for a short time preached, in London and all her books were published there. London was an important centre for Catholic activity and 'The inns of Court, the embassy chapels...provided patronage for priests and opportunities for Catholic gentry to practise their religion.'[190]

It must be considered that, although Aubin was one of the few to represent Catholics in her work, this did not necessarily mean that she wrote solely in the cause of morality or Catholicism. It may have been that the rich associations between Catholicism, the feminine, artifice and oppression, served her depiction of gendered and stereotyped figures of virtue and vice and her conversion of dominant social meanings.[191] As I have indicated, Hogarth, a non-Catholic, also depicted virtue as a young, beautiful, besieged Jacobite. In Aubin's work, powerless and poor slaves oppose powerful and rich nobles, and female Christians oppose masculine, non-Christian vice. In such a rhetoric, the figure of the besieged virtuous Catholic was a useful symbolic device which drew on the popular feeling against 'Popery'. Her possible use of the Catholic as a generic figure of oppression partly explains her complementary depiction of oppressed Protestants in Catholic countries. In *Charlotta Du Pont*, Charlotta states that 'if her father [in law] and family discovered she was a Protestant, she must expect to be hated and slighted'.[192] Similar sentiments are expressed by Charlotta's Protestant father who moves from France to England to escape religious persecution. This plot device may have been a way to get her reader to empathise with Catholics, or with the fate of Christian and female virtue, or with the injustice of poverty. Aubin's multiple disguises prevent access to any ultimate "truth".

Aubin's (and Evans') use of *Robinson Crusoe* may also have been enabled by the common oppression of Catholics and Protestant Dissenters.[193] In her work on

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[190] Sheils, p. 238.

[191] Richetti quotes Northrop Frye: 'each event or incident [is] a manifestation of some underlying unity'; 'That simultaneous unity of plot and theme'; 'her homiletic purpose'. *Popular Fiction Before Richardson*, p. 228.

[192] *Charlotta Du Pont*, p. 75

[193] There is not to ignore their differences, see Haydon, 1993.

Aubin, Sarah Prescott states that the York Buildings where Aubin preached were frequented by a number of dissenting, or non-Conformist, groups.[194] Although generally Dissenters were against 'Popery', Catholics and Dissenters were similarly disadvantaged, which would have been significant for Aubin's allegorical depiction of powerlessness. As Colin Haydon puts it, 'Protestant Dissenters, as well as Papists, were subject to hostile stereotyping'.[195] Historically, both were opposed to the Anglican Church and both were disadvantaged in financial, legal and civic matters. Dissenters' disadvantages arose from the Revolution of 1642-60 (the period immediately preceding Defoe's birth). As Haydon writes,

> Their forbears plunged England into civil war and murdered the King. They had abolished episcopacy [government of the church by bishops], brought down the Church of England, despoiled its places of worship. The 'fanatick sects' and 'mechanick preachers' had worked for a social revolution.[196]

When in Evans' work, Vendchurch pretended to be Spanish, he called himself a 'heretick'. The comment not only suggested religious persecution but also the general state of a castaway figure, alienated from the dominant beliefs of society. In this sense, his 'heretick' status might also have referred to the alienation of the Dissenters in relation to the established High Church,[197] the land-owning gentry and the nobility of the 'Upper state'.[198] The 'heretick' image also occurs in *Robinson Crusoe*. When Crusoe rescues two Spanish prisoners from the Caribs he suggests (like Selkirk) that he has more to fear from them than from the cannibals: 'I had rather be deliver'd up to the Savages, and be devour'd alive than fall into

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[194] Prescott, p. 106.

[195] Haydon, p. 11.

[196] Ibid, p. 246. The "mechanick" preachers referred to tradesmen who were Dissenting preachers, they were equated with women preachers like Aubin: 'When women preach and Cobblers pray, the fiends in hell make holiday', quotation from 1641. Watts, *The Dissenters*, p. 83.

[197] Although after the Hanoverian accession the Low Church, the Whig party dominated ecclesiastic appointments.

[198] Quoted by Haydon, p. 97. Haydon also comments that 'Whigs might denounce Popery whilst praising the Revolution, but the Tories portrayed the Gunpowder Plot as a threat to king, Church, and Parliament, and drew parallels between the dangers from the Papists and those from republican Dissent. p. 263.

the merciless claws of the Priests, and be carried into the *Inquisition'*.[199] He goes on to show, however, that the Spanish Catholics, contrary to their reputation, are 'very civil honest men', an argument which favours Defoe's foreign trading interest. Being Spanish is again shown to be a signifier of trading wealth and success when Crusoe finds 'a great deal of wealth on board' a wrecked Spanish vessel.[200] Defoe treats both French and Spanish characters well, refusing to portray them as villainous Catholics. When he does refer to Catholicism, it is against the priests, a theme familiar from Evans' work. For example, Crusoe comments on Friday's religion that:

> the Policy of making a secret Religion, in order to preserve the Veneration of the People to the Clergy, is not only to be found in the *Roman* but perhaps among all Religions in the World, even among the most brutish and barbarous Savages.[201]

The comparison serves to make Crusoe's beliefs superior in a context that the reader can associate with. It is possible to argue therefore that, for Defoe, Catholics were a sign of problematic foreign wealth on the one hand, and of Christian morality on the other. In this respect, the two images support each other as much as they are apparently in conflict.

Richard Schlatter's study of sermons in England in this period suggests that Aubin's representation of religious oppression would have had common acceptance among a variety of religious denominations. For example, her presentation of outside events bringing about inward change and the unexpected virtues of a mercenary approach was similarly stated by the Protestant preacher Barrow in 1700:

> as God often uses temporal and outward occurrences to produce inward and spiritual effects, so it may happen that those whose first approaches to goodness were mercenary, and out of compliance to others, may by coming within view of it discern it so amiable that they may after love it for itself.[202]

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[199] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 244.

[200] Ibid, p. 192.

[201] Ibid, p. 217.

[202] Barrow, *Of Industry*, 1700 quoted by Richard B. Schlatter, *Social Ideas of Religious Leaders, 1660-1688*, Oxford University Press, London, 1940, p. 114.

It is possible, then, that Aubin's marrying of Catholic protagonists to Protestant Dissenters not only brought together two groups who were equally beleaguered in or by English society, but also represented the symbolic marriage of two different cultures. This is the case in *Martha Rattenberg* when Martha marries the Roman Catholic, James as a compromise with wealth and luxury. Defoe's Moll Flanders, another famously pragmatic character, marries a Roman Catholic, who turns out to be her favourite husband.[203] Defoe's extreme pragmatism in relation to Catholicism is depicted in a cartoon in 1711. He is shown sitting between the Pope and the Devil and the caption reads: 'Here's Daniel, the Pope and the Devil well match'd'.[204] The Devil may have been a reference to his support of Mandeville, whose name was lampooned as 'Man of Evil'. The cartoon referred to the tensions between trade and religion as well as to the common links between Roman Catholicism and trade, artifice and luxury. It also alluded to the common perception that Defoe would work for whoever would pay him.

In her preface to *Count de Vinevil* Aubin complains that in society, 'Religious Treaties grow mouldy on the Booksellers shelves',[205] and 'Pope's Homer' is neglected in favour of Toland.[206] Her comment is not only about the lack of Christian values, but also an observation as to what is being sold and read, that is, about her own material interest. Defoe was criticised by the deist Charles Gildon for putting 'religious and useful reflections' in *Robinson Crusoe* 'to swell the bulk'.[207] The deists disagreed with advocating 'punishments here and now,

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[203] Moll Flanders' favourite husband, the highway robber Jemy, is a Roman Catholic and through him she says, 'I presently learnt to speak favourably of the Romish Church'. *Moll Flanders*, p. 378. In his notes to the text, G. A. Starr states that Jemy was a Lancashire Catholic who were 'objects of official anxiety' and 'popular hostility' because of their Jacobite sympathies. p. 378.

[204] Maximillian E. Novak, *Realism, Myth, and History in Defoe's Fiction*, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1983, p. 14.

[205] *Count de Vinevil*, p. 5.

[206] Ibid, p. 5. Pope was a Roman Catholic and Toland was a deist and as such anti-Popery. Toland said: 'Popery in reality is nothing else but the Clergy's assuming a right to think for the Laity.' Quoted by Paulson, p. 7.

[207] Charles Gildon, *Robinson Crusoe examin'd and criticis'd: or, A new edition of Charles Gildon's famous pamphlet now published with an introduction and explanatory notes together with a note on Gildon's life by P. Dottin*, J.M. Dent, London 1923.

rewards to look forward to in the afterlife (therefore no need of them in this)'.[208] Defoe and Aubin worked against this religious tenet by rewarding their virtuous protagonists handsomely in the materialist present.

The possibility that Aubin's moral concerns matched or covered her pecuniary interests is supported by the artifice of her prefaces. Aubin uses her prefaces to lay claim to her own virtuous intentions and as such, her prefaces praise the virtue of her patrons. Like her female protagonists, the reader and patron to whom Aubin commended her books was female, good and virtuous. In *The Noble Slaves*, she says to her aristocratic 'friend' that her only aim is writing is to 'gain a place in your esteem, especially with my own sex, whose Favour I shall always be proud of: Nor have they a truer friend, than their Humble servant'.[209] In her preface to *Charlotta Du Pont*, Aubin claims an association with the writer Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe who has also been described as a significant forerunner of Richardson.[210] However, critics have shown that Aubin makes a false claim of friendship with her patrons. They point out that Aubin's claims of friendship with at least two of the patrons she names, including Rowe, are disingenuous and that her purpose is to claim respectability for her work.[211] On the basis of this information, Sarah Prescott points out that Aubin's vocation as a preacher has been used all too easily to explain the morality of her narratives when in fact writing and preaching can both be considered as 'theatricality and performance',[212] and

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[208] Paulson, p. 3.

[209] *The Noble Slaves* p. xii.

[210] MacCarthy, p. 286.

[211] In the preface for *Charlotta Du Pont*, Aubin claims a friendship with the religious writer, Elizabeth Rowe. Jane Spencer points out that this claim served as a 'guarantee [of] the religious and virtuous character of any woman writer who could manage to appear associated with her.' As evidence of the disingenuous nature of the claim of friendship Spencer refers to Aubin's writing of Rowe's husband as if he is alive when a friend of Rowe's would have known that he had died some years previously. p. 87. In *The Life and Adventures of Lady Lucy* , Aubin also recommends herself through claiming friendship with the patron's husband when they had been separated some years before. McBurney, p. 256.

[212] Prescott understands Aubin's work as an amalgamation of contesting yet interrelated narratives.' She also cites Prevost from the period as emphasising Aubin's poverty. Prescott, p. 107. Richetti limits Aubin's use of a moral narrative to a 'screen' of respectability in order to sell to a wider audience'. *Popular Fiction Before Richardson*, p. 239. Also, McBurney, p. 245.

both were ways in which to earn money.[213] As such, for a Catholic writer like Aubin it may have been more "Politick" to gain financially by expressing generic, respectable, moral virtue.[214] Given the possibility that a pragmatic sensibility was at work, her prefaces may have been a necessary disguise in a society in which 'worship is [being] replaced by admiration and desire'.[215]

To be a successful writer Aubin faced a similar problem to that of Defoe and Evans. Early eighteenth century authors had to develop strategies to counter 'the absolute aversion of stolid middle class folk or pious Dissenters to fiction presented as such'.[216] She had to both entertain while condemning pleasure and be self-interested without appearing to be so. This meant giving narratives 'moral meaning' as a way to claim 'literal truth'.[217] It also meant disguising moral meaning in an adventure of danger and risk. For Aubin, immorality had to be depicted to evoke morality. In Aubin's work it was certainly the case that 'the abstraction that virginity implies is destroyed by its articulation.'[218]

Conclusion

The romance and travel genres allowed Aubin to base her castaway narratives on sexual desire.[219] The travel genre allowed her to contrast national, racial, sexual and religious values as a way to tell the moral tale of the triumph and importance of virtue. It allowed her to place her female protagonists at the limit and most threatening edge of society. The world external to England is juxtaposed to a critique of the lack of virtue in English society. The genre of romance allowed her (and Evans) to place a gendered morality at the centre of

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[213] The DLB quotes Prevost explaining to his audience that Londoners paid for admission to an oratory. The *Universal Spectator* in 1729 describes her as being one of the most popular. DLB, vol. 39, p. 12.

[214] More appropriate than Eliza Haywood, for example, whose *Love in Excess* was as popular as *Robinson Crusoe* when it was first published in 1719. Beasley, p. 227.

[215] Paulson, p. 31.

[216] Richetti, *Defoe's Narratives*, p. 32.

[217] Ibid, p. 33.

[218] R. Howard Bloch quoted by Davis, p. 217.

[219] The use of 'morality' to refer to sexual behaviour came about in the late seventeenth century. MacIntyre, p. 37. MacIntyre argues that in the period 1630-1850 '"morality" became the name for that particular sphere in which rules of conduct...are allowed a cultural space of their own'. p. 38.

their narratives. That such a gendered morality is more disguised in *Robinson Crusoe* is perhaps evidence of their different projects. Aubin's argument is moral and simple: wealth and status will not produce virtue, but wealth and status will accrue to the virtuous. Her work emulates Defoe's argument, more than it does the work of Evans'. That is, for both Defoe and Aubin, vice produces wealth and the appearance of virtue is the way to access it. Her use of disguise makes it difficult not to accuse Aubin of 'double dealing'.[220] As I have discussed, her work throws up a number of veils and as such, can be likened to her own protagonists who 'contrived a Story together to blind the World'.[221] For example, although Defoe and Aubin appear to be opposed politically, in so far as Aubin espouses a Tory point of view, even here the possibility exists that Aubin may have been simply covering herself.[222] That is, her political allegiance may have been as slippery as Defoe's. Considered as a series of disguises, her narratives, like Defoe's allow her to survive as a writer and remain in circulation.

Aubin writes an allegory of an ideal world and, in doing so, reverses Defoe's pragmatic writing style to produce a romantic tale. Allegory has been characterised as 'an overturning of the sensuous world', a phrase which suggests the overturning of a world perceived by the senses. It is a phrase which appropriately suggests a capsizing, or a shipwreck.[223] In Aubin's work, the feminine is ideal and castaway, shipwrecked by masculine desire. This material world, also a world which is based on material concerns, is then overturned to present an ideal, feminine world. For all three authors, the castaway narrative is used to revalue meanings in order to give authenticity to different identities. These newly formed identities are cobbled together from values marked "masculine"

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[220] Richetti argues that, to the contrary, 'there is very little cause to accuse Mrs Aubin of double-dealing...', p. 220.

[221] *The Noble Slaves*, p. 13

[222] Blaim suggests that Aubin combines making a living with High Tory Patriotism, Artur Blaim, *Failed Dynamics: The English Robinsonade of the Eighteenth Century*, Uniwersytet Marii Curie, Lublin, 1987, p. 39. Aubin wrote an ode to Queen Anne who presided over a Tory government. When Anne died in 1714 the Whigs came into power and were there for the rest of Aubin's life.

[223] Franco Moretti, *The modern epic: the world system from Goethe to Garcia Marquez*, Verso, London, 1996. Trans. Quintin Hoare. p. 79.

and "feminine", taken from popular use and transformed like goods from an offshore shipwreck.

The pleasure of the early eighteenth century castaway narratives comes from the excitement provided by protagonists who are flung from the centre, propelled or pushed by the times in which they live. In the work of Aubin, Evans and Defoe, each protagonist arrives in an enclosed place to convert, transcend or reconcile identity in the face of changing social values. Each journey concerns either social mobility or survival. Through the use of tropes which redefine what is substantial and authentic against that which is insubstantial and invalid, each castaway narrative creates or strengthens a preferred identity and subjectivity. For Evans, a marginal subject-position that benefits, at a distance, from the more mobile and luxurious life that others choose to lead, is endorsed. For the more ambitious Defoe, a new kind of heroic trading figure results, who overturns all traditional senses of social limitations. For Aubin, a subjectivity that draws on the imagery of virginity to combine wealth with virtue, and which criticises masculine power, is established, but only as a romantic ideal. That is, such a powerful female subjectivity must remain disguised behind the bright ideal of a perfect match between words and values. The difference between the three is apparent. Aubin has justified the right to circulate in public at all, while Evans has secured the right to a marginal space which allows for his brand of conformity between moral and material survival. In contrast, Defoe has Crusoe claim the world as his trading universe. In all of these castaway narratives, a particular identity emerges from a space of transformation which is textual, spatial and feminine.

Chapter Four

Barbara Einzig's *A New Fiction* - A Gendered and Judaic Critique

...translation manifests the kinship or relatedness of language.

Walter Benjamin, 'The Task of the Translator', *Illuminations*

In the previous chapters, I have described different ways in which gendered values inform the tensions of the early eighteenth century castaway narrative, most notably, tensions between domestic and foreign trade, trade and finance, gold and paper credit. These were also expressed as tensions between the spoken and written word, frugality and excess, presence and absence and more broadly, the ideal and material worlds. The gendering of this landscape, through references to masculine desire, female virtue, virginity, marriage, inheritance and the patriarchal family gave meaning to the tensions of the early eighteenth century. I have shown that in order to resolve these tensions, identity and morality were restructured in a gendered, spatialised and symbolic terrain. In the late twentieth century narratives I will now consider, similarly gendered binaries construct a literary and linguistic landscape.[1] In this landscape, the female "subject" is presented as both castaway in masculine language and as "rescued" through a textual and feminine transformation.[2] My interest is in the ways in which representations of the feminine are similar to and different from the early period.

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[1] Michelle Le Doeuff points out the long history upon which these binaries are based when she states, 'In the list of Pythagorean oppositions...one finds the following: limit and infinity; unity and multiplicity; masculine and feminine; light and dark; good and evil'. *The Philosophic Imaginary*, trans. Colin Gordon, The Athlone Press, London, 1989, p. 113.

[2] In the first three chapters the feminine referred to the symbolic gendering of values in society. That symbolic language no longer has ready currency and would counter the themes of the twentieth century castaway narratives in that it suggests an inherent feminine nature. However, the three narratives which I am about to discuss construct an opposition to "masculine" modern subjectivity through a variety of means which classify an alternative textuality and ethics as feminine. Importantly, the female "subject" of these texts is never the same as the feminine of the text. I have therefore retained the term feminine as it captures the similar sense in which a textual as well as subjective 'rescue' is being performed in both periods.

In the next three chapters, I discuss Barbara Einzig's *Robinson Crusoe: A New Fiction*, J. M. Coetzee's *Foe* and Jane Gardam's *Crusoe's Daughter*. In these texts, the character and narrative of *Robinson Crusoe* informs a critique of modern subjectivity, presented as inherently masculine, and *Robinson Crusoe* itself provides the means for its own deconstruction. As in the early texts, certain values are described as "feminine" and are used to challenge modern subjectivity depicted as masculine. This is done not entirely to dissipate the modern "subject", but to give authenticity to marginal subject and writing positions. In valorising marginal subjectivities, these texts use similar strategies to those evident in *Robinson Crusoe* and its rewritings, which responded to the dominant values of the early eighteenth century. In that these late twentieth century rewritings reconstruct *Robinson Crusoe* as much as they deconstruct it, the gendered construction of that text is made to resurface.

This chapter concerns Barbara Einzig's *Robinson Crusoe: A New Fiction* (1983).[3] Einzig's work is important to this thesis because she uses *Robinson Crusoe* to articulate her own marginal subject-position as female and Jewish. *A New Fiction* criticises the terms upon which the modern "subject" is based, including a critique of agency, of the concept of the self and of Western bases of knowledge. In this sense, the subject of Einzig's "autobiography" is and is not "Einzig".[4] Her task is similar to that of Defoe, who redefined dominant values in order to represent the socially mobile tradesman. However, because *Robinson Crusoe* signifies for Einzig a site of masculine and Protestant dominance, her text necessarily contrasts with Defoe's approach.

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[3] Barbara Einzig, *Robinson Crusoe: A New Fiction*, Membrane Press, Wisconsin, Brooklyn, 1983 referred to in the footnotes and chapter as *A New Fiction*. The introduction to *A New Fiction* states that this is the first of a number of such fictional critiques of classic texts. After writing this chapter, I received from Barbara Einzig an earlier edition, also in pamphlet form, titled *Robinson Crusoe, A Fiction by Barbara Einzig*, Potes and Poets, New York, 1982. My references are to the 1983 edition.

[4] Although Einzig productively blurs her textual and actual selves, I have distinguished them *where possible* for the sake of clarity. That is, "Einzig" indicates the figure in the text.

Einzig's work is described as 'experimental writing exploring the borderline between poetry and prose fiction'.[5] In *A New Fiction*, she engages with *Robinson Crusoe* through metaphor and intertextuality. Her text is a short prose piece published by an alternative press.[6] In its paper edition, it resembles a chap book, the periodical form in which *Robinson Crusoe* was later serialised. *A New Fiction* was also published as an electronic text and until recently was available on the Internet.[7] Like the chap book itself, which is said to have encouraged the episodic form of the novel, the Internet and the electronic text are significant to Einzig's critique of subjectivity and narrative.

Einzig (1951-) is an American born author who has produced prize winning short fiction and poetry, as well as translations from Russian. She works as an editor in the publishing industry and her publicity material states that she is university educated and 'twice divorced with one child'.[8] The description effectively evokes the difference in women's lives between the society which produced *A New Fiction* and, for example, Aubin's society. In spite of these differences, Aubin and Einzig both rewrite *Robinson Crusoe* through reference to religious and sexual difference. Just as Aubin brought Catholicism into her engagement with *Robinson Crusoe*, so Einzig on the basis of her Hungarian-Jewish background brings Judaism. In her work, she refers to her Jewish family background, to the work of the Jewish theorists, Walter Benjamin and Hannah Arendt, and to the practice of the Kabbalah in order to position herself differently to the modern subjectivity associated with Defoe's text. It is said that 'the most characteristic feature of the Jewish imagination [is] the interpretation and

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[5] New College Poetics Program, San Francisco, 1987. Material supplied by the author, 1997.

[6] The piece is seventeen pages long.

[7] As at 21 November, 1996, the text was available on the Internet at www.thing.net/~grist/l&d/lEinzig2.html. At 1 October 1997 the text was no longer on the Internet. The loss of the text on the Internet interestingly changes the status of the text from one which is widely available to one which is rare and obscure. Because of this, a copy of the text is attached as an appendix to the thesis.

[8] Prizes include the Edward Albee Foundation Fellowship, New York, 1995; New York State Foundation for the Arts Poetry Fellow, 1989; Pushcart Prize in Fiction, 1988; Burckhardt Prize in Literature, University of California, 1972. Paper made available by author, 1997.

rewriting of sacred texts'.[9] In this sense, Einzig's work can be understood as a theoretical, literary, linguistic and theological engagement with *Robinson Crusoe*.

In the text, Judaism works as a contrast to the dominant rational individualism informed by Protestantism. As was the case with Catholicism, Judaism is an identity associated with the feminine and with oppression.[10] Like Aubin, Einzig presents herself as caught between two value systems, presented as masculine and feminine. Because of her investment in the feminine, she develops a critical distance from Judaism through regendering Benjamin's theories.[11] In this sense, *Robinson Crusoe*, Judaism and feminism form a three-way tension within which "Einzig's" identity is shaped and shapes the text. I show that her deconstruction of *Robinson Crusoe* effectively draws on, as well as critiques, the gendered elements which contributed to that text's construction.[12]

Barbara Einzig's *Robinson Crusoe: A New Fiction*

A New Fiction is presented in relation to *Robinson Crusoe* through its title, the use of its language, its structure, incidents within the text, its use of capitalised nouns and an explanatory preface. In the preface, for example, the language is italicised as if hand written and headed: 'A Word Concerning This Entertainment'. Einzig uses two main languages in the text: 'The language is both completely my own and an engagement with that of another writer (here, of course, Defoe)'.[13] The castaway narrative is used as a metaphor for her journey into writing. Through the text's references to *Robinson Crusoe*, as well as to American colonialism and migration from post-war Europe, writing itself is presented as an historical and political journey.

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[9] Michael Fishbane quoted in Christina Crosby *The Ends of History*, Routledge, New York, 1991, p. 166, fn. 47.

[10] See Sander Gilman, *The Jew's Body*, Routledge, New York, 1991.

[11] As I discuss later, her use of Benjamin and Arendt itself signifies her own critical distance from Judaism as both were critical of and criticised by Judaism in their lifetimes. Her position compares with Defoe who was a dissenter and as such had a critical distance from dominant Protestant beliefs.

[12] Deconstruction requires 'borrowing all the strategic and economic resources of subversion from the old structure, borrowing them structurally'. Derrida, *Between the Blinds*, p. 41.

[13] *A New Fiction*, p. 1.

Einzig's work is difficult to describe in narrative terms, but a brief sketch will assist the reader. The protagonist of *A New Fiction* is a daughter whose "journey" is described as if she is a female Crusoe. The setting of the text is not "foreign" as it was in *Robinson Crusoe*, but domestic. "Einzig" begins by describing her birth in Michigan, America, in a parody of Defoe's opening paragraph. She then recalls her Jewish maternal family in Hungary and her parents' post-war migration. Echoing *Robinson Crusoe*, she says that her father's name was changed 'by the usual corruption of words in the Austro-Hungarian Empire'.[14] She describes her father as an economist and says that her mother 'left off her trade' to raise children.[15] She then refers to her family's migration across America and her childhood in California. The text focuses on the childhood period in which she decided to become a writer. The trouble begins when, through her attempts at writing history, she begins to doubt the inheritance of knowledge received from her parents. Her doubts signify a break with the dominant modernist paradigm and, as a result, her thoughts '[can] not rest on any horizon line'.[16] After their initial encouragement, her parents forbid her to write. Her father's words echo those of Crusoe's father: 'if she writes on, she will be the most miserable wretch that ever was born'.[17] In the next section, titled '*I Embark*', "Einzig's" renewed determination to write is the equivalent to Crusoe's refusal to give up his desire to go to sea. She says, 'my mind took up its scarcely charted course' as she attempts to write her maternal grandmother's history.[18] She connects history and materialism by imagining that the story 'might climax with a visit to Bloomingdale's'.[19]

Through her attempt to write history, "Einzig" realises that representation and memories are uncertain and that there are different ways of seeing and

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[14] Ibid, p. 1.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid, p. 5.
[17] Ibid, p. 9.
[18] Ibid, p. 10.
[19] Ibid.

knowing. In her dreams, contemporary images, such as American GIs, converge with icons of colonialism and in her life, colonial icons name consumer goods. She realises that societies and narratives are imbued with 'a plague of connection'.[20] Her realisation leads her to reconsider what is substantial: 'But O! How what we mistake with pleasure for solid ground is but a linguistic hammock'.[21] The loss of solid ground represents both a problem and a possibility, as it did in the early eighteenth century castaway narratives. In a parody of, and ironic coment on, the silence of the feminine in *Robinson Crusoe*, she decides on 'silence, or, if the truth be told, to keeping my notes to myself'.[22]

"Einzig" comes to realise the dangers of the 'sea of uncertainty' in two incidents.[23] In the first, her friend Eddie is arrested for attempting to pull up a large oak tree in public while under the influence of drugs. "Einzig" questions the meaning of Eddie acting this way in public. She also questions the rationality of the police who, she says, must have known he couldn't pull up the tree. The incident is used to question the agency of the "subject", as well as the context in which situations come to make sense and the distinction between history and nature. Her anxiety about the instability of meanings is fed by her mother's stories of her aunt's madness, defined as a propensity to talk to things. The implication is that, in another context, such speech could be meaningful and rational. Throughout the text, Einzig uses Benjamin and Arendt to suggest such a meaningful context. At the end of the narrative, she re-covers herself. Appearances are maintained but now she has inside her 'a combination lock...a black and white clock...an inherited locket with an unidentified miniature inside'. The words are poetic and draw the reader's attention to the surface of the text. They also draw attention to the potential of words and things to 'speak', to enclose and disclose meanings. Her words refer to history and inherited traditions. The possibility that

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[20] Ibid, p. 11.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid, p. 14.

[23] Ibid, p. 12.

such feminine poetic writing will disturb historically constructed, political boundaries and the Western construction of knowledge is the reason that "Einzig's" father forbids her to write. In the description of his refusal, women's history is equated with poetry and, in the style of the earlier narratives, Einzig uses the language of symbolic marriage:

> My father...trembled at the possibility of a dangerous by-product being accidentally released through the combining of women and history within one literary vessel. My work, he argued, began to approach poetry, *wedding all things*...should I continue on my present course I might return us to the era prior to Adam Smith, whose most important achievement had been *to divorce political economy from ethics.*[24] [my emphases].

Einzig's desire to problematise the modern "subject" as autonomous agent and centre of meaning explains the experimental character of her work. A review of *A New Fiction* states, 'the poetic narrative dazzles with a linguistic richness that is simultaneously classical and avante-garde.'[25] Einzig uses her poetic text to translate, and speak through, *Robinson Crusoe* and in this sense, her feminine writing is the site of her rescue.

For Einzig, the state of being castaway arises from the recognition that meanings are unstable and that language metaphorically takes one out to sea. Her text is based on the premise that meanings cannot be fixed by reference to either the material "real" or to feminist or religious ideals. This instability of meaning is comparable to the early eighteenth century crisis of value, which was also a crisis of legitimation and representation. Like Defoe, Evans and Aubin, Einzig uses the castaway narrative to make productive use of a potentially negative situation. One of the ways in which she does this is by using textual and subjective uncertainty (the 'sea of uncertainty') to indicate the power and existence of her own marginal subject-position and text. In this sense, of all of the castaways I have discussed, "Einzig" is most like Crusoe to the extent that his return to sea is a symbolic embrace of problematic and uncertain economic desire. To break with the "vessel"

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[24] Ibid, p. 9.

[25] Norman Weinstein, *The Bloomsbury Review*, nd., quoted in 'Barbara Einzig: Excerpts from Reviews', paper made available by the author, 1997.

of modern subjectivity, Einzig looks to feminine and Jewish traditions. One of the ways she does this is to establish a maternal and theoretical family. In that the early castaway narratives also drew on the symbolism of the family and inheritance, this enables her to use *Robinson Crusoe* productively against itself.

The language of family

"Einzig" uses the language of *Robinson Crusoe* to describe her birth. In this respect, her birth, like that of Crusoe's, is represented as historical, material and textual:

> I was born in the year, 1951, in the town of Ann Arbor, Michigan, in the county of Wayne, in a Catholic hospital, near the large family of my mother, daughter of a rabbi and an apartment house manager, and that of my father, a young, handsome man whose virtue shone.[26]

As discussed, Defoe describes Crusoe's year and place of birth, his father's origin and financial position, his mother's family, and his name change. "Einzig" too refers to the year of her birth, but emphasises the specific spatial and textual coordinates of her birth through terms such as 'in' and 'near'. Defoe's introduction shows the mutuality of Crusoe's social and textual construction.[27] Einzig's text also emphasises the textual construction of identity by using Defoe's language. In this sense, like Defoe, she is using the convention of autobiography to emphasise the relation of text to life. However, her use of his language effectively locates that convention in textual and literary history, and so defines its conditions of production.

The juxtaposition of Einzig's text with Defoe's brings similarities and differences to the surface. "Einzig", who has both father and mother, is situated in the inherited and productive discourses of commerce, religion, aesthetics and morality. Her self-presentation situates her in a Defoean world in which "commerce" has flourished. As in the early eighteenth century narratives, she presents herself and other "subjects" as the outcome of various symbolic marriages

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[26] *A New Fiction*, p. 2.

[27] See discussion of Crusoe's birth, Chapter 1, p. 67.

of different values. The description of her father as handsome and virtuous reflects the ideal marriage of aesthetics and morality which informed the earlier narratives and Aubin's work, in particular. Her mother is described as the result of a marriage between 'a rabbi and an apartment house manager', that is, between religion and commerce.[28] Her father is an economist who teaches at the university, which suggests a relationship between materialism and knowledge. Commerce and an emphasis on appearance are dominant in each "marriage" of values.

That her mother gives up her 'trade' to raise children defines "Einzig's" family as middle class. Her work mirrors the way in which *Robinson Crusoe* critiqued the previous generation's definition of the 'Middle state'.[29] "Einzig", is like Crusoe, not 'bred to any trade'.[30] In this sense, although the discourse of commerce is productive, paternal and dominant, "Einzig" is not productive in these terms. In contrast with the absence of the mother in the early texts, "Einzig" gives her mother a crucial role, by insisting on her symbolic presence and influence. Pointing to her mother's biological and symbolic role, she says: 'my mother enters this story early by necessity'.[31] Throughout the text, "Einzig's" original family is constructed as matrilineal by giving priority to her mother's lineage over her father. For example, in a recognisably feminist strategy of reversal, she begins her text by referring to her mother's mother before her mother's father and tells of her three sisters before going on to mention her father's occupation.

Einzig shows her sisters as female subjects who are named and constructed by various discourses. Her description "relates" her own deconstructed subjectivity, presented as a fragmented text, to the subjectivity of her sisters. That is, her construction of herself as fragmented is related, not just by theory and

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[28] Ibid, p. 1.

[29] Einzig's work echoes that of Benjamin who has been described as confronting the 'cosy comfort of bourgeois life'. Graeme Gilloch, *Myth and Metropolis: Walter Benjamin and the City*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1996, p. 173.

[30] *A New Fiction*, p. 3.

[31] Ibid, p. 1.

language, to dominant female roles and representations, but to these representations through kinship and the female body. She presents her older sisters as shaped by dominant intellectual traditions. Her eldest sister is presented as formed from a way of thinking which prioritises the material, social, structured world and the next eldest sister as formed from the world of Western philosophy. These associations are embedded in their descriptions. The formation of their identities is therefore both textual and material.

The eldest sister is described in terms of her occupation, as 'a social worker in Cambridge'. Her title prioritises society and labour and emphasises material effects in the world. Her representation and occupation are consistent with an understanding of society in which structure and material conditions are prioritised. She is therefore described in terms of her position within different structures. In the family she was 'first-born', she was also 'president of that club we formed'. "Einzig" presents this sister as formed in a system which categorises genders as separate and discrete. This is evident in her reference to her sister's club being related to the gendered clubs of 'Little Women' and 'Pickwick Papers'.[32] This sister, then, is "woman" shaped in sociological, discursive and textual terms.

In contrast, the next eldest sister is presented in terms of Western philosophy and has 'a mind inclined towards analysis'.[33] Her description emphasises the visual rather than her position in society.[34] She has 'fair' skin and 'dark hair' and she is 'ready to smile'. The description prioritises her face and head and uses oppositional dark and light language.[35] The visual basis for her knowledge is emphasised: 'she watched things as they were about to happen'.[36] In

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[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Evelyn Fox Keller and Christine Grontkowski, 'The Mind's Eye' in Sandra Harding and Merrill B. Hintikka (eds.) *Discovering Reality: F...inist Perspectives On Epistemology, Metaphysics, And Philosophy Of Science*, D. Reidel, Boston, 1983.

[35] *A New Fiction*, p. 1.

[36] Ibid. p. 1.

contrast to the social positioning of her eldest sister, this sister is not placed within a social structure, but is described as 'The other sister'.[37] As 'other' she occupies the conventional place of the feminine in philosophical language, just as her sister occupies the traditional female role of social worker. This second sister, as a figure of philosophic discourse, is not present in society, but 'wanders certain islands to the west, shirt out', indicating a romantic and idealised location within western ideas. She appears to be located, like the figure of Crusoe, in faraway places, while she is actually located, described and produced in Western philosophic discourse. "Einzig" does not comment on her younger sister other than making the point that she was present at her birth, perhaps indicating the "progressive" times and her own influence: 'I greeted her birth, this was in California'.[38] The description of her older sisters suggests not only two different intellectual traditions which precede her, but the defining of female subjectivity and of women's roles within those traditions. Without a trade, "Einzig" is castaway between the worlds of social materiality and philosophical ideals. The castaway space, between materiality and ideals, informed the work of the earlier texts. As in these texts, Einzig also defines it as an important and transformative in-between space.

"Einzig" describes herself and her sisters as existing within a maternal kinship. Such kinship has been described as fundamental to Judaism: 'the determining fact of Jewish identity is guaranteed by the mother, not the father...the evidence of Jewish birth is maternal and material'.[39] "Einzig's" construction of herself as born of a matriarchal family is an intervention in which birth, marriage and family are converted into linguistic and theological terms. Birth, marriage and family are therefore presented as inseparable from an investigation of modern subjectivity. Einzig regenders Defoe's text and modern subjectivity by presenting this "matriarchy" as a textual, linguistic and historical strategy, rather than as a literal, originary moment. Nonetheless, her association

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[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Crosby is discussing George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* in *The Ends Of History*, Routledge, London, 1991, pp. 20-21.

relies on powerful suggestions of such a moment from within Western society as well as within feminism and within Judaism.[40] As I will discuss, Einzig uses Benjamin to re-present "her" family as linguistic. Like Aubin, in the scene where Teresa warns Domingo not to eat the 'European pear', one of the stories which Einzig readdresses is the story of the Fall of Man, which in her text is the story of her family's migration from Hungary.

Travellers in language

"Einzig" uses *Robinson Crusoe* to present herself and her family as travellers in language.[41] In the text, the library is 'a wilderness of information' and her thoughts are 'rambling'. Her father is described as 'venturing forth' into 'creative writing' and when "Einzig" writes she 'embarks' on a 'scarcely charted course'. She writes: 'The original continent for which I set out required but a modest voyage: I wrote of my mother's mother sailing for this country.'[42] The association between travelling and writing enables her to represent language as political and historical in relation to her family's migration. In such a manner it serves to critique the universal and unitary ideology of modern subjectivity. Einzig shares with Defoe an emphasis on migrant, and symbolically hybrid, beginnings. By associating identity and writing with her family's migration to America, she charts "herself" as a discursive subject under process of translation from one mode to another.

The journey places "Einzig" in America in 1951 in a family whose past is formed by being Jews in Hungary in the first half of the twentieth century. In the text, "Einzig" refers to a past prior to the Second World War. This past has a

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[40] As Joanna Hodge argues, 'Any set of images which seeks to challenge the domination of institutionalised images of women's weakness and suitability for sacrifice will tend to make appeal to some figurative point of origin, easily misconstrued as a naturalisation, in order to hold off the pressure to surrender once more to the dominant mode. Joanna Hodge, ' Feminism and Post-Modernism: Misleading Divisions Imposed by the Opposition between Modernism and Post-Modernism' in Andrew Benjamin, ed., *The Problems of Modernity*, Routledge, London, 1989, p. 100.

[41] For Benjamin, 'the traveller is a romantic figure, of the flaneur, the gambler, the virtuoso'. Walter Benjamin, *One Way Street and Other Writings*, Verso, London, 1985, p. 372.

[42] *A New Fiction*, p. 10.

utopian quality as the land provided all that was required: 'my mother's mother ... lived in Herinche, Hungary, a good country, with houses, grasses of many kinds, trees, fruits, sweets, and good water that was always cold'.[43] The 'good country' of Hungary supplied their subsistence needs, exemplified as 'good water', the freedom to pray, and an harmonious family. To emphasise the harmony of this 'original' period, "Einzig" says 'The whole family sang beautifully.'[44] This sense of an original state is used by Einzig not to evoke an ideal state, but to ground her identity in a language which recognises its feminine and Jewish aspects. Having said this, "Einzig's" critical distance from Judaism is also evident in her regendering of her family and in her use of Benjamin, who rejected Judaism, and Arendt, whose work was criticised by Jewish leaders. These aspects demonstrate her ambivalence towards her religious background while she creates and draws on her feminine and Jewish inheritance to contrast her subjectivity with that of the Protestant rational "subject".

"Einzig's" feminine world of plenty contrasts with the masculine subsistence and finite culture of *Robinson Crusoe.* As the language of 'finitude' implies there is a sense of being subject to limitation. Finitude is a way to speak of language as a restraint and it is also a term related to the limited supply of material goods. The language of *Robinson Crusoe* allows Einzig to associate the constraints of language with material conditions. In this account, "her" parents' 'legacy of finitude'[45] is presented as a relative term with respect to the the death, scarcity and religious persecution associated with the Second World War. Einzig's text also highlights the possessive character of the "subject" of rational individualism. The loss of the family's 'inheritance', her matriarchal and Jewish 'good country', is marked by a possessive, colonial language in which 'homes...[are]... claimed by strangers'.[46] In the style of *Robinson Crusoe*, Einzig

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[43] Ibid, p. 1.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid.

capitalises names such as Mother and makes constant use of the possessive article, 'my mother', 'my sister, 'my grandmother'.[47] However, just as in the early texts, the island was a place of relative values and of revaluing, so Einzig's text also revalues. The contrast between Defoe's text, her own poetic language, and her evocation of a feminine past which is marked by plenty, give value to the infinite nature of her own writing. In this manner, although she rightly emphasises her text's difference from Defoe's, her text also reflects Defoe's use of such feminine values.

Through depicting her family's migration across and within America, Einzig is able to present her text and *Robinson Crusoe* as texts which are "foreign" to each other 'in degree of time and consciousness', yet are also in 'kinship'.[48] In a literal and symbolic sense, she suggests that the act of migration and the act of writing turns family into foreigners and foreigners into family, thereby changing the status of both and effectively familiarising the reader with different values. "Einzig's" identity, suggested through multiple, intertextual references to Hungary, Judaism and to English and American literature and history, introduces different values into the "unitary" story associated with *Robinson Crusoe* as rational economic man. Like Aubin and Defoe, Einzig changes or corrupts the values of the dominant social text. Like Crusoe, "Einzig" points out that her name is a 'corruption' of her father's original name.[49] Crusoe's name, it will be recalled, was changed 'by the usual Corruption of Words in *England*'.[50] The changing of Crusoe's name is related to Defoe's insistence in *The True Born Englishman* on the hybridity inherent in English class and identity. This in turn was related to his project of justifying the hybrid gentleman-trader. Through the use of the travel genre, Defoe, Aubin and Evans all used cultural difference to establish authenticity. Evans, it will be recalled, used Martha's act of maintaining her own

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[47] Ibid, p. 5, for example.

[48] The words, "kinship" and "foreign" are significant in Walter Benjamin's 'The Task of the Translator' in *Illuminations*, Schocken Books, New York, 1968, pp. 74-5.

[49] *A New Fiction*, p. 1.

[50] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 3.

name to assert that difference could signify authenticity and that, conversely, apparent sameness (keeping the same name) could indicate difference. The corruption of "Einzig's" name takes place prior to her family's migration to America. In this sense, her inheritance is of corrupted ideals and a corrupt language. In the same spirit as Aubin and Defoe, she represents this corruption of language as positive. The likeness she suggests between her own and Crusoe's naming links the two texts to social change and emphasises the connections between politics, language and identity. Her use of the hyphenated 'Austro-Hungarian Empire' suggests that the 'Empire' itself is a corrupted "subject" and that changes to the boundaries of the "subject" will involve a power struggle.[51] Migration features in Einzig's text as the transfer of a body of people from one country to another, or from one side of a country to another. It is a transgression of boundaries that is negative and violent as well as a positive and active shaping of identity. Different subject-positions emerge from such transgression. Einzig's presentation of migratory transgression as both positive and negative, as well as spatially transformative, with regard to the production of identity, is a similar representation to that which informed the early works.

"Einzig's" crisis, like that of the early eighteenth century castaways, takes the form of breaking with the father. Her narrative therefore links gender and politics to questions of writing and narrative. The son disobeying the father by going to sea in *Robinson Crusoe* is now the daughter persisting with her writing against her father's wishes. She also writes in disobedience of her mother. In this sense, she breaks with her mother's tradition, by not giving up her trade, that is, her desire to write.[52] Einzig's text, like Evans', valorises uncertainty, silence and privacy in contrast to Defoe's apparent emphasis on factuality, control and presence. Having outlined the ways in which Einzig relates to *Robinson Crusoe*, it is

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[51] Hannah Arendt states that '*polis* originally connoted something like a "ring-wall"'. *The Human Condition*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1958, p. 64.

[52] Einzig, p. 1

now necessary to turn to her use of Benjamin and Arendt to explain the ideas that inform her translation of *Robinson Crusoe* into a "new" fiction.

Translation and kinship

In her preface, Einzig uses the opening quotation to this chapter to contextualise her work in relation to Benjamin's article 'The Task of the Translator'.[53] She also opens her text by juxtaposing a quotation from Arendt with one from *Robinson Crusoe*, thereby signalling the influence of Arendt on her work. Benjamin and Arendt are theorists whose work has been understood in the contexts of Judaism, gender and Western culture. Not without controversy, both theorists are important to feminism, and gendered concepts inform their work.[54] In *A New Fiction*, Einzig makes critical use of Benjamin and Arendt to create a new feminine space in relation to *Robinson Crusoe*. Arendt and Benjamin are particularly important to the text because their work has become significant in placing the Holocaust and the diasporas which followed World War Two at the centre of critiques of modernity.[55] In the text, "Einzig" states that her family came from Kisvarda in Hungary after the Second World War.[56] When the Germans invaded Hungary in 1944, a ghetto for Jews was established in Kisvarda and people were subsequently sent to Auschwitz.[57] Although Einzig mentions no

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[53] Benjamin quoted by Einzig in her preface.

[54] Gender 'forms the basis for some of Benjamin's most important conceptual moves'. Rey Chow, Benjamin's Love Affair with Death', *New German Critique*, Fall, No. 48, 1989, p. 65. The way in which gender informs Benjamin's work is also discussed by John Docker, '"A Hermaphroditic Position": Benjamin, Postmodernism and the Frenzy of Gender', in Gerhard Fischer (ed.), *'With the Sharpened Axe of Reason': Approaches to Walter Benjamin*, Ber , Oxford, 1996; Beth Sharor Ash, 'Walter Benjamin, Ethnic Fears, Oedipal Anxieties, Political Consequences', *New German Critique*, No. 48, Fall, 1987 and Janet Wolff, 'The Invisible Flaneuse: Women and the Literature of Modernity, in Andrew Benjamin, The Problem of Modernity. Her engagement with gender and relevance to feminism is discussed by Seyla Benhabib, 'Feminist Theory and Hannah Arendt's concept of public space', *History of the Human Sciences*, Vol. 6, No. 2, 1993.

[55] See specifically, Walter Benjamin 'Theories of German Fascism', *New German Critique*, 17, Spring, 1979. Arendt's works on totalitarianism and the Holocaust include: *Men in Dark Times*, Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., New York, 1955; *Eichmann in Jerusalem: a report on the banality of evil*; 1963 and *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 1967.

[56] *A New Fiction*, p. 1.

[57] Kisvarda is discussed in The *Children of the Holocaust* website at www.wiesenthal.com/children/khelen.html, 2 April, 1997. To show that the Internet complements the text's intertextuality and theoretical premises, I have given an Internet site rather than a library reference, where possible.

direct family experience of the Holocaust, as a silence it bears upon not only her identity, but on her existence. In this sense, the Holocaust, like the silent feminine of *Robinson Crusoe*, informs the text and "Einzig's" subjectivity. Flight from the Holocaust, the horror of which her father cannot speak, is the unspoken premise of the text. In this sense, both her Jewish background and her gender are represented as "contained" by the text of modern subjectivity and Benjamin's work on translation allows her to represent that which is silenced.

In her 'Prefatory Matter', Einzig states that her 'work is similar to Benjamin's 'The Task of the Translator' in which Benjamin states:

> it is the task of the translator to release in his own language *that pure language which is under the spell of another*, to liberate the language imprisoned in a work in his re-creation of that work. For the sake of pure language he breaks through the decayed barriers of his own language.[58] [my emphasis]

By situating herself as a text in "kinship" with *Robinson Crusoe* and with the theories of Arendt and Benjamin, Einzig positions herself as the translator of her life considered as a text. In this way, she changes her position and representation in the text as "self", that is as agent and producer of her own meaning, and as sole and original author of the text. The description of "Einzig's" "original" maternal home recalls Benjamin's sense of an original "pure" language. The harmonious singing of this original family also represents the sign of a successful translation. Benjamin states that '...the language of a translation can - in fact, must - let itself go, so that it gives voice to the intention of the original not as reproduction but as harmony...'.[59]

Benjamin's 'theology of language' is crucial to understanding how Einzig uses *Robinson Crusoe* to reposition herself, as his theory establishes a two-way communication between language and materiality. This directly opposes the language of ownership and control over others depicted in *Robinson Crusoe*. Benjamin's linguistic theology describes how material things are named. He posits the idea of an original, sacred language in which God created the world before

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[58] Benjamin, 'The Task of the Translator', *Illuminations*, p. 80.

[59] Ibid, pp. 78-9.

'the fall of man'.[60] According to Benjamin, all 'things', including 'man', were created in this sacred language and all except 'man' were then named.[61] He argues that both animate and inanimate 'things' have a 'sacred language' which informs 'man's' language. All things communicate their 'mental being' which in turn is translated by man into language.[62] The communication is two-way in that the name that 'man' gives to himself and to things will depend on 'how language is communicated to him':[63]

> There is no event or thing in either animate or inanimate nature that does not in some way partake of language, for it is the nature of all to communicate mental meanings.[64]

In other words, what is named and the name itself are 'naturally constantly interrelated'.[65] Hence, Einzig's extensive use of the language of kinship. This two-way communication informs Benjamin's work on 'inanimate nature' such as, shopping malls, consumables and technology. In his work, the past is like a 'thing' in that although it is apparently mute and inaccessible, it informs the present. Hence the apparently enclosed and unitary subjectivity and text of *Robinson Crusoe* has potency in the present.

Benjamin describes the relationship between 'things' and 'man', between God's language and 'man's language', in terms of different degrees of density.[66] In such terms, Einzig is able to translate *Robinson Crusoe* into a feminine mode because this 'language' is already inherent in the original text. As Benjamin puts it,

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[60] My understanding of Benjamin's work on translation has been enhanced by Paul de Man, *The Resistance to Theory*, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 1986 and the critique of De Man's discussion by E. San Juan Jr. in Chapter One of *Hegemony and Strategies of Transgression*; as well as works by Gilloch; and Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing*, The MIT Press, Massachusetts and London, 1989.

[61] Walter Benjamin, 'On Language as Such and on the Language of Man' in *Reflections*, Schocken Books, New York, 1986, p. 324. It is relevant to the discussion of Einzig's text to maintain Benjamin's gendered terms.

[62] Benjamin, 'On Language as Such and on the Language of Man', *Reflections*, p. 314.

[63] Ibid, p. 325.

[64] Ibid, p. 314.

[65] Ibid, p. 320

[66] Ibid, p. 320.

'...a specific significance inherent in the original manifests itself in translatability'.[67] Her work can therefore be regarded as 'the translation of an imperfect language into a more perfect one'.[68] In that Benjamin's work emerges from a political critique of materialism, it is most appropriate to a critique of *Robinson Crusoe* and Defoe's language. Graeme Gilloch points out that the 'recovery of traces, the revelation of the history of the object, the recollection of the hardship and injustice that surround the history of the commodity, are fundamental imperatives for Benjamin'.[69] His work links materialism and language to a critique of modern subjectivity and modernity, by re-establishing agency for that which is silenced by language. For Einzig, this includes the female "subject" and the body. As the discussion which follows indicates, Einzig uses both the work of Arendt and Benjamin to regender subjectivity.

In her preface, after referring to Benjamin's work on translation, Einzig contrasts Defoe's language with that of Arendt. Arendt states:

> ...you look only to the communicative value of the word. I look to the disclosing quality. And this disclosing quality has, of course, always a historical background...

In contrast, Einzig quotes Crusoe as saying:

> I must keep the tame from the wild...and the only way for this was to have some enclosed piece of ground...to keep them in so effectually.[70]

These two very different quotations and languages are given as examples of differently gendered philosophies of language and, consequently, different understandings of meaning and identity. Arendt, female, German-Jewish American philosopher, refugee, product of two different societies and adherent of Benjamin's theories of language, most closely resembles Einzig's representation of herself. Einzig opposes Arendt's quotation to the words of Crusoe, fictional character, masculine, English, Protestant son of an early eighteenth century

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[67] Benjamin, 'The Task of the Translator', *Illuminations*, p. 71.

[68] Benjamin, 'On Language as Such and on the Language of Man', *Reflections*, p. 325.

[69] Gilloch, p. 119.

[70] Quotations are from Hannah Arendt (no publishing details) and *Robinson Crusoe* cited in introduction to *A New Fiction*.

merchant and migrant, and modernist literary icon. Key oppositions such as fact/fiction, Jew/Protestant, past/present, masculine/feminine are established as differences and similarities by the juxtaposition of the two quotations. It is important to note that each of these quite different philosophies maintains the position of an autonomous, individual speaker. It is also relevant to Einzig's rewriting that both speakers are "subjects" with mixed-nationality backgrounds.

Arendt's statement concerns disclosure, that is, opening and revealing, while Crusoe's or Defoe's, concerns enclosure, keeping things in and out, remaining closed, maintaining separation. Einzig associates the first with the "feminine subject" (here represented by Arendt), and the second with the "masculine subject" (represented by Crusoe). As in the early eighteenth century castaway texts, Einzig is creating a spatialised and gendered language. The Arendt quotation concerns language and history, and Defoe's quotation concerns nature. That these differences are attributed to differently gendered "subjects" serves Einzig's text well, as she uses Benjamin's confounding of gendered distinctions, such as nature and history, to problematise the notion of a distinct, autonomous identity and the idea of an essential self.[71]

In Benjamin's theory, apparently distinct concepts such as nature and history have permeable boundaries (like translations) and therefore inform each other. Benjamin's theory of permeable boundaries and two-way communication emerges from his sense of an original language to which all other languages are related. In this sense, he posits the idea of a family of languages. In her work, Einzig literalises and feminises this linguistic family by describing "her family" in matriarchal terms. Through her use of Benjamin and Arendt as an alternative

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[71] *A New Fiction* is an early feminist engagement with Benjamin's theories. Recent papers which discuss Benjamin as being of interest to feminism include work by Christine Buci-Glucksman who states that in Benjamin's work, 'the motif of the woman imposes, by its constancy, its persistence and wealth of meanings, all its interpretative radicality'. 'Catastrophic Utopia: The 'feminine' as Allegory of the Modern', *Representations*, 4, Spring, 1986. Eva Geulen suggests Benjamin's work '...might provide insights for feminism's current dilemma, Benjamin also sought alternatives ...to the idealistic dialectic of subjective and objective, particular and universal'. Eva Geulen, 'Toward a Genealogy of Gender in Walter Benjamin's Writing, *The German Quarterly*, Spring 1996, vol. 69, no. 2, p. 161. See also Chow, 1989; Buck-Morss, 1989.

"language", she can also be understood to be symbolically reparenting herself. In doing so, I suggest that she both "uses and abuses" Benjamin and Defoe in order to articulate for herself a productive in-between textual and feminine space.[72] In this use and abuse, her work again emulates *Robinson Crusoe* and the earlier authors in their use of the travel and romance genres to critique dominant and problematic social values.

Nature and History

In *A New Fiction*, "Einzig" recalls that her parents drove a De Soto, a popular American family car from the 1950s. It had on its bonnet the helmet of Hernando de Soto, the coloniser of the southern parts of America.[73] When "Einzig" researches her history she is faced with becoming either a dominant "subject" like De Soto or a forgotten and dominated "subject" like the Indian 'queen' of whom she dreams. In her dream life, "Einzig" is both figures: 'Discouraged and exhausted, I slept. I was De Soto, and my grandmother the Indian queen who was my prisoner and hostage'.[74] The domination of the female 'Indian queen' also signifies the loss of the Native American Indian's story, which is silenced by Western historical discourse. The construction of history is presented as a narrative which privileges certain acts and agencies and, as such, silences certain identities. For example, the title 'queen' is not an Indian term and indicates a Western construction. The story of the Indian queen, who in the text is also "Einzig's" 'grandmother', expresses a kinship between masculine languages as they are involved in the captivity of subjects and feminine languages as they are

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[72] 'Use and abuse' is the phrase used by Linda Hutcheon to describe the work of the post modern text. As I understand it, it is also the way in which Defoe, Aubin and Evans related to their own period's conventional practices and morality. Hutcheon, *A Poetics of Postmodernism*, see Chapter 4.

[73] Hernando De Soto travelled through what became Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas in the years 1539-43. 'De Soto's generation was part of a European thrust into the New World that was in many ways a last ditch effort to prolong the medieval, Catholic, knightly tradition to which he belonged, a cavalier tradition that had begun late in the 15th century during Spain's wars to expel the Moors from the Iberian peninsula...The conquistador/cavalier tradition--and its link to forced emigration--had flourished in the slave-holding plantation culture of the Southern states'. 'John Dyer, Powell's De Soto and United States History: The Critical Reception of Discovery of the Mississippi by De Soto, 1541 A. D', http://xroads.virginia.edu/~CAP/DESOTO/congress.html. 1 May, 1997.

[74] *A New Fiction*, p. 13.

subjected to the masculine. The title of female monarch indicates the power of the feminine that is silenced, as well as its construction in masculine images of politics and power.

Einzig makes it clear that the dominating subject-position of Western rational individualism can be occupied by both male or female "subjects" and that her problem does not only concern the past but the present. For example, she dreams that she is the Spanish explorer: 'I looked down in dejection and saw that my Spanish costume was gone, and that I had on an American GI's uniform'.[75] In this fashion, the past, though it is apparently enclosed like the silent symbol on the De Soto car, continues to inform and shape the present. The analogy she uses is that of the life inherent in an enclosed 'seed or kernel or nut'.[76] As such, when her father discusses the past with her, 'Green, black, soft, bruised, fibrous shapes encountered our shoes while walking.'[77] In that the walnuts 'encountered' the shoes, agency is attributed to the walnuts not to the feet. This suggests the active life of 'things' and the past represented by feminine, active nature. Benjamin says of such 'nature':

> Man communicates himself to God through name, which he gives to nature and (in proper names) to his own kind, and to nature he gives names according to the communication that *he receives from her*...[78] [my emphasis]

In this depiction by Benjamin, nature is female and active and counters the masculine act of naming. Man does not dominate nature, as did Crusoe; here nature is active, communicating and influencing its own naming. This is relevant to Einzig's narrative and the relationship between the opening quotations by Arendt and Crusoe. The 'nutshell' for Arendt is a metaphor for the story and she states that:

> no matter how abstract our theories may sound or how consistent our arguments may appear, there are incidents and stories behind them which, at least for ourselves, contain as in a nutshell the full meaning of whatever we have to say[79]

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[75] Ibid.

[76] Ibid, p. 10.

[77] Ibid, p. 6.

[78] Benjamin, 'On Language as Such and on the Language of Man', *Reflections*, p. 331.

Benjamin's image of the 'natural-historical' suggests that "nature" in Einzig's work cannot be simply equated with the conventional association of woman as nature, although, as with the image of an original female utopia, it draws on the power of that imagery.[80] In Einzig's depiction of the family of language as feminine, and her association of "nature" with the feminine, she is engaging with Benjamin's conception of history as nature and of nature as history. In contrast, Benjamin sometimes emphasised the masculine aspect of that relation, when he says, for example, that 'Man is the namer...he is the lord of nature and can give names to things'.[81] By emphasising the active "feminine", Einzig represents language itself as a historical and gendered construction.

Einzig's depiction of that which is named as feminine and active collapses dualisms such as internal/external, nature/history and subject/object and represents them as concepts which contain and depend upon each other. Her depiction suggests the earlier work of Aubin, in which the image of enclosure represented as active, transforming, feminine virtue was complemented, as well as "disguised", by a masculine protective exterior. Einzig's strategy, however, is not like Aubin's, to employ a disguise or protection. Rather, her writing attempts to 'crack open' masculine language and subjectivity in the productive way in which a seed opens a shell.

Einzig's writing transforms the masculine languages of both Defoe and Benjamin. When she describes her family of language as female, she is using her representation of Judaism against Benjamin's masculine naming, and his theories against a masculine-defined Judaism. Benjamin's theory collapses that which is named into the name itself and thus retains power for that which is named. This suggests that the concept of matriarchy itself is a naming which is both masculine

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[79] Lisa Jane Disch, *Hannah Arendt and the Limits of Philosophy*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1994, p. 110.

[80] Adorno states that Benjamin had: 'as no one else, the ability to regard historical things, manifestations of the objectified spirit, 'culture' as if they were nature...His entire thought could be characterised as 'natural-historical'. Quoted by Buck-Morss, p. 58.

[81] Walter Benjamin, *One Way Street and Other Writings*, Verso, London, 1985, p. 111.

and feminine. Einzig's matriarchy is therefore not a recourse to an ideal and distinct feminine or to Judaism. For Einzig, the relationship of masculine to feminine is like that of seed and shell, a relationship that is not separate and opposite. All such oppositions in Einzig's work exist in a circularity in which the negative term becomes the positive term and vice versa. This circularity suggests not only the earlier castaway narratives' references to the circulation of wealth, but also to the cycle of life and death. In this regard, Einzig's strategy is to reinstate materiality, through reference to the physical body, as inextricable from textuality.

Einzig's emphasis allows her to inscribe economic and sexual desire into her text and into the text of rational individualism. By presenting herself as a child, she appears to exist in a text which echoes the exclusion of sex from rational individualism. It will be recalled that Ian Watt (using Weber) reads sex as 'one of the strongest potential menaces to the individual's pursuit of economic ends'.[82] However, as discussed, the imagery of economic desire in the early eighteenth century was also expressed as sexual desire and, I have suggested, Defoe maintained the importance of desire in *Robinson Crusoe* through Crusoe's return to the ocean. I suggest that Einzig makes explicit the desire that is inherent in modern subjectivity in a number of ways. Firstly, by depicting travelling as a form of writing she depicts the sea as a motif of desire and associates it with textuality. Secondly, her narrative of childhood is a linguistic metaphor which locates her in a 'child's world', which for Benjamin is 'akin to the language of sacred texts.'[83] Einzig depicts such an original language as feminine, a language in which there is no control over excess. In these metaphorical senses, Einzig's use of montage (associated with play), her references to childhood and to the feminine, serve to reinscribe sexual and economic desire into *Robinson Crusoe* as a "new" fiction. In this way, she draws out the sexual dynamic of power which informs rational individualism.

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[82] Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel*, p. 67. See this thesis, p. 7, fn. 19.

[83] Gerhard Scholem, 'Walter Benjamin', *On Jews and Judaism in Crisis: Selected Essays*, ed., Werner J. Dannhauser, Schocken Books, 1976 quoted by Susan Buck-Morss, 1989, p. 263.

Rational historical man

When "Einzig" associates her mother with the 'natural-historical', she gives her a power which is active and social. Her mother, consistent with "Einzig's" depiction of herself within a female line of inheritance, is assigned an important symbolic role in the private sphere. Her mother watches over seeds and plants. This suggests that the opening of the 'seed', which is also the text, and the production of new meanings, is feminine. "Einzig" states: 'My mother served as a capable guide to this world'.[84] 'This world' is an in-between area, like an island, where those depicted as marginalised exist: 'the labors of housewives and of oriental gardeners created beds of color'.[85] Her mother's walks in the suburbs suggests Benjamin's 'botanising on the asphalt' as she moves and blurs distinctions between nature and society.[86] Hence, her mother 'exhibiting such curiosity' takes home 'a slip to be fostered'.[87]

In contrast to her mother, "Einzig's" father is a Crusoe-like figure, an economist occupying a separate and different space, but with whom "Einzig" can still communicate. His concern with the economy, she says, 'did not serve...as a barricade between us, but as a kind of running board of discourse, on which I might stand outside the body of his vehicle...yet able to speak through an always open window.'[88] In other words, Einzig proposes that father and daughter are situated within different, but aligned and communicable discourses. Her father is a rational, orderly figure who '...had read most of the public library, measuring it off in a deliberate quota of inches per week.'[89] The juxtaposition of rational measurement with the activity of reading highlights the similarities and differences between the ideas which inform the father's work and the activity of

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[84] *A New Fiction*, p. 3.

[85] Ibid, p. 3.

[86] Quoted by Susan Buck-Morss, 'The Flaneur, the Sandwichman and the Whore: The Politics of Loitering', *New German Critique*, 39, Fall 1986, p. 104.

[87] *A New Fiction*, p. 3.

[88] Ibid, p. 4.

[89] Ibid.

reading. It also recalls the economic language of Defoe and the early rewritings which associated economics and writing.

"Einzig's" father represents Western knowledge, in which history is rational, knowable and measurable. This contrasts with her mother's world, in which things are guided into existence. It is in this masculine, dominant and rational language that "Einzig" is anxious about the world. In this world, she is constantly reminded of what she cannot know. That which has been forgotten, that which cannot be spoken of, and that which she must simply believe, haunt her text. For example, her father has a past he cannot speak of. Instead he tells her of '... a country of mixed up things...in a voice which implied there was more, but that it was too far in the past, and now could only exist in fragments... '[90] She discovers that she cannot access the past, because the historical records are 'dubious'[91], her parent's past had a 'lack of definition' and there was 'uncertainty'.[92] She says of her own past, 'I remember very little, or imagine that I remember very little, or there is very little in the imagined memory that exists'.[93] In masculine and modernist historical discourse, marginal figures and events are "forgotten" in history. In contrast, in her mother's feminine discourse the 'transformation of the nameless into name' points out that these lives and incidents continue to inform the present.[94]

The story of "Einzig" growing up is replete with references to a colonial past, references which are depicted as icons of modernity. The colonisation of America is the vehicle in which the present is made possible. In Einzig's text, this vehicle is literally the family car, 'a green De Soto, proud and mobile'.[95] The symbol of the helmet of De Soto on the car positions "Einzig's" family history in

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[90] Ibid, p. 6.

[91] Ibid, p. 12.

[92] Ibid, p. 7.

[93] Ibid, p. 2.

[94] Benjamin, *Reflections*, p. 325.

[95] *A New Fiction*, p. 2.

relation to the history and colonisation of Florida.[96] In her dream "Einzig", as De Soto, gives the Indian queen a box of pearls which she forgets to take back before the queen disappears.[97] Both the history of 'the Indian queen' and the box of pearls disappear into history. The pearls are a well-chosen image as they evoke both nature and the feminine in their cultural associations. 'Pearls' are also an image that has literary and theoretical kinship.[98] In "Einzig's" dream everything has such multiple meanings. She is De Soto and her grandmother is the Indian queen who shows the way forward like the Statue of Liberty, symbol of nation, migration and colonisation:

> the Indian queen...I needed her to lead myself and my men by the direct trail to the west, where I could see far off what appeared to be a high, light green female statue, holding what looked like a torch or flashlight...[99]

In this quotation, there is a sense that it is the ideal and historical feminine which will show the way forward. It is however a two-way representation, that is, it is both utopian and ironic, suggesting feminism as a wish-image of the future and the Statue of Liberty as both feminine and grounded in the history of colonisation.

Private and public space

The images of voyage, shipwreck, island, and triumphant return in *Robinson Crusoe* establish a private, secure and enclosed "subject" which has mobility and integrity on the high seas of public, trading life. In her critique of *Robinson Crusoe*, Einzig's text draws permeable boundaries between the "subject" and the text and between private and public space. This permeability reflects Benjamin's thesis on translation and draws on the work of Arendt. Einzig addresses public and private space through the story of Eddie. Eddie, her friend who attempts to pull up a tree after taking LSD, is arrested:

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[96] Buck-Morss, 1989, p. 349.

[97] As well as referring to the disappearance of history, this may be a rewriting of the racist Western expression, "Indian giver" which refers to asking for something back that was given as a gift.

[98] In her introduction to Benjamin's *Illuminations*, Arendt refers to Heidegger's 'remarkable sense for living eyes and living bones that had sea-changed into pearls and corals, and as such could be lifted into the present only by doing violence to their context...'. p. 46. The language is also that of *The Tempest*.

[99] *A New Fiction*, p. 13.

> He apparently took off his clothes and began to uproot WITH HIS HANDS, my mother said, the large oak standing there. He was on LSD, and the police took him into that little room in the station, because he was OUT OF CONTROL.[100]

In this story Eddie is both the opposite and the same as Crusoe. In his naked and "natural" state, his mind "artificially" affected, he tries to dominate nature by pulling up a tree. Just as Eddie's mind is 'irrational', so are the police, for "Einzig" points out, 'Eddie was hardly able to pull up the oak barehanded'. "Einzig's" discussion of the incident proceeds by reference to the construction of "normality" and madness. In the story the "rational" act of culture dominating nature is presented as irrational and, at the same time, the control of an irrational act by treating it as if it were rational is criticised.

Through Eddie's 'story', "Einzig" comes to recognise that "truth" is discursively constructed, that public judgement of Eddie's act is effected by circumstance and that 'knowledge is situated'. She compares the act with another later incident in which a storm uprooted trees. "Einzig" states that the act 'drew the neighbourhood together'.[101] She points out:

> if one's neighbour had a large oak which threatened to fall on one's house, a gradual distance might evolve between the neighbours, the one perceiving the other as a possible agent of death, such an agency would be hard to prove in a court of law.[102]

In other words, the agency of nature cannot be rationalised. Agency is therefore shown to have two faces, a positive face associated with disclosure, the feminine and the 'natural-historical', in which 'things' have agency; and a negative face associated with a sense of masculine enclosure and associated with questions of property and ownership.

The story of Eddie also refers to the importance of the distinction between private and public space. In *A New Fiction*, there is a hidden private world, associated with her mother, in which space and time are of generous proportions:

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[100] Ibid, p. 15.

[101] Ibid, p. 16.

[102] Ibid.

> the suburb in which we dwelt was not a mean one: great oak trees spread their boughs over the quiet streets; lanes and parks existed for walking quickly out of sight or hearing of automobiles;[103]

This depiction has a quality of excess and luxury that "Einzig" previously associated with her father: 'His life was abundant, luxuriant'.[104] The mutual association indicates that the two sexes dominate quite different sectors, each with a different form of excess. "Einzig" expresses the view that Eddie could have disappeared into one of the suburb's quiet streets and conducted his act without making himself the subject of a police inquiry:

> I grew heated... the foolhardiness of Eddie not to have walked into the forest, the hills, the parks and lanes I have told of where, in such a brief span of time, privacy could have been gained.[105]

She concludes that Eddie needed to act in public and that it was 'a deliberate performance incapable of provoking an adequate response'.[106] The act, therefore, is like Einzig's writing in that it cannot be understood in the same terms as dominant discursive practices, such as the law. Her emphasis on the importance of occupying public space is the obverse and complementary state to the valuing of that which is private, feminine and 'natural-historical'. In these terms, Eddie's madness cannot be understood, but it can and does speak. It can be compared to the power of her own fragmented style of writing, and her initial decision to keep her writing to herself is confirmed by Eddie's incarceration. The worth of Eddie's act is that, as a story, it comments on conventional meanings. In this sense, Einzig as a writer must also act in public. This recognition of the importance of the public act is suggested in her dream:

> I was walking out a door; I was in a war. It was a war that went on without victory or magnitude. I wanted to reenter civilian life, to be again reduced to flowering inside my notions of what I had considered to be human, but those days seem to be gone.

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[103] Ibid, p. 3.

[104] Ibid, p. 4.

[105] Ibid, p. 16.

[106] Ibid.

In this quotation, "Einzig" the private and feminine civilian, is distinguished from the "outdoor", masculine and combative public. In such a fashion, "Einzig" is potentially castaway in both spheres. Einzig presents the feminine language of her text as one which can be misinterpreted in the public sphere. This is made explicit when, at the end of the narrative, "Einzig" presents her mother talking to the fridge. As a comment on Eddie's act, her mother tells her that her own sister 'when she went crazy [thought] that the bedsprings were alive and the refrigerator was alive'.[107] As she watches her mother, "Einzig" says that:

> Unaccountably the meaning of *craze* as a fine crack in the glaze or enamel of pottery came into my head, as it were, followed by a rapid silent inquiry into the history of refrigerators, when they first existed.[108]

In other words, the fridge as 'thing' communicated a meaning to her. Einzig's story, in part, concerns her difference from the Protestant Crusoe and her inability to speak of that difference in anything but the terms which such a dominant subjectivity offers. The fragmenting of her text arises out of her attempt to write her experience into the tradition of the latter. Einzig's text "crazes" the "vessel" that is *Robinson Crusoe* through a writing that breaks with "rationality" by using fragmentation, montage and quotation.

Einzig's critique and validation of both public and private spheres draws on the ideas of Arendt. For Arendt, these spheres have different languages in that what is experienced in the private sphere cannot be valued in the same way in the public sphere. For both Einzig and Arendt this is a positive way in which to regard the private sphere. Arendt says of the private sphere that 'prior to the modern age...to have no private place of one's own (like a slave) meant to be no longer human'[109] In this sense, that which must not be spoken in public is like that which cannot be known from the past. Both silences have value and actively shape the public and the present. Einzig's depiction of marginal spaces in which borders are permeable, is similar to that evoked by Arendt. Arendt refers to 'ancient times'

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[107] Ibid, p. 17.

[108] Ibid.

[109] Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 64.

in which the law was identified with a boundary, 'actually a space, a kind of no man's land between the private and public, sheltering and protecting both realms while at the same time, separating them from each other'.[110] Such a space is protective for Arendt as she says 'there are a great many things which cannot withstand the implacable, bright light of the constant presence of others on the public scene'.[111]

Einzig also acknowledges Arendt's understanding that 'An action can only be an action if there is a public space in which it can appear'.[112] The public space for Arendt is 'the organisation of the people as it arises out of acting and speaking together'.[113] In *A New Fiction*, Einzig expounds Arendt's understanding that the meaning of an act cannot be determined by agency (what was intended) but must be examined according to 'the meanings the act takes on in the eyes of spectators in different times and places'.[114]

Einzig productively associates Arendt's concepts of public and private with Benjamin's concepts of appearance and translation. Significantly, both theorists conventionally gender their concepts. 'Nature' for Benjamin and the private sphere for Arendt are associated with the "feminine". Through bringing the two theorists into close conjunction, Einzig affirms her writing as a feminine 'in between' space, a space of translation between nature and history, public and private space, masculine writing and feminine silence. Her position as translator between these terms is that of Evans' Martha who also translated between two different cultures and value systems. She similarly occupied a borderland on the island between the utopian society and the ocean, representative of dangerous masculine desire.

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[110] Ibid, p. 63.

[111] Ibid, p. 51.

[112] Disch, p. 79.

[113] Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 198.

[114] Disch, p. 79.

Aesthetics and knowing

In the narratives of Defoe, Evans and Aubin, the morality which is both contested and expressed is that appearances express a moral truth. Einzig shows her awareness of this when she describes "her father" as handsome and virtuous.[115] In challenging this conception, she uses sight and the quality of glass to emphasise that we see what we know, rather than we know what we see.[116] This immediately shifts agency from author to reader in the creation of meaning in a text. This relates her work to Defoe's for whom responsibility for the text rested with the customer/reader. For differing reasons, each author refutes the idea that they have total control over meaning. Einzig's work resists the idea that the narrative 'is a transparent form of telling'[117] and challenges the senses as the basis for knowledge.

Einzig's approach rejects the opposition between subjective and objective, outside and inside ways of seeing, viewing them instead as mutually constructing. Through the description of her local library she emphasises a two-way sense of seeing. The library has an 'Eichler facade' which is made of glass. Joseph Eichler was a designer-builder who built houses in Palo Alto, where "Einzig" grew up.[118] His importance to Einzig's text is that he 'perfected a...design featuring vast expanses of glass that made occupants feel almost as if they were living on the outside'.[119] For Einzig, Eichler's facade is a metaphor for breaking the distinction between natural and social, and public and private, while maintaining them as separate spaces. The image is of aligned, but permeable spaces. Eichler's use of glass blurred distinctions based on appearance and therefore questioned the basis on which distinctions were made. It was a liberal view which complemented his

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[115] *A New Fiction*, p. 2.

[116] Benjamin also used the qualities of glass, that is, its fragility, its ability to be solid and its ability to fragment as an appropriate metaphor for his own fragmented writing . See Chapter 6, 'Glass architecture' in Pierre Missac, *Walter Benjamin's Passages*, The MIT Press, Massachusetts, 1995.

[117] Robert Hodge, *Literature as Discourse*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1990, p. 173.

[118] Information on Joseph Eichler is taken from the Internet. www.commerce.digital.com.palo-alto/historical-assoc/images/logo.gif. 6 June, 1996.

[119] Ibid.

political views. For example, he 'spoke in favour of racial tolerance', insisting that 'race not be an issue in the sale of his houses'.[120]

The metaphor of the Eichler facade allows Einzig to suggest that writing itself is situated in, shaping and shaped by, both public and private arenas. As a contrasting metaphor, Einzig offers the police library within which Eddie is locked until he tears the library apart. The difference between the two images links reading and representation to subjectivity, knowledge and power. The metaphor of the Eichler facade suggests an ideal two-way relationship between inner and outer worlds and public and private worlds. This contrasts with her parents' instructions not to read which makes "Einzig" and her sister 'lower books through the window, that they might not be seen'.[121]

In the text, "Einzig's" questioning of her inherited knowledge base is followed by a questioning of her subjective knowledge and its dependence on visuality: 'The cloud in my blue sky first evidenced itself by certain peculiarities of my faculties of perception'.[122] "Einzig" quotes Goethe, an important influence on Benjamin, as saying 'we see only what we know'.[123] "Einzig's" decision to give up writing is based on her senses. She writes 'The linoleum of the adult section [in the library] was cold. This touched me sensibly. I would write down this account and then no more of it...'[124] She becomes aware that there are other knowledges, indicating an ultimately productive unknowability. She criticises a dependence on subjective knowledge through the domestic image of a one-way window:

> when I thought of the word "house", conjured up was all the richness of this house I then lived in, with a power disproportionate to its humble frame. A closet shut off from the inside the window visible as ornament on the exterior; and I now got it into my head, as it were, that the word "house" was to me no more than this window, impossible to look through from the inside, a one-sided word only, as I only knew one house that thus formed my entire conception of what this sound

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[120] Ibid.

[121] *A New Fiction*, p. 11.

[122] Ibid, p. 5.

[123] Ibid, p. 5. It was Plato who first articulated the importance of the visual sense; its importance in shaping knowledge and involvement in 'the birth of the personal 'I' have been argued in contemporary debates. The arguments are summarised by Keller and Grontkowski.

[124] *A New Fiction*, p. 13.

might mean, and how many actual other houses did its meaning to me then shut out?[125]

When Eichler built his glass facade it was a public act. In contrast, in the above quotation, it is the internal private act which is powerful. The one-sided window is a one-sided word and the power to disclose is significant, private and feminine. In these terms, the private act of disclosure complements Einzig's writing and informs her public act of publishing her work.

Belief and the problem of identity

Einzig emphasises the way in which the visual or the aesthetic underscores belief systems by connecting the eighteenth century insecurity over paper currency with seeing:

> ...when I reported where I was born it was with a sense of being a counterfeiter, shining the false silver currency of my biography and catching your vulnerable eye. Eyes have an affinity for money, often decorating the notes themselves.[126]

Her stated problem is that she cannot believe her eyes, trust her senses, or 'know' the truth of others. The narrator is unsure whether what is being "seen" is 'memory' or whether sight is objective, so that 'the eye formed a kind of foreign witness'.[127] She explains to 'the reader' that her story is based on information given to her and cannot be trusted. Here "Einzig" can be understood to be attempting to counter a sense of her particular identity as a 'shoddy counterfeit' of the "real" thing.[128] In relation to modern masculine and Protestant subjectivity, her identity can only be "other" in that it is "foreign" and inaccessible. When she discusses her grandfather's religion, she says 'hasidic' was 'a foreign, closed word'[129] and 'so...my public persona was to me but another fiction'.[130] Her problem is that Jewish and female identities, like all identities, can only be deduced from external signs:

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[125] Ibid, p. 7.

[126] Ibid, p. 14.

[127] Ibid, p. 5.

[128] Ash, p. 8.

[129] *A New Fiction*, p. 10.

[130] Ibid, pp. 8-9

> certain hotels across the country refused our entrance on the grounds that we were Jewish, as a child I regarded that attribute as a private one of my mother's, a sort of personal mood that sometimes came over her, as a small shrine to the ominous,...shut in mystery...Perhaps Mother even made it up.[131]

She counters the problem of being unable to know the "truth" through using feminine and Judaic references. Einzig's use of Benjamin contrasts aspects of Judaism against Defoe's Protestantism. The effect of different beliefs on culture and on identity is emphasised by "Einzig" in her description of the family's move to California. She says she sensed that her parent's wished

> to flee a world dense with family, in which privacy was non-existent, and one was surrounded by furniture covered in plastic...in short to break away, to move toward something else . . . something benign, ambitious, unencumbered by eastern prejudice, or by what seemed to evoke that prejudice: belief.[132]

Einzig's references to the harmonious singing of her original family and to Rabbi Nachman are all references to the Jewish Kabbalistic tradition, a tradition which also influenced Benjamin. This influence is evident in the following description of the Kabbalah:

> A song means filling a jug, and even more so breaking the jug. Breaking it apart. In the language of the Kabbalah we perhaps might call it: Broken Vessels.[133]

It is said of the Kabbalah that, 'The duality between the container and the contained is one of the most important Kabbalistic explanations of the creative moment.'[134] This conveys Einzig's (and Benjamin's) reference to 'things' having a mental being, and the sense of languages being translations of an original sacred text.

"Einzig" presents herself as inheriting two dominant traditions. She compares herself to the offspring of two different lovebirds who have to choose between carrying nest material in the beak or in the rump feathers.[135] "Einzig" presents her choice as between the Kabbalah and the Eastern European oral story-

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[131] Ibid, p. 3.

[132] Ibid, p. 2.

[133] H. Leivick quoted by Harold Bloom, *Kabbalah and Criticism*, The Seabury Press, New York, 1975, preface.

[134] http://www.digital.brilliance.com/Kab/FAQ.htm#What is Kabbalah. 30 September, 1997.

[135] *A New Fiction*, p. 12.

telling tradition which Rabbi Nachmann exemplifies, and the English "classical" and feminine tradition represented as 'the Brontës', which, in turn, is related to Defoe.[136] 'Spinning a tale' is the phrase Einzig plays with to show the important differences and similarities between the two traditions. Rabbi Nachmann's tales are depicted as having a sonic quality; they transcend boundaries, and ring throughout 'the spinning globe'.[137] In comparison, the Brontës' narratives 'had to be spun in underground caverns where the atmosphere was sufficiently moist'.[138] Nachman's texts are associated with the air and with lofty ideals, 'the heights made me dizzy', while the tradition of literary women is below ground and suggestive of materiality and of women's domestic and hidden labour. As Einzig writes, 'grandmother made little hats'.[139] Just as Einzig describes the feminine literary tradition as powerful, though enclosed and confined, so she refers to the voice of Rabbi Nachman as tiny but 'soaring'. Together the images suggest Aubin's enclosed, ideal, redemptive and feminine spaces. Just as Nachmann's tiny voice soars, so the Bronte's make lace, suggesting textual connections and productive aporias. In these descriptions, Einzig effectively embraces both traditions as combining disclosure and enclosure. Her realisation that she has inherited both traditions leads to her knowledge that her work is 'nothing but quotations'.[140]

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[136] Martin Buber, *The Tales of Rabbi Nachmann*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1956. Rabbi Nachmann is the founder of Hasidism, or Chassidism, to which Einzig also makes reference. Harold Bloom states that 'Hasidism was the ultimate descendent of Kabbalah', *Kabbalah and Criticism*, 1975, p. 34.

[137] *A New Fiction*, p. 11. Nachmann is named by Arendt as the only writer Kafka would read. Kafka's work is described by Arendt as 'making decisive changes in traditional parables or inventing new ones in traditional style'. *Illuminations*, p. 41.

[138] *A New Fiction*, p. 11.

[139] Ibid, p. 11.

[140] Ibid, p. 12.

Montage, Form and the Internet

Einzig's work can be understood to reincorporate 'tell-tale' marks of "origin" upon modern subjectivity, characterised as *Robinson Crusoe*.[141] Einzig reinscribes gender, religion and capitalism onto the language of *Robinson Crusoe* and into her own text. Her writing serves as both an inducement and a reminder of the nature of interpretation by casting the light back on the interpreter's agency. In her work, as in Benjamin's, readers are made 'historical detectives even against [their]...will, forcing [them]... to become actively involved in the reconstruction of the work'.[142] An example is the 'Eichler facade', which Einzig does not explain is made of glass. The reader is required to investigate in order to discover its significance. Her approach is appropriate to her text's publication as an electronic text accessible on the Internet. On the Internet, Einzig's text does not provide immediate access to meanings, words, phrases, quotations. Key words are not offered as hypertext ready to be opened up to meaning, for in Einzig's conception the whole text would need underlining. Rather the reader, as 'traveller' or 'visitor', can follow up various leads offered by the text. The text can also be entered from a number of gateways which link it to other discourses, for example, economics, religion and literature. Ideally, this enables the reader to realise the intertextuality of language and to draw connections between *Robinson Crusoe*, colonisation and contemporary society. An example of the text's multiple intertextuality is Einzig's use of the phrase 'the undiscovered country'.[143] An Internet search shows the phrase to be used in a feminist utopian text, Charlotte Gilman's *Herland*, in a text of colonialism, Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, and in *Hamlet*. That is, the Internet emphasises the disclosing qualities of language and the computer complements Einzig's travelling and spatial metaphors, with its language of search and scroll and interconnections between texts.

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[141] The project responds to Benjamin's insight that 'the techniques of mass production involve the destruction of tell-tale marks upon objects that recall their origin'. Gilloch, p. 119.

[142] Buck-Morss, p. x.

[143] Einzig uses it to refer to Eddie's near death. *A New Fiction*, p. 15.

When her father quotes Hamlet, 'I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself king of infinite space', "Einzig" comments that she did not know what followed. The isolation of the quotation is a refusal of linear text and an acknowledgment of difference and fragmentation. Like her father's past, meanings 'now could exist only in fragments'.[144] Being 'king of infinite space', while living in finite space is Einzig's perception of being bound up in a language that has preceded her. Einzig's text embraces fragmentation and spatialisation as tools of disclosure which empower the reader. This is consistent with what I understand to be Einzig's feminist rewriting of *Robinson Crusoe.*

Both Einzig's text and the morality-based castaway narratives of the early eighteenth century can be said to protest against certain social values. In Einzig's work, the "realist" text is undermined. In the earlier period, the romance and the travel narratives were considered problematic and illusory. It has been suggested that the "realist" text is moral and feminine in contrast to the "masculinity" of the postmodern novel.[145] Einzig's writing project opposes both of these poles by situating the feminine as central to language. By refusing to directly oppose her text to *Robinson Crusoe*, she shows the 'new' to be inextricable from history and language. In literary criticism, *Robinson Crusoe* is situated at the beginning of the "rise of the novel" and an obsession with things "new" characterised this early eighteenth century period. I have shown that the novel drew on the traditions which preceded it while it established its own inheritance. Like the early eighteenth century narratives, Einzig's text situates her "new" beginning by engaging with dominant values. Her text makes its "origins" explicit, while drawing out different connections and associations in order to suggest its own integrity and establish a "new" tradition. In this sense, the "new" of *A New Fiction* is comparable to a 1950s advertisement for the De Soto which asked '"New road?" to which came the reply, "No, new De Soto!"'.[146]

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[144] Ibid, p. 6.

[145] Wenche Ommundsen, *Metafictions?*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1993, p. 96.

[146] http: www.desoto.org/history.html 10 January, 1996.

Conclusion

Einzig depicts her text as a feminine space of transformation. In so doing, she emulates the work of the earlier castaway narratives. With important differences, her work resonates with the feminine, "enclosed' and "internal" imagery which informs the work of Aubin, Defoe and Evans. I have shown that in their texts, the feminine defines spaces where values are both protected and changed. Einzig and her period differ markedly from that of the early eighteenth century authors. However, her text is clearly in 'kinship' with these texts which devalue popular associations and reinvest words with 'new' meanings. In these terms, *A New Fiction* situates itself within and against a literary and cultural tradition.

In spite of obvious differences, the texts of Einzig, Defoe, Aubin and Evans have some important features in common. Evans, Aubin and Einzig all engage with *Robinson Crusoe* by shaping their narratives around the figure of a woman. All the authors, including Defoe, use the castaway figure to address and resolve problems of difference. As I have shown, the early texts are concerned with authenticity and the problem of differing cultural values and identities. In these terms, the castaway narrative continues to be valid as a text of social critique. Einzig and the earlier authors also have in common an awareness of the artifice of language and fiction; in addition each author brings religious and gendered differences to bear on the text. Although both Aubin and Einzig are quite different female 'subjects', their texts demonstrate an engagement with *Robinson Crusoe* which associates women with oppression and converts this association into one of power. In their texts, they both ascribe public values to the "feminine", focus on their public work as writers and associate their "oppression" with their religion.

Many of the themes which are evident in the critique *Robinson Crusoe* were already presaged in that text and in its earlier rewritings. For example, *Robinson Crusoe* is popularly read as a text in which culture dominates nature. However, in Chapter One, I have shown that Defoe complicates this division by constructing Crusoe as "natural" and Friday as "social". This is done to create a likeness

between the desiring Crusoe and Friday as a figure of avarice who represents Defoe's consumer society. In this sense, Einzig's blurring of the distinction between nature and history works in similar ways to Defoe's text. Defoe showed this is as a process taking place in writing.[147] Although Einzig challenges the ideology in which nature, race and the feminine are all dominated and controlled, like Defoe, Einzig's challenge to dominant values occurs through the use of a feminine and enabling language.[148] In this sense she simultaneously emulates and criticises *Robinson Crusoe*.

Of all the early eighteenth century castaway narratives, Crusoe is the only figure who returns to sea. Defoe uses the protective feminine (of female virtue) to profit from masculine desire. His ultimate "desire" is to remain safe, mobile, accessible and profitable. In response, Einzig's text refuses to either remain "at sea", that is, to be dismissed as "mad", or to remain on land. To stay on land is to be locked into a gendered modernity in which a masculine language "masters" and controls the feminine and female subjectivity. For Einzig, the dichotomies offered by modernity can only be transgressed by the production of a different kind of writing. Through her use of *Robinson Crusoe* her writing emerges as neither feminine and "crazy"nor as masculine and rational. Because of her location in a society in which modern subjectivity is dominant, "Einzig" ends the text as a productive, but 'anxious' subject. However, her writing remains a productive in-between state in which a "new" story can come into existence.

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[147] As Margaret Sankey points out, 'The process of civilising the island and Friday is paralleled by the process by which the writer-Robinson creates an order in his life through the recording of his spiritual and mental states'. Margaret Sankey, 'Meaning through Intertextuality: Isomorphism of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Tournier's Vendredi ou les limbes du Pacifique', *Australian Journal of French Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 1, 1981, p. 82.

[148] Her work is like that of Arendt who describes translation in biological and familial terms as 'the [literary form]...charged with the special mission of watching over the maturing process of the original language and the birth pangs of its own'. Benjamin, 'The Task of the Translator', *Illuminations*, p. 73.

Chapter Five

The "feminine" middle ground of *Foe*

Death may indeed be the last great foe of writing, but writing is also the foe of death.

J. M. Coetzee, *Age of Iron*

...what are you now, whether Ghost or Substance, *I know not...*

Daniel Defoe, *Roxana*

Introduction

In this chapter, I examine *Foe* (1986), written by the South African writer, J. M. Coetzee. *Foe* is an important text which comments on the foundational premises of Western culture and language and the consequences that these entail for race and gender. It is a significant novel in the genre of postcolonial literature, as are all Coetzee's works. Coetzee is a major prize-winning author as well as Professor of English and a scholar of linguistics at Cape Town University.[1] He has published seven novels to date.[2] Of the three late twentieth century authors whose work I examine in this thesis, his work has been given the most attention by academic critics.[3] This is largely explained by his focus on language in relation to race, gender and colonialism, and the acknowledged influence on his work of contemporary French theorists, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault and Jacques Lacan.[4] As Teresa Dovey points out, Coetzee's novels (like Einzig's work)

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[1] Coetzee has won most of the major literature prizes, including Britain's Booker-McConnell prize; the Prix Femina Etranger, France, the Jerusalem Prize in Israel, and the Mofolo-Plomer prize and CNA prize in South Africa. He has also been a nominee for the Nobel Prize in Literature. David Attwell in J. M. Coetzee, *Doubling the Point: Essays and Interviews*, ed. David Attwell, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1992, fn. 3, p. 397.

[2] Coetzee has also worked in universities in both South Africa and the United States. Teresa Dovey, *The Novels of J. M. Coetzee: Lacanian Allegories*, AD. Donker, Craighall, 1988, p. 9.

[3] Apart from numerous articles, his work is the subject of five books of criticism. Graham Huggan and Stephen Watson, eds., *Critical Perspectives on J. M. Coetzee*, Macmillan Press Ltd., Hampshire, 1996; David Attwell, *J. M. Coetzee: South Africa and the Politics of Writing*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1993; Dick Penner, *Countries of the Mind: The Fiction of J. M. Coetzee*, Greenwood Press, New York, 1989; Susan VanZanten Gallagher, *A Story of South Africa: J. M. Coetzee's Fiction in Context*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1991 and Dovey, 1988

[4] Coetzee acknowledges the influences of Derrida and Foucault in his interview with Attwell in Coetzee, *Doubling the Point*, pp. 245-247. Attwell refers to the three authors as Coetzee's 'strategic influences'. Coetzee, p. 4. Dovey (1988) demonstrates the extent of Lacan's influence.

constitute 'fiction as criticism' or fictocriticism.[5] Dovey expresses the view that *Foe* is 'constituted by nothing less than the discourses of feminism, postcolonialism and postmodernism'.[6] These theoretical influences are read as constituting his fiction as a kind of 'allegorised theory'.[7] Consequently, it is argued that, although his work addresses 'the nature and crisis of fiction-writing in South Africa today'[8], his concerns are linguistic and in this sense, 'eternal'.[9] Other critics insist that it would be wrong to focus solely on the grammatical and linguistic aspects of Coetzee's writing. They insist that the disequilibrium of power in South Africa, in which 'the serfs are in open rebellion and the masters are in disarray', is crucial to his work.[10] At the time of the publication of *Foe*, 15.5 million South Africans were under the rule of a minority Afrikaner government.[11] The political struggle of black South Africans was particularly evident a year before the novel was published when a state of emergency was declared in the Eastern Cape. It was only the second state of emergency since Sharpeville twenty-five years earlier and was caused by similar events.[12]

There is a tension then, at least among critics, between reading Coetzee's work as a theoretical critique of the metaphysics which inform the construction of Western humanism and liberalism, and reading his work as derived from the political context of South Africa.[13] In the former reading, his work is recognised for

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[5] Dovey, p. 330.

[6] Huggan and Watson comment that the 'Academe would have invented J. M. Coetzee had he not already existed, so sympathetic do his concerns seem to be to critical theory and many of its current critical preoccupations. Whether this is an unqualified virtue remains to be seen'. p. 6.

[7] The phrase is used by David Attwell in an interview with Coetzee in Coetzee, *Doubling the Point*, p. 245.

[8] Attwell in his introduction to Coetzee, ibid, p. 4.

[9] Kelly Hewson, a South African critic quoted in Magreet De Lange, *The Muzzled Muse: Literature and Censorship in South Africa*, John Benjamins Publishing Company, Amsterdam, 1997, p. 103.

[10] The phrase is used by Coetzee to describe South Africa in 'Jerusalem Prize speech (1987). *Doubling the Point*, p. 96.

[11] The figure is quoted by Nadine Gordimer, 'Letter from Johannesburg, 1985' in *The Essential Gesture*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1988, p. 302.

[12] Ibid, p. 301.

[13] Robert Post, 'The Noise of Freedom: J. M Coetzee's *Foe*', *Critique*, vol. 30, Spring 1989, pp. 143-54.

its critical insights, while in the latter, it tends to be criticised as conservative.[14] As a white author, the conjunction of Coetzee's theoretical and political concerns have led to him being described as writing 'from a marginal location'.[15] Coetzee himself says that because his parents were 'indifferent to the *volk* and its fate', he grew up in the Afrikaner community with 'a well developed sense of social marginality'. His description of his experience (which he tells in the third person) relays the difficult position of a man who has power and agency in a culture which is oppressive to the majority. In his account, the master is depicted as being as oppressed as the slave. In keeping with this imagery, he has described his situation in terms of the colour of his skin: 'there is no way of escaping the skin you are born with...you cannot resign from the caste'.[16] Coetzee states that, as a result, he is 'disabled, disqualified' and as a writer he is 'without authority, writing without authority'.[17] These self representations are important as they link his interest in critical theory to the politics of South Africa and suggest his personal investment in the texts he writes.

With the above contexts in mind, in this reading of *Foe* I examine how the depiction of the castaway as a female lends authority to Coetzee's marginalised voice. Briefly, such a voice is achieved through the evocation of a "feminine" space which is related to, but not identified with, the female castaway, Susan Barton. That is, Susan is not only 'The Female Castaway'[18] but also a 'feminine subject', the term Coetzee has used to describe her in an interview.[19] I understand by his phrase that Susan is more than just a gendered female subject and more than a

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[14] Brian Macaskill states that 'the intellectual left' in South Africa 'have accused Coetzee (especially during the early to mid 1980s) of political quietism'. 'Charting J. M. Coetzee's Middle Voice', *Contemporary Literature*, vol XXXV, no. 3, p. 443. De Lange describes *Foe* as having 'no direct connection with South Africa at all'. The connection between the *Age of Iron*, described by De Lange as 'Coetzee's first political novel', (from which she uses the opening quotation to this chapter) and *Foe* is not observed. De Lange, pp. 109-110.

[15] Huggan and Watson, p. 2.

[16] Coetzee, *Doubling the Point*, p. 96.

[17] Ibid, pp. 392-3.

[18] *Foe*, p. 67.

[19] Coetzee, *Doubling the Point*, p. 248.

theoretical, feminine abstraction. As is said of another of Coetzee's female castaways, Magda of *In the Heart of the Country*, she

> is only *in part*, a theoretical construct, a "hole" born of deconstruction, or an absence indicated by lack of a historiographic record. Her "wholeness" lies elsewhere...in the intersection of linguistic and literary codes[20].

Coetzee's approach places the female castaway at such an intersection by making her construction as a "subject" in language available to the reader. This allows Coetzee to identify her with the white, masculine"subjects" of the text as well as with Friday, as her racialised and silenced "other". In this way, the castaway as 'feminine subject' is not only shown as a liberal subject but also as the representative of writing itself understood as an active and constructing middle voice. Coetzee describes the lingering presence of such a middle voice in Indo-European languages:

> the phantom presence of a middle voice...can be felt in some senses of modern verbs if one is alert to the possibility of the three fold opposition active-middle-passive.[21]

His example is the phrase, 'I\am writing\a note' which shows an active and middle voice in that 'To write (middle) is to carry out the action (or better, to do-writing)'.[22] In *Foe*, writing is the bridge between that which has existence and that which does not. In other words, it is textuality, words as well as silence, which gives identities "existence" and value. Writing is mirrored in the text by the position of the female castaway who aspires to be like the author, Foe, and is shown to be like her "other", Friday. In these terms, the female castaway and the narrative itself, as in the earlier castaway narratives, signifies an active transformative space between the subject and its other and between what is considered to have substance and value and what does not.

The broad outline of *Foe* is as follows. It opens with Susan telling her story of being castaway on an island with two figures called Cruso and Friday. Cruso

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[20] J. M. Coetzee, *In the Heart of the Country* discussed in Brian Macaskill, 'Charting J. M. Coetzee's Middle Voice', p. 462.

[21] 'A Note on Writing, (1984)' in *Doubling the Point*, p. 94.

[22] *Doubling the Point*, p. 94.

and Friday differ markedly from their namesakes in Defoe's novel.[23] Although, as in *Robinson Crusoe*, the island is situated off the coast of Brazil and the names of the characters are familiar, the reader is soon informed that both characters and the island are not what they might expect. Susan's discovery that 'I have come to the wrong island' is also the reader's.[24] Cruso, now spelt without an 'e', is not the same character that was Robinson Crusoe.[25] Coetzee's Friday is mute as he has no tongue. He represents the colonised black subject excluded from representation in 'white writing'.[26] In this section, Susan tries to change Cruso to make him more like herself, that is, like Robinson Crusoe. She also tries to find out, without success, the story of Friday. When a ship arrives, Susan forces them both to be rescued. Cruso and Susan have sex on the island and on the rescue ship. On the rescue ship, for the sake of convention, she agrees to be called Mrs. Cruso and, on this basis, after Cruso's death she refers to herself as a widow.[27] The description refers back to Defoe's independent widow and, appropriately, Susan makes an oblique feminist reference when she says of Cruso: 'If there was a wife left behind in Brazil, she and I would be sisters now'.[28] When Cruso dies, Susan "inherits" the care of Friday and the carriage of the island story.

In the second section, Susan meets Foe in London and asks him to write the story of the island. Her negotiations then take the form of letters to Foe. Foe's name and his description, as a figure constantly in debt, suggests among other

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[23] To avoid confusion, I have used Robinson Crusoe's full name throughout the chapter to refer to Defoe's protagonist, although clearly, as with Einzig's text, the confusion is productive within the narrative. Where italicised the name is that of Defoe's text.

[24] *Foe*, p. 6.

[25] Chris Bongie points out that the 'e' can only be heard in writing, indicating the difference that writing makes. Chris Bongie, '"Lost In The Maze Of Doubting": J. M. Coetzee's *Foe* And The Politics Of (Un)Likeness', *Modern Fiction Studies*, vol. 39, No. 2, Summer, 1993, p. 271.

[26] *White writing* is the title of a collected edition of Coetzee's critical writings. The title has a double significance as Eurocentric writing and as Derrida's 'white ink' which indicates both race and erasure, that is, that which cannot be read. J. M. Coetzee, *White Writing: on the culture of letters in South Africa*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1988.

[27] *Foe*, p. 56

[28] Ibid, p. 56.

connotations, Daniel Defoe.[29] When Foe goes into hiding from the bailiffs, Susan continues to write him letters, but he does not reply. When she and Friday move into his empty house, a woman arrives who says she is Susan's daughter. Susan had told Cruso and Foe that she was looking for her daughter in Bahia before she was shipwrecked. Susan does not recognise the woman as her daughter and suspects that she has been sent by Foe. In fact, the story of the daughter resembles that of Defoe's *Roxana* and some of Defoe's fictional characters are called as witnesses.[30] At this time, Susan fails in her attempt to return Friday to Africa because of the risk of slavery. In the third and apparently final narrative section, Susan resumes her first person narration and she and Friday meet with Foe. In an act of sex with Foe, she describes herself as a 'Muse', trying to 'father' her own narrative. She also begins to teach Friday to write. In the short section which follows, an unnamed "I" describes Friday and various couples as bodies which lie inside Foe's house, which is now dark and abandoned, and inside Susan's wrecked ship lying on the ocean bed.

The island: a 'fabulous scene'

The island establishes a triangular structure as the basis of Western language and culture. The structure is that of the binaries which construct Western language plus that which is "other" than either pole. The "other" is that which cannot be represented by the structure of Western language and by its discourses and can only be gestured towards. In this sense, the island of *Foe* is foundational; it is Derrida's 'fabulous scene' which is erased from the cultural myth that, in this instance, is *Robinson Crusoe*. As such, *Foe* is a kind of pop-up book of deconstructive positions.[31] The triangular structure of the novel is reflected in the

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[29] In the context of the novel's description of the linguistic foundations of society, it is appropriate that *Foe* was De Foe's 'original' name.

[30] Like Susan, Roxana denies the existence of her daughter. For Roxana this is "necessary" to protect her wealth and social position.

[31] The depiction of the island as foundational suggests Jacques Derrida's 'white mythology', discussed earlier, of which he states: 'White mythology - metaphysics has erased within itself the fabulous scene that has procured it, the scene that nevertheless remains active and stirring, inscribed in white ink, an invisible design covered over in the palimpsest'. Jacques Derrida, 'White Mythology: Metaphor in the

figures of Susan, Friday and Cruso, of Susan, Friday and the author Foe, and in the triangle of Foe, Susan and her alleged daughter. In this symbolic and metaphysical sense, the ocean which surrounds the island is the insubstantial "other" which is also powerful and shaping. When Susan arrives and swims 'against the current' and breaks 'free of its grip', she is breaking from the realm of that which shapes and is shaped by the island. That Susan survives, on the land as well as at sea, indicates her doubleness. That is, she is aligned with, as well as different from, both Cruso and Friday. It is significant in this respect that the "conclusion" of the text takes place below the water, where such a text is based, in 'a place where bodies are their own signs'.[32] That this is also a place of drowning, darkness and silence is the problem Coetzee faces.

When Susan arrives on the island, she arrives as it were on the surface of the text and into the material conditions of language. It is a world in which she is defined against Friday as absolute "other" and against Cruso as absolute "subject". The state of language she arrives into is not only historical and literary, but masculine, and defined against non-white and non-Western experience. The conditions of her arrival establish the kind of state that Susan enters. Firstly, the island acts upon her, indicating her arrival into language and into narrative. When she leaves the ocean, her foot is pierced. It swells and she limps. Her hopping on one leg plays with the idea that Defoe's single footprint, which caused Robinson Crusoe so much consternation, belonged to a woman. The depiction also suggests that the single footprint symbolises a dependence on "others" rather than a universal individualism. As such, when Susan cannot walk, Friday carries her half on and half off his back:

> So part-way skipping on one leg, part-way riding on his back, with my petticoat gathered up and my chin brushing his springy hair, I ascended the hillside, my fear of him abating in this strange backwards embrace.[33]

Text of Philosophy' in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1982, p. 146. In his interview with David Attwell, Coetzee agrees that in his fiction he is able to 'move relatively freely within the deconstructive mode'. Coetzee, *Doubling the Point*, pp. 245-6.

[32] *Foe*, p. 157.

[33] Ibid, p. 6.

The scene recalls the earlier castaway narratives of Aubin and Evans in which servants and slaves carried and saved their female "masters".[34] However, the dependency of Susan on Friday is characterised as 'part-way'[35], which suggests that each is partially independent of the relation that one has to the other. That is, neither Friday nor Susan is totally confined by his or her position within masculine Western language. Each is also other to it and to Cruso who, in contrast, is described as 'singular' and a 'singular saviour'.[36] Friday is also described as a saviour in that, when Susan first sees him, he has 'a dazzling halo' around his head.[37] Susan puts Foe in the place of God when later she tells Friday: 'In Mr. Foe's house there are many mansions'.[38] In the text, masculinity as the dominant metanarrative displaces (and produces) the biblical story of Eden with which the earlier texts engaged.

Cruso represents the order of language, the point at which meaning is fixed and from which the others then gain significance. Susan says of him: 'He is a truly kingly figure; he is the true king of his island'.[39] Just as language is structured around his masculinity, so language gives his masculinity meaning. Susan is described as 'his second subject, the first being his manservant Friday'. Language is thus identified with the structures of patriarchy and colonialism. As with Friday and Susan, Cruso's symbolic place within language is not identical with his consciousness as a subject. For example, Susan understands 'that in truth the island no more belonged to Cruso than to the King of Portugal'.[40] This, however, is

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[34] In Aubin, *The Noble Slaves*, when Teresa is drowning, Domingo says 'My dear Lady, throw your self upon me, and I will bear you up til I die'. p. 3. In Evans, *Alexander Vendchurch*, the servant Diego saves Elvira, 'Diego, an old servant of my father's, and one who was an excellent swimmer, caught hold of me...and bore me to near the land'. p. 22.

[35] *Foe*, p. 6.

[36] Ibid, p. 11, p. 13.

[37] Ibid, p. 5.

[38] Ibid, p. 77.

[39] Ibid, p. 37.

[40] Ibid, p. 26.

not Cruso's "truth" and he asserts his authority over her, saying 'While you live under my roof you will do as I instruct'.[41]

Susan's subjection to Cruso is depicted in terms of his attempt to confine her within domestic space. For example, although Cruso says he will make shoes for her, he is angry when, tired of waiting, she goes ahead and makes her own. While she waits for him she is confined within 'an encampment in the shape of a *triangle* which Cruso termed his castle'.[42] The implication is that all three figures are subjects of a Eurocentric, masculine language which is cause and effect of the historical conditions which have shaped their lives. In that Susan makes her own shoes, and gains her freedom within the island, social structures are shown as not fixed. Susan, as "subject", by virtue of being born into the same language as Cruso, has potentially equal access to his 'singular' position. In this sense, Susan is a female "subject" reflective of the liberal feminism of the mid to late twentieth century. Such "equal rights" feminism has been criticised for not recognising its complicity in the colonised relations which created the white man as "first subject". Chris Bongie suggests that Susan's 'simple minded feminist identity politics' will not allow her to recognise her complicity with power.[43] It is in a liberal feminist sense, reflective of the language in which *Robinson Crusoe* was constructed, that Susan "inherits" Cruso's story and responsibility for Friday.

Susan's desire to be free is associated with the apes that roam the island. These apes are killed and their skins make the shoes that allow Susan to walk freely. Another condition of the three's existence, then, is the subjection of nature. The depiction of apes suggests not only the Darwinian domination of nature, but also *Robinson Crusoe*, and the domination of "man" over his own desires. Cruso, manifesting the enclosed 'singularity' of the subject, also thinks himself free. He is living in his own world and likes to stare out to sea in the evenings in the manner

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[41] Ibid, p. 20.

[42] Ibid, p. 9. My emphasis.

[43] Bongie, p. 265.

of Rousseau.[44] Cruso's is a self-enclosure which matches the island and Friday's silence, as well as his attempt to confine Susan. As such, Susan describes Cruso as having so 'narrowed his horizon...he had come to be persuaded he knew all there was to know about the world'.[45] Therefore, when she asks about escape, he says, 'where should I escape to...as if no answer were possible'.[46] In other words, Cruso lives as if he were outside of history.

On the island, very little that Cruso does makes sense to the female castaway. Susan has a Robinson Crusoe's mentality and Cruso, in a reversal of roles, is her opposite. Cruso is without the desire which characterised Defoe's society. In Lacanian terms, 'loss or lack initiates desire' and desire is the structuring principle of language.[47] In this sense, unlike Susan who is depicted as castrated by virtue of being female, Cruso is complete unto himself. As I will explain later, Friday is also "complete" unto himself as absolute "other". Susan's likeness to Robinson Crusoe is evident in her attempts to get Cruso to use tools and to keep a journal. She raises Robinson Crusoe-like expectations and asks Cruso, for example, why don't we get tools and wood from the sunken ship and why don't you write down your history. Cruso, who has had 'no-one to say him nay to', is impervious to her views that the world is different to his perception.[48] The questions asked by Susan are unable to interrogate language's own foundations, because her questions and their answers are derived from the same foundations. In this regard, although Cruso and language are depicted as different

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[44] As indicated earlier, Rousseau stated the importance of *Robinson Crusoe* in *Emile*. Huck Glutman describes Rousseau's reveries in his last work, *The Reveries of A Solitary Walker*, as an attempt to abandon ' the active self, erase the boundaries between self and no-self'. Luther H. Martin, Huck Glutman and Patrick Hutton, eds., *Technologies of Self: a seminar with Michel Foucault*, University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst, 1988, p. 114.

[45] *Foe*, p. 13.

[46] Ibid.

[47] According to Brian Macaskill and Jeanne Colleran, '*Foe* participates in the Lacanian and feminist perception of representation as a loss or lack that initiates desire'. 'Reading History, Reading Heresy: The Resistance Of Representation and the Representation Of Resistance In J. M. Coetzee's *Foe*.' *Contemporary Literature*, vol. 33, 1992, p. 439. This is discussed in detail in Dovey, 1988.

[48] *Foe*, p. 13.

from the rationality of Susan and of *Robinson Crusoe*, they are in fact the same and one is unable to interrogate the other.

By virtue of Susan's questions, the reader comes to know the subject, narrative, history and temporality as social constructs.[49] That is, through Susan's writing the reader comes to understand that her questions are contained within the same set of terms that construct and position her in language. Her questions, which receive no satisfaction, are eventually questioned by herself. In this manner a "feminine other" is evoked and the similarities and differences that gender, sex and sexuality make to language and to subjectivity are outlined, without those differences being read as essential. In such a fashion, the text points back to how the reader interprets.

Throughout the text, history, writing and tools are modes which differentiate the self from its "other". Unlike Robinson Crusoe, and contrary to Susan's desire, Cruso doesn't keep a journal. This is equated with the fact that he has no desire for tools and no curiosity about the past. He says 'We sleep, we eat, we have no need of tools.'[50] Cruso has a Nietzschean response to Susan Barton's urging that he record his history on the island: 'Nothing is forgotten said he' and then: 'Nothing I have forgotten is worth the remembering'.[51] In *Foe*, history is the narrative which constructs desire. As such, Cruso's lack of desire for tools and for writing is linked to the absence of narrative and history. History is not considered to be important on the island and when the past is referred to, it is not in the form that Susan expects. She says that Cruso's stories of his own and Friday's past are hard to 'reconcile'. His stories all have adventure themes, reflective of the early eighteenth century narratives, and are quite contradictory. Cruso tells her, for example, that he quit a wealthy family in search of adventure, that he was a cabin

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[49] In Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's words, '*Foe* stages the difficulties of a timekeeping investigation before a space that will not yield its inscription'. Arac, p. 161.

[50] *Foe*, p. 32.

[51] Ibid, p. 17. Penelope Deutscher points out the similarities between Rousseau and Nietzsche with respect to women before distinguishing Nietzsche's project in 'Is it not remarkable that Nietzsche...should have hated Rousseau?' in Paul Patton, *Nietzsche, Feminism and Political Theory*, Allen and Unwin, St Leonards, 1993.

boy from a poor family and was captured by Moors, that Friday was a slave child when the ship went down, and that Friday was a cannibal saved by Cruso from being eaten.[52] Because Cruso is not a Hobbesian 'desiring animal', on the island, language is utilitarian rather than pleasurable, as in conversation. Cruso has no use for conversation and, until Susan's arrival, his only company is that of the mute Friday. The Friday who is unable to speak contrasts with the Friday who satisfied Robinson Crusoe's desire for conversation. The contrast retrospectively casts Robinson Crusoe as a desiring "subject" even though women are literally absent on the island.

The role of desire

Although Susan is depicted as being like Robinson Crusoe, she is also presented as different from him. She performs an oppositional role to the masculine "subject". For example, she states that had she arrived on the island with a saw she knows Cruso would have used it.[53] Nonetheless, in response to Foe's later comment that it would have been better had Cruso rescued a carpenter's chest, she says 'I do not wish to be captious, but we lived on an island so buffeted by the wind that there was not a tree did not grow twisted and bent.'[54] So on the island, she opposes Cruso, and in England she mourns the loss of the island and opposes Foe.[55] This suggests that her status, wherever she is, is oppositional to language and to culture. In this sense, in spite of her similarity to Robinson Crusoe, she is also aligned with Friday and, as such, is always a split "subject", that is, one who can never attain full agency as an "individual".

On the island, the rule of Cruso is relatively benign and Friday and Susan roam freely. This is due, in part, to Cruso's constructed and barren terraces in which he has no 'seed' to plant.[56] Susan reflects later that, in contrast to the

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[52] *Foe*, p. 12.
[53] Ibid, p. 32
[54] Ibid, p. 55.
[55] Ibid, p. 55.
[56] Ibid, p. 33.

originary scene of Eden, 'our island was not a garden of desire'.[57] The absence of desire on the island enables Coetzee to depict a different kind of agency. That is, his island is similar to the utopia in *Martha Rattenberg*, which allowed Evans to depict Martha as representative of a middle state between problematic masculine desire and a feminine society in which all were equal. In *Foe*, a similar 'middle' agency is reflected in the sexual encounter between Susan and Cruso. The occasion is expressed as one of passivity and then acceptance. That is, the absence of desire by either party is notable, but does not prevent agency being depicted. The scene begins as Susan awakes and says 'I came to myself in daylight' (a reference to rejoining the "self" constructed in culture and language). Then she writes: 'A hand was exploring my body'. The hand has no subject-related agency and the sentence is passive while it expresses a relation between bodies. The sentence demonstrates Coetzee's 'middle voice'. Susan reasons to herself that he 'has not known a woman for 15 years'.[58] On this basis, she says 'I resisted no more but let him do as he wished'.[59] It is a passive and pragmatic answer to Cruso's pragmatic need.

Although Susan's act can be interpreted as passive, by looking at the grammatical structure, as Coetzee would seem to want his reader to do, it becomes an active choice.[60] But to state it this way is to oversimplify the issue because her decision is pre-empted by Cruso's gesture. At first she says, 'I pushed his hand away and made to rise, but he held me. No doubt, I might have freed myself, for I was stronger than he'.[61] And so the event is contextualised within the bare framework of a rape scene that portrays physical strength as a fundamental difference between the two subjects. The scene revolves around Susan's power to choose, and the terms under which she shall have choice. In this scene, and the rhetoric which surrounds it, as she ponders its meaning (and the reader mirrors

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[57] Ibid, p. 86.

[58] Ibid, p. 30.

[59] Ibid, p. 30.

[60] Coetzee refers to 'the rhetorical potential of the passive' in 'The Rhetoric of the Passive in English' in Coetzee, *Doubling the Point*, p. 159.

[61] *Foe*, p. 30.

her), physical strength is understood to impinge on the idea of free choice. In the text, she is stronger than he is and therefore can decide for herself. On the same basis, if the roles were reversed, it is implied, it would have been a rape scene. Underlying the scene is the view that physical strength is an important factor of power, but that such strength is not an essential attribute of masculinity, or, by implication, of masculine language.

The actions of Cruso and Susan can be described as an "active-passivity". The scene privileges the agency of the body as "other" than the agency of the subject, while showing that the two are related. The sexual act leads Susan to an awareness of something outside language and, afterwards, she sits down and 'collects' herself. She reflects:

> What are these blinks of an eyelid, against which the only defence is an eternal and inhuman wakefulness? Might they not be the cracks and chinks through which another voice, other voices, speak in our lives? By what right do we close our ears to them? The questions echoed in my head without an answer.[62]

The image of the cracking of a surface, beyond which something else might be perceived, is also present in the work of Einzig. Within a social framework of power, Coetzee points to the importance of surrendering subjective agency by 'relaxing vigilance' and by ignoring culture and language in order for the voices of the "other" to be heard. Such an active-passivity brings Susan to the island. She states her situation in conventional terms recognisable as the concept of 'Fortuna' when she says, 'Chance had cast me on his island, chance had thrown me in his arms'.[63] Again the statement has no agency and refers to a situation in which she is pushed by circumstances. However, in a phrase which refers to the sexual scene with Cruso, she also observes 'We yield to a stranger's embrace or give ourselves to the waves'.[64] This statement combines a passive surrender to a "subject" with an active embrace of the ocean as "other". That is, it portrays both the relinquishing and retention of agency. It is a positive portrayal of an active-passivity which

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[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid. See description of Fortuna in Chapter One, p. 47, fn. 67.

[64] *Foe*, p. 30.

reflects Coetzee's all important middle voice. The portrayal of the body as both passive and active states within language suggest why it is that Coetzee has a female castaway as his narrator. Such a position allows him to portray her similarities to both Friday and Cruso. Susan's position as a castaway refers, not only to her status as second subject, but to the importance of Coetzee writing in a middle voice.

In contrast to Coetzee's evocation of writing as kind of double space in which both the visible and the invisible construct meaning, Cruso produces an image of the island as a blank space. He spends his days preparing terraces for the sowing of corn that future generations may or may not bring. As Cruso has no seed to sow, the seemingly useless act (according to Susan) contradicts Cruso's 'law', 'that we shall work for our bread, which is a commandment.'[65] The terraces suggest Cruso is creating a Lockean tabula rasa state for future generations. The image of the terraces suggests that language, like the identity of Robinson Crusoe, presents itself as both "natural" while being shaped by humans. The terraces are enclosed, blank spaces which appear to contain no previous stories and this notion shapes the foundational ground of the "island" itself. The gendered and racial structure on the island, however, indicates that the island is not a blank and originary place, and untold stories are contained within it. In this presentation, language is the story which the cultural myth of *Robinson Crusoe* and rational individualism erases. Conversely, it is also the story upon which it is based.

The island is both similar and different from the island of Britain. The island is its effaced origin and is depicted as built on the basis of its own otherness. This otherness is manifested in the stories of Susan and Friday, stories which remain untold. In contrast to Britain, the island is pictured as swayed by the ocean: 'They say Britain is an island too, a great island. But that is a mere geographer's notion. The earth under our feet is firm in Britain, as it never was on Cruso's island'.[66] The juxtaposition of *Robinson Crusoe* with Coetzee's island allows

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[65] Ibid, p. 36.

[66] Ibid, p. 26.

the material conditions of society and of language on each "island" to be understood as different but related economies. Cruso states: 'This is not England, we have no need of a great stock of words'.[67] In contrast to England, on Cruso's island, utility or use value dominates relations, as is shown in the absence of desire for sex, for knowledge, for writing and for tools. The reference to words as stock refers to the language of materialism as well as the Protestant opposition to luxury goods. In the contrast between Cruso's island and *Robinson Crusoe*, Defoe's text is shown as imbued with the language of desire.

The scene of writing

After meeting Foe, Susan writes to him telling of her progress with the account of the island she is writing for him. When he goes into hiding from the bailiffs, the castaway cannot contact him. She continues to write, except now when she finishes her letters, she says 'For whom am I writing? I blot the pages and toss them out of the window. Let who will read them'.[68] The statement marks her transition to the status of author. Now she writes not knowing who will read the words she writes, or what the reader will make of them. Yet the text emphasises the reciprocity (between the social and textual, between the other and the "subject") that is inherent in the act of writing.

Reciprocity and its difficulty is a theme which Coetzee stresses throughout his fiction.[69] It is for this reason that I chose the opening quotation, which emphasises the reciprocity inherent in any single term or act. Reciprocity tends to be overlooked by critics who emphasise the enemy aspect of *Foe*. It is reciprocity that is emphasised when Susan says of her writing, 'Let me return to my relation'.[70] That is, writing and language is shown as a relation, not just between

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[67] Ibid, p. 21.

[68] Ibid, p. 64.

[69] Coetzee addresses the theme of reciprocity in *White Writing* and in a number of articles under the heading 'The Poetics of Reciprocity' in *Doubling the Point*. In the latter he states 'at the heart of the unfreedom of the hereditary masters of South Africa is a failure to love.' p. 97.

[70] Ibid, p. 12. Relation is appropriately defined as 1. Narration, a narrative; (Law) relaying of information. 2. what one person or thing has to do with another, way in which one stands or is related to another, kind of connection or correspondence or contrast or feeling that prevails between persons or

subjects, but with that which is other to itself. This active sense, which occurs without the agency of the subject, is emphasised on the island where, it is said, nothing happens. For example, on the island Susan is in a world in which communication is almost impossible, where there is no history and no narrative. However, the island is shown as a cyclical world of constant interrelation:

> The rain dripped here and there through the roof and hissed on the hot stones. In time the rain ceased and the sun came out, drawing wisps of steam from the earth, and the wind resumed and blew without respite till the next lull and the next rain.[71]

Living on the island is like being in language and language is shown to be an art that does not require agency. For example, when Cruso builds a house, agency is attributed to the passive as in the description: 'the reeds artfully thatched together'.[72] The use of the middle voice again indicates an art at work that is not produced by the subject.

Complementing this depiction is silence represented as an active space. The island and Friday are the aporias around which the female castaway circles in her meditations on writing and speech. That these silences are not passive but active and forming is not seen by either the castaway or Foe. In fact, Susan's questions reflect her own need to know that Friday understands her.'What I fear most', she states, 'is that after years of speechlessness the very notion of speech is lost to him...When I ...say *Spoon*, how can I be sure he does not think I am chattering to myself as a magpie or an ape does...?'[73] Coetzee echoes here the popular eighteenth century belief that castaways lost the power of speech through their isolation.[74] Her speech demonstrates her own fear that she will lose her status as a human subject through Friday's inability to understand her. Earlier I showed that Evans, in particular, presented silence as having value in constructing writing and

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things; dealing with others (sexual intercourse); kinsman, kinswoman, relative. *The Australian Concise Dictionary of Current English*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1987.

[71] *Foe*, p. 14.

[72] Ibid, p. 9.

[73] Ibid, p. 57.

[74] Jager, p. 316.

that silence, for him, had religious value. In this text, Coetzee also represents silence as structuring representation.

Susan's letters to Foe trace her own and Friday's journey from London to Foe's house where they take up residence. By occupying the author's house, Susan is presented as being on a journey to self-fulfilment as author of her own text. Her journey into individualism or selfhood is shown as bound by the power regimes that she and Friday are silenced by. One of these regimes is history and its construction in a textuality that defines what is "real" and authentic. The island episode, and Friday's and Susan's pasts, must enter narrative in order to become history. When the novel commences, Susan Barton is writing 'The Female Castaway. Being a True Account of a year Spent on a Desert Island. With Many Strange Circumstances Never Hitherto Related.'[75] This narrative is a "History" in the style of *Robinson Crusoe*. Speech marks introduce each paragraph in most of the text.[76] By this means, the reader understands that *Foe* is being told through the figure of Susan. At the same time, the "feminine" text alerts the reader to the role of narrative in the construction of history. In this sense, *Foe* is both like and unlike the "History" that Susan understands that she is writing.

For the female castaway, her story has a beginning, her arrival on the island, and an end, when she leaves with Cruso and Friday on a ship bound for England. For Foe, the history prior to the island, when she was in Bahia, is Susan's story. For him, 'the island is not a story in itself'.[77] Susan recognises that 'the world expects stories from its adventurers' and that because of this 'Cruso rescued will be a deep disappointment to the world'.[78] As another critic points out, Foe wishes to separate Susan's story from the narrative which becomes *Robinson Crusoe*. Further, the story of Susan and her daughter in Bahia, which Foe wishes to write,

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[75] *Foe*, p. 67.

[76] They are intermittent in the third section and absent in the last section indicating the gradual distancing of speech from writing in the narrative.

[77] *Foe* p. 117.

[78] Ibid, p. 34.

and which he implies is salacious, is the story of *Roxana*.[79] This is a separation of masculine and feminine representations. Susan predicts that when she is gone, Foe will write a story of the island without her. She predicts, 'you will murmur to yourself "Better without the women". Yet where would you be without the woman?'.[80] Her statement emphasises the importance of the feminine to *Robinson Crusoe*.

Susan says that, on the island, nothing happened and 'Cruso would brook no change'.[81] The problem of the story of the island is that it must be constructed in narrative and narrative will change its story. Language is shown to produce temporality through narrative. On an island where nothing happens, there will be no narrative and time will be different, as when the female castaway awakes on the first day and the sun is sinking. This absence of temporality and history is linked to the absence of story and desire. Life is dull on the island, according to Susan.[82] But later, she discovers that it is also dull in England and that she has waited everywhere. She structures time in England by doing chores herself and giving chores to Friday.[83] This is not work for food, as was required on the island, but domestic labour. Domestic labour is not depicted as fundamental to the positioning of the female subject in language, but as related to it. Because Friday is situated symbolically outside language he is also outside the structuring of work. Consequently he is referred to in terms which suggest the colonial term, the 'lazy native'. For example, Susan says that idleness will destroy him and states that 'From eating too much and lying abed he is growing stupid'.[84] Friday, like Cruso, exists outside of the structuring of desire which creates history, temporality and narrative.

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[79] Judie Newman, *The Ballistic Bard*, Arnold, London, 1995, p. 96.

[80] *Foe*, p. 72.

[81] Ibid, p. 27

[82] Ibid, p. 34

[83] Ibid, p. 56.

[84] Ibid, p. 56.

Friday and Authoring

In the final scene of the novel, which involves two short, significantly similar but different accounts by an unnamed 'I', Friday is shown lying beneath the water. In this section, the text doubles upon itself in a sequence in which all the characters are first seen asleep and then lying under the ocean. In one account, the characters observed appear to be asleep or dead in the semi-darkness of Foe's house. In the other, the characters are lying, drowned beneath the sea. Both accounts have a dream-like quality conveyed partly through content and partly through syntax. Both of these accounts end with the unnamed 'I' attempting to hear what sounds are contained in the silent Friday's body. According to the text, this is 'where bodies are their own signs', 'the home of Friday'. The section reflects the two stories omitted from the foundational story of the island, that is, Susan's and Friday's histories. In one section, Susan lies face to face with the dead captain of her ship after the mutiny. In the other, Friday "speaks" by opening his mouth and pouring forth water which proceeds to define the present, the ground of our knowledge and understanding.

The world of the "other" is made known to the reader as it develops in the text through repetition and recognition. It is a language kept separate from, yet akin to, the knowledge available to the "subjects" of the text. The knowledge of the realm of the "other" can be likened to the historical status of the knowledge of individuality. This knowledge 'for a long time', according to Foucault, 'remained below the level of description' (just as the sea lies below the level of the land).[85] Friday, as "other" to Western language, is not representable in that language on his own terms. He is unable to speak and represent himself. Like Susan, his body is shown as penetrated by language, but because he is symbolically "other" and excluded from language his awareness of it cannot be represented. Throughout the text, the reader's only knowledge of Friday is given in Susan's direct and indirect speech. For example, Susan says that Friday crushes the thorns beneath his feet

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[85] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* quoted in Martin, *Technologies of Self*, p. 99.

and ignores the bleeding cracks caused by flesh-eating insects.[86] In such a way, Coetzee separates the role of each character from his or her symbolic aspect. For example, although the physical act of Friday carrying Susan facilitates an understanding of the castaway and Friday as shaped by each other, this is not the experience of the female "subject". She proceeds to refer to him in social terms as a porter[87] and understands his act in cultural, rather than linguistic terms.

Susan's questions and development are crucially affected in the novel by her dual affiliations as "subject" and "other". Her awareness of Friday ranges from ignoring him to being repulsed by him to describing him as her shadow. He is so insubstantial to her that when she finally concludes that 'we are all substantial, we are all in the same world', Foe points out that she has omitted to mention Friday.[88] So Coetzee limits her understanding to the cultural and historical circumstances which have produced her. The significance of Friday's silence, for Susan, is that when they are eventually rescued, she inherits responsibility for him, and by association, for the racial injustice that he represents.

Friday is the embodiment of the 'literary object' that has been taken over (literally to England) but whose story cannot be retrieved.[89] That which is lost through translation is conveyed in *Foe* partly by the indirect comparison of Friday with Defoe's Friday. Coetzee's Friday is marked by his difference from Defoe's Friday although his name remains the same, indicating the essential sameness of their subjection. In Defoe's text, Friday is:

> a comely handsome fellow, perfectly well made; with straight long limbs, *not too large*...with something very manly in his face, and yet he had all the sweetness and

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[86] *Foe*, p. 7.

[87] Ibid, p. 8

[88] Ibid, p. 152.

[89] The colonising of Friday's story compares with an account of a priest's journey to Brazil published in 1578. Michel de Certeau states that the priest returns with the concept of the 'Savage'. De Certeau writes: '(His text) transforms the voyage into a cycle. From over there it brings back a literary object, the Savage, that allows him to turn back to his point of departure. The story effects a return to himself through the mediation of the other. Yet something still remains over there, which the words of the text cannot convey; namely the speech of the Tupis. It is that part of the other that cannot be retrieved, an evanescent act that writing cannot convey'. Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, trans. Tom Conley, Columbia University Press, New York, 1988, p. 213.

> softness of an European in his countenance...His hair was long and black, *not curl'd like wool;* his forehead very high and large, and a great vivacity and sparkling in his eyes. The colour of his skin was *not quite black,* but very tawny...a bright dun colour, that had in it something very agreeable, tho' *not very easy to describe.* His face was round and plump; his nose small, *not flat like the negroes,* a very good mouth, thin lips and his teeth well set, and white as ivory.[90]

In contrast to Defoe's Friday, who is described in negative terms as 'not...like the negroes' and is described as a commodity, his teeth like ivory, Coetzee's Friday is described more positively and directly as 'a black African'.[91] Susan's description of Friday's appearance is a list of features: 'the flat face, the small dull eyes, the broad nose, the thick lips, the skin not black but a dark grey, dry as if coated with dust.[92] It is a face that, unlike Defoe's Friday, refuses appeals to a European aesthetic and each suggestion of agreeableness on these terms is undermined. Its effect is achieved in part by itemising each body part as if in an account book. The description in *Foe* calls attention both to Friday's status as a non-subject and indirectly to the European's language of ownership, slavery and commerce. It also omits the possessive pronoun 'his', and therefore does not ascribe ownership of Friday's body to Friday himself. The description points to the "problem" that the difference of the "other" represents in Western culture.

Friday's description, emphasising as it does cultural difference, is a negative description for the female castaway. She sees his spear, her head sinks and she assumes that 'I have come to an island of cannibals'.[93] That is, Friday's body continues to be presented, and read by the female castaway, as a sign of Friday's difference and, therefore, inaccessibility. When she arrives on the island, she imagines that he wants to kill her, not from enmity but for subsistence, like 'a porpoise thrown up by the waves'.[94] Her language is of give and take as she fears that the waves that gave her to him may cause him to take her life. It is an imagery

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[90] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 208.

[91] Derek Attridge, '"*Foe*" and the Politics of Canonisation' in Huggan and Watson, p. 184. Post suggests that Friday's description indicates that *Foe* is an allegory of South Africa. p. 145.

[92] *Foe*, p. 6.

[93] Ibid.

[94] Ibid.

which suggests the process of Susan becoming a "subject" and subjected to language. The image of reciprocity also informs the encounter as Friday touches her and she smells him:

> He reached out and with the back of his hand touched my arm. He is trying my flesh, I thought. But by and by my breathing slowed as I grew calmer. He smelled of fish and of sheepswool on a hot day.[95]

Their bodies achieve an exchange of sorts and when she asks for water, he signs for her to follow. The gesture is described for the reader to see, just as the castaway sees and tries to interpret it.

Susan and Friday are not only opposed but alike. They are comparable in that both arrive in the text "dis-abled" on the basis of their difference. In parallel with Friday's silence on the island, Susan is invaded by the wind to the extent that she has to bind her head and becomes deaf. Friday is unable to speak and Susan is unable to hear and, as such, each is unable to communicate his or her difference from the masculine "subject" of language. As "other" to Cruso and to each other, they are like Cruso's terraces, blank spaces upon which deconstructive approaches can be inscribed. This blank aspect is particularly reflected in the alignment of the silent Friday with the female castaway as castrated. She says of Friday, 'It was no comfort that his mutilation was secret, closed behind his lips (as some other mutilations are hidden by clothing), that outwardly he was like any other Negro'.[96] The likeness between the two figures is offered to the reader while the female castaway simply observes Friday with abject horror.[97]

Both Susan and Friday are intent on authoring, 'spinning language' out of themselves. Susan's way is to pick up Foe's pen. Friday's way is to dance in Foe's clothes. The female castaway observes him and comments that 'In the dance nothing was still and yet everything was still. The whirling robe was a scarlet bell

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[95] Ibid.

[96] Ibid, p. 24.

[97] Teresa Dovey suggests that the scene is an 'unveiling' of 'men's privileging of the phallus and of the faculty of sight'. As a presence which signifies an absence, the sight indicates that power of the phallus is 'phallacious'. pp. 372-3.

settled upon Friday's shoulders and enclosing him'.[98] Friday claims the role of writer on his own terms through performing what appears to Susan to be a traditional dance in Foe's authorial 'robe'. He spins, 'Like South African blacks famous for their dances', in his own cultural self-enclosed world.[99] Friday in his own world, is like Cruso in that he is a subject on his own terms, though outside Western language.[100] In a different context, Coetzee indirectly suggests the linguistic significance of Friday's act:

> Since experience and action depend upon man's representations man lives in relation to objects almost exclusively as language leads him to live it. By the very act of spinning language out of himself, he spins himself into language.[101]

While the naked Friday spins out a position from which to "speak", Susan watches and in the whirling robe she sees 'the dark pillar at its centre'.[102] She says 'one might have supposed the purpose of his dancing was to show forth the nakedness underneath'.[103] Friday's act reveals to Susan the absent-presence that is language, represented here as unreadable, that is, neither and both phallic and castrated, masculine and feminine. Throughout the text it is clear however, that while Susan and Friday share a similar relation to white, masculine discourse, they do not, as her abduction of Friday to England under the liberal pretext of responsibility and care demonstrate, share the same relationship to that discourse.

The 'feminine subject' and language

In the third part of the novel, Susan is increasingly aware of her importance to Foe and of his importance to her. She recounts in a first person narration her sexual intercourse with him. In this act, she straddles him and declares that 'She [the Muse] must do whatever lies in her power to father her offspring', which is

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[98] *Foe*, p. 119.

[99] Post, p. 147.

[100] Gordimer uses the dance as the image of revolution, saying 'I live at 6,000 feet in a society whirling, stamping, swaying with the force of revolutionary change'. 'Living in the Interregnum' (first published in 1982), *The Essential Gesture*, p. 262.

[101] Coetzee quoting the linguist, Wilhelm von Humboldt in the 1830s. Coetzee, *Doubling the Point*, p. 181.

[102] *Foe*, p. 119.

[103] Ibid, p. 118.

her story of the island.[104] The 'Muse' and the act of being 'father' are diametrically opposed in this quotation in which the meeting of different gendered roles creates agency for Susan. This penultimate section of the text conveys the sense that the female castaway is merging the masculine authorial position of 'I' with the feminine power of 'the Muse'. In this way she becomes a 'feminine subject' who creates by "fathering" and by situating Foe as feminine. She completes the gesture by saying that she sees Foe as her wife. In this sense, Susan's act legalises her relationship with Foe, who describes himself as 'an old whore' (also Defoe's self-description), and attributes dominance to herself.[105] In the 'whoring' terms which informed *Robinson Crusoe*, her act effectively legitimates writing as an artifice. Her act is one of reform, that is, it does not advocate an alternative to masculine language, but actively asserts the "feminine", as 'the Muse', within it. Susan's "middle" role is complemented in the text by her position as 'second subject' and agent of reform. It was in this role that she forced both Cruso and Friday onto the rescue ship. In England, she tries to send Friday to Africa, but cannot do so because of the risk of slavery. Susan finds that, by virtue of her earlier act, she is morally responsible for him. She sets him "free", saying at the same time, 'I do not love him, but he is mine'.[106] She completes Friday's "subjection", which is also represented as his "freedom" from slavery, by teaching him English. Her role as reformer and teacher indicates that these conventional female roles (reformer and teacher) are not only grounded in the assumption of a masculine individualism, but emerge from her "feminine" status as both "subject" and "other" to language. Her position as teacher, and its colonising role, is also a reference to the pedagogical orientation of *Robinson Crusoe*.[107]

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[104] Ibid, p. 140.

[105] Ibid, p. 151.

[106] Ibid, p. 111.

[107] This pedagogical role was made explicit by Rousseau when he famously referred to *Robinson Crusoe* as the only text he would wish young Emile to read. Susan's role as a teacher evokes the many translations of *Robinson Crusoe* which have spread Western ideas to the colonised world. A recently discussed example is a book published in Indonesia in 1875. Its message was 'Break free, by individual effort, of the suffocating confines of family, community and convention'. As such, in Ian Proudfoot's view, 'a corrosive ideal, which had underpinned the rise of the West, was promoted among Javanese

The masculinity of language, or its phallocentric logic, is emphasised in the text through images which convey subjects over undifferentiated space. The "other" is evoked through reference to insubstantial spaces such as air, water and silence. Phallic language is portrayed through material and substantial images, such as planks which form a walkway for Foe to cross to his desk in the attic.[108] Later Susan crosses these planks to write at the same desk. Friday also straddles a log (a "natural" plank?) in order to scatter petals on the surface of the ocean.[109] Friday's act of communication is repeated when he plays his flute. This phallic imagery is later evoked when Foe is straddled by Barton in the act of fathering her text. The imagery also suggests the plank which enables the two men to cross the chasm into the utopian and feminine society in *Martha Rattenberg*. The imagery suggests the figure 'I', which Susan and Friday must access in order to become full "subjects".

However, the "phallic" image of the plank is also reversed in the text to suggest the feminine, as in the reversal that happens when Foe becomes a wife. The 'plank' imagery is therefore not only a negative and phallic term of subjection and control. It comes to refer to a more positive sense in which the blank spaces of the text are crossed. The 'plank' imagery also represents the hymen which, I have suggested, informed Aubin's narratives.[110] The hymen produces a double rather than 'singular' sense, as in Derrida's understanding of the hymen as that which 'produces the effect of a medium (...a medium located between...two terms)'.[111] Derrida says of the hymen that it is 'a sign of fusion, the consummation of

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youth by the colonial government'. Proudfoot cites the view that 'When a new language is invented, *Robinson Crusoe* is one of the first books published in it'. The book was Adolf von de Wall, *Hikayat Robinson Crusoë*. Government Press, Batavia, 1875, discussed in Ian Proudfoot, 'Robinson Crusoe in Indonesia', *The Asia-Pacific Magazine*, No. 6 and 7, 1997, pp. 47-8.

[108] Dovey suggests that the attic reference recalls Gilbert and Gubar's *Mad woman in the Attic* which focussed on the history of women's writing and which Dovey depicts as asking 'What have women got to hide', p. 340.

[109] *Foe*, p. 31.

[110] See this thesis, Chapter Three, p. 139.

[111] Derrida, *Between the Blinds*, p. 185.

marriage, the identification of two beings, the confusion between the two'.[112] This definition allows for a sense of language, writing and of the "feminine" castaway as such a medium. This more positive sense is literally presented in *Foe* through the repeated use of hyphenated words as well as the use of dashes to introduce speech. This style draws attention to the silence of the "other" which underlies speech.

The text is sprinkled with such "hymenic" words which show language as a process which reflects and shapes historical and material contexts. Words such as ink-well, watch-dog, log-boat, slave-ship, watch-coat and slave-trader show words in formation. Other hyphenated words such as willy-nilly and higgedly-piggedly show sounds becoming words. Words with no hyphen, such as waterlogged, show the absent-presence of the hyphen. For example, slave-trader is also shown as 'slaveowner' with the newness and evidence of its construction erased.[113] In these ways, the text shows language developing out of, as well as over, that which is "other" to language. In this fashion, the 'plank' image becomes the image of a bridge as when Susan sets Friday the task of gardening, that is, domesticating nature. Susan asks Friday to trim hedges like the men in Evans' utopia. She hopes that doing such tasks will help him 'build a bridge of words over which...he may cross to the time before Cruso...when he lived immersed in the prattle of words as unthinking as a fish in water'.[114] In this sense, Friday astride 'his log' strewing petals is engaged in an act of writing which speaks to the depths, but which is articulated at the surface of writing. Another critic understands that 'Friday, as one who knows enough to remain on the surface, may be immune to the lure of those ideological depths that beckon his colonial forebears.'[115] In an interview, Coetzee also emphasises the importance of writing as an articulated surface and questions whether the desire of contemporary criticism to read the silence of the

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[112] Ibid, p. 182.

[113] *Foe*, p. 61.

[114] Ibid, p. 60.

[115] Bongie, p. 277.

text is not 'a version of utopianism' which suggests that we 'look forward to the day when truth will be (or was) said...'[116] Friday scattering petals on the surface is a writing which he writes within his own culture. The act is seen by Susan whose culture-bound interpretation is to speculate as to whether it proves that Friday has a soul.

When Susan straddles Foe near the end of the text, Foe refers to the story of Friday scattering his petals and to its meaning. Before this, Susan has said of her dominant sexual position that it was one Foe 'did not seem easy with, in a woman'.[117] The observation is placed in parenthesis as appropriate to a second subject's point of view. Foe's unease is shown when he recalls the story of Friday and imagines a monster rising from the deep to swallow Friday up. Susan remarks, 'What led Foe to talk of sea-monsters at such a time I could not guess'.[118] The juxtaposition allows the reader to conclude that Foe is describing his own fear of being consumed by the "feminine".[119] Foe then returns to the story to point out, more positively, that Friday could have been beckoned as much as menaced. He recalls that the boat Friday was on (Susan reminds him that it was a log of wood, although earlier she called it a log-boat) saved his life: 'in his puny boat he floats upon the very skin of death and is safe'.[120] Foe goes on to say: 'Friday rows his log of wood across the dark pupil - or dead socket - of an eye staring up at him from the floor of the sea'.[121] It is at this point that Foe decides that 'writing is not doomed to be the shadow of speech'.

Friday must be taught to write, because 'Til we have spoken the unspoken we have not come to the heart of the story'.[122] Foe argues that Friday will be able

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[116] Coetzee, *White Writing*, p. 81.

[117] *Foe*, p. 139.

[118] *Foe*, p. 140.

[119] Coetzee echoes *Foe* when he says, in a parenthesis in an interview '(...These fictions of mine are paltry, ludicrous defenses against that being overwhelmed and, to me, transparently so.). Interview with David Attwell, Coetzee, *Doubling the* Point, p. 248.

[120] *Foe*, p. 141.

[121] Ibid, p. 141.

[122] Ibid, pp. 141-3.

to express 'the unspoken' because 'words...form themselves...out of the deepest of inner silences'.[123] Susan argues with this conception, commenting that Friday will always have to write in the words of others. Like Benjamin, Foe appeals to an originary language, the Word of God, which, he says, is written by such as the 'waterskater' on the surface of ponds.[124] Susan is silenced by him and writes 'I held my tongue'. This relates her to Friday and justifies her own argument by showing that freedom "to express" is indeed delimited by language and by power.[125] That the debate itself is presented at all, however, continues to give value to writing. At the end of the text, the reader descends into the 'eye' to apparently observe that which is "other" to the text, only to realise that the unnamed "I" which descends with them is a sign that the "medium" they are in is writing, that is, the watery surface that is the text.[126]

The masculinity of language informs Susan's question as to 'what it augured for the writing of my story that I should become so intimate with its author'.[127] Before having sex with Foe, she reassures Friday that 'it's all to the good.' Earlier, after sex with Cruso, she ponders her arrival on the island and asks herself 'whether there was a better or worse'.[128] The question calls to mind the marriage ceremony and the use of marriage symbolism which marked the earlier texts. This time, when she lies with Foe, Foe also asks a question couched in the language of "better or worse":

> 'I ask myself sometimes', he said, 'how would it be if God's creatures had no need of sleep. If we spent all our lives awake, would we better people for it or worse?[129]

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[123] Ibid, pp. 142-3.

[124] Ibid, pp. 143-4.

[125] Ibid, p. 144.

[126] Kim L. Worthington states that 'In order to impose meaning, we descend into that I/eye'. *Self as Narrative*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996. p. 272. As I have indicated the image also stresses the importance of the surface of texuality.

[127] *Foe*, p. 137.

[128] Ibid, p. 30.

[129] Ibid, p. 137.

On the island, Susan had asked a similar question: 'What are these blinks of an eyelid, against which our only defence is an eternal and inhuman wakefulness?'[130] The coming together of masculine with feminine is symbolically equated with being awake and asleep. Being awake and asleep is in turn associated with the "subject" and its "other". Susan has no answer to Foe's question. But earlier she had noted that in these 'blinks' there might be 'cracks and chinks through which...other voices speak in our lives'.[131] The allusion to the marriage ceremony gives an indication that Foe as masculine author and Susan as feminine Muse are productively merging as well as reversing their positions. The language of better or worse indicates the oppositional nature of that merger. The space in-between 'the blinks' are what is "other" to that opposition. It is a space which can be named as silence, as Friday or as anything other than dominant heterosexual, white Western colonial language. In the earlier texts, the image of marriage reconciled opposing values. In *Foe*, the image of marriage joins together the substantial with the insubstantial, evoking something which is "other" than both. The image of sexual union, as in the earlier texts, suggests that male and female are more than their subject-positions in language.

Foe follows his moment of fear by telling Susan the story of Dante. In Hell, one of the souls of the dead greets him in tears, saying 'do not suppose mortal...that because I am not substantial these tears you behold are not the tears of true grief.'[132] The early castaway texts referred to the negative and positive aspects of the "unstable" written word and the contrasting stability attributed to silence. Foe's story of Dante similarly suggests that what has been thought of as insubstantial is to be reassessed. This issue is addressed directly in *Foe* through the story of the arrival of the woman who alleges she is Susan's daughter.

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[130] Ibid, p. 30.

[131] Ibid, p. 137.

[132] Ibid, p. 138.

Materiality and Language

In keeping with the triangular structure of the text, a third story forms a constructive aporia within *Foe*. The story is that of Susan following her daughter to Bahia and a "daughter" appearing in England who is not recognised by Susan. Both Friday's and Susan's stories can be understood as black history and women's history and the liberal attempts to recover such histories. The point that such histories are produced in narrative and language is indicated by the association between the story of Susan's daughter and the daughter in Defoe's *Roxana*. In Defoe's last novel, Roxana denies her daughter's existence in order to maintain her respectability as a married woman after a lifetime of gaining wealth through being the mistress of powerful and wealthy men. In other words, motherhood does not fit within Roxana's story of economic success. This is in accord with the absence of the mother in the earlier castaway narratives. The 'caring and giving' provided by a mother has been similarly interpreted as 'irrational' within neo-classical economics.[133] *Foe* addresses the "choices" offered by rational individualism through questioning its language. As I have indicated, *Foe* is in part a criticism of the limitations of "equal rights" feminism and the inherently imperialistic character of identity politics, humanist morality and reform movements. In this sense, it both opposes *Robinson Crusoe* and draws on its depiction and endorsement of a middle 'state'.

When *Foe* presents Friday as a body at one with himself and Cruso as at one with language, the "choice" indirectly offered to Susan is between substantiality and insubstantiality. The relevance to Susan is that, as she tells Foe, if she is not author of herself in language, she is a sexualised body and risks being consigned to sexual commodification. In this regard, she says:

> I could return, in every respect to the life of a substantial body, the life you recommend. But such a life is abject. It is the life of a thing. A whore used by men is used as a substantial body.[134]

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[133] Gillian Hewitson, 'Rational Economic Man: A Feminist Evaluation', unpublished conference paper, La Trobe University, n.d., p. 32.

[134] *Foe*, p. 126.

In *Foe*, Susan's "daughter" is cast as Susan's feminine "other" and her rejection by Susan as a female Robinson Crusoe corresponds to an understanding that the rational, economic self of Western discourse requires the rejection of "woman" and the irrationality of mothering. That Susan ultimately neither rejects nor accepts this "daughter" indicates her ambivalent relationship to the discourse of rational individualism.

Susan Barton's arrival on the island differs from the events of *Robinson Crusoe*. In that text, Crusoe is shipwrecked as an effect of nature, that is as the result of a storm. I have suggested that the shipwreck also represents the outcome of his own problematic desires. The events which led to Susan Barton becoming castaway are the kidnapping of her daughter who was 'abducted and conveyed to the New World by an Englishman, a factor and agent in the carrying trade'.[135] Her failed attempt to find her daughter ends in a mutiny on the ship on her way home. After the mutiny, the female castaway is put into a boat with the dead captain. The implication is that she is being punished because of her relationship with the captain. Later in the text the reader is told that the captain was 'besotted with love of her'.[136] As the captain is the ruler of his ship, Susan was symbolically in a relationship with masculine power, as she was with Cruso and is with Foe. Susan's changing subjectivity, her agency and authoring, are marked in the text through such sexual relations. Her relation with the captain brings her to the island, where she is a castaway. In this depiction, masculine language structures the journey from past to present to future. However, language itself is subject to mutinous internal (the crew) and external (the ocean) forces. In other words, the narrative of history itself is unreliable. The mutiny recalls Aubin's castaway romances and the work of Evans. These authors presented romance and travel narratives as unreliable, yet also potentially productive in the articulation of "new " identities. The story of Susan and her "daughter" similarly questions the posited "substantial" alternative, that is, the "truth" of material evidence.

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[135] Ibid, p. 10.

[136] Ibid, p. 86.

The young woman makes the claim that she is Susan's daughter before Susan 'fathers' her narrative of the island. Susan does not recognise her and suspects that she has been "produced" by Foe.[137] The girl insists that she is Susan's daughter and the issue becomes one of what will constitute evidence of her status. That is, is the daughter's identity substantial and therefore "real", or is she insubstantial, a product of Foe's authorial imagination? This incident addresses one of the central anxieties of the early castaway texts, which was that, compared to material existence, written language had no substantial value. In this scenario, material existence is that which is judged through the evidence of the senses. Susan first suspects the "daughter" of being sent by the bailiffs and then by Foe. The suspicion that she must be a representative of the bailiffs, and therefore associated with debt, suggests that she is a subject produced by the economic world. This associates the daughter's "truth" with the "real" of the material world and with the "false" of a society based on credit. In this manifestation she is both true and false.

The engagement of materialism with language and power is indicated throughout the text. For example, in exchange for Susan's story, Foe has been paying for Susan's and Friday's bed and board. When Susan is with Foe, he points out that if she will stay the night she will have a soft bed. Susan decides to stay as she understands that it is on the basis of this exchange that she and Friday will 'have a home for the night...and perhaps another meal tomorrow'.[138] The theme continues when Foe is displaced by bailiffs. This event enables the female castaway to become an author, to sit at Foe's desk and take up his pen. When Susan enters language, she enters a differentiated state in which she is at risk on the basis of material survival. On the island, all her material needs are met. Susan and Friday, as Foe's dependents, are tied into a cash economy to meet their basic needs:

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[137] Ibid, p. 72.

[138] Ibid, p. 137.

> The three guineas you sent are spent. Clothes for Friday were a heavy expense. The rent for this week is owed. I am ashamed to come downstairs and cook our poor supper of peas and salt.[139]

The three guineas paid regularly by Foe to Barton suggest Virginia Woolf and her essay, *Three Guineas*, which speculated on what a three guinea donation could do for women's education. In England, Friday and Susan Barton share servitude and dependence on Foe. He provides their basic needs in exchange for her story. So language and the needs of the material body are shown as interrelated.

Susan suspects that Foe has produced a "daughter" to engineer an ending to her story of Bahia which he has sketched out for her. The "daughter" is "insubstantial" in that she is textual, presented as a fictional character of Defoe's and Foe's imagination. The options which the text provides are that either the daughter is representative of the bailiff (associated with debt), or she is produced by the author (associated with artifice). Witnesses from a variety of Defoe's novels are called upon to provide proof that the daughter is who she and Foe say she is.[140] For example, Roxana's maid, Amy, makes an appearance to swear that the daughter is Susan's child.[141]

Consistent with the triangular structure of the novel, there is a third indirect presentation not available to Susan herself. That is, the "daughter" is also Susan Barton's symbolic and feminine "other". In this manifestation, she is as "real" as Susan in that she is a "substantial" fiction which has effect in the world. As "other" she has followed Susan everywhere:

> ' "Everywhere?" said I, smiling.
> ' "Everywhere," said she.
> ' "I know of one place where you have not followed me," said I.
> ' "I have followed you everywhere," said she.
> ' "Did you follow me across the ocean?" said I.
> ' "I know of the island," said she.
> 'It was as if she had struck me in the face. "You know nothing of the island," I retorted.[142]

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[139] Ibid, p. 64.

[140] Ibid, p. 129. The main witnesses are Jack from *Colonel Jack* 1722 and Amy from *Roxana*, 1724.

[141] *Foe*, p. 129. In Defoe's *Roxana*, Amy murders the daughter to preserve Roxana's reputation as a lady.

[142] Ibid, p. 74.

In this quotation, the repetition of 'said I' and 'said she' stresses that the words are speaking the "subjects" and not the other way round. The young woman says she is also called Susan Barton and has been in all the same places. Susan is also Roxana's "real" name and the name of Roxana's daughter.[143] Her claim, to have been with the castaway in all the places where the castaway has been, suggests that mother and daughter are in fact one and the same. As in the similarities between Susan and Friday, the similarities that Susan has with the "daughter" are not available to Susan.

The daughter reveals herself as the castaway's "other" through her likeness to Friday. She speaks to the female castaway, but like Friday (and like Crusoe) she has 'clenched teeth'.[144] When Friday lies in the place 'where bodies are their own signs' at the end of the novel, the subject "I" tries to part his 'clenched teeth'. In the second part of the final section, the "I" passes 'a fingernail across his teeth, trying to find a way in.'[145] Like the absence in the text made manifest in Friday and the first letter that Friday will write, the daughter is described as having 'a little O of a mouth'.[146] In his literary criticism, Coetzee has written that 'The O, the circle, the hole are symbols of that which male authoritarian language cannot appropriate'[147] At the end of the novel, the letter 'O' is the first letter that Friday writes as the symbol of his otherness. It is also the omega, the last letter of the Greek alphabet and Susan is directed by Foe to guide Friday towards the letter 'a'.[148] Robinson Crusoe comments on Friday's prayers that 'All things do say 'O' to him'.[149] The 'O' suggests that, for the "subject", the inaccessibility of the "other" is a kind of

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[143] Newman, p. 97.

[144] *Foe*, p. 77. *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 188.

[145] *Foe*, p. 154 and p. 157.

[146] Ibid, p. 75.

[147] Coetzee adds this comment to a footnote to his essay 'Achterberg's "Ballade van de gasfitter"' in which Coetzee quotes Monique Wittig in *The Guèrillères* reference to 'the O, the perfect circle that you invent to overthrow them to imprison them [women]'. *Doubling the Point*, fn 18, p. 404.

[148] On the basis of Mary Douglas's *Purity and Danger*, Newman points out that in *Foe*, Friday writing the omega indicates that 'writing...always begins at the end, on a page that is already foul'. Newman, p. 102.

[149] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 216.

spiritual loss, as well as a loss experienced in the body. In this sense, the absence or inaccessibility of the "other" is equated in the novel with the 'substance' that Susan says she has lost and which she wants Foe as author to help her find. The daughter is Foe's response to her request.

Susan looks to the proof of sight, of convention, common sense and reason to prove her own claim that the daughter is not hers. When she looks at their two hands and comments on their difference, she says:

> I stare at the two hands side by side. My hand is long, hers is short. Her fingers are plump unformed fingers of a child. Her eyes are grey, mine brown. What kind of being is she, so serenely blind to the evidence of her own senses.[150]

Similarly, on the island, before Susan has sex with Cruso, she turns and sees him and 'knows that it is all true', that she is castaway with 'an Englishman...as strange to me as a Laplander.'[151] Her construction of "truth" here is established on the basis of her seeing Cruso's physical difference from herself. When Foe is suspected of producing a "daughter" for Susan, one of the tensions is between the "truth" of the body and that of the "subject". As Susan's "fathering" of her story shows, this is a gendered debate which pits the "truth" of the material body against that of language.

The choices faced by Susan are that either the daughter is substantial, that is, biologically "real", or she is insubstantial, that is, a fictional character. The benefit of depicting a female castaway protagonist is that Coetzee confounds the "truth" of both positions. Just as the island was not 'that island', so Susan says the "daughter" is 'not that daughter'.[152] The biological relationship of daughter to mother is, at first, marked by its lack of differentiation.[153] In this sense, the relationship itself marks something other than that which can be represented as undifferentiated or differentiated, substantial or insubstantial. As the embodiment

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[150] *Foe*, p. 76.

[151] Ibid, p. 31.

[152] Ibid, p. 75.

[153] Dovey quotes Jacqueline Rose, 'The point of origin is the maternal body, an undifferentiated space, and yet one in which the girl recognises herself'. p. 365.

of the castaway's "other", the daughter manifests that which until now has been an absent presence in the text.

When Susan puts it to the daughter that there are no stories of daughters looking for mothers, 'they are not part of life', the statement refers to the "truth" of biological birth.[154] This "truth" is contrasted with the daughter's claim that her father is George Lewes, a literary and historical reference to George Eliot's partner.[155] When the "daughter" claims that Susan Barton is her 'name in truth' and that 'we have the same hand', she exclaims 'Behold the sign by which we may know our true mother'[156] In *Foe*, mothering or biological reproduction is displaced by the production of meaning in language. The act of bearing a child does not of itself produce "subjects"; it produces bodies. On this basis, the "daughter", like Susan, is neither substantial nor insubstantial. She is a body excluded from language, as well as a "subject" within language. As such, the "daughter" is a middle figure and, like the figure of "Einzig" in the previous chapter, has both internal and external 'truth'; that is, when she sleeps, 'one eye is half open and the other eye rolled back'.[157]

When Susan arrives on the island, she calls herself 'Castaway' and also states, 'I am cast away'.[158] In this sense she is both a name and an act. She explains the significance of being castaway by pronouncing 'I am all alone'. This statement of singularity is ironically made to Friday who, in Coetzee's double historicised language, is termed, 'a fellow-creature'. In this sense, it is writing, rather than subjective agency, that joins them as well as divides them, just as it is language which joins the female "subject" to the feminine. When Susan calls Friday a "fellow-creature", the term recalls Defoe's gentleman-tradesman, the 'Land-Water

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[154] *Foe*, p. 78.

[155] George Eliot or Mary Ann Cross is, of course, an example of a woman writer who adopted the guise of a man (taking her lover's first name for her own) and was taken for a man. She said of herself, 'They thought I was the father of a family - was sure I was a man who had seen a great deal of society'. George Eliot, Letters, Vol II quoted on www.bogo.co.uk/emlyn/GEORGEELIOT.html. 10 January, 1998.

[156] *Foe*, p. 76.

[157] Ibid, p. 78.

[158] Ibid, p. 5

thing' referred to in the first chapter, as well as Evans' sea 'Lyons'. Susan's otherness is indicated when she thinks she is seen as 'a porpoise' by Friday and later thinks Cruso sees her as a fish. These likenesses suggest that the terms 'fellow-creature' and 'feminine subject' are hybrid terms indicating "subjects" and "bodies" which are both substantial and insubstantial, masculine and feminine.[159]

In the middle ground

In an interview, Coetzee points out that in *Robinson Crusoe*, Defoe uses agentless sentences 'to epitomise a particular moment in the rise of the bourgeoisie'.[160] This complements Coetzee's conception of a middle voice in that he goes on to suggest that a 'drama takes place in the vacant place where the agent phrase might have been - as good a syntactic representation of the unconscious as one is likely to find'.[161] In other words, both silence and writing perform the role of an active middle voice.

Through Susan, as 'feminine subject', Coetzee shows three related positions. He shows a female "subject" achieving authority and being subjected to authority through language. He shows white male and female subject-positions as opposite and similar in relation to "Friday" as other than either position. He then uses the feamle castaway to present writing as the textual and feminine bridge between these differences. Susan, as narrator of *Foe*, directly and indirectly alerts the reader to the differences and similarities between white male and female "subjects" and their racialised "other". In *Foe*, Susan's experience allows Coetzee to present and question a range of oppositions which construct meaning, among them being language and materiality. In this sense, the female castaway is exemplary of an all important middle ground, which is also the textual ground of the middle voice.

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[159] Ibid, p. 9.

[160] Coetzee points out the capacity of such a writing strategy to be 'wide open to misunderstanding by an audience not attuned to its nuances' and draws attention to its use 'by such conservative neo-classical writers as Swift and Gibbon'. 'The Agentless Sentence as Rhetorical Device (1980)' in *Doubling the Point*, p. 174 and p. 180. In discussion with Attwell he agrees that *Foe* 'with its eighteenth century echoes' was launched into an 'unpropitious' rhetorical climate. p. 146.

[161] Coetzee, 'The Agentless Sentence as Rhetorical Device (1980)' in *Doubling the Point*, pp. 170-180.

Situated at the junction of the female constructed in language and the feminine, as that which is excluded from language, her position in the text alludes to the importance of writing itself. In her duality, Susan is like Magda, *In the Heart of the Country*, one who declares for

> The medium, the median - that is what I wanted to be! Neither master nor slave, neither parent nor child, but the bridge between, so that in me the contraries should be reconciled.[162]

This quotation evokes Robinson Crusoe's father's praise for the 'middle State [sic]'. In this sense, like all the texts I have examined, Coetzee's engagement with *Robinson Crusoe* is not one of opposition but of utilisation and occupation in order to change meanings. The theme of the castaway as occupying a middle situation of reconciliation recalls the emphasis of the earlier castaway texts on seeking a compromise and resolution to a crisis of value. In *Foe*, Coetzee negotiates the terms upon which "subjects" and "things" come into existence, that is, come to have value and authenticity. As in *Robinson Crusoe*, the question being addressed is, on what terms can that which is given no value come into existence, when "it" represents the lack of value itself?

Coetzee has described *Foe* as 'an interrogation of authority',[163] and many reviewers have focussed on the "foe as enemy" aspect of the text, concentrating on the role of Foe as white author.[164] I have emphasised the sense in which the text is about something "other" than the opposition 'friend/foe'. Coetzee's use of a 'feminine subject' as "author" of a metafictional rewriting of *Robinson Crusoe* demonstrates the feminine agency of the middle voice. This middle voice stresses a reciprocity between writing and death, or writing and silence, as indicated in the quotations which opens this chapter.

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[162] Macaskill, 'Charting J. M. Coetzee's Middle Voice', p. 465.

[163] Coetzee, *Doubling the Point*, p. 247.

[164] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak will serve as an example. She states that 'At first I had wanted to end on the following sentence: Mr Foe is everyone's Foe, the enabling violator, for without him there is nothing to cite. A month after finishing this writing, I heard Jacques Derrida deliver an extraordinary paper on friendship. I suppose I can say now that this *Foe*, in history, is the site where the line between friend and *Foe* is undone. When one *wants* to be a friend to the wholly other, it withdraws its graphematic space. *Foe* allows that story to be told'. Spivak, 'Theory in the Margin', p. 175.

Coetzee has stated that his own sense of marginality comes in part from learning English as a child. He states that at that time 'laws were being concocted to prevent people of Afrikaans descent from bringing up their children to speak English'.[165] In this sense, the image which ends *Foe*, in which the female castaway teaches a mute Friday to write under the instruction of the author, is an image of both freedom and tyranny. As the medium which connects and contrasts the two texts, *Foe* and *Robinson Crusoe*, Susan's act of writing and writing itself, mark a space which is other than either a metaphysical or textual reality. Dovey comments that Coetzee writes 'double-sided allegories'.[166] This recalls Coetzee's hymenic, double imagery and his liberal use of the hyphen to indicate both space and the coming into being of new meanings. Coetzee says of Susan that 'the book is not Foe's, it is hers, even in the form of the trace of her hunt for a Foe to tell it for her.'[167] The form of the hunt is the bridging form of the feminine middle voice. In its double transcription of the female as both castaway and as productive middle space, *Foe* reflects the double orientation of *Robinson Crusoe* and the earlier female castaway texts. It not only contextualises "woman" within the narrative of *Robinson Crusoe* as a narrative of enclosed rational individualism, but also returns to it the sense of the "feminine" as an actively constructive middle space.

Conclusion

In South African political terms, the idea of 'freedom' is tied to Western concepts of the individual and individual rights. Brian Macaskill as argued that 'Coetzee's act of "doing-writing" in the middle voice cogently represents a crucial - critical - response to the materialist historiography that still dominates the articulation of cultural politics in South Africa'.[168] In *Foe*, Coetzee uses the female castaway to represent such a writing and to link the coming into being of "individuals" with an understanding of what is involved in the production of such

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[165] Coetzee, *Doubling the Point*, p. 393.

[166] Dovey, p. 395.

[167] Coetzee, *Doubling the* Point, p. 248.

[168] Macaskill, 'Charting J. M. Coetzee's Middle Voice', p. 447.

subjects. His critique requires the portrayal of Susan Barton as coherent, fixed and immutable. That is, he critiques identity politics through showing her becoming an author of her self. Her sense of Friday as "other" is available to her only as her shadow, a vague sense of loss which adds to the tyranny of her subjection to the law of language. In one of his interviews, Coetzee asks himself a pertinent rhetorical question:

> is representation to be so robbed of power by the endlessly skeptical processes of textualisation that those represented in/by the text - *the feminine subject*, the colonial subject - are to have no power either?[169] [my emphasis]

He contrasts the 'feminine subject' and her act of writing with Friday:

> ...Friday is the true test. Is his history of mute subjection to remain drowned?...Friday is mute, but Friday does not disappear, because Friday is body...Whatever else, the body is not "that which it is not," and the proof that it *is* is the pain that it feels. The body with its pain becomes a counter to the endless trials of doubt.[170]

Coetzee fixes the body in pain as the essential term upon which justice should be based. In order to demonstrate his point, Coetzee draws attention to the final pages of *Foe* saying that 'They close the text by force, so to speak: they confront head on the endlessness of skepticism.'[171] On this basis, writing, based on the "other", or the truth of the body in pain, is contrasted with masculine writing fixed by phallic power and subjectivity.

The 'feminine subject' of *Foe* is also, but not only, a body in pain. In the imagery which opens the text, Susan emerges from the ocean limping, and is born into language.[172] By using nature as a metaphor for language, the female "subject" is configured as split and penetrable; shaped and invaded by language. This final stabilisation of meaning by Coetzee evokes *Robinson Crusoe* as a text of redemption. In a discussion of autobiography and confession, Coetzee refers to Dostoevsky as an author who 'poses the closure not of confession but of

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[169] Ibid, p. 248.

[170] Ibid, p. 248.

[171] Ibid, p. 248.

[172] Benita Parry suggests that the three female narrators of Coetzee's novels 'explicitly represent the body as the agent of language'. 'Speech and Silence in J. M. Coetzee' in Huggan and Watson, p. 48.

absolution' to 'the endlessness of skepticism'.[173] Through a "feminine writing" authorised by the female castaway who links Friday as "other" and as the body in pain, and Foe, as dominant masculine subjectivity, Coetzee bestows an 'absolution' upon his work. In this sense, the castaway narrative itself is a feminine space of transformation which provides authenticity for his own marginalised position.

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[173] Coetzee, *Doubling the* Point, p. 249.

Chapter Six

Defoe's Realism, Modernism and Bodily Specificity in *Crusoe's Daughter*

His women have the indecency and the continence of beasts; his men are strong and silent as trees. English feminism and English imperialism already lurk in these souls which are just emerging from the animal kingdom.

James Joyce, *Daniel Defoe*

Defoe, by reiterating that nothing but a plain earthenware pot stands in the foreground, persuades us to see remote islands and the solitudes of the human soul.

Virginia Woolf, 'Robinson Crusoe', *The Second Common Reader*

Introduction

At the end of *Robinson Crusoe*, Crusoe informs the reader that when he returns to England, he fathers 'two sons and one daughter'.[1] The title of Jane Gardam's *Crusoe's Daughter* (1985) declares its relationship with *Robinson Crusoe* and signals an engagement with Defoe's text from a female perspective. As in the early female castaway narratives, *Robinson Crusoe*, the story of a youngest son, is used to represent the experience of a daughter. As Polly, the main protagonist, states of Crusoe: 'He was like women have to be almost always, on an island. Stuck. Imprisoned.'[2]

Gardam is a successful, prize-winning English author of both children's and adult literature.[3] One of her novels was nominated for the Booker prize in 1978 and she is the only author to have won the Whitbread prize twice.[4] Her publicity describes her as originally from Yorkshire, married with three grown-up children and, like Einzig and Coetzee, university educated. This information gives a broad

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[1] *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 307.

[2] Jane Gardam, *Crusoe's Daughter*, Abacus Books, London, 1992, p. 133.

[3] *Crusoe's Daughter* troubles the boundaries between children's and adult literature. Gardam's concerns over the distinction are discussed in Lissa Paul, 'Escape Claws: Cover Stories on "Lolly Willowes" and "Crusoe's Daughter"' in *Signal: Approaches to Children's Books*, vol. 63, September, 1990. The article compares Gardam's work with the work of Sylvia Townsend Warner. Paul says of *Crusoe's Daughter*, 'Transgressions of spatial, sexual and linguistic authority occur on almost every page'. p. 214.

[4] Information about Gardam from her publisher indicates that her prizes include: the David Higham Award, the Royal Society of Literature's Winifred Holtby Prize (for short stories about Jamaica), the Katherine Mansfield Award and the Macmillian Silver Pen Award, http:\\american.prices.com/books/1500/1539auth.html. 17 January, 1997.

indication of the differences and similarities between the authors I have examined. Unlike Coetzee's *Foe*, *Crusoe's Daughter* has not been widely discussed by literary critics. This perhaps results from the novel's less explicit engagement with contemporary critical theory. The text was published by a mainstream publisher and was widely reviewed, unlike the less well-known work by Einzig.[5]

Crusoe's Daughter is written in a deceptively realist style and reads as a linear history and autobiography. Gardam produces a gendered realism and modernism to form a "feminine" middle ground which responds to *Robinson Crusoe* as a masculine and formative text of modern subjectivity. In the book, she makes use of Defoe's writing and modernism to evoke a poetic and historically situated materiality. The simultaneously poetic and materialist aspects of Defoe's realism is pointed out in the opening quotations by the modernist writers Virginia Woolf and James Joyce. Modernism is important to Gardam's critique of *Robinson Crusoe* because it was a movement that problematised and sexualised the self and was significantly influenced by women writers concerned to express female experience, such as Woolf herself and Dorothy Richardson.[6]

Crusoe's Daughter

Crusoe's Daughter is the "autobiography" of Polly Flint. The title declares the protagonist's textuality as well as her subject position relative to *Robinson Crusoe*. That her relation to the text will be both imitative and different is indicated by her sex and by her name. Polly was the name of Crusoe's parrot. Flint, her "natural" father, was also the name of the pirate Captain, as well as the parrot, in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*. Flint, as she later tells her pupils, has a material quality capable of producing fire.[7] The latter reference suggests the capacity of

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[5] Criticism of *Crusoe's Daughter* is also featured on the Internet. The site is written in the form of a tutorial by George P. Landow, Professor of English and Art History, Brown University, www.stg.brown.edu /projects/hypertext/landow/post/gardam/crusoe2.html. 17 January, 1997.

[6] Dennis Brown, *The Modernist Self in Twentieth-Century English Literature: A Study in Self-Fragmentation*, Macmillan Press, Basingstoke, 1989, p. 1. Brown uses *Robinson Crusoe* as a contrast to the modernist self, saying '*Robinson Crusoe* is a classic exemplification of the integral and consistent self'. p. 3. For a discussion of "feminine" modernism see Rado, *Rereading Modernism*, 1994.

[7] *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 190.

materiality to produce something other than its opposite, that is, immateriality and insubstantiality. The association of *Robinson Crusoe* with *Treasure Island* connects children's adventure tales with colonialism and "boy's own" adventures. It suggests that Polly's subjectivity will be formed by and against *Robinson Crusoe* presented as a masculine and colonial text in English literature.

Crusoe's Daughter covers the twentieth century from Polly's birth in 1898 to her death in 1986.[8] Two thirds of the narrative addresses her experience before she turns twenty, that is up until the First World War. The novel ends with Polly as a character in a script which could be for theatre, film or television. Outside Polly's house, a female journalist, symbolic descendant of Defoe, and actual descendant of her maid and tradesman, waits for Polly's memoirs. Inside, Polly and Crusoe are in conversation. Prior to this, throughout the novel, Crusoe is not directly addressed as a figure of the imagination, rather the book is loved by Polly and influences her behaviour. The text is then novel, memoir, play and the century's history experienced by a constructed female and marginal voice. The script shows the "body" itself as influencing, and being influenced by, the identity ascribed to it in language.

The story of *Crusoe's Daughter* is as follows. In 1904, Polly Flint is six years old and she and her father arrive at an isolated 'yellow house' called 'Oversands' on the marshes of the coast of England. Oversands is built on shifting sands and is described as a ship and as 'a desert isle'.[9] Flint dies after he leaves Polly with her dead mother's elderly sisters, Mary and Frances, their companion, Mrs Woods, and Charlotte, the maid. The aunts run the house on a small inheritance left by their father, an archdeacon. As in the tradition of the early eighteenth century castaway narratives, Polly's mother had died when Polly was a baby. At Oversands, the women are depicted as isolated, not only in patriarchal society, but also within a masculine literary, historical and social landscape. Polly is raised

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[8] This is one year after *Crusoe's Daughter* is first published in 1985. The book is still in print.

[9] *Crusoe's Daughter*, pp. 12, 130.

according to Anglican religious principles, yet she refuses to be confirmed because religion requires her to be good and to have no desires.[10] She is educated at home and taught French and German. Her main contact is with two other houses, one is representative of materialism and industry, and the other, of aesthetics and the aristocracy. In the first, the Zeit house, Polly falls in love with Theo, wealthy second generation German and Jewish son of an industrialist and inheritor of the local 'Iron-Works'. While Theo fights for England in the First World War, his family are interned. His family reject Polly and Theo marries an aristocrat's daughter, who eventually leaves him for a German officer. In the Second World War, unable to leave Nazi Germany, he gets his two young daughters out to be raised by Polly. He returns after the war to Polly, but soon dies.[11]

The second major house is Thwaite, a house in which many writers, artists and musicians of modernism and romanticism are patronised by the aristocrat and poet, Lady Celia.[12] Polly also meets, and for a while is in love with, a working class poet, Paul Treece, who is killed in the First World War.[13] In this house, Polly becomes close to the elderly Arthur Thwaite who is the owner of Thwaite and is the brother of Lady Celia. 'Thwaite' signifies a powerful patriarchal culture and lineage in that it is the name of the man, his status as 'Lord', his family, his house and local village. Thwaite is like Crusoe in that he names a "text" in which certain meanings and subjectivities are privileged. Thwaite, understood to mean 'a clearing in the forest', suggests enlightenment, as well as the land clearing acts

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[10] Ibid, p. 33.

[11] Ibid, p. 220.

[12] Dennis Brown states that 'most Modernists texts were only launched in the first place by private money...' Gardam's reference to patronage establishes the social and economic conditions of writing and connects Defoe with Woolf. Brown, *The Modernist Self*, fn. 7, p. 200. Russell McDougall states that Lady Celia resembles Lady Otteline Morrel, one of Woolf's literary circle. Apart from Leonard and Virginia Woolf who visit, there is also a figure who resembles Lily Briscoe from Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*. More oblique references include T.S. Eliot's wife Vivien. Russell McDougall, 'A Novel Atlas: Tradition and the Individual Text of *Crusoe's Daughter*' in Andrew Taylor and Russell McDougall, ed., *Uncommon Ground: Essays in Literatures in English*, Centre for Research in the New Literatures in English Publications, Adelaide, 1990.

[13] He is a figure suggestive of the soldier-poet featured in Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*.

which created aristocratic as well as industrial wealth.[14] Eventually, Polly discovers that Thwaite is her grandfather. He had a child, Polly's mother, with her grandmother when he was twenty and her grandmother was forty and married to the archdeacon. The archdeacon adopted the child as his own and Thwaite broke off his engagement to Polly's Aunt Mary, who unknowingly then became his daughter's sister. The relationship this indicates between moral values and material effects shows the artifice inherent in the patriarchal structure. The text continues to show Thwaite as having a vital sexuality. This conveys the power of masculine language, and the figure of Thwaite is therefore suggestive of the masculine and sexual writing of modernists such as Ezra Pound and D. H. Lawrence.[15] Thwaite's "masculine" vitality counters the 'sexless' Crusoe.[16] The "secret" of the story is also that of female sexuality when Polly discovers her grandmother's copy of *Fanny Hill* hidden at the top of the bookshelf in her grandfather's room.[17]

For most of her life, *Robinson Crusoe* is Polly's companion, role model and criterion for judgement.[18] She defends *Robinson Crusoe* to others and contrasts Crusoe's experience with her own. Polly understands that she is different from Robinson Crusoe who, unlike her, will not menstruate. Like Einzig, Gardam creates a web of literary connections. To counter the masculinity of dominant traditions, Polly is connected to a female literary tradition which includes Jane Austen, the Brontës, Sylvia Plath and Woolf. More specifically, in her description, Polly resembles Rachel, the main protagonist of Woolf's *The Voyage Out* (1915). Like Polly, Rachel has had a Christian upbringing and was educated at home with her aunts, 'her mother being dead'.[19] Polly is the same age as Rachel in 1915. In *The*

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[14] *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 71.

[15] Maud Ellman discusses Pound's 'spermatic economy'. She says that for Pound, 'Art, like nature, runs on phallic power'. *The Poetics of Impersonality*, The Harvester Press, Brighton, 1987, p. 167

[16] *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 54.

[17] Ibid, p. 158.

[18] There suggests a parallel with Wilkie Collins, *The Moonstone*, 1910. See discussion in Nayder, 'Robinson Crusoe and Friday in Victorian Britain'. pp. 213-31.

[19] Virginia Woolf, *The Voyage Out*, The Hogarth Press, London, 1949, 1st pub., 1915, p. 167 and p. 179.

Voyage Out, Mrs Ambrose thinks that Rachel would benefit from reading Defoe.[20] *Crusoe's Daughter* complements *A Voyage Out* in that Rachel dies on the brink of starting her sexual life and Polly remains a virgin. The "fact" of Polly's virginity is however indecisive, as according to Gardam's schema, Polly is formed from the dominant traditions of literature which hide women's sexuality.

Using Plath's language, Polly describes herself as isolated and living in 'a bell-jar'. She says she is isolated because she was educated at home. Reflecting the views of Woolf in *Three Guineas*, she says that had she been a boy, money would have been found to send her to school. After her aunts and Mrs Woods die and Theo marries, Polly is castaway in the gulf between her emotional life and her intellect. She starts to drink and spends years translating *Robinson Crusoe* into French and German, finishing the task in 1930. She then starts working 'on an analysis of the book [*Robinson Crusoe*] as a Spiritual Biography'.[21] Her decline suggests, among things, that the Western intellectual model is masculine, rational and emotionally arid. Just prior to the Second World War, Polly is rescued from her drunken decline by Alice, Charlotte's successor. Alice is a Defoean upwardly mobile domestic servant who marries the local schoolmaster. She arranges for Polly to become a teacher and, between them, they turn Oversands into a school boarding house. Near the end of the text, Polly adopts Theo's two daughters.[22] One step-daughter is married to a parson, descendant of 'Boagey's, provision merchants'.[23] Her sister is single and an international lawyer: 'She runs Europe'.[24] The yellow house is now no longer at the margins, but at the centre of a 'huge chemical city'.[25] Polly's isolation has become a political act as a compulsory

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[20] Ibid, p. 144. Gillian Beer describes the novel as having 'a closely realistic surface', making it a possible model for *Crusoe's Daughter*. Gillian Beer, *Arguing with the Past: Essays in Narrative from Woolf to Sidney*, Routledge, London, 1989, p. 167.

[21] *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 176.

[22] When I spoke with Gardam at a writer's festival in Australia, she said that this part of *Crusoe's Daughter* was inspired by the story of two young Jewish women she met while at Oxford. This suggestion of factuality emphasises the text's emulation as well as refutation of *Robinson Crusoe*.

[23] *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 42.

[24] Ibid, p. 219.

[25] Ibid, p. 216.

purchase order has been issued for the house to enable nuclear waste to be buried in the 'salt caves' below the marsh.[26] In protest, Polly and the nuns she shares the house with, lock themselves in.[27]

In contrast to *Robinson Crusoe*, Polly's agency is passive. The cover up of sex, sexuality and the 'disgusting' female body enacted in the text has now become a metaphor for the cover up of problems specific to the late twentieth century: nuclear waste, environmental destruction and industrialisation.[28] Polly eventually shares her house with nuns suggesting their "freedom", through separation from (although formed within) dominant and masculine values. *Crusoe's Daughter* is a condemnation of the masculinity of *Robinson Crusoe*, as iconic text of rational individualism, and its pretence to total control, both over the self and over others. It also confirms *Robinson Crusoe* as a writing capable of depicting a "female" individualism. In *Crusoe's Daughter*, the "feminine" is a passive and ethical position which obstructs the "progress" of rational individualism.

Love, Sex and the Reproductive Text

In the text, religious values create stories which cover female sexuality, the female body and bodily acts and, therefore, inform language and shape identity as well as the English literary canon. For example, the events of a woman's biological life, particularly menstruation and menopause, are hidden: 'There was nothing about women going funny in novels'.[29] Charlotte's illegitimate son Stanley dies because of such a cover story. His adopted family is large, his 'father' drinks, and because of the poverty in which he lives, he dies of a fever. In contrast, Polly recovers from the same fever and Polly's mother, Emma, is kept with her mother and "passed" as the archdeacon's daughter. The point is made that morality and the concept of sin cannot be separated from class.

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[26] Ibid, p. 218.

[27] Ibid, p. 84.

[28] Ibid, p. 134.

[29] Ibid, p. 123.

What is hidden from view in Polly's growing up, prior to and during the First World War, are Mrs. Woods' love for Frances, the cover up and separation of the maid, Charlotte, from her son Stanley and the relationship between Polly's grandmother and Thwaite. Such relationships are hidden to suit the prevailing morality. As a result, lives change, Frances marries the priest, Stanley is adopted by Charlotte's sister, and Polly's mother becomes the archdeacon's daughter. Because female sexuality and female bodies are at the base of these "fictions", Gardam constructs her own cover story to show female bodies, sex and sexuality as structuring time, space and value differently throughout the text.

In *Crusoe's Daughter*, language is a sexual economy in which *Robinson Crusoe* and modernism are defined against and emerge from a literary tradition reflective of a particular, patriarchal history. Arthur Thwaite is the text's main example of an embodied, sexual character, who contrasts with his pale and romantic sister. In that Thwaite names a landscape, he represents a culture that is masculine and sexual. He is 'full blooded and successful with women'[30] in contrast with the 'milk and water' artists he is host to. At Thwaite, the various artists are described as white, pale, ugly, dull and, even dead.[31] Thwaite's sister, who runs the house, is herself like a statue, her hand is 'ice cold...it lay in mine as if dead'[32] In contrast, Thwaite is a sexual, rather than romantic figure. By situating Thwaite as Polly's grandfather, Gardam links Polly to a "robust" as well as a "weak" tradition.

Speaking in short punchy sentences and clearing his throat, Thwaite resembles Dr Watson, the narrator and assistant to Sherlock Holmes.[33] In *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (1892) Watson is the contrasting figure to Holmes, for whom all emotions were abhorrent to his 'cold, precise, but admirably balanced

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[30] Ibid, pp. 212-3.

[31] Ibid, p. 78.

[32] Ibid, p. 79.

[33] Ibid, p. 75.

mind'.[34] Watson is a benign, domestic figure and Thwaite correspondingly spends his time with his married butler and housekeeper, whose homely quarters Polly describes as beautiful.[35] Earlier Polly 'had hoped for a Heathcliffe character' and was disappointed by Thwaite's appearance, with his 'monocle and a drooping moustache'.[36] Polly says of her grandfather, 'It's interesting to know there are such men. Usually they're only in novels'.[37] Through such literary associations Gardam brings her characters' social and literary "inheritance" to the reader's attention.

Gardam suggests that a "masculine" and vigorous realism produced a pale and "feminine" romanticism. For example, when Polly looks at her mother's photograph, she sees a 'romantic portrait'. The photograph is taken in 'a foreign landscape,...peaks, clouds and misty lakes...it is a photographer's backdrop in Liverpool'.[38] In the picture, the child is vigorous and the mother weak. Polly sees her mother's small frame with a large baby and imagines her alone and complaining, 'I am a child myself. Why does the blood have to start running down the legs'.[39] Earlier Polly observed how 'easy and beautiful' Crusoe's life is in comparison.[40] In keeping with this sexualisation of texts, Thwaite is vigorous in his eighties and Polly, once vigorous in the photograph, is now weak like her mother: 'Mr Thwaite...was growing more and more vigorous as the days went by and we grew weaker'.[41]

In *Crusoe's Daughter*, female identity is represented as losing its vigour through being associated with a lack of sexual desire and disembodiment. Women are represented in culture (in the text) as without desire and without blood.

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[34] Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes* (1st published 1892), John Murray, London, 1966, p. 9. In her review, Patricia Craig describes Thwaite as 'akin to Badger in *The Wind in the Willows*, 'Crusoe and Daughter', *London Review of Books*, 20 June, 1985, p. 20.

[35] Ibid, p. 90.

[36] Ibid, p. 65.

[37] Ibid, p. 212.

[38] Ibid, p. 52.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid, p. 54.

[41] Ibid, p. 209.

Gardam's text brings together the symbolic and the literal to break down the gendered binaries which shape identity in culture. She uses menstruation to contrast Polly's bodily experience with Crusoe's:

> I should have liked him, I thought, Robinson. He liked to set things straight. To put down the hopeful things. So sensible and brave. So strong and handsome. He made a huge effort at self-respect. He was a man of course, so it would be easier. He didn't have blood pouring out of himself every four weeks until he was old. He would never feel disgusting.[42]

Blood, "life" and sexuality, and their absence, are depicted through the use of colour. For example, when Polly returns from lying half-naked in the sun in the long grass, she looks in the mirror and sees herself as 'a ruby red face on a rough girl' after lying 'half naked in broad daylight'.[43] Later in the novel, Polly recovers a sense of herself again when she hears that Theo saw her in the grass and thought she was a 'stunner'.[44] The words, spoken by Thwaite, show Polly's recovery as achieved through the auspices of the constructing male gaze.[45] The defining nature of the male gaze informs the houses of both Zeit and Thwaite and Polly complains that 'The artists stare so much'.[46] The representation of Polly to herself, in such dominant masculine terms, causes her to see herself in the third person. That is, she can only see herself as others see her, and experience her body as if it is not her own. Gardam's use of colour transforms the negative implications associated with the aesthetic view of women, to produce an embodied female 'subject', which is distinct from the landscape.

Colour introduces the modernist sense of writing as painting into *Crusoe's Daughter* as a "realist" text.[47] Colour is one of the ways in which Gardam

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[42] Ibid, p. 39.

[43] Ibid, p. 95.

[44] Ibid, p. 180.

[45] Laura Mulvey says of the male gaze, 'In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its phantasy on to the female figure which is styled accordingly.'. 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', *Screen*, vol. 16, no. 3, 1975.

[46] *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 81.

[47] George Smith discusses the desire of the modernists to paint with words in 'Woolf, Cezanne and *Nachträglichkeit* in Feminist Modernism' in Rado, *Rereading Modernism*, p. 73

regenders and embodies subjectivity. It is a system of representation which Gardam uses to emphasise space and visuality as opposed, yet related, to temporality and numeracy. When Polly arrives 'figures stood about the hall on coloured tiles', indicating a certain Defoe-like mathematical quality.[48] Later, when Polly analyses *Robinson Crusoe* she gets 'busy with the red ink, busy with the green'.[49] At 'the yellow house', Mrs Woods is 'a woman with a green face'.[50] At the Thwaite house, Polly meets 'The purple woman poet'.[51] Colour suggests qualities of vitality and life and shows the constructedness of appearance and substantiality. Gardam uses it as a "feminine" response to the domination of the masculine and religious construction of the female body, sex and sexuality. It is significant in this respect that Polly's house is described spatially as yellow, rather than in temporal terms, as new (Zeit's house) or traditional (Thwaite's house). As I will discuss later in the chapter, the presence of colour and the different associations that colours have are used both positively and negatively to situate race and colonialism as central to the establishment of modern female identity and modernity.

For Gardam, the "sexual" potential of Defoe's writing is evident in his depiction of "full-blooded" and "working class" characters such as Moll Flanders and Roxana. A gendered and class vitality is expressed when Polly says of Mr Box, 'he changed - intensified - Charlotte'.[52] This capacity of Defoe's writing is evident when Polly writes of her sexual desire to Theo and cites Moll Flanders as someone 'who could not have told him so with more passion and less restraint'.[53] As Woolf states, Defoe's importance was that he was able to create

> men and women...who were free to talk openly of the passions and desires which have moved men and women since the beginning of time, and thus even now they

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[48] *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 9.

[49] Ibid, p. 9.

[50] Ibid, p. 9.

[51] Ibid, p. 89.

[52] Ibid, p. 42.

[53] Ibid, p. 163.

> keep their vitality undiminished. There is a dignity in everything that is looked at openly.[54]

While Gardam shows how vitality is taken from the female "subject" by the exclusion of her body from the text of rational individualism, she uses a sexuality based on Defoe's writing and on modernism, rather than romanticism, to bring vitality back to the female subject.

The absence of women on Crusoe's island provides *Crusoe's Daughter* with the image of Polly as a single isolated woman who cannot form a sexual relationship or reproduce herself. This literal depiction of singularity allows Gardam to connect the text with its material effects. The language of sexual relationship in the text evokes a set of terms which concern productive discourse and viable identities. In *Crusoe's Daughter*, words associated with reproduction have symbolic as well as material meaning. The sign of a change of circumstances and identity is referred to as a birth. The sign of allegiance to a person or a set of ideas is 'love'. 'Adoption' is a metaphor for changing paradigms. According to this scenario, a life is marked by many "births" and different "family" arrangements, and identity is not fixed but changeable. As I have shown, these familial metaphors also informed the early eighteenth century castaway texts.

The language of *Crusoe's Daughter* connects the creation of new subjectivities to literary tradition and to society. Polly states that *Robinson Crusoe* arrived 'realised and complete like the child Athene springing from the head of the rough god Zeus'.[55] Her comparison suggests a classical literary tradition in which birth is envisaged as the production of a masculine mind and which excludes a female embodied perspective. As Polly states, 'I seem to have been born at the yellow house, delivered there neat and complete without the

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[54] Virginia Woolf, 'Defoe', *The Common Reader*, The Hogarth Press, London, 1948, p. 130. Susan M. Squier shows that Defoe's writing was the inspiration for *Orlando* quoting her as saying 'I sketched the possibilities which an unattractive woman, penniless, alone might yet bring into being...It struck me, vaguely that I might write a Defoe narrative fun'. 'Tradition and Revision in Woolf's Orlando: Defoe and "The Jessamy Brides", *Women's Studies*, vol. 12, no. 2, 1986, p. 167.

[55] *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 187.

embarrassments and messiness of conception or birth'.[56] This depiction of birth also derives from a "masculine" modernism, in that Lawrence and Pound believed that 'the self can change and renew itself phoenix-like'.[57]

Polly takes a middle position when she emphasises the connection between society and textuality. Crusoe tells Polly: 'Characters in fiction cannot make new departures. We are eunuchs. Frozen eunuchs'.[58] When her Aunt Frances changes after Stanley's death, Polly states that 'new people can emerge: and it will be a bad day for novels when this is not so'.[59] Polly sees that the transformation of Frances is 'as precise as a birth and as astonishing and as complete'.[60] Later she also sees that while 'intention is definable...change ...proceeds waveringly...and...often does not proceed at all'.[61] For example, Polly realises her capacity to teach after Stanley accidentally burns her book. Yet her "birth" as a teacher doesn't happen until twenty years later. This suggests that changes in social practice lag behind discursive shifts and that changes to subjectivities and identities are linked to power.

Whether a discourse is considered productive in *Crusoe's Daughter* depends on the perspective which is dominant in that discourse. *Robinson Crusoe*, a text in which an active female sexual and reproductive perspective is absent, produces a 'daughter' like Polly who is a childless virgin. The model *Robinson Crusoe* provides is that of strength derived from being 'sexless'. Hence, the "love" between the female "subject" and the masculine text of rational individualism is presented as unrequited, that is, unproductive. When Polly declares to Crusoe 'You were my great love', he points out: 'You know I never loved you'.[62] The unrequited love between Polly and Crusoe is also that of Polly and Theo. After Polly breaks with

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[56] Ibid, p. 15.
[57] Ibid, p. 146.
[58] Ibid, p. 221.
[59] Ibid, p. 54.
[60] Ibid, p. 55.
[61] Ibid, p. 54.
[62] Ibid, p. 221.

Crusoe, she becomes the adoptive mother to the Zeit children, 'Theo's children. Theo's and mine.'[63] Polly is also adopted and this shows inheritance and tradition to be constructed and social.

The combination of the visual and spatial with the temporal and narrative creates *Crusoe's Daughter* as a "natural" artifice suggestive of *Robinson Crusoe*. The depiction of female domestication as artifice is conveyed in the 1986 cover of *Crusoe's Daughter* which shows Polly posing outside the yellow house with cut flowers, in a highly stylised garden featuring trained trellises, manicured lawns and topiary. The scene suggests the utopia in *Martha Rattenberg* where masculine nature is domesticated. By creating a "natural" sexual textuality, Gardam creates a sense of inherited tradition and 'wealth'.

Theo and Thwaite are either the current owners or eventual owners of their properties and their eventual "legacy" is to their daughters or granddaughters. Gardam's theme is one of cultural inheritance from male to female. Defoe the journalist becomes Charlotte, the journalist, just as Polly inherits and changes the subjectivity of *Robinson Crusoe*. By the end of the text, Polly, like Crusoe, has profited from her isolation by acquiring Theo's children, a career, two houses and an inheritance from Thwaite. The theme shows a social and cultural shift in power and values from male to female occurring throughout the century. Masculine inheritance is complemented by female inheritance. When Polly takes up teaching, she is following in her mother's "footsteps", 'I ...recognised an inherited power'.[64] As with the sons of the gentleman-trader, one generation's activity changes the status of the next generation. The daughter who is an international lawyer inherits Theo's mother's capacities, who becomes 'very continental', working for post-war Germany. It is a cultural inheritance which is only indirectly attributable to the feminist movement in that Theo's sister is described as 'anti-suffragette...like most bossy women'.[65] Finally, Charlotte Box, the journalist, is not only a symbolic

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[63] Ibid, p. 213.

[64] Ibid, p. 187.

[65] Ibid, p. 138.

descendant of Defoe, but also of Polly's maid, Charlotte, and Mr Box, a man of trade. Through inheritance, each character's identity is shown to be a product of historical and embodied experience, literary discourse and material wealth.

The middle ground

Defoe used *Robinson Crusoe* to redefine what it meant to be in 'the middle state'. Polly also describes herself at Oversands as in 'the middle state'.[66] As a paradigm, *Robinson Crusoe* allows Polly (and the reader) to compare and contrast her subjectivity with the Zeits and Thwaites, indicating the characteristics of the middle state in which she is entwined and which she will transform. The most obvious contrast between the Zeit house and the Thwaite house is that the first is associated with modernisation, materialism and industry, and the latter with modernism, aestheticism and the aristocracy.

The hierarchy between the three houses indicates not only a class structure, but other alliances. Lady Celia prefers the religious Polly to the industrial Zeits. The Thwaites are not mentioned to Polly before Frances' marriage, and never visit.[67] Oversands has little money, while the Thwaite and Zeit houses are rich. The Zeit and Thwaite houses are predominantly atheist and are associated with philanthropy and patronage respectively. Polly's house is religious and associated with charity and missionary work. In contrast to all of them, the poet Treece's family are poor tenant farmers. When Polly tells Treece's brother she is poor, he tells her 'A house is rich'.[68] Mary describes Oversands as a house of 'idle poor' and opposes them to the 'working poor'.[69] The comparison aligns and opposes Oversands with Lady Celia, as one of the idle rich. In these terms, Polly's middle "feminine" state is related to, yet differs from, the "masculine" industrious middle class depicted by Defoe.

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[66] Ibid, p. 77.

[67] Ibid, p. 73.

[68] Ibid, p. 151.

[69] Ibid, p. 122.

All three houses are run by 'determined' women.[70] These women inform the tradition which the text constructs as leading to Polly's eventual politicisation. For example, the Zeit's association with modernisation is indicated by Mrs Zeit's use of the telephone in her war work.[71] At the end of the text Polly's "occupation" of her house is assisted by the use of an 'answerphone' which she uses to vet visitors and defend the house.

Theo and Thwaite are the "subjects" in each house who are "loved" by Polly and the respective women of their houses. Theo and Thwaite are rich and powerful. However, in so far as each lives in a female dominated 'house', each is presented as partially shaped by the female power that each has created. For example, Lady Celia is produced from aesthetic values which reify the feminine. She lies on a couch while Mrs Zeit, as appropriate to the rationality associated with industry, is 'upright' and 'most dreadfully plain'.[72] Although Lady Celia says that all the occupants of the house are free, Polly understands that Celia holds threads and 'every thread is tied to a guest'.[73] Theo's mother is 'in total command' of the war refugees.[74] Each figure shows power accruing to women through the different discursive positioning of women. That is, on the one hand, women are given responsibility for domesticity and social welfare and on the other, the feminine is aesthetically associated with frailty and beauty.[75] Each female "dominated" house is actually run by domestic servants, each of whom has authority over their own domestic (but not moral) space. Polly says of Thwaite's housekeeper that she was not only in charge of her husband the butler, but of her employer.[76] In this way, Gardam represents women from the upper, middle and lower classes as powerful figures, each formed in a hierarchy of values which maintain their relative power.

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[70] Ibid, p. 72 and p. 142.

[71] Ibid, p. 106.

[72] Ibid, pp. 105-6.

[73] Ibid, p. 78.

[74] Ibid, p. 142.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Ibid, p. 88.

Theo, Polly, and Thwaite are distinct from their respective "houses" of industry, religion and modernism. That is, each is related to it, yet stands apart from their female dominated houses and from the values that each house is associated with. Each stands apart on the basis of their sex and its cultural implications. By emphasising class, race and gender difference Gardam creates a heterogeneity within modernity, modernisation and modernism.[77] The contrast between the three figures allows Gardam to critique the apparent completeness, power and powerlessness of each character.

One of the central differences between the three houses is religion. When Polly refuses to be confirmed she adopts *Robinson Crusoe* as her religion. Her refusal aligns her with Defoe as a Dissenting Protestant.[78] In contrast, the Zeits and the occupants of the Thwaite house are atheists, although Lady Celia says those in her house are not unbelievers.[79] In contrast to their houses, Theo and Thwaite are both represented as religious. When Polly thinks of Thwaite, she thinks he prays and she sees his 'medieval face' rather than 'a message from anything higher'.[80] The Jewish Theo, whose family are atheists, but who was confirmed at Eton, states: 'My God, He lives in King's College Chapel'.[81] In other words, religion and knowledge are depicted as mutually informing discourses. By the end of the text,

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[77] Rita Felski gives the following definitions. Modernity is 'often used as an overarching term to designate the worldview of an entire historical period...that defines itself in opposition to the authority of tradition and the past'. Modernisation 'typically refers to a pattern of socio-economic development...scientific and technological innovation, an ever-expanding capitalist market, the development of the nation-state etc.' Modernism 'is associated with decentered subjectivity, aesthetic self-consciousness, subversion of narrative continuity, and an emphasis on paradox, contradiction and ambiguity'. 'Modernism and Modernity: Engendering Literary History' in Rado, p. 198.

[78] Defoe's pamphlet, *The Shortest Way with Dissenters* was written as a satirical condemnation of Dissenters from the perspective of an extreme Anglican. It recommended sending Dissenters to the gallows. Ministers of the Crown supported the views expressed and when they discovered it was a hoax Defoe was imprisoned, his book burned and he was put in stocks for three days. Reputedly, his supporters rallied. James Joyce's description is that 'flower-girls decked the instrument of torture with flowers; copies of his Hymn to the Pillory, which the newsboys sold for a few pennies...while the city mob...toasted the health of the prisoner as well as freedom of speech'. James Joyce, *Daniel Defoe*, State University of New York, Buffalo, 1964, (published manuscript of 1912 lecture in Trieste, Italy), p. 10.

[79] *Crusoe's Daughter*, pp. 79-80. Lady Celia's comment may pertain to belief being inherent to the literary enterprise.

[80] Ibid, p. 120.

[81] Ibid, p. 109.

Polly has reclaimed a religious position when she shares her house with nuns. Earlier she describes the nunnery as having 'confidence, happiness, or life'.[82] She sees them laughing on the marsh, 'wickedly holding their sandals in their hands...They pushed each other and squealed like bumpkins'.[83] This suggests they have a freedom which is denied to Polly. The importance of religion in shaping difference within each "house" produces religion as both dominant and oppositional. This results in Polly redefining "religion" in terms of a strength to resist as opposed to the power to control. *Crusoe's Daughter* associates "vitality" with hybridity and the blurring of boundaries between realism and modernism and between cultures, classes and concepts. Charlotte, Polly's first maid, represents this blurring of boundaries. Polly is horrified to discover that Charlotte is chosen to tell her about menstruation. Her horror is related to the fact that Charlotte obscures boundaries; her hairpins drop into the cooking, she boils her knickers in a pan on the stove, she makes love to the grocer in the kitchen.

The triangular structure created by the three houses and the three figures shows Polly as defined by a father figure and a lover. The structure is similar to the triangular relationships depicted in Coetzee's *Foe*. The triangle not only indicates the structure of female subjectivity, but also emphasises that the "subject" will always appear as different from its own understanding. In other words, its agency will always be overdetermined. As such, the text presents Polly as different from Polly's understanding of herself. In this sense, the subject is always a hybrid figure, by virtue of its linguistic and social construction. Polly is therefore a hybrid identity like Theo and Thwaite. Theo is a hybrid identity because he is German and not German, English and not English, Jewish and not Jewish. The description of Theo's father as 'a typical English country gentleman, if you didn't know'[84] evokes Defoe's representation of the hybrid 'true born

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[82] Ibid, p. 192.

[83] Ibid, p. 21.

[84] Ibid, p. 131.

Englishman'. When he dies, he is missed by Thwaite, suggesting that the two figures mirrored each other, like Friday and Crusoe.[85]

Polly's given middle state is situated between aestheticism and materialism, the literal and the real, traditional and new wealth, art and rationality, desire and pragmatism. In the text, her middle state is both female, indicated by the female household of Oversands, and feminine in that the text aligns her marginality, and later centrality, with the marsh on which Oversands is built. The text defines the marsh as a liminal, in-between space. Like the gentleman-tradesman, it is neither land nor water.[86] As a space which is neither one thing nor another, the marsh is valued by some and not by others and continually shaped by modernisation, by roads, houses and industry. It is a "feminine space" which is vulnerable, because it does not fit dominant categories of aesthetics or utility. The marsh represents a feminine which is other than that defined by masculine discourse. In this regard, there is 'No guilt ever on the marsh, just joy.'[87] The different social relation that each discourse has to the landscape upon which it is founded is evident in the names given to each house. As discussed, Thwaite relates to the clearing of land. In contrast, the name of Theo's house admits of no past and is pragmatically called 'The New House'.[88] In contrast to both, Polly's house is yellow, a primary colour which indicates neither time nor space.

Like the women of the text, the marsh is pale and unnoticeable. From the sea, it is invisible, 'but living on the marsh, it was visible enough' and 'Sometimes...dazzled'.[89] It is a landscape which is unobserved by Mary, who only

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[85] The 'mirror' is a Lacanian term. The mirror stage occurs in early infancy when the infant sees itself as separate from itself, indicating its entry into the symbolic realm. For a useful discussion and critique see Felicity Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Self: Gender and Ideology in Eighteenth Century England*, The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1989, pp. 32-33.

[86] John M. Warner positions Defoe as one of James Joyce's major influences and states that 'the concept of liminality is a key motif throughout, not just in *Robinson Crusoe*, but all of Defoe's novels...It is a threshold state where one lives in a world which is not simply itself but which partakes of another realm'. John. M. Warner, *Joyce's Grandfathers: myth and history in Defoe, Smollett, Sterne, and Joyce*, University of Georgia Press, Athens, 1993, p. 34.

[87] *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 29.

[88] Ibid, p. 158.

[89] Ibid, p. 21.

sees the sea, and Mrs Woods, who pragmatically crosses it to go to church.[90] The depictions associate these women with the repression of female sexuality. In relation to this association, it is relevant that in the "enlightened" Thwaite house there are not many shutters and 'nobody seems at all sure that marriage is a necessary thing'.[91] "Marriage" functions as a term for the way in which identities are established in masculine language. As such, Polly agrees with Thwaite that the marriage of Frances was a funeral.[92] The formation of Polly against and within this heterosexual, Protestant language contributes to the depiction of her eventual middle state as virginal and pure, yet political. When Polly resists eviction, her "virginity" marks a tradition of associating women with moral purity and links Gardam's text to the work of Aubin. Both authors ultimately strive to imbue the social and public sphere with "feminine" moral values.

An embodied landscape

Gardam is an author of children's literature as well as adult literature and *Crusoe's Daughter* blurs the distinction between the two, using the perspective of a child to make society appear strange.[93] In this child's perspective, the house is a looming landscape, the aunts are 'deeply aged - quite forty', and Mrs Woolf is judged to be different from her name, understood as it is heard, 'Mrs Wolf'.[94] Later, the poet Treece's mother, a tenant farmer's wife, refers to the 'Wolves'.[95] This kind of "misreading" enables the reader to realise different perspectives. The child's perspective makes points of view appear as specific rather than universal. It also enlarges space, exaggerates what is "normal" and depicts the literal as both

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[90] Ibid, p. 22.

[91] Ibid, p. 78.

[92] Ibid, p. 77.

[93] The text also refers to a number of children's adventure stories including: Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island*, 1883; Arthur Ransome, *Swallows and Amazons*, 1930 and Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*, 1865.

[94] *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 98.

[95] Ibid, p. 149.

"true" and "untrue".[96] This latter aspect is evident when the poet Treece goes to war and asks if can he write to her. Polly points out the truth/lie of the literal, when she replies, 'Write? But don't you?' meaning that he is a poet.[97] In this sense, the space between the metaphoric and the literal is an important middle ground which relates to the space between the ideal and the material "real", which was sought in the earlier eighteenth century texts.

The particularity of perspective is emphasised in the narrative through Polly's age and through the text's spatiality. As Polly says, 'to a head not much higher than a door knob, the ceilings and cornices...might have been in another atmosphere'.[98] Similarly, when she first sees Theo and his sister in their pony cart on the marsh, they are incrementally 'a bouncing black dot...a bird at first...the small black triangle...some little insistent machine...a pony and trap...Two people sat in it'.[99] Such particularity of perspective informs the construction of subjectivity in the text. The text presents Theo as Polly's equivalent. That is, both are shaped by and different to *Robinson Crusoe* as icon of rational individualism. The likenesses between them are also produced by their positions, as female and Jew, within rational individualism. When Polly first sees Theo she notes that 'He looked as if everything in the world was well known to him and followed a good set of rules, which he kept and was happy'.[100] Just as the feminine represents a middle ground; so is Theo represented as indecisive, and as such, is also between definite states. Theo's daughter expresses the view that Theo was 'a great hesitator' and that this resulted in his failure to leave Germany in time.[101] Perspective and positioning in culture are also stressed when Polly's "rationality"

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[96] Juliet Dusinberre points out that the literal evokes a 'double landscape' in which 'The literal is freer.' and 'The image is a form of bondage'. She points out that the two Lewis Carroll's *Alice* books are based on tension between the literal and the metaphoric. *Alice to the Lighthouse: Children's Books and Radical Experiments in Art*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1987, p. 222.

[97] *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 135.

[98] Ibid, p. 12.

[99] *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 40.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Ibid, p. 218. As an indecisive figure, Theo is also unlike *Robinson Crusoe* and suggestive of T. S. Eliot's Prufrock.

depicts Thwaite as mad. When she first arrives at Thwaite, Polly thinks she must be in 'a lunatic asylum for the rich. They have them in novels'.[102] Later, Theo's daughter recalls that, on first meeting her, they thought she was mad. By implication, rationality here is linked to what is known and so the anecdotes link history to the formation of identity. In this sense also, what is new is linked to what is strange, foreign and other. In this way, *Crusoe's Daughter* links geographic space to generational and class difference, as well as to historical and cultural perspectives. When Polly asks how far the Thwaite house is from hers, Thwaite says, 'everything does seem rather far from here'.[103]

Just as time and space are blurred in this text, so is materiality and substantiality. On her arrival, Polly '...did a jigsaw the size of a continent...the aunt's face...watched our four hands hover over the oceans of mahogany.'[104] In this depiction the ocean is substantial and linked to foreign trade, as it was for Defoe. The reference to the mahogany table also links domesticity to trade and to colonisation. The relationship between language and history is conveyed as goods from the British colonies become commonplace by the outbreak of the Second World War. The infusion of colonial products is used to associate modernisation with variety and increased choice: 'Bovril, Oxo, Ovaltine or even Mazawattee Tea'.[105] The products not only signify the shifting definition of luxury (prior to this, imported African coffee was only drunk on Sunday), but the hybridity of English culture. Hybridity, defined as colonial through the blurring of boundaries and the introduction of colour, is shown to be central to improvements in the lives of women. When Polly finally goes to school as a teacher, she wears Mrs Wood's African shoes. To Polly, coffee 'meant primary colours'.[106] Colour is not only associated with the absence from English literature of the female experience of the

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[102] Ibid, p. 74.
[103] Ibid, p. 71.
[104] Ibid, p. 9.
[105] Ibid, p. 209.
[106] Ibid, p. 28.

body, sex and sexuality, but also with class and with the exotic, sexualised space of the English colonies. The absence of sex and the body is represented as mapping political and colonial history. As such Africa was 'desirably wild' and meant 'Colour and heat'.[107]

Just as colonial spaces shape English identity and history, so the natural "feminine" environment shapes masculine History. Its active shaping is indicated by the wind and the sand which constantly attempt to enter and buffet the house:

> The North-East wind...It piled up sand...It flung sand...It howled and bansheed...it blew hardest of all into and onto and through and round the yellow house ...shaking...hurtling ...whisking ...pulling...[108]

The power of the feminine is related to masculinity and self-control. When Polly turns to drink, her self-control is abandoned. In contrast, the built social landscape controls the "natural" environment and marks out a history of social change. A post office is built, a new school, a road, 'a broad tarmacadammed [sic] road...stopping well short of the yellow house'.[109] As the rest of the world closes in, Oversands and Polly's identity, like colonial "subjects" and products, and like the working class, become central to modernity.

Unlike the "masculine" model of linearity, change is shown to be "feminine" and incremental. The text emphasises and utilises the unclear boundaries which exist between time and space. Change takes the form of the shaping, insubstantial wind and occurs in the context of everyday activities:

> We are...told, endlessly, that the war burst and shattered us like a thunder bolt...like Crusoe's demon pouncing upon him in his sleep.
>
> Neither is quite true. Even on the marsh we had heard uneasy things for sometime - for about four years. For months...Mr Box of Boagey's, the doctor, the vicar had all spoken of a coming war and I remember Aunt Frances telling me years before her wedding when I was still a child.[110]

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[107] Ibid, p. 28.

[108] Ibid, p. 20.

[109] Ibid, p. 119.

[110] Ibid, p. 117.

In this environment, historical events do not arrive as if new born. The bells don't ring to announce war; Polly is just told that the news is 'seeping around'.[111] In contrast, the marsh is surrounded by bells differently marking time:

> The bells kept the time - the church bell...that turned each hour into a funeral...,the bells from the nunnery canonical and complex, and a bell from the Hall stables far off and uncertain...[112]

When Gardam blurs time and space she creates a dialogue between Defoe's realism and its concern with the everyday and the spatial aesthetics of modernism. This gives a female, private, sexual and domestic history an active role in modernity and masculine history. The days of the week are marked by social and domestic "events": 'Sunday was the day of processions'.[113] On Wednesday, Stanley visited, Thursdays were for Father Pocock, Friday was the day of the 'garden-lad'.[114] The associations link time with language and culture, and suggest to the reader that Friday's name was also derived from a particular culture and historical period. The novel places the events of Polly's life as a woman, events which are biological and cultural, alongside the main events of 'History' (as Alice, Polly's maid, refers to the First World War).[115] Events such as Polly's refusal of confirmation, the onset and decline of menstruation, her first love and rejection, the loss of her aunt in marriage to a missionary, her adoption of the Zeit children, and her becoming a teacher, are given equal significance with, and shown to be related to, war and poverty, as well as the colonialisation and industrialisation of England.

In the text, places and class positions are understood within a cultural hierarchy which attributes lower value to the lower body, the lower classes and

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[111] Ibid, p. 129.

[112] Ibid, p. 21.

[113] Ibid, p. 28.

[114] Ibid, p. 42.

[115] Ibid, p. 141.

the colonies.[116] For example, the working-class, industrial landscape of Wales is 'dirty'. When she arrives, it is assumed that Polly is dirty because she has come from Wales. Wales is associated with its "black" coalminers and these in turn are associated with, and differentiated from, workers who are racially black:

> All the men were black, but not black like the black seamen in Wales who sometimes came to the foster-mother's house and when they washed were black still. These men were only very dirty and trickly with sweat which left white marks.[117]

Later, Polly is again scrubbed in her transformation from 'drunk' to teacher.[118]

To Mrs Woods, "foreign" and "dirt" were the same: Naples exemplified 'the filth of foreign countries'.[119] Gardam's text challenges such negative views, as did the earlier castaway narratives, by associating the "foreign" with difference and with the new. When Polly meets the Zeits she says, 'I was listening to a foreign language I couldn't understand'[120] and when Mrs Zeit cries after Treece's death, Polly thinks 'how foreign she is'.[121] Because Polly learns to speak French and German, she is able to speak to 'foreigners', that is, literally people who speak other languages, as well as people who represent other cultures. Because Polly speaks German, when Theo's daughters arrive they feel safe with her. Against the culture of negativity attributed to being separate and 'foreign', Gardam presents its centrality and aligns the feminine with the "foreign".

To be "foreign" is also to be different. Polly's role as translator of *Robinson Crusoe* is related to the argument of *Crusoe's Daughter* that to be separate creates difference. Polly observes that when Crusoe was 'married to a landscape...he had a hard time to keep sane.'[122] Polly criticises the Brontës, saying that they wrote 'a

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[116] Mary Douglas states, 'Reflection on dirt involves reflection on the relation of order to disorder, being to non-being, form to formlessness, life to death. Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: an analysis of pollution and taboo*, Routledge, Kegan and Paul, London, 1969, p. 5.

[117] *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 11.

[118] Ibid, p. 185.

[119] Ibid, p. 61.

[120] Ibid, p. 25.

[121] Ibid, p. 140.

[122] Ibid, p. 77.

compelling landscape' but 'I am not sure that we were ever meant to become knitted into a landscape'.[123] Mrs Woods, wearing and carrying black knitting, is a "literal" example of such a submerged figure.[124] The text alludes to Mrs Woods' love for Frances, a love which is overheard rather than seen. In this way individuality is presented as necessary to the production of difference. By positioning a woman's life at the centre of the text, Gardam is able to show the links between gender, race, class, religion and language as they operate at the level of the everyday and as they work in relationship to History. In her house on the marsh, Polly is seen by those "outside" as far from the centre, but she responds, '... it's the centre of things for me'.[125]

Metaphors of Subjectivity

Throughout *Crusoe's Daughter*, 'colour' and vitality are used to suggest a subject-position's viability in culture. As a consequence, subjectivities such as Mrs Woods' are pale. When Mrs Woods 'hisses' her love for Frances on the stairs, Polly says 'Nobody mentioned the scene. Ever.'[126] The lack of representation of lesbianism in English literature is linked to the cultural judgement of Mrs Woods as undesirable. That is, Charlotte, in her own yet clearly not "separate" language, accuses her of being unattractive to men: 'What man'd look at thee'.[127] The social construction of the "subject" is indicated when Mrs Woods dies and Polly sees 'a nothing with a young face, quite gentle and pretty'.[128] Prior to this, she is described as having 'the habit of being grim'.[129]

The text comments on the construction of subjectivity in a number of ways. Polly's drinking is a sign of the dissolution of the self which, like fragmentation, is

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[123] Ibid, p. 77.
[124] Ibid, p. 13.
[125] Ibid, p. 84.
[126] Ibid, p. 59.
[127] Ibid, p. 51.
[128] Ibid, p. 148.
[129] Ibid, p. 146.

a major trope of modernism.[130] Treece, as working class poet and then soldier-poet is also a fragmented or "disjunctured" subject. Such a subjectivity has been understood as representing 'a freedom of self possibilities'.[131] Because such a figure is subject to the dominant warrior values of society, the poet dies with the soldier. That is, "freedom" is shown to be always determined by power. Treece's death is like that of Frances, whose 'funeral' indicated the death of her relative independence.

Death is also productively recoded in the text to indicate the value of fragmentation and hybridity. Mary, as a Florence Nightingale nurse, is also a 'black bride'.[132] In the recoding of colour which occurs in the text, black, which is shown in its association with death and dirt, is transformed and connected with hybridity, life and health. The image of the black bride associates the feminine with an in-between, liminal state between life and death. In accord with this, texts are depicted as healthy or sick bodies and 'sickness of the body was a matter which training and skill could overcome'.[133] That is, literature is shown to have the capacity to heal as well as to reproduce subjectivity. Nursing informs Mary's identity and gives her authority. Illness is equally defining for Mrs Woods, for whom it '...played some mystical part in her religion'.[134] Treece is nicknamed 'The Poultice', suggesting that his poetry draws out the infections of society. This latter image provides a positive association between the feminine and poetry, as I later discuss.

Multiplicity of identity is emphasised when Polly resists the coherent self offered by her aunt's religion (she refuses to be confirmed) and discovers another "self": 'not I but some other girl answered'.[135] Her resistance is the beginning of

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[130] See Brown, *The Modernist Self*, Chapter 2.

[131] Brown speaks of the Russian harlequin in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, saying ' he represents the life-force as zany disjunction - thriving on self-contradiction'. *The Modernist Self*, p. 24.

[132] *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 21.

[133] Ibid, p. 48.

[134] Ibid, p. 19.

[135] Ibid, p. 27.

her awareness of different subject-positions and other texts. As she later tells Crusoe, there have been other texts, 'a few since your day'.[136] Polly's problem is that to be visible in culture is to be reflected back to oneself as a complete being, as Friday reflected Crusoe. Because the dominant subjectivity is masculine, or the feminine constructed as the masculine's complementary opposite, this is not possible. As a result, Polly sees herself as split from her body. After her first period for example, she says she is pleased that the body is taking care of itself.[137] Because her body and sexuality are excluded from a world dominated by rational individualism, Polly fails to establish a productive "conversation" which will "confirm" who she is. This is evident in her conversation with Treece: 'By talking about my body I'd stopped the only real conversation I'd ever had in my life'.[138] In other words, like Friday in conversation with Crusoe, her reality is sacrificed to his. The text emphasises the constructed nature of the ostensibly unitary, coherent subject. For example, Thwaite is compared to Don Quixote suggesting that his 'wholeness' is based on self-deception, indicated by his affair with Polly's grandmother. Through this representation of Thwaite, Crusoe himself is depicted as an artifice that is confirmed by the perspective of others. This confirmation is presented as inextricable from gender, power, wealth and social position.

Polly states that 'ego' is the focus of the Thwaite house. The term reminds the reader of the temporal and thematic coincidence of psychoanalysis with modernism. The term also links subjectivity-formation to sexual desire. At Thwaite, the relationship between women and desire is quite different from that at Oversands. This is evident in Lady Celia's 'magnetism for men'.[139] When Polly receives her first kiss from a ' painter' she says that, in contrast to Treece, he 'understood' about the female body.[140] Polly says that at Thwaite, 'We live as if we

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[136] Ibid, p. 222.

[137] Ibid, p. 37.

[138] Ibid, p. 134.

[139] *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 114.

[140] Ibid, p. 134.

are all extra-special. I'm afraid it isn't very Christian at all'.[141] The Thwaite house is therefore marked by artifice and Oversands by 'truth'. The focus on the "self" at Thwaite is as wrong to Polly as is the artificial "true" and "good" self which she is required to produce at Oversands. When Frances marries the priest, Polly says 'She had lost her true, uncalculating self.'[142] Her loss of such a "self" is linked to her desire to be rich which was 'unusual in the fiancèe of a missionary.'[143] At Oversands, the religiously-defined, feminine "self" is formed on the basis of denial and this is shown to be inconsistent with a desire for wealth. The tension exhibited here parallels the problem of authenticity faced by Defoe's socially mobile tradesman in relation to accruing wealth.

When Polly experiences the "enlightenment" of Thwaite, she realises her difference from Crusoe. She writes to her aunt that at Oversands she has become 'fragmented and incomplete'.[144] The comparison leads the reader to realise the positive possibilities inherent in the fragmentation of subjectivity. Her use of the language of modernism allows her to show the fragmented nature of all subject-positions, while her realist narrative shows subject-positions as always constructed in discourse and discourse in society. Texts and "reality" are mutually constructed as Polly indicates when she tells Crusoe, in the script which ends the text, 'Fiction isn't memory', to which Crusoe replies 'But memory is fiction'.[145] This indicates the importance of Gardam's situating of modernism in the "real" time of its development, prior to and including the First World War. That is, the realisation of the mutual construction of identity, history and textuality is itself a historical construction. As Woolf stated with irony, 'on or about December 1910, human nature changed'.[146]

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[141] Ibid, p. 80.

[142] Ibid, p. 66.

[143] Ibid, p. 64.

[144] Ibid, p. 77.

[145] Ibid, p. 220.

[146] Woolf, 'Mr Bennett and Mrs. Brown' quoted by Brown, *The Modernist Self*, p. 15.

Thwaite's speech, unlike his sexuality, indicates that he exerts a control over his emotions. His speech is full of silences and he is described as a 'mystery' who 'commanded his interior life and was so hopeless with his exterior one'.[147] The same self-control is evident at Oversands. Oversands is marked by goodness, achieved through the denial of desire. For example, when her aunt goes into a retreat at the nearby nunnery, Polly states that she must be very 'good' not to feel the need for letters. Polly is brought up as an Anglican, and her memoir, like Crusoe's journal, is an accounting of her own life. When she first arrives at Oversands she is told that her 'goodness, though a gift from God, was something I had to see after... As soon as I saw signs of wear and tear I had to report'.[148] Polly discovers there are unmentionable things that she cannot confess. These concern her foster mother's drinking and having sex, female experiences that Gardam suggests are absent from literature. The exclusion of the organic body per se informs the mythical, religious and literary stories that shape what is possible, hence 'One couldn't imagine an angel in the water closet'.[149] Polly wants to be and is expected to be an angel, a spiritual, good and religious figure rather than one made of flesh and blood.

When Polly writes to her aunt about how unsure and lonely she is at Thwaite, she apologises for her lack of control.[150] That she eventually has 'affairs with novels' suggests a "freedom" associated with the "enlightened" Thwaite house.[151] Desire for the feminine is also overcome by rationality in the Zeit household. When Theo feels desire for Polly, his mother intervenes and sends Polly away. Theo hides his feelings, 'not quite achieving the blankness he was aiming at. But perfectly in control'.[152] The emphasis is on a rationality which imperfectly covers a "feminine" hesitancy, reflective of an uncertain subject-

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147 *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 67. p. 73.

148 Ibid, p. 16.

149 Ibid, p. 17.

150 Ibid, p. 80.

151 Ibid, p. 222.

152 Ibid, p. 144.

position. It is an uncertainty that Gardam presents as common to both Jewish and female subjects, in that she represents both as ultimately other to rational individualism.

The text shows that in combination with religion, aesthetics has defined the standard for what it is to be female: 'Women's bodies are so difficult and disgusting, though they're supposed to be so fragrant and beautiful and delicate'.[153] The significance of aesthetics is demonstrated through Polly's experience of clothes. When she arrives at both Oversands and Thwaite, she is required to change her clothes. The changing of clothes is analogous to the reading of many books, and the clothes at Thwaite emphasise variety and difference as her clothes there have many colours. In contrast, the clothes from Oversands are dun coloured and heavy.[154] At Thwaite, the egoistic self is associated with desire and luxury, and Polly remarks that she is to be 'dressed as a princess'.[155] Clothes represent not only artifice, but the relationship between artifice and wealth. The social delimitation of desire is shown when Theo, who undoes Polly's clothes, rejects her to marry an aristocrat's daughter. Gardam's use of clothes critiques the concept of an inherent and natural self and shows texts as clothes which hide, but which also shape, different identities according to different social values.

Clothes link identity to sexuality and religion. At Oversands, Polly's image of herself is inextricable from the house's perspective on sex and sin. She confuses literal and metaphoric meanings when Mary tries to teach her about angels:

> 'What is raiment, Polly?'
> 'Clothes.'
> 'You have raiment, Polly.'
> I thought of my raiment. The mountain of vests.
> 'And if you keep it bright - ?'
> I thought of the body-belts. I thought of the man's trousers dropped on the floor.[156]

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[153] Ibid, p. 134.

[154] Ibid, p. 14.

[155] Ibid, p. 84.

[156] Ibid, p. 17.

Polly is remembering her early years in Wales when as a small child she observed her landlady having sex. This is the scene that she hides, when Mary requires that she confess her sins. Clothes define her identity and her class, as Treece's brother tells her: 'A house is rich - that dress is rich'.[157] Polly says that 'One of the very few mistakes in *Robinson Crusoe*' was Crusoe's regard for clothes: 'He had them by him. He did not use them'.[158] She says that she would miss 'Different, beautiful clothes as time went by'.[159] In Polly's view, Crusoe's 'mistake' was his lack of awareness of the possibilities inherent in artifice. As I have shown, and as I think Gardam's text shows, this was not a possibility that was missed by Defoe, although his social circumstances required him to conceal it.

Imitation and Representation

Crusoe's Daughter shows the role of mirroring in the formation of identify and shows social change as founded on such imitation. Polly says that Crusoe's finding of the footprint is typically understood to be the most 'terrifying' episode of *Robinson Crusoe*.[160] Polly finds 'much more frightening' the episode when Crusoe lands in a strange part of the island and hears 'his own voice calling out his own name' (the parrot calls out 'Robin Crusoe').[161] This is also the name which Polly calls Crusoe in the final words of the play which ends *Crusoe's Daughter*. Crusoe, in turn, calls her 'Pol', indicating her sameness and difference from his parrot. In her imitation, Polly is parrot to *Robinson Crusoe*, as a dominant cultural text which fails to reflect her identity as a sexual, embodied woman. In this sense, she is isolated like Crusoe and comments, 'a dog...cats...goats...and a parrot might be quite jolly companions'.[162]

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[157] Ibid, p. 151.

[158] Ibid, p. 83.

[159] Ibid, pp. 83-4.

[160] Ibid, p. 153.

[161] Ibid, p. 154.

[162] Ibid, p. 122.

Polly's adherence to *Robinson Crusoe* is described by the poet Treece as a biological parenting:

> You ought to rid yourself of him...Often the book that gets you is the first you've really read for yourself - or maybe you pick it up at an important moment in your life...Like ducks. Little ducks you know - the first thing they see when they step out of the egg, they think is their mother. Even if it's a cow, they'll follow it about. ...It is an imprint. 'Love' is only an imprint most of the time.[163]

Polly's response is: 'I'm not a duck...I don't think *Robinson Crusoe* is my mother'.[164] Her statement simultaneously places *Robinson Crusoe* (symbolised by its footprint) in a masculine tradition and confirms Polly's lack of a female tradition. Gardam depicts women as birds in order to show the importance of mirroring to the establishment of identity. Polly, Alice, and Mrs Woods are presented as parrots and women are variously described as ostriches, chickens and ducks.[165] The line between birds and women is blurred, preventing a simple analogy between nature and women. Hence women in a church 'sound like birds'[166] and chickens 'talked in long rusty sentences.'[167] When women see the new young male priest they are 'like chickens running at feeding time'.[168] The birds have different cultural associations: chickens are domesticated and incapable of flight, ducks can exist on land and water, ostriches are popularly depicted as sticking their heads in the sand and so represent the denial of visual evidence, and parrots imitate the human voice. Each depicts a range of different relationships to the environment. The comparing of Polly to a duck in her following of *Robinson Crusoe* suggests Defoe's land-water imagery. In this sense, the negative connotation of imitation is also a positive image of hybridity and transformation.

The positioning of 'woman' as parrot suggests that 'woman' in the imitative role of 'Other' is both frightening and powerful. Polly's power is that she is also

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[163] Ibid, p. 134.

[164] Ibid, p. 135.

[165] Ibid, pp. 155, 13, 198.

[166] Ibid, p. 198.

[167] Ibid, p. 12.

[168] Ibid, p. 199.

able to be imitated, as are the other female characters and writers who shape her. Her recovery is significantly brought about by Alice who, as servant, is Polly's equivalent of Friday. When Polly hears Alice speak Polly's own words she is at first alarmed:

> "Yes I see. *That's* a good thing then," she said, examining the parcel.
>
> It was my own voice using my own words.
>
> She was in charge - and had probably been in charge, though I had not known it, for ages...Alice was her own woman...But when I got used to the change I liked it.[169]

Here imitation is presented as a positive facet of social mobility and change. Before hearing Alice speak her words, she states: 'I had begun to be a little afraid of Alice'.[170] The statement evokes Defoe's writings on the 'problem' of servants imitating their masters. Gardam shows, as Defoe had, that the social construction of identity and subjectivity presents positive possibilities as well as problems.

Like Evans, Einzig and Coetzee, Gardam also uses letters to show the importance of 'response' in the establishment of identity. When Polly desires 'an immediate and precise answer', she wants 'Some telegram from somewhere.'[171] Polly has a number of failed communications. For instance, she writes to Paul Treece but her letters go unanswered when he is killed in the First World War. She writes to Frances after she sails for India but Frances doesn't reply. She says that she cannot write to Mary because she is living the ideal religious state of isolation and cannot receive or write letters. She wishes she had more people to send postcards to.[172] She writes to Theo and his replies gradually become indecipherable before stopping when he marries. Symbolically, his illegible writing connotes his uncertain and marginal subjectivity.[173]

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[169] Ibid, p. 155.

[170] Ibid.

[171] Ibid, p. 60.

[172] Ibid, p. 80.

[173] Ibid, p. 25.

In these examples, writing is agency and is related to desire, identity and material circumstances. Cessation of the letters indicates a loss of agency in a social and physical as well as a symbolic sense. Polly's mother waited in poverty, 'money running short', for a letter from her husband.[174] As is the case for Susan Barton in *Foe*, the end of communication brings Polly to writing, interpretation and pedagogy. Control over words becomes Polly's path to freedom, imitating Crusoe's emphasis on mastery of self and society. However, Polly's circumstances, like Susan Barton's, are always overdetermined by her sex and in both texts, the women become teachers. Polly's suitability to be a teacher is tied to her single and unmarried state as was her mother's. The role of teacher is used not only to indicate a gendered and socially determined role, but also a symbolic feminine transformative space between materiality and textuality.

Agency and Ethics

Each 'house' has a different perspective on the 'health' and 'vitality' of Defoe's realism. The views reflect the range of criticism of *Robinson Crusoe* and the different perspectives of and within each 'house'. In keeping with the association of emotion with 'vitality', Polly's grandfather advises her to read Dickens, who 'will make you laugh' and in whose work there is 'more of a *throng*'.[175] Treece tells Polly that Dickens criticised *Robinson Crusoe* 'for not making anyone laugh or cry'.[176] However, *Crusoe's Daughter* emphasises the emotion inherent in *Robinson Crusoe* and introduces humour through her use of literality. The emotion is highlighted when Polly uses the words of *Robinson Crusoe* to reflect her own distress on hearing that Theo has married:

> There are some secret moving springs in the affections which when they are set going by some object in view, or even not in view...that motion carries out the soul in such violent eager embracings that the absence is unsupportable.[177]

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[174] Ibid, p. 52.

[175] Ibid, p. 70.

[176] Ibid, p. 134. Craig, p. 20. This view accords with that of Ian Watt who associates the lack of emotion and the absence of women with rational individualism.

[177] *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 168. *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 188.

Gardam uses Woolf's comment on Dickens as the epigram to *Crusoe's Daughter*. It reads: 'The pressure of life when one is fending for oneself alone on a desert island is really no laughing matter. It is no crying one either'.[178] In other words, *Crusoe's Daughter* depicts a middle position in which a language, informed by women's experience, modernism, and realism, conveys both rationality and emotion. For example, short sentences are used to productively associate menopause, that 'funny' business, with rationality: 'Blood again. Disturbance in the blood. Ah well so it's over. No children now'.[179] In contrast, her drunken decline is represented by the repetition of Crusoe's name, internal dialogue and emotion.[180] Very short sections are also used to convey emotional distress, as when Polly is told that Theo has married:

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I became very odd. Oh, really quite odd then.[181]

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Similarly, isolated and apparently factual statements such as 'We had tea' indicate that something more momentous (news of Theo's marriage) is occurring.[182] These apparently factual statements link realism with poetry (or the symbolic), emotion and the feminine. When Polly criticises some romantic poetry featuring owls, she states Crusoe was 'spared owls'.[183] This statement links the poetic with the absence of women on Crusoe's island, that is, with the feminine. Lady Celia, who gets enjoyment from the attention of young poets, and who therefore literally associates poetry with romanticism, says *Robinson Crusoe* has no poetry. The materialist, Theo, thinks *Robinson Crusoe* is based on reportage: 'He was real, wasn't he?'[184] Polly's middle position is that the 'verisimilitude' of

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[178] Woolf, p. 23. As I have discussed, the lack of emotion in *Robinson Crusoe* is discussed by Ian Watt.

[179] Ibid, p. 200.

[180] Ibid, p. 169, p. 174-5 (where Polly reiterates her envy of Crusoe seven times).

[181] Ibid, p. 169.

[182] Ibid, p. 165.

[183] Ibid, p. 87.

[184] Ibid, p. 143.

Defoe's prose is 'full of poetic truth'.[185] She says that the text is journalism: 'With glory added. And not a lot of gush and romantic love'.[186] For Treece, poetry is secular and symbolic and therefore Defoe lacked imagination. He scorns the religiosity of *Robinson Crusoe*, saying that soon it will be called 'religious allegory'.[187] Polly tells Treece that it requires a lot of imagination to invent twenty-eight years of isolation. When Polly reads Treece's poetry after he dies, she compares his work to *Robinson Crusoe* and finds that, like that text, it had 'a lovely fortitude'.[188] When she receives his 'very perfect' letters she notes their inherent labour: 'Whole letters may have been redrafted to achieve this'.[189]

The writing of the modernists such as Woolf and Joyce give the same significance to the interior life of the self that Defoe gave to the external world.[190] Woolf remarked that Defoe 'describes the effect of the emotions on the body, not on the mind'.[191] The modernists' appreciation of the poetry and materiality of Defoe's realism is evident in the opening quotations to this chapter. Joyce stated that he thought modern realism a reaction to Defoe's realism, which he said 'defies and transcends the magical beguilements of music'.[192] Woolf observed that Defoe's writing worked at the level of the everyday and made 'common actions dignified and common objects beautiful'.[193] When Gardam 's text negotiates between the aesthetic and the material, she creates the "feminine" as an ethical position.

In the house of Thwaite, when the purple woman's hyacinth upturns and exposes its undersides, the image contrasts and unites 'poetry' with its material

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[185] Ibid, p. 86.

[186] Ibid, p. 86.

[187] Ibid, p. 131.

[188] Ibid, p. 156.

[189] Ibid, p. 137.

[190] Joyce, p. 23.

[191] Virginia Woolf, '*Robinson Crusoe*', *The Second Common Reader*, Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc., New York, 1932 in Frank H. Ellis, Twentieth Century Interpretations of *Robinson Crusoe*: A Collection of Critical Essays, Prentice Hall Inc., New Jersey, 1969, p. 23.

[192] Joyce, p. 22.

[193] Woolf, p. 23.

existence.[194] Material existence of another kind is also emphasised in Aunt Frances' desire to be a missionary, which is tied up with her desire to be rich and independent. Polly cares about poets but wants breakfast.[195] In Gardam's text, because the feminine includes the representation of the female sexual body, much of the support for *Robinson Crusoe* in the text is antiromantic and pro-materiality. In *Crusoe's Daughter*, the historicised and constructed nature of materiality becomes the basis of an ethical position taken against its real effects.

Gardam's text is much closer to Defoe's realism than to Aubin's "romance" or Evan's "anti-romance". Nonetheless, it has some striking similarities with their rewritings. In particular, Gardam's work is like Aubin's, who also, it will be recalled, cast "woman" as moral agent of transformation and reconciled her heroine's progress with inherited "wealth". Unlike in Aubin's narratives, Polly's "virtue", also represented by virginity, is clearly not pursued by society. However, neither is Polly a disinterested "subject". For Aubin and Gardam alike, the feminine blend of sexual purity and material vulnerability is just what the public realm needs. As social critiques, all the castaway texts reflect this strong pedagogical intention. For Coetzee and Gardam, this desire is socially situated by their depiction of "woman" as symbolic and actual teacher. Polly's planned lecture to her students places *Robinson Crusoe* in an evolutionary tradition. In this sense, the text situates all English literature in a landscape of inherited values and represents those values. Russell McDougall suggests that *Crusoe's Daughter* refers to T. S Eliot's essay 'Tradition and the Individual Talent'.[196] Eliot's view is that the past informs the present and that each 'new' text realigns all past texts. In this regard, *Crusoe's Daughter* is a positive rewriting of *Robinson Crusoe* in which

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[194] The 'purple' woman tells Polly, 'I *was* the hyacinth' p. 89. McDougall suggests this refers to T.S. Eliot's 'objective correlative': 'an image or metaphor that arouses emotional responses'. Also that it refers to Eliot's 'hyacinth girl' based on his wife Vivien. That she was incarcerated in an asylum for what was a treatable gynaecological disorder echoes one of the themes of *Crusoe's Daughter*.

[195] *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 104.

[196] Eliot states '...for order to persist after the superinvention of novelty, the *whole* existing order must be, ever so slightly, altered; and so the relations, proportions, values of each work of art toward the whole are readjusted...'. T. S. Eliot, 'Tradition and Individual Talent, *Selected Prose of T. S. Eliot*, ed., Frank Kermode, Faber and Faber, London, 1975, p. 39.

'Defoe's novel begins to look very modern'.[197] Just as Gardam critiques *Robinson Crusoe*, she also criticises Eliot's thesis by emphasising the racial and gendered social construction of texts. The teacher's middle position between words and "reality" is also evident in the role of translator used by Gardam and Evans as well as Einzig.

The final scenes of the text emphasise the relationship between language and the covering over of bodily, material acts, products and 'waste'. The links made in the text between textuality and materiality occur through the use of spatial metaphors and metaphors which convey 'life' in terms of the specificity of the physical, sexual body. However, the life of the body is always textual, as is shown by the script which ends the text. The writing of an additional ending after the apparent ending of a text is a familiar postmodern acknowledgment of the constructed nature of closure and is a gesture used by Coetzee in *Foe*. The end of *Crusoe's Daughter* emphasises the relationship between bodies and language. Unlike *Foe*, which features free form poetic prose in its final section, Gardam uses a play to suggest that the words that are written will be spoken by bodies who will come to occupy the speaking positions in a play. Literally, the parts are to be occupied by the reader.[198]

Gardam does not depict Polly as creator of her own subjectivity. Polly is passive; she is affected by life, changes are imposed upon her. By the end of the novel, Polly's passivity is represented as her strength as she refuses to move for the bulldozers. Polly, in the end, matters because her body occupies a space desired by others. Polly, unlike Crusoe, does not bring the environment under her control and for much of the novel she is immersed in it. In the end, she only comes to stand apart from the landscape, that is, becomes an individual, because her body translates a position that is made for her.

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[197] McDougall, p. 122.

[198] The use of characters in a play suggests Woolf's *The Waves* in which various fictional characters are played out: 'I changed...was Hamlet, was Shelley'. Quoted in Brown, *The Modernist Self*, p. 163.

In relation to ethics, the text's emphasis is on context rather than on individual action. For example, early in the text, two children, Theo's sister and her aristocratic friend, who will become Theo's wife, wish to burn bibles. They explain the act as sensible and rational, because they have no fire wood. The religious Polly is shocked. Years later, when Alice wishes to burn some old bibles left by one of the aunts, a different Polly says it is superstitious not to do so. The destruction of books is presented then as both positive and negative. Earlier, when Polly's book of French is accidentally thrown into the fire, Polly realises her desire to teach. This book burning is described as 'a triumph, the completion of an act'.[199] The relationship between ethics and book burning is implied via Theo and his experience as a Jew in the Second World War. In these ways, Gardam's depicts the ethics and necessity of destroying texts, as varying according to circumstance. Like Einzig, her work emphasises the context in which an act occurs. She stresses the cultural construction of truth and establishes the importance of ethics by linking language with the material world.

Conclusion

With respect to the way in which texts interact with society, the reviews of *Crusoe's Daughter* usefully give a sense of its reception in England and America in the mid 1980s. There is in these reviews a sense of nostalgia in which realism is associated with tradition and stable society. One reviewer, for example, understood that among its 'virtues' *Crusoe's Daughter* adapted 'venerable novelistic techniques to address present day political and social concerns'. The reviewer noted favourably that 'The fluid narratives of those older novels...placed unalterable obligations upon its members'.[200] Another reviewer noted that the heroine and text 'vindicate the possibilities of the unexpected, the single-minded, the old fashioned'.[201] This nostalgia for tradition, morality, the 'old-fashioned' and individualistic was countered in other reviews which observed the text's

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[199] *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 187.

[200] Bob Coleman, '*Crusoe's Daughter* - Gardam J.', *New York Times Book Review*, April, 1986, p. 39.

[201] Margaret Walters, 'Polly Marooned', *Observer*, London, 12 May, 1985.

intertextuality. One recognised that it is only 'On the surface [that] this is a chronicle novel' and 'below the surface' it is concerned with redrawing 'the map of what we call reality'.[202] Another observed that *Crusoe's Daughter* was a 'salting [of] one set of fictitious memoirs with another'.[203] The intertextuality of *Crusoe's Daughter* was criticised by another reviewer, Barbara Hardy, a major figure in literary criticism of the novel, who stated that the reference to *Robinson Crusoe* enabled a 'conventional novel of character and manners' to be promoted to 'a work of literary reflection'.[204] Hardy criticised Gardam for her 'neglect of [Defoe's]...materialism, his sentimental attack on materialism, his colonialism and his cruelty'.[205] She also cited politics and marital discord (referring to Polly's definition of the modern novel) as ignored by Gardam, as well as Defoe's feminism. For Hardy, *Crusoe's Daughter* was at its best when 'light-hearted' and did 'not tease us into thinking too hard about great novels'. In other words, *Crusoe's Daughter* was accused of inauthenticity, of trying to be something it is not. These reviews, particularly the latter, polarise realism and contemporary writing, past and present, old and new, stability and instability, light and substantial, surface and depth. These polarisations in turn are used to represent divergent values. The climate this evokes, in terms of validating new ways of writing and new ways of being, is not so very different from that faced by Defoe's tradesman trying to be a gentleman on his own terms. The effect of such polarisations is that none of the reviews commented on the difference made to *Robinson Crusoe* by the introduction of a female protagonist. As is evident in *Crusoe's Daughter* itself, because no conversation is established, all that is associated with the feminine is effectively silenced, which is precisely Gardam's point.

That the feminine remains hidden is, nonetheless, appropriate to Gardam's text. In the text, embodied, reproductive female sexuality is the sin created and

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[202] Francis King, 'Marooned', *The Spectator*, 18 May, 1985, p. 27.

[203] Craig, p. 20.

[204] Barbara Hardy, *'Islanded, companionable'*, *Times Literary Supplement*, 31 May, 1985, p. 99.

[205] Ibid.

silenced by religion, and it is this silence that pervades English literature. In *Crusoe's Daughter*, the tradition of reading is itself inseparable from the notion of good and bad.[206] For example, reading is a reward, 'if sins not too bad'.[207] After Polly menstruates, she takes a book from the shelf although she says she is not allowed to: 'it was a Sunday and it was a novel'.[208] Before Polly becomes textually promiscuous, she is a faithful and monogamous reader.[209] Polly's removal of most of her books from her shelves at the end of the text is therefore both symbolic and social. In the place of books stands a television, centre stage.[210]

Polly's return to religion at the end of the text implies that religious values have produced a passivity which is now presented as positive. It also indicates that religion was the basis for a valuable and "singular" interpretative relationship between reader and text. Throughout the text, Polly reads *Robinson Crusoe* as if it were her bible. In *Martha Rattenberg*, Martha's companion, while she waited for the men to return from utopia, was her Bible. At the end of the text, in a script, Polly says to Crusoe: 'Quite a few people see an affinity between you and Jesus Christ'.[211] *Robinson Crusoe* was the tool which prevented her dissolution by confirming who she was. The association links the Protestant tradition to literary criticism through Polly's writing of *Robinson Crusoe* as spiritual biography. This indicates why Gardam's style of writing is not only silenced ideologically, but is (as her work suggests) silenced textually and historically.

Joyce distinguished Defoe's realism from modern realism. Through images of female experience, tropes of modernism, intertextuality and symbol, Gardam uses Defoe's realism to depict another "feminine" reality. However, because our culture is predominantly secular, there is no longer, outside of universities, a

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[206] Tom Laqueur, 'Credit, Novels, Masturbation', in Susan Leigh Foster (ed.), *Choreographing History*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1995.

[207] *Crusoe's Daughter*, p. 18.

[208] Ibid, p. 36.

[209] Ibid, p. 223.

[210] Ibid, pp. 220, 224.

[211] Ibid, p. 223.

tradition of reading for symbolic meaning, and many of her allusions would remain hidden from the modern reader. Because of this, her use of a playscript to end her work recognises that, unlike the early eighteenth century narratives, modern social critiques, in order to be visible, must signal a crisis of value at the level of the aesthetic as well as the symbolic. Gardam's text is a more pragmatic resolution to this tension than the texts of Coetzee and Einzig. When Aubin emulated Defoe, in all but his writing style, her romances and high moral ideals laid a heavy disguise over any more pragmatic intent. Similarly, Defoe hid the "feminine" in a pragmatic style, although it shaped his work. Like *Robinson Crusoe*, which has been taken as historical fact, Gardam's work, for the most part, appears as an apparently "straight" narrative and moral tale. In this sense, Gardam, like her early eighteenth century predecessors, uses the castaway narrative to combine the poetic and the "historical" and, possibly, her personal morals and financial needs.

Conclusion

The period from 1660 to 1800 might be read then not as the movement toward the formation of the human subject who is the source of his own meanings but, rather, as one crucial period for representing and revisioning the experience of...subjects in formation, subjects constructed in multiple conflicting domains...

Felicity Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject*

Since femininity is associated with masquerade, masquerade - the figurative, textuality etc. - comes to seem feminine. Femininity would thus appear to have settled, like magic dust, over the terrain of culture generally, and in the process to have transformed masculinity itself.

Tania Modleski, *Feminism without Women: Culture and Criticism in a "Postfeminist" Age*

In my thesis I have read *Robinson Crusoe* in relation to the feminine as it acquires meaning within the text and in each of the rewritings I have examined. This has meant that I have focussed on the differences and similarities that each narrative displays without expounding an overall, explanatory schema. It is now necessary to summarise my findings and make some speculative comments about the project as a whole. The question I will focus on is what the castaway narrative can tell us about the construction of identity in general and about *Robinson Crusoe*, considered as exemplary text of modern subjectivity, in particular. In doing so I will address why it is that late twentieth century authors (including myself) have returned to *Robinson Crusoe*.

An important context for my concluding remarks is what Salman Rushdie has termed the contemporary 'turn to the eighteenth century' by academics and novelists. Rushdie is quoted in the journal *Eighteenth Century Life*, in a review of a list of modern novels concerned with the eighteenth century.[1] Donna Heiland, author of the review essay, states that these novels constitute 'a genuine literary sub-genre', the work of which 'is only beginning to be understood'.[2] She gives two main reasons for this interest. The first is that modern technology has led to a questioning of the Cartesian mind-body distinction, and the second is the contemporary dismantling of colonisation. In

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[1] Donna Heiland, 'Historical Subjects: Recent Fiction about the Eighteenth Century', *Eighteenth Century Fiction*, vol. 21, no. 1, 1997, p. 118. The review essay discusses or mentions fifty of these novels published between 1967-1993 (the majority of which were published after 1980). The editor announced that the list is to be revised annually.

[2] Heiland, p. 109.

Heiland's view, the two are connected, for the relationship that is being questioned is that of a European mind controlling a colonised body.[3] She states that the questioning evident in these novels shows the Cartesian model to be 'susceptible to critique'. She concludes that they depict the eighteenth century understanding of identity as 'always already "post-modern"'[4] and show a 'deep connection between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries'.[5] My own thesis concurs with Heiland's view by demonstrating that in the early eighteenth and late twentieth centuries the castaway narrative is a text of social criticism which engages with the cultural process whereby subjectivity is established. My extended examination of *Robinson Crusoe* and its rewritings has provided the opportunity to examine in detail the different and similar ways that the texts in each period meet.

Firstly, what does the structure of the castaway narrative tell us about the construction of identity in Western discourse? As depicted in the early eighteenth century narratives, the castaway is shipwrecked between a place that is familiar and known and one that is unknown and "foreign". The "island" which saves the castaway is isolated and unnamed. Because of this isolation, the premise of the castaway narrative is that the castaway's experience must be conveyed to society through narrative itself. This focus on the textual representation of experience is the first aspect of the castaway narrative which is useful to the self-reflexive orientation of the late twentieth century texts.

Both sets of authors recognise that the experience of the castaway is that of anyone whose experience lies outside that which can be recognised and valued in dominant cultural terms. The problem which the castaway narrative focuses on is how to bring into existence that which has no existence or how to value that which may signify the lack of value itself. In other words, with regard to the deconstructive texts of the late twentieth century, the castaway narrative is useful because it criticises dominant social and cultural values and

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[3] Heiland, p. 109.

[4] Heiland, p. 110

[5] Heiland, p. 114.

binaries in order to give value to that which is other than, and marginal to them. The castaway narrative is also useful as a text of deconstruction because it is a text of survival. This aspect makes the journey of identity an ontological and epistemological one. That is, the castaway narrative of identity is about whether the castaway will literally, as well as materially, survive. It concerns whether and how the "subject" will regain communication and language, and how the "subject" is to be represented in order to appear in society.

The castaway narrative "names" an unknown experience and by naming that experience gives authority, agency and existence to the identity based on it. The story of the island that is unknown and out of sight not only represents the "new" identity that is to come into being, but also the story of the past itself, that other "distant" story that cannot be known but can only be told. As the twentieth century narratives point out, identity and history are inextricable. As Defoe recognised also, to name what has occurred is to name what is to happen next. Implicit in the castaway narrative is the development of new identities based on a use and abuse of the past. The twentieth century authors use this aspect of the castaway narrative to draw on, as well as to criticise, colonialism and modernity as well as the projects of history writing and modern subjectivity. That is, the castaway narrative allows the late twentieth century authors to show the conditions which determine Western subjectivity while using those conditions to create "new" possibilities.

The castaway journey allows the castaway to be transformed by encounters with "values" that are both strange and familiar, foreign and domestic. For example, Friday is both like and unlike Crusoe. He is also both like and unlike the cannibals to whom he belongs and from whom he is "rescued". The two figures are presented as more like each other than like either of the societies from which they derive. In this emphasis on the importance of "likeness", cultural, racial and sexual differences are presented as both essential to the text and also as merged into it. In the late twentieth century, the encounter with the "other" in the castaway narrative allows authors to show the dependence of one dominant cultural term on the term that it occludes. In this way, the colonies, the colonised "subjects" and their

produce, as well as the values marked "feminine", are shown as shaping both modern subjectivity and modernity itself.

The power of the castaway narrative rests on the evocation of identity as a negotiated space. Spatial language produces the sense of "new" identity as involving the movement beyond current limits, the extension of boundaries themselves, and the dangers and possibilities of excess. The fact of colonialism and the effect of foreign trade on society had enabled such a language to become meaningful. In other words, actual events informed the production of this kind of symbolic language. The dismantling of colonialism has similarly enabled late twentieth century authors to invert this landscape. Where the earlier authors used travel and distance to allegorise their criticisms of society, in the twentieth century the castaway narrative depicts Western society itself as a space constructed by colonialism. These late twentieth century texts are not therefore critiques of foreign trade and luxury, but of the sexual, racial, gendered and ontological hierarchies of Western discourse.

The castaway narrative is a foundational story, not only because it has come to represent rational individualism, but also because it is supremely and metaphorically about the process whereby "things" - identities and values - are recognised and about the terms which make this recognition necessary and possible. In the eighteenth century, difference and value were conveyed partly through the combining of different genres and the use of intertextuality. In Aubin's work, for example, the female was associated with the truth of the narrative through the morality which her protagonists displayed. Her combining of the travel and romance genres enabled her to bring together problematic "masculine" desire and "feminine" virtue and through "disinterest" to reward virtue with wealth.[6] In this way, she avoided the cultural connotations of immorality associated with a woman earning her own money. Because of her gender, it was a "choice" that was circumscribed by society's values. For Defoe, his desire to move away from dominant values, which understood the desire for pleasure as immoral, led him to extend the

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[6] "Disinterested desire", it will be recalled, was the Shaftesburian notion of civic virtue that was adopted by Aubin. See this thesis, p. 156.

limits of the possible through the travel narrative. He avoided the moral terrain of the ideal by focussing on the detail of the everyday. The shape of Aubin's and Defoe's narratives was determined by the prevailing values of their society and, in turn, each had implications for the articulation of the feminine and for the representation of "woman". Defoe disassociated the economic project from the moral project in which it was entangled. Because of his aim, women were absent on his island. However, the mutually informing languages of sex and money in the period meant that the "feminine" was implicitly, as well as explicitly, involved in his project.

In spite of, or perhaps because of, the incorporation of "new" values, the castaway who returns to society must be able to "converse" in order to be recognised and valued in the "old" language. The "feminine", presented literally as translator or interpreter, is located in the space in between "new" and "old" ways of being. In the process of "translation" both "old" and "new" values, languages and cultures are transformed. In this way, the castaway's return is able to be presented as a triumphant tale of individual endeavour which results from the agency of the subject itself. This strategy is adopted by Defoe when he positions Crusoe as author of his own eponymous text. The twentieth century authors emphasise that such agency is achieved through the incorporation and denial of difference. These texts make explicit the racial and cultural differences on which modern subjectivity depends.

As the above discussion indicates, the "differences" which inform the castaway narrative are not only textual, but sexual, racial and cultural. In fact, the "textual" only acquires value in so far as it names and shapes that unknown place in between the terms which define value in society. In this sense, there is a ready and useful similarity between the textual and the feminine as both acquire value through being transformative middle terms. My work on the early eighteenth century connects artifice and disguise with the feminine, and this association also connects the feminine historically with writing and textuality, as the second opening quotation to this chapter recognises. The feminine, as a middle ground whose value is determined by the binaries which shape the narrative and the texts as a feminine artifice, informs all the castaway narratives I have examined. In this way the text as feminine becomes a site of

constructive value in the late twentieth century texts. This historical sense of the connection between the feminine and writing usefully takes debates about "feminine" writing away from any implication that such writing is informed by an essential feminine nature.

I have shown *Robinson Crusoe* to be informed by the language of sexual desire when previously only its economic language had been recognised. Desire, configured as both economic and sexual, informs Defoe's narrative and contradicts the sense that *Robinson Crusoe*, and by association rational individualism, is synonymous with the absence of sexual desire. The identification of the crisis of identity with pubescent protagonists suggests that for Defoe, Evans and Aubin, the languages of sex and money mutually inform the production of identity. Because these languages refer to symbolic as well as material and physical survival and existence, the feminine can be used to bring about and show the shift from symbolic to material, from insubstantial to substantial, from that which has no existence to that which has authority. In the late twentieth century narratives, the feminine is used to show the textual and mediatory aspect of these shifts and shows the "real" and the symbolic to be mutually informing. On this basis, the feminine can be equated with the character of allegory itself, the form which all of the narratives I have examined take.

Within the limits of my thesis, it is possible to say that the feminine is an active and formative component in the production of meaning and value within the "economies" of sex and money. This is so because, like money, the feminine is a currency which can show either value or its lack, and can show the process whereby valuing and devaluing occurs.[7] As is evident in Defoe's depiction of the independent widow, the work which the "feminine" does in valorising that which is different, "foreign" or "new" emerges from and affects

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[7] The term 'economies', rather than discourses, is useful here in that it suggests the overlapping determinations of value that shape identity. In *Symbolic Economies*, Jean Joseph Goux addresses money, writing and sex as economies of general equivalence. He explains 'general equivalence' as a 'standard measure' which makes terms commensurable by making them equal. As is the focus of the texts I have examined, Goux is concerned with relations between the "ideal', the "real" and the "symbolic". Jean-Joseph Goux, *Symbolic Economies: After Freud and Marx*, trans. Jennifer Curtiss Gage, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1990.

the representation of women and, consequently, the ways in which they are perceived and their perceptions of themselves.

Apart from the gendered tensions which surrounded luxury and credit, my analysis makes it clear that, in the early period, images of marriage, family and inheritance are central to the construction of identity. These familial images problematise the opposition between individual "subject" and society which is prevalent in modernist discourse.[8] Defoe's use of "conversation" and his awareness of the importance of reputation to the tradesman's identity and survival also challenges this opposition. For Defoe, the identity of the tradesman is not only secured in society, but is specifically secured through reference to narratives of sex, marriage and relationship.

In the castaway narrative, circularity, that is, "returning" from a journey transformed is necessary to moving forward. This cycle enables the narrative to connect both past, present and future. The circulation of money, as a signifier, is important to Defoe because, through circulation, money accrues value.[9] In *Robinson Crusoe* the family is also a circulatory metaphor which shows "woman" gaining value through the process of marriage and reproduction. The family cycle can also be used to signify the passing of time from past to present to future. Crusoe establishes his own family on his return home, thereby replacing the family which he left. Ian Watt noted that as soon as this family is established, Crusoe's wife dies and Crusoe becomes a widower. Two quite different female figures, Crusoe's mother and his friend the widow, also mark the beginning and end of Crusoe's journey. Crusoe as widower and the widow now complement each other, as did Crusoe and Friday. As was the case with all the other "opposites" - Friday and Crusoe, past and present, foreign and domestic - both are transformed by the encounter. The images of "woman" and family in the early texts therefore work in a similar way to the rhetoric of

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[8] Felski also demonstrates the importance of images of the family to the shaping of modern identity. In her comparison between Marshall Berman's *All that is Solid Melts into Air* with Gail Finney's *Women in Modern Drama* (1989), she states that, in contrast to Berman's work, which 'tends to replicate an established view of modernity in terms of a polarised opposition between individual and society', Finney's work 'points to the centrality of familial ties and identities...to modern subjectivity'. Felski, p. 3.

[9] See David Trotter's *Circulation* for a discussion of the prevalence of images of circulation in Defoe's work.

money and value. They "naturalise" a cycle of birth and death in which "new" traditions are validated, and cultural and monetary "inheritance" (and therefore survival) is secured. In this sense, the widow figure in *Robinson Crusoe* connects the land-based tradition of the patriarchal family with the "new" tradition of commerce.[10] The mirroring of Crusoe with the widow indicates the importance of the feminine in the construction of Crusoe's new identity. For Defoe the feminine represented the possibility of social mobility, as well as the means whereby such mobility could be validated (through reference to female virtue). The problem was that the feminine, in its association with luxury and artifice, was also problematic for masculinity, as well as for identity. The advantage of the widow figure is that she represents the feminine as "free" of masculine ties, while simultaneously and symbolically linking commerce with the conventions of family inheritance. Like Aubin, Defoe recognised that female independence in this period must be validated by association with "family" values. Although his depiction of male and female "individuals" appears to sever family ties, in *Robinson Crusoe* the widow's financial autonomy and respectability depends on her family connection and she and Crusoe remain linked as "friends". It is a relationship which hides the familial and gendered connections that have enabled the two to be produced. As I have suggested before, the figure of the widow as autonomous appears to be dependent on the "liberation" of the "feminine" which occurs in this period in relation to the removal of moral judgement from luxury and pleasure.[11] This "liberation" is also implicitly linked to the association of the feminine with artifice and therefore to the representation of women as consumers. Both the figures of Friday and the widow demonstrate the racial and gendered hybridity which is inherent in Defoe's conception of the formation of the masculine tradesman.

The castaway narrative, as I have presented it, is pre-eminently a text of social criticism and this is important to the authors of the twentieth century

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[10] Frederick Hegel stated that in modern culture "woman" is 'the site where idea and matter are united in one spot'. This appears to inform the representation of the "feminine and "woman" in the castaway narrative. Hegel, *Aesthetics*, quoted by Goux, p. 241.

[11] In Chapters One and Two I discuss the widow figure. See p. 126, fn 140 for a description of the widow as a figure who enjoyed the same financial rights and responsibilities as did men.

rewritings that I have examined. This is so not only with regard to their criticisms of the rational individualism associated with *Robinson Crusoe*, but also with regard to their representation of marginalised identities and values. The late twentieth century texts challenge modern subjectivity as a dominant, ideological and masculine manifestation, and do so by exposing its textual and historical construction. These texts establish, then deconstruct, oppositions such as dominant and marginal, "real" and textual, masculine and feminine, substantial and insubstantial. It is in the deconstruction of these binaries that the "feminine" imagery of the earlier texts begins to re-emerge. The common depiction of the feminine as a middle ground between contrasting values, and of woman as translator or interpreter, are the two major images I have focussed on. Both early and late texts depict a textual and feminine middle ground in which "new" values and identities are constructed. These representations themselves challenge the dominant cultural association of the island with individualism itself. As in the early period, the twentieth century texts transform values through producing different forms of writing. Through writing, the negative values associated with women and colonised "subjects" are inverted. Characteristics such as passivity and irrationality which are conventionally associated with women, and the silence of the other, become the basis for powerful and socially formative ethical positions.

It is noticeable that while both sets of texts address the tension between ideals, textuality and materiality, the early texts are more concerned with material survival and with social mobility and the later texts with textual and epistemological survival. It is a shift which portrays not only the concerns of the different periods, but the changed "nature" of the 'Middle State' itself. In a social climate which does not concern immediate personal survival, the emphasis is on the relationship between the ideals by which we live, the representation of those ideals, and the relationship they have with materiality and textuality. In other words, the importance of the feminine and the textual which informed the concerns of the early eighteenth century texts has now transformed the focus of the novel and the text of modern subjectivity itself. In the early texts, the feminine valorised new, socially mobile and independent identities. In the later ones, the feminine gives authority to less materialistic

and socially prejudicial values through using different styles of writing. In their emphasis on the importance of narrative styles, they emulate the early texts. By showing the gendered, textual and historical basis of identity, the late twentieth century narratives bring into being "new" kinds of identities and values, and in doing so challenge and change the belief systems which maintained the "old". The importance that values marked feminine have in the shaping of identity has a complex and indirect relationship to actual lives, but an important relationship nonetheless. The challenge for feminism is to look again at the image in the mirror in which we see ourselves reflected as masculine dominated "subjects". To look in order to recognise, in the dark spaces which give that image shape, a culturally-formed yet influential feminine which can be used to affect, both positively and negatively, what happens next.

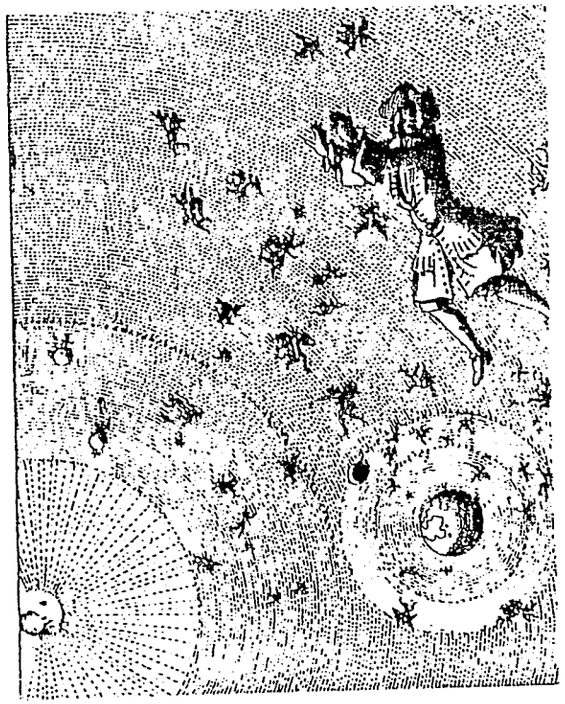
Appendix

Robinson Crusoe: A New Fiction

by Barbara Einzig

1983

Robinson Crusoe
A New Fiction



by

Barbara Einzig

Robinson Crusoe

A New Fiction

by

Barbara Einzig

Membrane Press

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I would not agree with this. What you consider my idiosyncratic use of words—I think there is a little more to it, of course. We all grow up and inherit a certain vocabulary. We then have to examine this vocabulary. And this not just by finding out how this word is usually used, which then gives as a result a certain number of uses. These uses are then legitimate. In my opinion a word has a much stronger relation to what it denotes or what it is, than just the way it is being used between you and me. That is, you look only to the communicative value of the word. I look to the disclosing quality. And this disclosing quality has, of course, always a historical background.

—Hannah Arendt, in conversation

But then it occurred to me, that I must keep the tame from the wild, or else they would always run wild when they grew up; and the only way for this was to have some enclosed piece of ground well fenced, either with hedge or pale, to keep them in so effectually, that those within might not break out, or those without break in.

—Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*

A Word Concerning this Entertainment

Robinson Crusoe is the first in a series of "studies" of classics, using the source text in ways ranging from the incorporation of three or four found sentences, to the borrowing of the source's sense of content, sentence structure, tone, or rhetorical device. The language is both completely my own and an engagement with that of another writer (here, of course, Defoe), and the work is thus similar to Walter Benjamin's "Task of the Translator," where translation manifests the kinship or relatedness of languages. While the languages here are both English, they are foreign in degree of time and consciousness. Defoe is a different person, speaks a different language, and writes in the English of the seventeenth rather than the twentieth century.

–BE

At First

I was born in the year 1951, in the town of Ann Arbor, Michigan, in the county of Wayne, in a Catholic hospital, near the large family of my mother, daughter of a rabbi and an apartment house manager, and that of my father, a young handsome man whose virtue shone. They both got a bad estate, by infinite loss, that made all things hence finite. It was a legacy of finitude, growing up in the place where the homes of their aunts, uncles, and grandparents had been claimed by strangers or destroyed, my mother's mother having lived in Herinche, Hungary, a good country, with houses, grasses of many kinds, trees, fruits, sweets, and good water that was always cold. My mother's father went to pray at 2 a.m., returning in the morning and then sleeping until the afternoon. The whole family sang beautifully.

My mother enters this story early by necessity, for she left off her trade, and raised us; having married my father, whose relations were long ago named Egyes, being it is told the only Jews in that place, Kisvarda, also of Hungary, but after whom I have not been strictly called, but known instead as, Barbara Einzig; for by the usual corruption of words in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, we were called, nay, we call ourselves, and write our name, Einzig, and so my companions always called me.

I had two elder sisters—the first-born wore a black sweater, president of that club we formed, formerly existing in *Little Women*, and before that in the *Pickwick Papers*, but this one has since become a social worker in Cambridge. The other was fair in complexion, with dark hair, and of a mind inclined toward analysis; she watched things as they were about to happen, ready to smile, and now wanders certain islands to the west, shirt out. Another sister I had who was younger than myself, I greeted her birth, this was in California, of which in its

place I will tell more, and what became of all of us we are still knowing.

Early in his life, while still a boy, my father had thought of venturing forth into that sphere that came to be known, in the ensuing decade, as "creative writing." This plan was set aside in his employment with the Ford Motor Company, from which he was permanently distracted by an invitation to teach at a university. He did so while completing his degree in economics at another school, a circumstance which, although illegal, enabled him to support the family while summing things up for himself.

Crawling around and looking at everything closely, and being held by a wide variety of arms, most acquainted by blood, yielded to walking, ing, to riding, to new horizons. When I was thirteen months of age, my two sisters moved with my parents and me across the country. Of this trip I remember very little, or imagine that I remember very little, or there is very little in the imagined memory that exists, only a motel room that is dark with me small and rocking in it, and a green De Soto with three seats, proud and mobile. Coasting down a propitious hill from the desert into a gas station, just in the nick of time, we arrived at last in California, whose historic and idiosyncratic attractions remained unannounced or otherwise indicated by my parents. Yet I sensed them: to get away from the harsh and muddy snows of winter, to flee a world dense with family, in which privacy was nonexistent, and one was surrounded by furniture covered in plastic, and boats of melon-balls repeatedly appearing as table centerpieces; in short--to break away, to move toward something else . . . something benign, ambitious, unencumbered by eastern prejudice, or by what seemed to evoke that prejudice: belief.

Belief figured largely in that place from which we rolled downhill. Mother sang a unique mixture of songs, from which I sought to surmise, to chart the coordinates of, what larger and more distant place she had

inhabited as a child. However, she generally sang songs from the forties, popular songs that in a light and fervent voice contrasted strangely with her teachings. Around the corner and under a tree a gallant sailor made love to me. He kissed me once. He kissed me twice. It didn't mean a thing to me but gosh it was so nice.

Much later, it was reported to me that certain motels across the country refused our entrance on the grounds that we were Jewish, but as a child I regarded that attribute as a private one of my mother's, a sort of personal mood that sometimes overcame her, as a small shrine to the ominous, as shut in mystery as the reason for our family's car trip west. Perhaps Mother even made it up. For being Jewish was something like the cracking leather of the third seat of the De Soto, beneath which something else, resembling foam rubber, began to spill.

Being the third daughter of the family, and not bred to any trade, my head began to be filled very early with rambling thoughts. At first, to be sure, they ranged over the close neighborhood, for the suburb in which we dwelt was not a mean one: great oak trees spread their boughs over the quiet streets; lanes and parks existed for walking quickly out of sight or hearing of automobiles; the labors of housewives and of oriental gardeners created beds of color. The earth blossomed forth in roses, carnations, the green flowers called lettuce—hearts of artichokes were hidden in strange, formal plants. My mother served as capable guide to this world, exhibiting such curiosity concerning the variety of flower inhabiting a particular border that the owner nearly always sent us home with a slip to be fostered, after engaging in conversation slow, gentle, pragmatic. Seeds, earth, light, and water were required. Plants grew and vanished in time, a phrase sounding like "in water." Time had physical possibilities; things could be given out and absorbed back into it, as if it were a sponge. I was the last in my class to

learn to tell time, and, against the background of my usual quick learning, this was enough of a difficulty to, before I finally mastered it, cause me to imagine the most pathetic future: I would be old, standing on a corner, intending to meet someone at four o'clock, looking at my watch and only seeing a little hand and a big one. With shame I pulled up the sleeve of my sweater to fully show the timepiece to a passerby who, in this sad imagining of mine, never understood what it was I wanted.

Knowledge was greatly valued by my family, and I was sincerely thankful for this condition, most generously exemplified by my mother who, rather than crowding our shelves at home, not only borrowed from but purchased books for the library, where a poster was established on which a sapphire globe was spinning; people of different cultures danced upon it, as if twirling it with their feet, and above them the emblem *READ: TRAVEL THE WORLD* floated in promise.

My father in his early teens had read most of the public library, measuring it off in a deliberate quota of inches per week. Now he brought reports home with which he surrounded his chair, piling them on the small table beside which he sat, in an easy posture of friendly survey. He had a group of orange paperbacks that grew steadily, on a monthly basis, *The Journal of American Economics*. They were a complete set from the beginning. His life was abundant, luxuriant: in his desk drawer was a bowl always full of change, and he arrived home from the train laden with large cardboard charts on which economic indicators zigzagged in colored tape, revealing levels of productivity as the paling or blushing of an eternal economy's face. His preoccupation with such matters conceived, as he told me, in the war, out of a concern to fathom what mattered, what made it work, did not serve in those days as a barricade between us, but as a kind of running board of discourse, on which I might stand outside the body of his vehicle, to be sure, yet able to speak through an always open window. The weather was fine. And

had I confined my wayward thoughts it might have so continued, but they could not rest on any horizon line, neither of argument nor of faith and, as I will tell, ranged without considerations of circumstances or consequences, and in an ill hour, G–d knows.

Something Else

The cloud in my blue sky first evidenced itself by certain peculiarities of my faculties of perception. Even before I could speak, I began to notice the asymmetry of faces, how one eye looked out direct and unafraid, with soft determination, and the other seemed partly fallen inward in the darkness of the pupil, back in the hollow space possessed by the head. This other eye seemed both detached, abstract, and more private and personal. It was thinking of something that was not seen in the space before the eyes, it was seeing something that was not visible in the space before the eyes. But whether it was seeing something that belonged like a favorite memory, purse, or shirt to the person who had the eye, who possessed this eye and used it, or whether the eye saw something that the person herself could not see but with this eye, so that the eye formed a kind of foreign witness, was not clear to me.

As Goethe so wisely said, "We see only what we know," so I began to think that my family joined me in this certain freedom of association beginning to blow about me. My eldest sister, in particular, conducted herself with an obstinacy that I mistook for a more philosophical practice, conceiving her behavior to be a conscious art of contradiction, as it were. She was an excellent pianist, and my mother acknowledged the importance of her recital by buying her a white organdy dress, with black velvet ribbons, for this occasion. My sister, aware of my mother's intention, wore jeans, appearing suddenly in them on stage. She played well with her long fingers that seemed older than her, and concluded her

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performance by shyly rising from the polished bench, turning to face the audience. She tipped her body slightly forward as if to curtsy, though the effect was one of being inadvertently pulled or straightened, and with exactly the same degree of indifferent movement her lips slightly parted. It was a smile as sure as it was quick, like the glimpse of a motive behind the face, one related to the movement of her hands over the keys, black and white as her dress should have been, and then she fled into the wings, and no amount of applause could bring her back.

I imagined this same art in my father's conversation on our frequent walks. The police of the town lived in a station bordering on a beautiful square outlined with walnut trees. At the right time of the year my father and I would go and gather walnuts. I was uncomfortable as we walked, for he told me of a country, a country of mixed-up things. He spoke of it only when his days were most lacking in exhilaration, in a tone of voice implying that there was more but that it was too far in the past, and now could exist only in fragments. Green, black, soft, bruised, fibrous shapes encountered our shoes while walking. Picking them up and putting them into our brown paper bags, my father would quote from Shakespeare: "I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself king of infinite space . . ." but I did not know what followed these words.

I began to read whatever my eye fell on. De Soto had a helmet all of gold; it was on the front of the car where everyone could see it, and on the trunk where the key went in; the ashtray too was concealed by this image, this time outlined in relief and with no separate color. In school I learned he was the sworn companion of Ponce de Leon, who, it was said, searched for the Fountain of Youth without finding it. This fable was held in check by the teacher's cautioning it might be only a legend. I saw them both wandering for at least four years through a tangle of violet Florida dusk (darkness was always falling on them),

knee-deep in brackish water. De Soto was wearing the helmet that gleamed intently, though with increasing dullness toward the end. His eyes were the same black-green as our car.

Sometimes I said to my parents, "What kind of place are you from?" endeavoring to find out if I was deciphering correctly. "What was it like?" I asked them. Yet a lack of definition pervaded the resultant accounts. I saw them too as partners in a twilight whose atmosphere had about it the same uncertainty in new territory, belonging (really) to some others. This twilight had black in it too—it was almost purple.

Nothing can be a greater demonstration of the existence of an invisible world, than the concurrence of second causes with the ideas of things which we form in our minds, pertectly reserved, and not communicated to any in the world. And the idea in my mind was this: when I thought of the word "house," conjured up was all the richness of this house I then lived in, with a power disproportionate to its humble frame. A closet shut off from the inside the window visible as ornament on the exterior; and I now got it into my head, as it were, that the word "house" was to me no more than this window, impossible to look through from the inside, a one-sided word only, as I only knew one house that thus formed my entire conception of what this sound might mean, and how many actual other houses did its meaning to me then shut out? In short, where my mind had wandered, my body was now desirous of following—at least around the corner.

Our backyard was dignified by an immense Fire Tree, easily the tallest tree within sight, and bound with ropes to limit its sway in wind. Next to the brick circle girdling the trunk, a small stone dwarf held his post. One day, as if reading my thoughts, he spoke to me, asking me to join him in leaving our garden and wandering throughout the neighborhood. Heeding his plea, I sought to lead him by the hand which,

despite his inner resolve, remained fixed to his hip in a confident gesture, belying his helplessness. As I was not large enough to pick him up and carry him, I resolved to as gently as possible lower him to the ground, and then to carefully drag him out of the garden, hoping that the spirit of animation would soon enable him to rise and walk on his own. The hard crack with which he hit the patio affected only the sack that he carried in his other hand, slung over his back, filled with earth and planted. Breaking it in two, the alarm was thus sounded; his freedom was not to be. He was restored to his former place, while I was closely watched.

My Writing Begins

At the age of five I pursued romance on paper, my own small scale of youth allowing me to magnify the most minor sensation to one of significant and erotic import, life being then a gate palpably swinging open; by seven I had abandoned this enterprise, writing instead tales of gods and heroes, and again my lack of experience in the world enabled me to envision everyman, even suburban man, as his own sovereign being. By nine I noted that men figured almost solely in these plots and, as I sought to surpass journalism, turned to my own sex, laboring upon historical novels revealing both the political and mercantile power of women in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. My father had until this time taken all the manuscripts, as they were completed, on a shining plane to New York to be published. He brought me back tiny pilot's wings and soap; my mother had insisted on a pen name, citing by way of precedent the Brontë sisters, and with passion and entreaty quoting Emily's "To Imagination": "So hopeless is the world without/The world within I doubly prize . . ." She barred my books from the household in order, she said, to preserve my childhood. So it was that my public persona was to me

but another fiction.

My father, fearing what he termed my "youthful lack of discrimination," trembled at the possibility of a dangerous by-product being accidentally created and released through the combining of women and history within one literary vessel. My work, he argued, began to approach poetry, wedding all things, and, nearly beside himself, he warned that should I continue on my present course I might return us to the era prior to Adam Smith, whose most important achievement had been in divorcing political economy from ethics. This I failed, being of so few years, to understand, comprehending only, on his return from a layover in Chicago, the tears running down his face and his outstretched hands, offering me my favorite chocolate mints and, with regret, my manuscript. He had determined, after much thought, that my publishing career should end.

Both father and mother now counselled me to write no more, literature like storytelling being the proper domain of children, now to be left behind. My father, after showing a great concern for it, said to my mother, with a sigh, "That girl might be happy, if she would stay her pen; but if she writes on, she will be the most miserable wretch that ever was born: I can give no consent to it."

I Embark

I was sincerely affected with this discourse, as indeed who could be otherwise? and I resolved not to think of writing any more, but to give it up, according to my father's desire. But, alas! a few days wore it all off; and in short, to prevent any of my father's farther importunities, in a few weeks after, I resolved to close my bedroom door on him, and speak only with my typewriter which, by cruel happenstance, he had presented as a gift, who now protested its use.

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Now when I was not in my desk chair, I could be found at the public library, though if found I was increasingly insensible to the finder, and only conversed with books. Beneath the Eichler facade of the structure in which I went about my preparations was a wilderness of information, and one question concerning the course of this current enterprise of mine would but demand another. I began my research with my old confidence that had first been planted in my breast when, blessed by my parents and the world at my feet, words flowed in measure exact and cadenced, in a sequence that, like a good victim, was easily followed. The original continent for which I set out required but a modest voyage: I wrote of my mother's mother sailing for this country. She was leaning heavily against the ship's railing, dressed in a suit of faded navy blue gabardine, and around her a small society of women spoke together in low voices. She looked out at the surface of the ocean . . .

Her mind was blue and white and churning. She was not rolling down a hill from somewhere. Was she fleeing? My grandfather had come earlier to escape the draft. There were three little children close by her long skirts, my baby aunts and uncles. What were their names? Where had her husband acquired the funds to send for her? Was he working as a kosher butcher? No, he could not stand the sight of so much blood. What then occupied his days? The word "hasidic" was entirely opaque to me at this time, having not even a one-sided meaning. It was a foreign, closed word, a seed or kernel or nut which I had no tools to break open

I recalled my father s tone of voice when he described how the old man with the long white beard was "all involved in that stuff . . . is it too much this way . . . is it too much that way . . ." This made me resolve to quit thinking upon it, to return to a short story of my grandmother's adaptation to the New World, which I might climax with a visit to Bloomingdale's if it then existed, but even as I sought this information, my mind once more took up its scarcely charted course.

Library hours were no longer sufficient for my search after this knowledge to find it, to dig it, to temper it, to bring it home, to work it--I enlisted the assistance of my younger sister, who rigged with me a tolerable contraption by which we could raise and lower the books through the window, that they might not be seen.

Always I had begun thus, a theme buoying me up, as the ground of plot formed itself and then was peopled with characters. But O' how what we mistake with pleasure for solid ground is but a linguistic hammock we lie suspended in, whose ropes may slacken and then collapse . . . never any young writer's misfortunes, I believe, began younger, or continued longer than mine. On the 1st of September, 1961, I settled in beneath my thermal blanket, with flashlight in hand, and began reading an account of the childhood and early years of Rabbi Nachman, the years being those of 1772 to 1798. Where had my grandmother gone? Where was she then? I learned that Nachman had possessed a tiny voice as small as the pilot's wings, with which he could cry out in such a way that it rang throughout the spinning globe of the poster, yet was not even noticed by the common men standing next to him. Similarly he claimed to perform a dance so delicate as to escape detection. I had learned that my grandmother made little hats with holes, knitted or crocheted, and by that plague of connection which was to be my ruin, I carried home a large old book on lace; at night I found that the flaxen thread of Flanders (that country in which the Brontës were schooled) was of such tenuousness that it had to be spun in underground caverns, where the atmosphere was sufficiently moist. And now I came upon an echo of my father's advice, for in further studies of Nachman it was told how the moment the teacher's back was turned, he would flee the classroom, to be found later wandering in the woods, knowing, the book said, even at a young age, that G–d was not to be found in the world of books. The heights made me dizzy, I read about

birds, learning that behavior determined by inheritance is inflexible.[1] Two species of lovebirds were paired: one transported nest material by tearing off strips of bark or leaves and tucking them between the rump feathers, the other carried the material in its bill. The children of this unhappy couple tried to place the nesting stuff between the rump feathers, but then pulled it out again, feeling the need to carry it by bill which, nevertheless, was a habit it took them three years to firmly adopt. My short story was abandoned. I wrote all these things down, and the rumpled notebook that contained my new work held nothing but quotations.

I Dream

I continued my work upon this book the most like a fool that ever woman did, who had any of her senses awake. I pleased myself with the design, without determining whether I was able to undertake it; not but that the difficulty of launching my book came often into my head: but I put a stop to my own inquiries into it, by this foolish answer: Let us first make it: I warrant I will find some way or other to get it along when it is done. This was surely a sea of uncertainty in which I now ventured, against how many signs. I had never been upon it before and it was enough to affect me then, who was but a young writer, and had never known anything of the matter. Previously I had confined my style to that of Irving Stone in *Immortal Wife*, but now, still obsessed with every form of head-covering imaginable (why I could not say), I found that a man named Rufus had cured a person who was suffering from the delusion of having no head by ordering him to wear a helmet of lead. De Soto's helmet of gold, heavy and shining, once again worked its spell upon me; I discovered that all of the records kept concerning his explorations in Florida were dubious, the entries not

made from day to day "but at irregular intervals as opportunity presented at the several resting places."

Discouraged and exhausted, I slept. I was De Soto, and my grandmother the Indian queen who was my prisoner and hostage; I needed her to lead myself and my men by the direct trail toward the west, where I could see far off what appeared to be a high, light green female statue, holding what looked like a torch or flashlight, but we walked on, I still did not know our whereabouts and, turning, found her gone. What grief I experienced when I realized that she had taken with her a small box of pearls that I had intended to take back before releasing her, but had left with her for the time being, by way of consolation.

I looked down in dejection, and saw that my Spanish costume was gone, and that I had on an American GI's uniform. I was walking out a door; I was in a war. It was a war that went on without victory or magnitude. I wanted to reenter civilian life, to be again reduced to flowering inside my notions of what I had considered to be human, but those days seemed to have gone. Suddenly they had departed, as a flock of birds when a person walks out a door; it did not seem I moved suddenly but for the frightened flocks of birds lifting precisely at the moment my foot came down on the ground in its first step, as if the step released them—helium balloons, tied to a girl's braids, they stay up.

I Awake

I had fallen asleep in the daytime, not in the night, and at the library, not in my room. Things had gotten mixed up. The linoleum of the adult section was cold. This touched me sensibly—I would write down this account, and then have no more of it, and well may the

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reader know why. I have told certain facts of my own life, indeed many of those most basic, with an air of dubious certainty. Perhaps I do not really remember this, and someone only told it to me? Most likely my mother or my sisters. So that when I reported where I was born it was with a sense of being a counterfeiter, shining the false silver currency of my biography and catching your vulnerable eye. Eves have an affinity for money, often decorating the notes themselves.

I only wish to recount one more incident, which occurred much later, after I had become reconciled to silence, or, if the truth be told, to keeping my notes to myself.

Although I have been born into an age full of record-keeping and as much fond of it, my own father and mother recounted, as I have told, little of the personal past, little of our personal past. For surely, as a family, we possess one in common.

The way things looked to me was now considerably altered; what I saw I knew to be the visible portion of something extending into another, differently trafficked dimension, a piece of lumber sticking out from the bed of a truck, tagged with a red flag.

Shortly after my awakening in the library, my family took a vacation trip to visit the relatives in Michigan. Upstairs in an attic room, at the head of a steep flight of stairs in my favorite aunt's house, overwhelmed by the size and force of my mother's family, I was trying to count them on my fingers, with the help of my eldest sister, to order them, to comprehend them. In the midst of this mental housekeeping, my cousin came forth, eager to assist in acquainting us with our family of origin.

"There is Harry, and he is married now to Helen. They have three children, Joe, Michael, and . There is David and his wife Miriam, she's pretty and her hands shake, and they have three children. There's Bess, married to Aaron, that's us, Ellen and Paul. There's Peggy, divorced, three children, she's the oldest, Suzy, Mary, Terry. And Suzy and

Terry have children too, Terry's got the twins and Sam. There's Jerry, married to Leslie, she's wierd, there's Ezra, he's single, he lives in California. Did he go out there before you? There's your mother, that makes seven, who else? "

And however many there were, there was a new mystery: Sally, living in an institution for years, visited occasionally by the family. I knew then that while I had been working on my last book, my mother must have imagined that I would be taking after her, after Sally, as I walked down the street, my head like a locket. I wished to enliven the world with my imagination.

So to my story: one day in high school my mother and I were discussing a close friend of mine, Eddie Cohen, who had frequented the Sunday school my mother had begun, one stressing holidays and food. He had been arrested the night before and taken inside the station, the one I have told of, with the walnut trees around it. That was because he had been at another park, where all the children played during the day, and had commenced talking to a tree. Then he apparently took off his clothes and began trying to uproot WITH HIS HANDS, my mother said, the large oak standing there. He was on LSD, and the police took him into that little room in the station, because he was OUT OF CONTROL. And in this room whose size continued to reduce itself as the narrative progressed—a room lined with books, the police library--they sat Eddie down, and left him there until a course of action could be decided. In the meantime, Eddie looked at the books and began to destroy them. Whether he simply threw them around, or actually tore pages and bent bindings, I do not know, only that he was subsequently taken to a hospital where, few people having ingested that drug then, he was given a sedative so powerful as to cause his heart to beat more and more slowly until he scarcely breathed. He drew near "the undiscover'd country," and, the danger

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to his life becoming clear, another drug was given to speed the heart, and then who knows what happened.

My mother recounted this tale, and I grew heated . . . the foolhardiness of Eddie not to have walked into the forest, the hills, the parks and lanes I have told of where, in such a brief span of time, privacy could have been gained. Yet I saw that this had been a deliberate performance incapable of provoking an adequate response; it was too frightening to the townspeople for Eddie to be naked in the park, challenging the solidity of oaks. Surely the remedy taken was excessive, an inept response to a harmless threat, for Eddie was hardly able to pull up the oak barehanded. About fifteen years later in the history of the town many oaks were uprooted in wind, falling on houses and cars, crushing them within an act of divine will, as the insurance clause read, a natural disaster that could not be attributed to any human agent, and thus could not contain any element of fear, aside from the moment it had happened. In fact this rare clenching of G–d's fist by its force drew the neighborhood together. Although if one's neighbor had a large oak which threatened to fall on one's house, a gradual distance might evolve between the neighbors, the one perceiving the other as a possible agent of death, such an agency would be hard to prove in a court of law, and hence their tension could only constellate a subtle and common form of disgruntlement: wind uprooting oaks could be fathomed. Then why this calamity with Eddie?

And my mother explained that no harm had been meant, but that he had been acting crazy over there in the park TALKING TO A TREE. I told her I had often talked to trees (but they don't listen to me) and she began arguing, and meanwhile was making sandwiches so went into the kitchen, and she was screaming and going into the refrigerator, and then, withdrawing from the refrigerator, looked at it, and,

imitating with her eyes and surrounding face the look of a crazed person, said, IS THE REFRIGERATOR ALIVE. She commenced the telling of how her sister Sally thought when she went crazy that the bedsprings were alive and the refrigerator was alive. Unaccountably the meaning of *craze* as a fine crack in the glaze of enamel of pottery came into my head, as it were, followed by a rapid, silent inquiry into the history of refrigerators, when they first existed, but then I came to my full senses and knew my mother to be worrying that what happened to Sally might happen to me—first Eddie, then me.

I reassured her, knowing what thickets thoughts may fall into if allowed to go ungoverned, and remembering the birds rising all at once.

At that time young, fresh, and easy as any girl child, for all my adventures, I recovered my composure, completely unruffled. But at this time this tale of hers implanted another closed mystery in me, a combination lock whose numbers one later forgets when one finds it shut, a black-and-white clock with no hands, an inherited locket with an unidentified miniature inside, gold and engraved with initials that now appear almost arbitrary, except for the anxiety they now evoke.

Also by Barbara Einzig:

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