

From the Colonial to the Postcolonial Island: Island Novels from Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* to Coetzee's *Foe*

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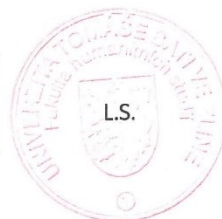
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ABSTRAKT

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá ostrovní literaturou, konkrétně ostrovními romány. K analýze byly zvoleny romány *Robinson Crusoe*, *Korálový ostrov* a *Ďabiel DeFoe*. Cílem práce je stručné představení autorů analyzovaných románů, zasazení románů do historického, sociálního a politického kontextu a následně je prováděna podrobná analýza každého z románů s cílem identifikovat rozdíly a podobnosti a popsat vývoj ostrovních románů napříč staletími. Na závěr práce obsahuje srovnání všech tří románů.

Klíčová slova: ostrovní literatura, ostrovní román, vývoj ostrovní literatury, Daniel Defoe, Robinson Crusoe, koloniální literatura, R. M. Ballantyne, Korálový ostrov, J. M. Coetzee, Foe, post koloniální literatura, porovnání ostrovních románů

ABSTRACT

This bachelor's thesis deals with the island literature, specifically it is focused on the island novels. The selected novels for an analysis are *Robinson Crusoe*, *The Coral Island* and *Foe*. The aim of the thesis is to briefly introduce the authors of the novels, put the novels into their historical, social and political context and then, a detailed analysis of each novel is performed in order to identify differences and similarities and to describe the evolution of the island novels across centuries.

Keywords: island literature, island novel, development of island novel, Daniel Defoe, Robinson Crusoe, colonial literature, R. M. Ballantyne, The Coral Island, J. M. Coetzee, Foe, postcolonial literature, comparison of the island novels

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I hereby declare that the print version of my Bachelor's thesis and the electronic version of my thesis deposited in the IS/STAG system are identical.

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INTRODUCTION

People have always been interested in stories, which have elements that are based on the contemporary society, but take place on a fantastic place. These stories are not only a reflection of the time, but also an interesting reading for both children and adults. Children see fun and a beautiful story in these books, while adults can read the author's attitude to certain facts. Therefore, it is no wonder that island literature was and still is popular among the readers.

The main goal of this thesis is to show the development and the main thoughts of the island novels throughout centuries, beginning with Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, continuing with Ballantyne's *The Coral Island* and ending with Coetzee's *Foe*. These novels will be analyzed in terms of main characters, island as a such and other main thought and themes that are visible in these novels.

The first chapter deals with the facts about the island literature and introduces the main work and circumstances. It begins in the early age literature and it continues to the 20th century.

Other chapters are focused on the particular novel, firstly, the focus is put to Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. In the chapter is shortly described author's life and then there is an analysis of *Robinson Crusoe* in terms of island literature. Next chapter is dedicated to Ballantyne and his novel *The Coral Island* and the last chapter deals with *Foe* written by Coetzee. The novels are also put into their historical, social and political context.

Also, the differences and similarities among these novels are identified and shown by the end of the chapters about *The Coral Island* and *Foe*. As we know, the novels contain similar themes, but they are sometimes presented differently, according to the author of the text. These themes are introduced in the analysis and then mentioned again in the comparison.

From analyses and comparison, the conclusion will be drawn. In conclusion, there is a summary of all the facts that are obtained from the analyses of the novels and the development of the island novels is shown.

1 ISLAND LITERATURE

Mysterious islands that are full of secrets always attract attention and make people curious. When authors desired to unleash their fantasies and use their own imagination, they used these books with such a theme as a medium. In the island literature, it is always up to the author how he is able to play with the reader's mind and in the book, either paradise or hell can be presented. The books of this genre are usually about sailors who became survivors of the shipwreck and ended on an abandoned island where they have to learn how to survive and live. They meet new people, new cultures and essentially, they make their own rules and society. The island can be perceived as a bridge between what is real and what is not. According to Stephanides and Bassnett, the most common topics that the island-themed books include are questions of culture, society, politics. Moreover, characters often think about being rescued and have a feeling of loneliness as they are missing their family, close friends and home. The magical and fantastic environment of the island is often used as a place for portraying or even criticizing the ongoing situation in the world of the author.¹

1.1 Island literature before the 18th century

Since early literary beginnings, islands were fascinating places for authors and readers. Small island in the middle of nowhere started to appear more and more in many works and in many languages since the 18th century despite the fact that authors were fascinated by this theme since the early ages. Stephanides and Bassnett claim that the traces of island literature go back to the ancient times when the island were often home to the Gods, for example, the first introduced island, Aeolia, was home to the God of Wind. This island can be found in the book *Odyssey* and in translation the name means something new and different what people were not aware of until they read the book. This island still exists and nowadays it is called Isole Eolie. Another well-known island is Thule island, which has existed since the 4th century BC. Amongst authors it is very popular island and it is also a magical place where the basic notions are mixed, such as day and night, hot and cold and life and death. Many well-known authors have included this island in their books - such as Francesco Petrarca, Miguel de Cervantes and Virgil.²

¹ Susan Bassnett, and Stephanos Stephanides, "Islands, Literature, and Cultural Translatability," *Transtext(e)s Transcultures*, Hors série (2008): 1–3, <https://doi.org/10.4000/transtexts.212>.

² *Ibid.*, 5–9.

Island literature includes certain experiments; thus it explores what happens when a human being encounters people from other cultures and it is clear to them that after this encounter and new experiences they cannot just return to the life they have previously known their whole life. At the time of Renaissance, new concepts of islands appeared in the literature. For example, in the drama of William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, there is an island that serves as an escape to Prospero but there are also battles for it. Even though events from real life occur, there are also certain elements of fantasy present. These phenomena connect and influence the inhabitants of the island – whether they were born here or arrived later. From this period of time, another very popular book is *Utopia* written by Thomas More. *Utopia* is a book that also started the genre of the same name and for the first time, the subject of change in society is emerging. This society is now better and dreamlike. Such a society is born of a civilization that has fallen in the past.³

1.2 The spreading of island literature in the 18th century

In the 18th century, with Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, the island was not only a source of fantasy and imagination. For instance, books about people who ended up alone on abandoned islands also became books for children. Nevertheless, there are certain elements that adults may understand better. The island is perceived as new, unexplored land without any rules and social hierarchy. Even though the main characters are alone and separated from other people, they start to establish a new way of life. Defoe in his *Robinson Crusoe* portrays the encounter with the new and the unfamiliar, with loneliness and isolation. The main character Robinson decides to transform the island and his original inhabitant according to his own ideas.⁴ Daniel Defoe establishes the foundations of Eurocentrism as a belief that European white people are superior to others. He spread his ideas and opinions with the aim of establishing a new territory, fully according to his image. This work was written in English and so it became something like “the Holy Book” for English people and their lifestyle. Shipwrecked Crusoe was described as affirmative, go-ahead, fortunate and godlike man equipped with a strong will.⁵ During his stay on the island, he starts to read the Bible which he finds in the remains of his destroyed ship and he comes to the

³ Ibid, 10.

⁴ Ibid, 14–15.

⁵ Wenju Han, “Construction and Deconstruction of Imagined Community - A Comparative Study of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and J. M. Coetzee's *Foe* in Light of Nationalism,” *Journal of Language Teaching and Research* 8, no. 6 (2017): 1141–1146, <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.0806.15>.

conclusion that everything in life happens for a reason and because the God wants it that way.⁶

1.3 Island literature in the 20th century

Popular works from the 20th century with island theme include *Foe* written by J. M. Coetzee. This novel can be called postcolonial, since it is actually a retelling or a parody on the well-known book *Robinson Crusoe*. Coetzee brings up the questions concerning the gender problems, including women's role in the story, ethnicity, racism and slavery. In postcolonial novels, it is mainly about comparing the works of the current period with those of the past. It is no longer primarily about social criticism, but about trying to understand the world and society in which we live. Fantastic stories that take place on remote islands are a pleasant place for the reader's soul and it is a non-violent reminder of how important this literature is even today.⁷

⁶ Michael A. Seidel, "Robinson Crusoe: A world classic," *British Library*, June 21, 2018, <https://www.bl.uk/restoration-18th-century-literature/articles/robinson-crusoe-a-world-classic>.

⁷ Bassnett, and Stephanides, "Islands, Literature, and Cultural Translatability," 24–29.

2 DANIEL DEFOE – *ROBINSON CRUSOE*

2.1 Daniel Defoe

Daniel Defoe, or so-called “the father of the English novel”⁸ was one of the prominent authors of the 18th century as he wrote many works with different themes and topics that influenced the novel as a genre and shaped it in a way in that it is known today. His most popular works include *Robinson Crusoe* and *Moll Flanders*. Daniel Defoe was born in London in 1660. Originally, he was a merchant but later he inclined to writing. His first works were mainly poems and political issues. During his life he spoke out for freedom in religion and in press. For his opinions, he was also in Newgate Prison for some time.⁹

2.1.1 Journalism

Defoe was in prison because he shared his political opinions in a pamphlet where he mocked the situation in Britain at that time. The satirical work *Shortest Way with the Dissenters* in 1703 was the main reason for his arrest. When he came back from prison, he started to write more and became a journalist and novelist. Though he was successful, he was never completely free from his “prison past”. Defoe’s journal *The Review* which he started in 1704 and that he was publishing for years¹⁰ was dealing with political issues and opinions. He managed to draw the attention of the government and they asked him to be their secret agent. In this role, he negotiated with France and in favor for cooperation and connection with Scotland.¹¹

2.2 The novel *Robinson Crusoe*

Written and published by Daniel Defoe on 25th April 1719, *Robinson Crusoe* started a new subgenre called “Robinsonade”. The common idea of this subgenre is surviving and adapting to the life on an abandoned island. *Robinson Crusoe* was translated into several languages and even today it is well-known as a book for both children and adults. Defoe aimed at portraying a life-changing influence, vitality, bravery and power. His character Robinson Crusoe and his personality and opinions are developing by existing and creating a life on an

⁸ Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), 131.

⁹ “Daniel Defoe,” British Library, accessed November 15, 2018, <https://www.bl.uk/people/daniel-defoe>.

¹⁰ Ronald Carter and John McRae, *The Routledge History of Literature in English: Britain and Ireland* (London: Routledge, 2001), 161.

¹¹ British Library, “Daniel Defoe.”

island. Michael Seidel says that the book had an impact on many people in a different way. For some it was an adventure story of living on an island and creating a new society there, other saw some features of economic fantasy in the story. It can be also understood as a tale about changing opinions on religion and a guide for Christians improve their life and to be better.¹² As Regan pointed out, the 18th century was also connected to enslaving the Indians and Africans and basically everyone who is not white and this feature appears in *Robinson Crusoe* as well.¹³

According to Seidel, some readers may interpret the story as a biography because Defoe supposedly established *Robinson Crusoe* based on experiences and adventures of the Scottish buccaneer Alexander Selkirk who was staying for some time on an island situated near Chile. Selkirk's life drastically changed when he was alone on an island after an argument with a captain of his original ship. He expected to be rescued and found by other sea-faring buccaneers but it did not happen. Alexander had to stay on this island for more than four years of his life. At the time when they found him, he was a little mad and his speech was worse than everyone expected. Furthermore, this experience left a mark on him in a form of severe depressions which he was unable to overcome.¹⁴ The story of *Robinson Crusoe* is closely connected with the problems of possession of property, distribution of power and trade. These things are said to be shaping Defoe's approach to portraying people and their personalities and behavior. Schmidgen notes that there is a mixture of empiricism and fictional realism in the book. Defoe probably used the close investigation technique which is one of the main features of empiricism together with a mysterious island full of unexplored and inhabited things that are available to be shaped by people or by the individual.¹⁵

2.2.1 The context of the novel

In the 18th century, there was an expansion of mercantilism in England and other European countries. Mercantilism can be defined as an economic theory which encourages the country's production and export in order to strengthen the country's power among the other countries. The main goal in this concept is to be better in both production and export than the other countries and to dominate in the trade.¹⁶ In the 17th century, England had a superior

¹² Seidel, "Robinson Crusoe: A world classic."

¹³ Marguerite M. Regan, "Feminism, Vegetarianism, and Colonial Resistance in Eighteenth-century British Novels," *Studies in the Novel* 46, no. 3 (2014): 275–276, ProQuest.

¹⁴ Seidel, "Robinson Crusoe: A world classic."

¹⁵ Wolfram Schmidgen, "The Metaphysics of Robinson Crusoe," *ELH* 83 (2016): 101–102, ProQuest.

¹⁶ "Mercantilism," Britannica, accessed April 24, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/mercantilism>.

position in the business, as almost all the ships were English and the goods were imported through England. Especially in mercantilism, it is important to keep businesses in balance. This can be done by enumeration practices, as can be seen in *Robinson Crusoe*, when Robinson carefully lists all the things he finds and produces. According to Defoe, every country cannot be rich. A strong leader and a prosperous country are needed to gain wealth, which means that the country has to export goods more than import them.¹⁷

Defoe's thinking is reflected in the character of Robinson Crusoe. Once Robinson is on the island, he considers himself a lord of the island and feels that everything belongs to him. Other people who come to the island have no opportunity to participate in the government because Robinson likes keeping his things in order and everyone believes that he knows the island better than anyone else. These facts make from the island Robinson's kingdom. Robinson's character reflects the era in which the novel was written. With Robinson's Island being in Southern America, what is totally out of the British Empire, it can be assumed that Defoe wanted to signal British desire for colonies and the desire to continually expand the British Empire. As it turns out later, society and thus the economy, Robinson himself creates on the island, according to his ideas and the ideals. He then teaches Friday, who learns to be a typical Englishman. This could be called the formation of a typical European and an Englishman, as well as the expansion of the British community.

2.2.2 Robinson Crusoe as the first colonialist

Robinson is the main character and a protagonist of the novel. He is a young, white boy from York. In the beginning, he seems hesitant and trapped between his father's expectations and his own dreams. Eventually, he decides to follow his heart. He can also be described as brave but his bravery is undermined after the first unsuccessful voyage. When he finds himself on the abandoned island, he tries hard to survive and he is also very innovative. He does everything by his hands, he builds himself a habitat, grows food and tames animals. Even though he manages well, Robinson is not afraid to admit a feeling of fear or panic or depression and these are the features that make him not perfect but real.

As every individual, even Robinson has his bad traits besides the good ones. In the beginning of the story, he leaves his parents without one word and he only regrets it in the religious way, not in the emotional. It can be said that he is worried about God and religious consequences but he does not mind that the parents must be worried about him. Robinson

¹⁷ Wolfram Schmidgen, "Robinson Crusoe, Enumeration, and the Mercantile Fetish," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 35, no. 1 (2001): 22–23, JSTOR.

can be also perceived as a perfectionist but not in the positive sense. He has a sense for detail and he can think everything through and create whatever he wants. On the other hand, it is possible to notice that in his report is almost no excitement even though his whole experience should be just exciting. Robinson gives detailed description, the exact date due to his created calendar but only with the less relevant events, such as grinding his tools or list of things that he finds in the remains of the ship. However, he does not even mention the exact date when he met Friday, it is only known that it was on a Friday.

Robinson represents the main thoughts of Enlightenment of the 18th century. His sense for detail and order is remarkable. He makes notes of everything what happens to him on the island during his stay and he also creates a calendar just to know what date and what day it is. Additionally, he gives a detailed description of everything he does and he can list all the equipment he finds in remains of the shipwrecked ship or on the island. It can be assumed that his logical thinking is the main reason for which he survives and manages to colonize the island only by himself. Robinson is a typical hero of the era of Enlightenment thanks to his traits and behavior. He is a person who acts freely and makes decision independently from others. He is also strongly guided by the reason and has logical thoughts as described below.

So I went to work; and there I must needs observe, that as reason is the substance and original of the mathematicks, so by stating and squaring every thing by reason, and by making the most rational judgment of things, every man may be in time master of every mechanick art.¹⁸

In the 18th century the term Eurocentrism was introduced which means that European white people believe that they are better than other races, especially the black people. In the story, Robinson meets Xury, the negro boy and even though they seem to be getting old well, Xury ends up enslaved by Portuguese captain and Robinson lets it happen and seems not to care much about it. Robinson's haughtiness can be observed also with Friday who is his partner during the stay on the island and he helps him a lot. Nonetheless, it is Robinson who leads and who teaches Friday and he actually manipulates him and his mind just to transform him into his image. At the end, Friday is not a savage anymore, but he has a knowledge of European and he is basically Christian.

It can be said that Robinson is something like a king on the island. Initially, when he is alone and does not know that there will be more people living on the island, he only tries to

¹⁸ Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (London: Penguin, 1994), 59.

survive. Maybe because of this fact that he was here first, Robinson later on sees himself like the most powerful and ruling person and it is visible more and more with every new person who arrives on the island. Robinson himself even talks about his when telling his story:

My Island was now peopled, and I thought my self very rich in Subjects; and it was a merry Reflection which I frequently made, How like a King I look'd. First of all, the whole Country was my own meer Property; so that I had an undoubted Right of Dominion. 2dly, My people were perfectly subjected: I was absolute Lord and Law-giver; they all owed their Lives to me, and were ready to lay down their Lives, *if there had been Occasion of it*, for me.¹⁹

Another interesting fact about Robinson is that there are no women. At the beginning, the only woman Robinson speaks of is his mother, otherwise there is no evidence of any other woman or girl in Robinsons' life. It might be because Robinsons' story takes place in the 17th century and it was common that the main characters in the books were men and the majority of authors were men too. However, Crusoe mentions once as the end of the story is approaching that he got married but right away he notes that his wife died. There is no description of her, even her name is unknown. All that is known about her is that he got married, had three children and that is it.

In the mean time, I in Part settled my self here; for first of all I marry'd, and that not either to my Disadvantage or Dissatisfaction, and has three Children, two Sons and one Daughter: But my Wife dying, and my Nephew coming Home with good Success from a Voyage to Spain, my Inclination to go Abroad, and his Importunity prevailed and engag'd me to go in his Ship, as a private Trader to the East Indies: This was in the Year 1694.²⁰

The Monarch of All He Surveyed

"I am monarch of all I survey,
My right there is none to dispute,
From the centre all round to the sea,
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.
O solitude! Where are the charms
That sages have seen in thy face?
Better dwell in the midst of alarms,
Than reign in this horrible place."²¹

¹⁹ Ibid, 203.

²⁰ Ibid, 257.

²¹ William Cowper, *The Poetical Works of William Cowper* (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1852), 172–173.

This poem written by William Cowper, is an appreciation of Alexander Selkirk, who was like The Real Robinson Crusoe. In this poem are described and monitored his feelings as he was living alone on an island, just like Robinson Crusoe. The similarity between Selkirk and Crusoe cannot be missed. Selkirk ran away from home when he was 19 and he wanted to spend some time on the sea. He ended up on an abandoned island near Chile and the island was called “Island That’s Farthest Away”. There were no people and only animals were ‘friends’ to him. Just like Robinson, he had goats for food and clothes. After his rescue by an English privateer, he wrote his own memories from the island and it is likely that Daniel Defoe read it and he found an inspiration in it.²²

Robinson Crusoe, as he was colonizing the island, took for his own everything that he saw. He began inhabiting the island on his own, he began to tame animals, mostly goats that gave him food as well as clothes. He also had his dog and a parrot. Robinson started to build his dwelling from the natural sources that he found – branches, stones, leaves and more. Furthermore, the book was published when the colonialism was spreading and thus some traces of it can be found. For example, Robinson is a young man, colonist, who steps on the island and in a moment everything on the island is his and he acts like a monarch of this whole land.

2.2.3 Friday – only subordinate?

The very first Robinson’s record about Friday:

I understood him in many Things, and let him know, I was very well pleas’d with him; in a little Time I began to speak to him, and teach him to speak to me; and first, I made him know his Name should be Friday, which was the Day I sav’d his Life; I call’d him so for the Memory of the Time; I likewise taught him to say Master, and then let him know, that was to be my Name; I likewise taught him to say, YES and NO, and to know the Meaning of them.²³

The black boy was rescued by Robinson from cannibals who brought him to the island to eat him with other prisoners. Robinson then named him according to the day on which he found and rescued him - Friday. With Friday, Robinson starts to build up the new society. Right from the start Friday helps Robinson with everything but still he is a subordinate and Robinson is the ruler. Friday is grateful to his rescuer Robinson and he also lets Robinson re-educate him according to his idea of perfect European boy. According to Robinson, Friday

²² “Monarch of all he surveyed,” Context, last modified February 1, 2012, <https://jchatoff.wordpress.com/2012/02/01/monarch-of-all-he-surveyed/>.

²³ Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 174.

most likely comes from America and he is a member of an Indian tribe. Friday's thinking before he is re-educated is for Robinson rather odd and very different. For example, he worships a mountain god named Benamuckee in his religion. During their interactions Robinson catches a few words from Friday's language. Moreover, Friday seems to accept and tolerate cannibalism even though he himself was almost eaten by the cannibals.

2.2.4 Island as a setting

The very first notes from Robinson's adventure on the island in the way in which he himself tells them:

I poor miserable Robinson Crusoe, being shipwreck'd, during a dreadful Storm, in the offing, came on Shore on this dismal unfortunate Island, which I call'd the Island of Despair, all the rest of the Ship's Company being drown'd, and my self almost dead. All the rest of that Day I spent in afflicting my self at the dismal Circumstances I was brought to, viz. I had neither Food, House, Clothes, Weapon, or Place to fly to, and in Despair of any Relief, saw nothing but Death before me, either that I should be devour'd by wild Beasts, murder'd by Savages, or starv'd to Death for Want of Food. At the Approach of Night, I slept in a Tree for fear of wild Creatures, but slept soundly tho' it rain'd all Night.²⁴

The island on which Robinson ends up is at the first sight very rocky, mountainous and there is no sign of life in the near or far surroundings, there is only the sea around. Robinson first thinks that he is on the shore of Southern America. At first, he thinks about where he is going to sleep, what he is going to eat as he sees nothing around him and feels helpless. The climate on the island is tropical, stuffy and hot. There is only a dense forest around him and in terms of animals, at first, he can see only a flock of annoying mosquitoes. In addition, Robinson is thirsty so he decides to find some source of water that he could drink from and satisfy his basic needs. In searching for drinking water Robinson sees a tree similar to a palm with beautiful yellow and red blossom. As he is looking around, he discovers another tree on which is a fruit that looks like a cucumber coupled into a grape shape. He wonders for a while if it is not poisonous but in the second moment, he eats it because he is starving. He does not regret it – the taste is great and there is many of these things, later on, he knows that this is a banana tree and Robinson eats bananas that are abundant on the island. From the tree with bananas, Robinson plucks a leaf and uses it as a sunshade. To quench thirst, Robinson aptly discovers a stream with a drinkable water. At first, Robinson is disappointed when he observes the surrounding world from a high mountain because there is nothing, just

²⁴ Ibid, 60–61.

him and “his” abandoned island. Nonetheless, as mentioned in the book, he later takes an advantage of that and builds his own society with him being on the top of it. The first animal he sees is very similar to a rabbit and it is an aguti. Another rather scary animal is an iguana. Robinson encounters many kinds of animals which he does not know about therefore they scare him, for example, a boa from which Robinson runs, is afraid of him as well. Robinson has no clue about these animals and does not know that it is not poisonous or dangerous and eats only small animals. The sea is clean and transparent, so Robinson is able to see a flock of colorful fish in the shallow water. He tries to eat oysters but they do not taste as good as he would think. The nights are full of strange sounds of animals that live and hunt on the island. The sky is clear and the stars are perfectly visible. The very first night he spends on a tree but then he is afraid of snakes that might climb them and surprise him while he is sleeping. Eventually, he settles in a cave that he discovers when he explores the island. Near the cave is water that is, as Robinson finds out, drinkable. As far as the streams of water are concerned, he finds two of them on the island – the bigger one and the small one. His most common food are bananas and corn cobs. Robinson also finds a coconut palm but he does not dare to shake it and he rather decides to wait until the coconuts fall from the palm. Robinson’s first self-made thing is a headgear from the banana tree leaf and later the sandals from the bark. Robinson soon manages to make a fire and observes periods of strong rain. He finds some weapons in the remain of the shipwrecked ship and decides to keep them. He is constantly improving his “house”. Moreover, he starts to keep a calendar and creates a sun clock in order to know what day and time it is. Little by little, Robinson expands his diet – for example, by cooking turtle soup. He is also keeping goats near his habitat and one day he even builds them a fence.

2.2.5 Cannibals

Cannibals in the book allow us to see and explore differences between Robinson’s and cannibals’ culture and religion. After some time spent on the island, Robinson observes that time from time the cannibals are coming here to eat their victims. At first, he does not know how to face this situation because he does not like the idea of watching cannibals eating other human beings, but on the other hand, he does not want to meddle with the rituals that are according to the savages’ religion. During the first encounter, he kills two of the cannibals but he is not happy with this and during his second encounter he lets them live and he only injures them and scares them with the sounds of gun shots. It is because his opinion is to leave this matter up to God and his will. The cannibals’ fate is not in Robinson’s hands

and only God has the right to decide whether the savages need to be killed or not. These are Robinson's first thoughts on savages that he sees on the island:

Upon the whole I concluded, That neither in Principle or in Policy, I ought one way or other to concern my self in this Affair. That my Business was by all possible Means to conceal my self from them, and not to leave the least Signal to them to guess by, that there were any living Creatures upon the Island; I mean of humane Shape.²⁵

After six years of Robinson's life on the island he sees the cannibals for the first time. It is a usual day but Robinson observes that his dog is uneasy. For this reason, he goes to check the cave but everything seems normal. He steps on the high mountain and discovers something that he never experienced before – five canoes with six naked men in each single one heading to the bay. In three of them he saw victims – one tied human in each canoe. Robinson starts wondering if he can save them, if he can handle a fight with approximately thirty savages. Afterwards, Robinson witnesses savages who dance around the fire and kill one of the prisoners. One of the remaining prisoners tries to run away and he is successful. Robinson wants to help him so he hides behind a big boulder and plans an ambush. After a while, the runaway prisoner sees Robinson and he is scared but Robinson tries to calm him down and convinces him that he will not hurt him. However, one of the savages sees them and throws a spear at them but Robinson manages to dodge it and shoot the savage. Eventually, he sets the prisoner free and tells him not to be afraid of him. This prisoner is Friday and since that day he is Robinson's loyal slave and subordinate. During this first encounter with savages, Robinson shot second savage and Friday insists on burying them and Robinson agrees. The other savages left the island as if they were not interested in what happened to their companions.

After some time, Robinson and Friday see boats approaching the island again. This time it is five boats full of savages with spears in their hands. Friday explains that, given their religion, they only take spears for the rituals and that they even do not know the guns. Robinson, knowing that savages do it because of the commands of their religion, does not want to kill them and he decides to only scare them. Friday suggests to scare away the savages by roaring as they certainly do not expect anyone to live here. Robinson likes the idea and admits that Friday knows them very well because he was savage himself before some time.

²⁵ Ibid, 146.

Finally, they manage to drive the savages away. Robinson and Friday then set free the prisoners from the boats – one savage and European with a beard. Later on, it turns out that the savage is Friday's father and the European man is a Spaniard.

2.2.6 Robinson's conversion

During the story, Robinson's personal development in the field of personality and religious thoughts is shown. Before he left his home and his parents, he was rebellious son of a merchant who was yearning for adventure and his dream was to become a sailor. In religious terms the rebellious behavior can be perceived as undermining the authority and the power of God. Robinson always believed in God, however, on the island, he becomes a better Christian than he ever was. When shipwrecked on the island, Robinson finds out his sins and he has time for thinking about religion and God. Instead of thanking God for leaving him alive and thus saving his life, he wonders why is this all happening to him, why such a bad thing happens to a good person. This is one of the features of Enlightenment – Robinson is not blindly believing in God and does not blame him for everything that happens anymore but he is driven by his own feelings, thoughts and his common sense. The break occurs when Robinson gets sick and he realizes that he could have a perfect and happy life back home, if he had only listened to his parents and to God. He thinks he chose the wrong way and that is why he is alone and now he is also ill. Since this revelation, Robinson is praying regularly and he studies the Bible which he finds in the remains of the ship. He slowly turns into a master and teacher who tries to convert people to the "right" faith - Christianity. In the end, Crusoe himself shows and teaches Friday about Christianity and he even manages to convert Friday. Crusoe eventually thinks that all this had to happen to him because it was a test from God to strengthen his faith. Certain contradictions occur with the Spaniard. Even though both are Christians, Robinson is a Protestant as he comes from England and the Spaniard is a Catholic. That is why Robinson is afraid to settle in Brazil after his return from the island – he would be forced to convert or face the Inquisition. These thoughts are expressed in the novel:

I had once a Mind to have gone to the Brasils, and have settled my self there; for I was, as it were, naturaliz'd to the Place; but I had some little Scruple in my Mind about Religion, which insensibly drew me back, of which I shall say more presently.²⁶

²⁶ Ibid, 241.

2.2.7 Robinson's rescue

After the arrival of the Spaniard and Friday's father on the island, they suggest that they will come back for more people that were in captivity with them. Robinson is thrilled about this idea because it means that there will be more people on the island and later, they can manage to get back home. The people are supposed to be good and experienced sailors and they certainly know how to get to the American mainland and also to the harbor with European ships. When Robinson and Friday are waiting for the Spaniard and Friday's father, they are not coming back for a long period of time. Instead of them, captain Brown and his partners appear on the island. Captain Brown tells Robinson the story how he was betrayed by his crew. His crew rebelled because the captain was not behaving well towards them. In this time, Robinson introduces himself as a governor. Moreover, these people still have doubts about Friday and his right to sit with them at one table but Robinson stands up for him. Besides being Robinson's friend, he ensures them that Friday can speak English and is also taught to be European, including religion. Everybody then starts to apologize to Robinson as they never intended to offend him. This is another symbol of Robinson's superiority. Before his leaving he wonders what he can do with the pirates that were brought to the island. He comes to the conclusion that they were led to this kind of life their whole life and they do not know anything else. He stresses that the ignorance is the root of evil. Eventually he decides that it is possible to re-educate them. Therefore, he leaves them on the island where the young pirates will need to work hard in order to live and survive. After a few more days, the Spaniard finally returned, but without Friday's father, who fell ill and died. When they raise the sails to leave, Robinson looks over the island, where he spent a part of his life and sees the young pirates who are just looking at the ship and now have to live and survive by their own. Robinson wonders what is on their minds but he cannot even guess. After he returns home to York, he is looking for his parents, but he finds out that they are no longer alive and that he himself was considered dead and thus he inherited nothing.

I went down afterwards into Yorkshire; but my Father was dead, and my Mother, and all the Family extinct, except that I found two Sisters, and two of the Children of one of my Brothers; and as I had been long ago given over for dead, there had been no Provision made for me; so that in a Word, I found nothing to relieve, or assist me; and that little Money I had, would not do much for me, as to settling in the World.²⁷

²⁷ Ibid, 234.

Robinson's wife is only mentioned once in a book. Robinson says that he got married after he returned from Lisbon, they had children but at the same time, Robinson mentions that his wife died. She is not described; her name is a mystery. It can be only assumed why this is that way.

3 ROBERT MICHAEL BALLANTYNE – *THE CORAL ISLAND*

3.1 R. M. Ballantyne

Born on 24 April 1825 in Edinburgh, Ballantyne was the youngest child of Alexander Thomson Ballantyne who owned family business called ‘Ballantyne & Co’ and it focused on editing of newspaper and printing.²⁸ In 1825 Ballantyne’s firm fainted to the debt of more than hundred thousand pounds.²⁹ In the early age of 16, Robert Michael Ballantyne left to Canada to work there. He had a job as a trader for the Hudson’s Bay Company which is a business group that functions even nowadays. Their business always was and still is focused mainly on trading with the fur.³⁰ Because of this profession, Ballantyne had a chance to travel to the provinces and his wisdom from the travels to Quebec or Manitoja are recorded and gave the basis for his novel *Snowflakes and Sunbeams*.³¹ As he felt lonely on his journeys, he started to correspond with his mother and shared the feelings and experiences with her.³² Later on, after his comeback to the Scotland, Ballantyne stopped with the business and started to write his own books. He put emphasis on the younger audience and for them he wrote stories about exciting adventures.³³ Ballantyne’s probably most known and popular work is the novel *The Coral Island* in which he writes about three boys who shipwreck on an island situated in Pacific.³⁴, thus this novel belongs to the genre of Robinsonades that started with Daniel Defoe in the 18th century. *The Coral Island* may seem like a story for children, nonetheless its topic influenced some other authors too. One of the “followers” of Ballantyne, Robert Louis Stevenson was fascinated with the adventure in the book and he used the topic and the features from Ballantyne in his book *Treasure Island*. Moreover, he wrote a short poem dedicated to Ballantyne and put it at the beginning of the book.³⁵

²⁸ “Post-Office Annual Directory 1832-33,” National Library of Scotland, accessed February 23, 2019, <https://digital.nls.uk/directories/browse/archive/83399739?&mode=transcription>.

²⁹ Sam McKinstry, and Marie Fletcher, “The Personal Account Books of Sir Walter Scott,” *The Accounting Historians Journal* 29, no. 2 (2002): 59–89, <https://doi.org/10.2308/0148-4184.29.2.59>.

³⁰ “The Bay gets a new logo for first time in almost 50 years,” *Financial Post*, accessed February 27, 2019, <https://business.financialpost.com/news/retail-marketing/the-bay-gets-a-new-logo-for-first-time-in-almost-50-years>.

³¹ “Ballantyne, R. M. (Robert Michael) 1825-1894,” *Worldcat*, accessed March 11, 2019, <http://worldcat.org/identities/lccn-n79118067/>.

³² Robert M. Ballantyne, *Personal Reminiscences in Book Making* (Whitefish: Kessinger Publishing, 1893), 14.

³³ “Obituary,” *The Times*, accessed March 12, 2019, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/topic/obituary>.

³⁴ Ross G. Forman, “When Britons Brave Brazil: British Imperialism and the Adventure Tale in Latin America, 1850–1918,” *Victorian Studies* 42, no. 3 (1999): 462–463, JSTOR.

³⁵ Robert M. Ballantyne, *The Cannibal Islands by R.M. Ballantyne, Fiction, Classics, Action & Adventure* (Los Angeles: Aegypan, 2009), annotation.

3.2 The novel *The Coral Island*

Ballantyne's most known and popular work, published in 1858 and then republished in 1995 by Penguin Books. As Dutheil pointed out, *The Coral Island* remains one of the most favorite adventure books for children, especially for young boys. He also claims that this work constructs and reflects ideas and colonial relations in the 19th century so called the Victorian period. Ballantyne used as the main features in his work mysterious life and primitive habits. He also used for the first time a trend which is common nowadays – the main characters are boys.³⁶ Minnie Singh claims that the text contains didactic intentions and thus, in some way, it is offering moral advice. The whole story is reported retrospectively by a main character, a boy. Singh assumes that the target audience are probably most likely young boys and based on this fact, it can be said that Ballantyne was a pioneer to this kind of text as it became popular during the 19th century.³⁷ Moreover, there are also assumptions about how can the text be perceived. Frank Kermode, who is a literary critic, came up in his essay with an idea of Golding later using *The Coral Island* as an inspiration for his novel *The Lord of the Flies*.³⁸ As the novel was written in the 19th century, civil culture and things discovered through experimentation were probably pattern taken from Darwinism.³⁹ Furthermore, evolutionary theory and social Darwinism were one of the main contributors to the new world pattern and the new way of thinking of people in the Victorian period.⁴⁰

3.2.1 The context of the novel

The novel was written in the 19th century and its main characters are young boys from Britain so it is crucial to mention the public schools that were important by that time. In addition to education, it was also about making the boys the great leaders, both in the economy and in an effort to expand the Empire. The school shaped the boys who attended it. They tried to make out of the young boys the perfect gentlemen and educate the next generation that would lead the nation in the “right direction”. Another message of these schools was to classify the

³⁶ Martine H. Dutheil, “The representation of the cannibal in Ballantyne's *The Coral Island*: Colonial anxieties in Victorian popular fiction,” *College Literature* 28, no. 1 (2001): 105–106, ProQuest.

³⁷ Minnie Singh, “The Government of Boys: Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and Ballantyne's *Coral Island*,” *Children's Literature* 25, no. 1 (1997): 205–13, <https://doi.org/10.1353/chl.0.0478>.

³⁸ Frank Kermode, *Puzzles and Epiphanies: Essays and Reviews 1958–1961* (London: Routledge, 1962), 200.

³⁹ Katharine Anderson, “Coral Jewellery,” *Victorian Review* 34, no. 1 (2008): 47–52, <https://doi.org/10.1353/vcr.2008.0008>.

⁴⁰ Patrick Brantlinger, “Victorians and Africans: The Genealogy of the Myth of the Dark Continent,” *Critical Inquiry* 12, no. 1 (1985): 166–203, <https://doi.org/10.1086/448326>.

middle-class into a system in which people of this class are not considered poor. Because the nation was constantly expanding and everything was changing, more gentlemen, who would take care of the country and continue to keep its reputation, were needed.⁴¹

In the Victorian Era, the term Muscular Christianity was also introduced. The definition of this term is that the Christians believe that part of their faith is also keeping themselves in good shape and also improving their morals and health.⁴² With Muscular Christianity there was a new era of nationalism, but now, women and Non-Christians were left out of the ideology too. This ideology is connected with colonies and colonization. Young men are practicing, keeping fit, so that they can use their power on deserted and distant islands while always having God on their side.⁴³

In the 19th century, white people still believed in their superiority and even though some people had already refused slavery and did not want slaves, the oppression of other races continued.⁴⁴ In this concept, white people think that they are better than people of any other color and that it gives them the power to enslave, weaken, and destroy their identities. This is the conviction of Europeans, especially English people, who were always so proud of their race and of their nation that they had to colonize as much as possible and made it clear to other races that they had the power over them.⁴⁵

In the novel *The Coral Island*, all of the mentioned features are shown. The boys are young Englishmen, but they already have their own morals, they are able to behave to each other and to the others. Also, when they are on the island, they always try not to hurt anybody's by their decisions. Boys are also Christians and they are trying to pass on this religion.

3.2.2 The narrator Ralph Rover

Unlike Robinson Crusoe, Ralph was used to travel since he was a little child. It is no wonder as he had it in the blood. In the first chapter he tells the readers that his family is connected to water – his father, grandfather and even great grandfather were sailors. “Rover” is not

⁴¹ “A Gentleman’s Education – Then As Now,” The Academy Platform, accessed April 24, 2019, <https://think.iafor.org/gentlemans-education-then-as-now/>.

⁴² “Muscular Christianity,” The Free Dictionary, accessed April 24, 2019, <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/Muscular+Christianity>.

⁴³ “When Jesus got ‘too feminine,’ white dudes invented Muscular Christianity,” Timeline, accessed April 24, 2019, <https://timeline.com/muscular-christianity-20d7c88839b9>.

⁴⁴ “Reflections on the History of White Supremacy in the United States,” Unitarian Universalist, accessed April 24, 2019, https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/gardinerwilliam/whiteness/white_supremacy_us.pdf.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

Ralph's real name; it is just a nickname that he got from his friends thanks to the fact he always loved roving and exploring new areas:

My Christian name was Ralph, and my comrades added to this the name of Rover, in consequence of the passion which I always evinced for travelling.⁴⁶

When Ralph grew up, he persuaded his father to give him on a ship in order to become sailor's apprentice. Even though he had some friends there, they never fully understood him, as he tells us. During cruises he listened carefully other sailors' stories from their journeys to the foreign countries – they told him about the storms, new and amazing species of animals and also about people with other cultures. From those stories, Ralph liked the most the ones from the Southern coral island because there is summer the whole year, there is plenty of tasty fruit and beautiful weather. On the other hand, uneducated people who are untouched with Christianity live there probably too. Since that time, Ralph wanted to travel to the Southern seas and to see these beauties with his own eyes. He was saying goodbye to his parents with tears in his eyes. His mother gave him a small Bible and she reminded him to read it even on the journeys and also, she reminded him to pray. Ralph's emotions are clear and they are expressed in the book – leaving his parents makes him sad. In contrast with Robinson, who left home without saying goodbye and practically ran away, Ralph was always on a good term with his parents. It was probably because they supported him in doing what he loved but Robinson's parents, especially father, only wanted him to become a businessman and Robinson might had a feeling that he does not understand him. So Ralph leaves his home in his 15 years and he sails towards the islands in the Pacific on a beautiful ship. Ralph already knows many things about sailing but still, he is amazed by the view on experienced sailors when they are putting the anchor on the land. On the ship, Ralph meets Jack Martin and Peterkin Gay who soon become Ralph's new best friends. Both friends, Jack and Peterkin, are described by Ralph. He tells in the novel how they look like and also how they behave and what is their nature. It can be observed that despite the fact that he does not know them for a long time, he succeeds in characterizing them completely. He has more to say about Jack:

Jack Martin was a tall, strapping, broad-shouldered youth of eighteen, with a handsome, good-humoured, firm face. He had had a good education, was clever and hearty and lion-like in his actions, but mild and quiet in disposition.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Robert M. Ballantyne, *The Coral Island* (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1884), 3.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 5.

Ralph's characteristic of Peterkin:

My other companion was Peterkin Gay. He was little, quick, funny, decidedly mischievous, and about fourteen years old. But Peterkin's mischief was almost always harmless, else he could not have been so much beloved as he was.⁴⁸

It can be noted that Ralph, in contrast to Robinson, who also tells his story and experience in the book gives and shows more emotions and he even engages the readers whom he from time to time turns to. This is visible for example in chapter 4:

I need scarcely say to my readers that...⁴⁹

This is a big difference from Robinson who only tells his story and describes things and events, emotions are left aside and the readers are in his case left aside too. This might be coming from the nature of people in the 19th century when it was more common to express feelings and it was popular for authors to reveal the thoughts of characters and the narrators in the books. Moreover, Ralph's narration about the island itself and about the life of him and his friends is very optimistic without any signs of depression or sadness.

3.2.3 Government of the boys on the island

After shipwreck, the boys are finding out that they are probably the only survivors of the strong storm that destroyed their ship. Their first thought is if the island on which they are now, is inhabited. Jack is the most excited about his new situation but the others joins him very soon and because they are British boys and thus born Empire builders, they are aiming for the order and they start deciding about the governing on the island. They plan how to control it together and conquer its inhabitants. In the book, Ralph even mentions Peterkin's proposal for an island government system:

You shall be king, Jack; Ralph, prime minister, and I shall be –⁵⁰

Then they put together their things to find out what they have and what they still lack, thus they need to craft it from the resources on the island. The solution of this situation and these thoughts is a shift from the 18th century and thus from *Robinson Crusoe*, as the boys all agree together and plan to enjoy life on the island. They distribute the tasks evenly. Despite

⁴⁸ Ibid, 5.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 18.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 13.

the fact that Ralph is the narrator, the oldest Jack, who is experienced, most advanced, and wisest, becomes the leader of the boys. He can cope with the production of things and can, for example, dive well and hence fish and oysters. The other two boys agree and accept Jack as a leader, so he takes the lead. However, it is more of a formal leader, since there is a friendly bond between boys, they decide together about everything and their system is almost democratic. Already after the first day, in his narration, Ralph speaks of the island as “their kingdom”. In the course of the book, it can be seen that the boys rarely talk about being rescued from the island, they rather enjoy “their” island and colonize it on their own, they rule together fairly and are very friendly to each other and like to help each other. Their only enemies are savages and pirates. In such cases, the boys join forces against the enemies who threaten them. Boys build their own society and it's great that they can still work together without hassles and conflicts. Ralph, Jack and Peterkin treat each other fairly, share food and drinks, protect each other, and learn new things. This bond they have created among each other is crucial to their life on the island.

3.2.4 Island as a setting

Immediately after the storm when the sky is clear, the boys can look around the island and start admiring it. Ralph describes the island as follows: a coral island, rocky, all over the hills, ubiquitous colorful plants, unknown trees. Ralph mentions that the only tree he knows is a coconut tree. Furthermore, they see sandy shores, a coral reef that lines the entire island. The climate seems tropical and warm with a pleasant summer breeze blowing through the air. From the crops that can be eaten, they first register some berries, similar to our strawberries, but they fear that they are poisonous. However, then they see that wild birds are eating them as well, so they think they won't be poisonous. Another great discovery are the coconuts, whose milk serves both for drinking and for saturation. The boys are excited about the island's first discoveries and are very optimistic about it - unlike Robinson, who, when he got to the island, wandered around and asked God why he put him into such a misery. Also, the boys are able to set the fire already the first night so that they do not sit in the dark. Jack knows how to do it with the lens from a telescope, a twig and a string. The night is calm, warm, the sky is full of stars. The only sounds the boys hear are the murmur of the waves in the sea and the shocks of the waves on the cliffs. The next day the boys see colorful birds and parrots, they are also diving - just Jack and Ralph, Peterkin is not able to dive - on the seabed are beautifully visible colorful fish, coral rocks with corals of all shapes and colors. Later in more detailed look, they can see anemones, starfish, crabs and sea urchins. On

the next walk on the island, a breadfruit tree is discovered as another source of food. After a longer time on the island, the boys discover banana trees and even potatoes that are delicious. Also, their supply of meat is widening - they will catch a wild pigeon by Ralph throwing a stone on him and killing him. One evening, the boys find out a herd of wild pigs resting after a hearty dinner, Jack tries to hunt down a pig, but Peterkin is the one who makes it. There are plenty of pigs on the island, so the boys decide that at least they don't have to hunt them so often because they have enough food for now. A meeting with a wild black cat who likes Peterkin follows - he concludes that she is very old and blind, but Peterkin cares about her and she enjoys better health. As time goes by and the boys discover the hidden secrets of the island, one day they will also come across a direct proof that there was someone who actually lived here before them - they find cut down trees and a shack where is the skeleton of a man and his dog. However, no details about this man were found for the boys (how long you lived here and who it was). As far as nature, resources, animals and plants are concerned, the coral island is far richer than Robinson's island, or is at least described like that. Ralph describes everything in great detail and always assures the reader that he is telling everything exactly as it really was. The boys even mention that they do not feel like being rescued, because they enjoy discovering and living beautifully and according to their rules on the island. However, this is before they meet their first enemies.

3.2.5 Enemies and the encounter with the new people

In the first half of the book, everything is paradise like, and the boys are enjoying the ideal life on the island - discovering new things, trying new food and experiencing adventure. The only danger before the arrival of the savages was the occasional meeting in the sea with a shark that had scared them when they were in the water. However, after a few months, the island's idyll is interrupted. Boys stand on a cliff and see two canoes approaching to the island. They were just unarmed, so they quickly make a tool out of sticks. As the ships approach, the boys notice that one is chasing the other and that the ship that is being chased has on board women, men and children, and the one who is chasing has on board only about 40 armed men. When Ralph observes the savages, it cannot go unnoticed that the savages are still naked like in Robinson's story, while all three boys wear clothes. When the canoes land on the island, the boys are still hidden and witness a battle between the two canoe crews. The leader of the armed men dies and the remaining members of his army want to capture the women and children of the opponents. They make a fire and at that moment Ralph is scared that they may want to burn their victims and want to intervene, but Jack holds him

back. This is how the boys become witnesses of cannibalism for the first time in their lives, seeing how they kill the enemy, then cutting him and biting its flesh over the fire. Boys decide to intervene when one of the armed men takes the woman's baby and throws it into the sea, even Jack can't look at it. Jack sends Ralph and Peterkin for the prisoner to set them free and he himself goes against the savages. With boys, there is no longer any wonder whether savages act in harmony with religion, they condemn cannibalism immediately, and they go straight into the battle with the savages. Returning to Robinson Crusoe's thoughts, he wondered if he should mix into their stuff.

The rescued prisoners seem to be asking something, but the boys do not understand them. However, later on they find a style of communication and find out that shaking hands is a warm welcome and pointing at the clumps and saying the name is an introduction. The chief introduces himself as Tararo. Even with their new friends, the boys face cannibalism - when they bury the fallen, one savage wants to cut and eat the dead man's meat. Jack interferes it in sharply and shows his disapproval. This can be perceived as a kind of "reeducation of savages" according to English ideals. Boys become friends with savages even though they do not fully understand them and have different cultures. Nevertheless, boys do not condemn them and let them eat and sleep with them. The next day the savages are ready to leave and the boys equip them with food and talk about them as their friends.

Shortly after this encounter, which finally turns out well and the boys get new friends from it, a somewhat unpleasant encounter, with pirates, follows. Ralph, Jack and Peterkin hide in the cave, but Ralph goes on a tour and he gets caught, though he thinks the pirates are leaving the island. Ralph describes the pirate as a white man, European. Of course, the pirates want to capture all three boys, but Ralph refuses to tell them where they are. He would never betray his friends, as he says in the book:

I tell you to your face, if you were to toss me over yonder cliff into the sea, I would not tell you where my companions are, and I dare you to try me!⁵¹

True friendship can be observed when Ralph does not want to betray his friends, even if it can cost him his life. The pirates then take him out of the coral island, and Ralph is surprised that their ship is clean and there is no cannon. After a while, Ralph starts to miss his friends and he is afraid that he will never see them again and he has tears in his eyes, but the captain orders him to stop crying otherwise he will be punished. Pirates behave cruelly to Ralph and

⁵¹ Ibid, 150.

they call him names and offend him. Ralph tries to get rid of the pirates and uses his wits, which are pretty good on the fact that Ralph is only 15 years old. He throws a box of gunpowder into the sea to reach the Coral Island and he knows that his friends will find in on the shore. Pirates immediately recognize him as a good sailor. Later, the captain apologizes for being rude and he also says he is not a pirate, but a timber trader at Fiji and offers Ralph a share of the profits. Ralph finally agrees, but he still feels uncomfortable. But then he learns the truth - while the crew impersonates traders, they are pirates who like to seize things by violent actions. But pirates recognize missionaries who are coming to the islands to spread Christianity, as they can tame the devil. When Ralph wants to run away, Bloody Bill tells him that the natives on the islands would eat him, because they make it just for their pleasure. Tararo, his friend from his first encounter with savages, also appears on the island. He is once again on the island with pirates and even with the natives, which are savages with strange habits and no pinch of decency. But from here, he and the Bloody Bill get away.

3.2.6 Spread of Christianity

From the beginning, a Christian touch can be seen in the novel. At the beginning, mother gives Ralph a small Bible to read and pray from it, reminding him to do so. The boys also turn to God several times or look up to him while they are on the island.

...it came to my mind to consider how strange it is that God should make such wonderful and extremely-beautiful works never to be seen at all...⁵²

Being a book that presents Victorian ideals and is also written at the time of the British Empire's expansion, it is very closely connected with Christianity, missionary actions, and spread of the faith in God.

If the capitan would only sail for soe o' the islands near Tahiti, we might run away there well enough, because the natives are all Christians; an' we find that whatever the savages take up with Christianity they always give over their bloody ways, and are safe to be trusted.⁵³

This is what is being said by Bloody Bill to Ralph when they are on the ship together. Then he adds that he himself does not know what Christianity is about and that he never cared for it. Nevertheless, missionaries, who are coming to these islands to spread Christianity, have been able to slowly transform savages into militant people living together in peace. Before

⁵² Ibid, 93.

⁵³ Ibid, 168.

that, they were not able to behave well to each other and they even gave their children to their gods as a food. But once they accepted the faith in God, they ceased these practices and stopped even cannibalism. From this can be concluded that Christianity in the book connects people and it also leads them to be better.

When Bloody Bill is dying, Ralph tells him that one can do everything what one can, but the other must be left up to God. Here is the belief in God, which is very strong with Ralph.

I wish I had the feelin's about God that you seem to have, at this hour. I'm dyin', Ralph;...⁵⁴

These are the words that Bloody Bill says to Ralph shortly before his death, which means that his friendship with Ralph has touched his soul and he is beginning to be interested in Christianity for the first time in his life. Though he dies at the end of the chapter, Bloody Bill does not leave the world untouched by Christianity. Before his death, Ralph recites to Bill some passages from the Bible and thus he gives him the hope that his soul, that has sinned his whole life, can be redeemed.

By this time, the missionaries went to the islands to spread Christianity and force the savages to convert. Thus, when the boys reunite, they go to the island of Mango to rescue a certain woman from Tararo's tribe, so that she won't be eaten by the cannibals. Ralph recalls what Bloody Bill had told him, and that the missionaries had already settled in the southern islands and they spread faith here. Tararo is a great opponent of Christianity and that is why he hates the white people - he considers them to spread this faith. So the boys decide to go to the south side, where savages are already Christians, and also, there is an indigenous teacher who can speak English, so the boys want to talk to him before they go to savages who would like to eat them. On the island, they meet an indigenous teacher, whom they immediately recognize according to his European appearance and his welcome sentence. Avatea (a member of the Tararo's tribe) wants to become a Christian, but she is held in captivity by Tararo. Indeed, Avatea comes from the Samoyan Island, where people are now Christians, and she has fallen in love with the Christian chief before she was captured by the pagans from another island.

The part of the island that has already accepted Christianity is separated from the one on which savages still live without faith in God. The landscape was beautiful and the houses

⁵⁴ Ibid, 198.

were at first sight very quiet and tidy. There was even a church on the island. It was hard for Ralph to believe that the riots and cannibalism had ruled here a year ago - now it looks so peaceful here, and Ralph praises the power of Christianity:

I could not refrain from exclaiming, “What a convincing proof that Christianity is of God!”⁵⁵

Also, the people were trying to dress in the European style, they were no longer naked as the savages on ships earlier.

The missionary tells the boys how Christianity has come to the island. For the first time, there were missionaries three years ago, but it was no good, because after they left, people came back to violence and wild life. He had arrived here in two years and without property, so the natives left him alone, finding that he had nothing. In the beginning, it was difficult, because people behaved badly to him and ridiculed him, but they gradually got rid of sins and accepted Christianity. However, Christianity is still in contrast with the local customs - for example, when a chief dies, his wives are also killed and buried with him. So when the chief, who was already in favor of Christianity, died, his son continued in the old traditions, but after some time he decided to accept Christianity as well and his people followed him. Still, there are a lot of islands where Christianity is still unknown and people live in bloodshed and sin all their lives.

The faith in God even gets the boys out of the prison, into which they are thrown by Tararo after the conflict with him. By bringing another teacher to the island and making Tararo accept Christianity. At that moment, all the prisoners are free. Tararo is like new person and later tells his people and the boys that the God of Light has entered the island and he sees clearly now. In addition, the missionary teacher who has arrived is the one Avatea wants to marry, so she is saved from the cannibals.

Young friend, you have seen few years, but your head is old...⁵⁶

This is an appreciation that the husband of Avatea gives to Jack. In other words, he tells him that he is a really good Christian and he is mature and wise in his head.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 221.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 256.

3.2.7 The end of the adventure

To part is the lot of all mankind. The world is a scene of constant leave-taking, and the hands that grasp in cordial greeting to-day, are doomed ere long to unite for the last time, when the quivering lips pronounce the word – “Farewell.”⁵⁷

With this sentence, Ralph says goodbye to everything that has happened on the island during their stay here. Even though he is a bit sad, he knows that this is life - one goes somewhere, meets new people and gets to know new possibilities, but eventually, it is always time to say goodbye.

When the time comes for the boys to leave the southern islands, they are a little sad and know they will miss them. One can think of why all that sadness when they have feared for their life so many times. However, Ralph immediately explains that the natives who have already adopted Christianity are now trying to treat them much better and that they are kind to them. Before leaving, they listened to the stories of the missionary who brought Tararo to faith. After his pattern, his entire people then decided to burn their idols and convert to Christianity. The boys were leaving alone, the missionary still had a task here - to confirm the faith of the inhabitants and former savages. When they were leaving the next day, the natives spoke warmly with them and the missionary waved with a hat behind them, saying goodbye with a loud cry. The boys were moved, even though they could not deny the fact that they were already looking forward to their homeland, where they headed. The book does not mention what the boys' life was like after returning home. For example, with Robinson it is known that he got married and started a trading company together with Friday. For boys, it is not crystal clear, but it is more than clear that their stay on the coral island gave them valuable experience, which will not only be well talked about, but they will be also useful in the life that awaits them in England. It is good to remember that even though bad things happened to the boys in the second half of the book, and their lives were threatened, or many times they were saved only by luck or wit - they did not fall in mind and even showed sadness about leaving the Pacific.

3.2.8 Comparison to *Robinson Crusoe*

While Robinson is alone on the island, there are three boys on the island in *The Coral Island*. Unlike Robinson, who soon becomes the master of his island and considers all those who entered the island to be his subordinates, these boys agree on the government democratically and Jack became the leader because of his maturity and age. Nevertheless, the boys decide

⁵⁷ Ibid, 258.

everything together and help each other. Compared to Robinson, when he is already with Friday on the island, Friday also helps him with everything, but superiority of Robinson is still visible, as he teaches Friday to be an Englishman, thereby he completely destroys Friday's own identity.

The novels also differ in the concept of Christianity. While in *Robinson Crusoe*, Robinson turns into Christianity during his stay on the island, narrator Ralph in *The Coral Island* is constantly turning to God and never forgets his faith. The boys never question the faith in God or the power that God has over them and are humble towards him. However, Robinson was not always humble. When he was still home in York, he questioned his parents and also the faith in God. He even leaves his parents without saying goodbye. In contrast, in *The Coral Island*, Ralph says goodbye to his mother, who gives him the Bible for the journey. Robinson finds his Bible in the remains of the ship and little by little, he becomes Christian during the story.

4 JOHN MAXWELL COETZEE – *FOE*

4.1 J. M. Coetzee

Born on 9 February 1940 in Cape Town, Coetzee lived in the Cape province. Even though his father and his mother spoke English, with wider family he had to speak other language. Coetzee earned a degree in English and Mathematics from the University of Cape Town, then he was a programmer and he even had some classes at the university where he studied.⁵⁸ In 2003, Coetzee even won the Nobel Prize for Literature. Typical features of Coetzee's writing are sophisticated texts that have a lot of analytics and insight. At the same time, he is also a critic who is not afraid to criticize rationalism and Western society. In his works, Coetzee focuses mainly on situations where the distinction between good and bad is useless. Coetzee's characters are unable to do anything at critical moments and to seize their fate. Nonetheless, he is still able to find a power in human being by examining his weakness and defeat.⁵⁹

4.2 The novel *Foe*

Foe is one of the well-known novels written by J. M. Coetzee. *Foe* is a parody of *Robinson Crusoe* with postmodern elements. Part of the book is written as the diary of a certain woman, Susan Barton. The characters are the same as in *Robinson Crusoe*, they have just slightly modified names and there is a new character, the female Susan Barton. The novel is called *Foe*, which is due to the true surname of Daniel Defoe - he has added "De" before the surname himself. Coetzee named the book to refute and rewrite everything Daniel Defoe found and emphasized in his book.⁶⁰ The book is focused primarily on the power of speech and language, Barton tells his story, but she must dictate it to the writer, because she does not have the right words to attract the reader.⁶¹ Language is important because Susan is constantly trying to tell Friday's story, but Friday has his tongue cut out in this book so he cannot say anything. So Susan makes up a lot of things. Coetzee tries to destroy Euro-Centrism, which spread over the world along with Defoe and his *Robinson Crusoe*. All that is true in

⁵⁸ Dominic Head, *J. M. Coetzee* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 1–3.

⁵⁹ "John Maxwell Coetzee," The Nobel Prize, last modified October 2, 2003, <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/2003/press-release/>.

⁶⁰ Han, "Construction and Deconstruction of Imagined Community - A Comparative Study of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and J. M. Coetzee's *Foe* in Light of Nationalism," 1141.

⁶¹ Patrick McGrath, "To Be Conscious Is to Suffer," *New York Times*, November 20, 1994, <https://www.nytimes.com/1994/11/20/books/to-be-conscious-is-to-suffer.html>.

Robinson Crusoe now Coetzee refutes and shows a new perspective of the story. The book could be perceived as advocating for Africans who were forced out of society at the time of colonization and enslaved by the Europeans. Coetzee deals with the theme of Africa, Africans in *Foe*, and tries to make these people feel free to assert themselves.⁶²

4.2.1 The context of the novel

Until the 20th century, women were left out of history, literature and key job positions. Even though there were some efforts by women to assert themselves, they never had the effect that one would expect. But at the beginning of the 20th century, the term “new and modern woman” appeared. It is already possible for women to study, vote, work and not only to stay at home and take care of the household and children. They become members of society and culture as well as men.⁶³ In the novel *Foe*, the main protagonist Susan tries to write a book about her experience on the island along with Crusoe and Friday. While trying to describe the story as it really happened, she still faces the obstacles and manipulations from the author Foe, who is trying to adjust her story into his idea. Foe wants to include her daughter's search for the story, but Susan insists on writing a book about life on the island from her female perspective.⁶⁴

Not only women in the 20th century started to assert themselves more, but also those who have been seen as slaves for a long time. Friday, who is in a novel without his tongue and without his genitals, represents the idea of how slaves were treated in the past. They did not have their own identity, culture, they could not say anything, which is shown in the book, since Friday cannot speak nor write. These people were always oppressed by those who believed in their superiority. It is hard to understand Friday's story, because he's not able to tell us. Friday is a symbol of the oppressed black race, the violence that their masters committed on these people. Friday cannot describe anything in words, but the fact that he does not have tongue and genitals speaks for itself and suggests that he has been treated very violently in the past. As a result, both Susan and Friday are examples of oppressed individuals during the colonial period. Even though Susan can talk, she still misses the story from

⁶² Han, “Construction and Deconstruction of Imagined Community - A Comparative Study of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and J. M. Coetzee's *Foe* in Light of Nationalism,” 1145–1146.

⁶³ Wendy Martin and Sharon Becker, “Writing as a Woman in the Twentieth Century,” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Literature* (2017): 1–2. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190201098.013.764>.

⁶⁴ Shadi Neimneh, “Postcolonial Feminism: Silence and Storytelling in J. M. Coetzee's *Foe*,” *Journal of Language and Literature* 5, no. 2 (2014): 49. Research Gate.

Friday, who spent more time with Cruso on the island, and thus she has a problem with telling the story. In addition, she cannot find the right words and the right narrative style for her story.⁶⁵

4.2.2 The female narrator Susan Barton

Susan Barton is the main protagonist and the narrator at the same time. She tells everything to a mysterious writer. In the first chapter, which functions as an introduction, Susan is introduced when she starts telling her story - how she shipwrecked and had to live for a year on the island with a man Cruso and his servant Friday. The new feature and also the symbol of feminism is that for the first time a female character is in the role of the narrator and she is also the main character. This is probably due to the time in which the book was written, as the 20th century is linked to feminism. Susan tells Cruso that she is of English and French origin, because her mother was from England and her father was from France. Susan also describes how she is frightened by Friday who finds her on the island. She sees a naked black man with a spear, so it immediately crosses her mind that he is a cannibal and her life is over. Her fears, however, disappear after she finds out that he is trying to help her and leads her to his master, an elderly man whom Susan describes as follows:

The stranger's eyes were green, his hair burnt to a straw colour. I judged he was sixty years of age. He wore (let me give my description of him all together) a jerkin, and drawers to below his knees, such as we see watermen wear on the Thames, and a tall cap rising in a cone, all of these made of pelts laced together, the fur outwards, and a stout pair of sandals. In his belt were a short stick and a knife.⁶⁶

When she meets Cruso, he starts to telling him her story. She went to search for her daughter, who was kidnapped to the New World. Susan traveled to Belgium, but there she was treated very badly and the local officials refused to help her – they told her that this conflict was among the English and that they could not help her. So she boarded to the ship to Lisbon, but the crew revolted against the captain and killed him, and Susan was dropped with his dead body off the ship. This is how Susan gets to the sea and later to Cruso's island.

Later on, she says that she is Cruso's second subordinate, as his first is Friday. She connected this fact as soon as she saw two of them - European and a black man, thus a black man must be subordinate. Prejudices against blacks still can be observed in this part. The main difference between Cruso and Susan is that Cruso has already resigned on trying to get

⁶⁵ Ibid, 51–52.

⁶⁶ John M. Coetzee, *Foe* (London: Penguin, 1987), 8.

out of the island, but for Susan it is the main goal - to save herself and get away as soon as possible. This is a significant difference against both Robinson Crusoe and the boys from *The Coral Island*. Susan represents a brand-new point of view, because women were never have been examined in great detail in island literature.

It is typical for Susan that she is trying to make the experiences (either her or Crusoe's) unforgettable at any cost, and she even urges him to write a diary about the island, about life and what is crucial, he must not leave out her of it. So the narrator pushes forward and wants to push through and longs to be at the center of the action. Even though she mentioned herself being Crusoe's subordinate, she would not let herself submit to his will completely, like Friday does, she still has her own opinion, and as she says in the book:

I am a castaway, not a prisoner.⁶⁷

Depending on this fact, she also describes that Crusoe is angry with her when she refuses to submit to his orders and, on the contrary, she herself gives him some tasks. Still, Susan keeps to apologize to Crusoe after their fights. Even though she is on the island with Crusoe and Friday, she feels lonely and she still has a lot of questions about their life so far, but she receives very few answers because Crusoe already seems to be crazy after years spent here and also it seems that he has already forgotten many things.

One day a ship appears with people who are willing to take them to the mainland, but Crusoe is already seriously ill and Friday does not want to board the ship at any cost. In the end, she manages to get to the ship both sick Crusoe and Friday and they set off towards England. Susan takes care of ill Crusoe until his last moments and on the ship, she even claims to be his wife, Mrs. Crusoe. After his death, she considers herself to be the heir of everything he left behind and she wants to tell the world about their story. After returning to England, she begins to send the letters to the mysterious writer Foe, whose task is to write a book about her experience that, as Susan thinks, will make her and Friday, who has now become her subordinate, famous. Susan wants to be included in the story that she was a part of. After returning from the island she feels that she has lost everything – her daughter, money and property. All she has left is the desire to tell the world about her experience. So she starts to write memoirs from the island because Crusoe did not do it, unlike Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, who was writing everything down and had order in all his notes. But after a while she wonders how to tell Crusoe's story truthfully when she was not present most of the time? Should

⁶⁷ Ibid, 20.

not she tell more about herself and about searching for her daughter? With these thoughts she turns the attention to herself again and she wants Foe to include her in the story, as she also lived on the island. When a writer does not respond to her for a long time and she learns that he has moved away, she moves into his apartment with Friday and begins to write the story herself. She writes about the year she spent on the island, she says she did not see any cannibals, what Crusoe's house looked like, his monkey dresses, and also the tongueless servant Friday. When she asked Crusoe who had cut Friday's tongue out, he told her that it was when he was young and was enslaved. However, Susan has a theory and does not deny that Crusoe himself did it. When she asks Friday about through the drawings (one shows Crusoe cutting his tongue out and the other one a slaver-holder), Friday does not give her an answer. So Susan thinks that it is possible that Friday does not remember it because he was a little boy when it happened. Later, Susan is afraid that their story is not interesting enough, since nothing has ever happened on the island - no cannibals, pirates, monsters. They did not even suffer from lack of food. So she is looking for something original that might be mentioned in the book, but she does not want to make up things as she wants to give a true picture of how it was. She is thinking about a lot of things, for example, when Robinson wanted to colonize the island, why did not he leave a baby? Why did not Crusoe or Friday have a desire for her, when they saw her in the sea? These are only thoughts and they are not answered, but Susan is definitely breaking the taboo of sexuality with these inner questions.

Foe is a postmodernist novel, which means for the reader that he cannot be sure of what the characters and the author are telling him. The whole book is composed of Susan's thoughts, which are at certain times ambiguous, as well as her character. Her unstable character is showing up for example when a girl who claims to be her kidnapped daughter comes to her and Susan refuses her by saying that she would recognize her daughter and this girl was probably sent by Foe himself to play with her. On the other hand, Susan can also be kind and it can be observed from the fact that she wants Friday to return to Africa among his people. However, as she mentions a few times it is mainly because he sees Friday as a burden and she would like to get rid of him. As a result of that, it is known that her character is doing things to have something of it herself. She tries to manipulate both the people around her and Foe, about whom she says to have accepted her as his Muse and she even becomes his mistress. But from Susan it was only to take control of the story and force Foe to include her as the main character. It is visible at the end of the book that even Susan herself is no longer able to tell the difference between truth and fiction and she thinks that people around her (including Foe) are not real.

4.2.3 Mysterious author Foe

His name symbolizes Daniel Defoe's true name, and it is therefore possible that this also undermines Defoe's ideas and opinions that he created. Therefore, he can be perceived as a parody of Defoe himself. Perhaps because the character is based on Defoe, who was a successful author of the 18th century, Susan believes that he is the right person to make her famous and from her book will be bestseller. First of all, Susan asks him to make her the main character and put her in a story she does not want to be left out of. In the first half of the book, Susan only writes letters to him and tries to persuade him to write her story. However, the writer does not respond and he even moves away to avoid his debts.

Even though Foe is portraying Defoe but unlike him, Foe is not so keen on facts. Still, he interrogates Susan for details and more interesting facts to make the story more readable and selling better. He asks, for example, what enemies on the island they were facing, whether they were cannibals or pirates. He is also interested in the whole story of Friday's cut out tongue, which remains a mystery. However, Susan still wants to write the story as it actually was, though she realizes that their life on the island was not as interesting as one might expect, and thus she often resists the temptation to make up something into the story.

During the story, when Susan already knows Foe in person, she dictates the story to him again and Foe starts to change the subject and asks her questions about her daughter, her life in Bahia and many other questions Susan does not want to answer and include in the story. Based on everything that is known about this mysterious author, it can be easily concluded that Foe is not a good author, because he is primarily concerned with profit and money and prefers these things over the true story.

4.2.4 Rewriting of the characters of Robinson Crusoe and Friday

Cruso

In *Foe*, Susan meets Cruso after she shipwrecks on his island. He is described as an elderly man with green eyes and a darker skin with a pessimistic view of life. It is also visible that he has been living here for some time. In contrast with Robinson Crusoe, Cruso is reconciled with his life on the island and he does not want to be rescued anymore. Cruso does not even write a diary because he says he remembers everything and nothing is forgotten, but Susan finds out that his memories are confused, because he describes one event in two ways, and it is not possible say which one is true. Susan describes as follows in the novel.

Thus one day he would say his father had been a wealthy merchant whose counting-house he had quit in search of adventure. But the next day he would tell me he had been

a poor lad of no family who had shipped as a cabin-boy and been captured by the Moors...⁶⁸

In other words, Cruso in *Foe* totally refutes everything that was built by Defoe in *Robinson Crusoe*. Robinson Crusoe is smart, witty and he remembers everything, and what he would not remember he writes down in his diary. On the other hand, Cruso is rather stupid and confused, and sometimes he does not even know what is actually true. Instead of relying on his common sense, he follows the saying and the tales. Since his words cannot be trusted, the Cruso's power of the colonizer that was visible to Robinson Crusoe is completely gone. Susan also describes how the years spent on the island influenced Cruso. She claims that Cruso is already too convinced that he is the king of his land and he does not want anyone to question that, because he is not used to it – Friday is loyal and he does everything what Cruso orders him. Therefore, he argues with Susan, who refuses to submit to his tasks and become his subordinate such as Friday.

Friday

Friday is described as a black man from Africa Cruso introduces him as his subordinate. Friday cannot speak as his tongue has been cut out and he is also castrated. Susan describes him after the first meeting as follows:

He was black: a Negro with a head of fuzzy wool.⁶⁹

Thanks to the fact that Friday does not have a tongue, he cannot express his opinion, which could be an example of how black people have always been silenced and oppressed by Europeans and thus they had no identity. In the book, Friday only knows some words to listen to Cruso's commands. After their rescue, Friday joins Susan and is her slave again in England, where they live together. Susan and the others are interested in Friday's story and they try to get him to tell the story, even if he cannot talk – they teach him to write or he learns other words to which he can react with his body. But none of it is successful and Friday's story remains a secret for both Susan and the readers. The question of African culture and its inhabitants also comes with Friday. Susan does not know Africa and life there, but she cannot get a picture, because the only one in her life is an African who is not able to tell her anything. Therefore, Friday becomes a symbol for the destruction of the identity of Africans

⁶⁸ Ibid, 12.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 5.

at the time of colonization and the withdrawal of their power and enslavement of the African, which was in the 20th century pointed out by authors who wanted to stop this discrimination.

4.2.5 Island as a setting

Susan describes his first impressions of the island as far less pleasant than the readers of such work would expect. The island is rocky, shrubby, with an unpleasant odor in the air and annoying fleas all around. But there are many animals on the island - lizards, monkeys and birds of various species. Compared to Robinson's island, this island is a much darker and far more hostile place. Robinson has magnified his island, grew his own food and has his own goats. However, Foe represents total disintegration of both Robinson's identity and his work and hence the island.

Cruso's dwelling was simple - the hut from the branches located between the stones, around a small fence as a protection against wild monkeys, and in terms of growing, he only grew lettuce, which, along with fish and bird eggs, was the only source of livelihood on the island. It means that Cruso was not nearly as inventive as Robinson Crusoe. Susan also reported that she had been sleeping on the ground for the duration of her stay, the only bed had Cruso. As for the weather, according to Susan, only the rains and winds were present.

With this construction of the island, Coetzee destroys everything that Daniel Defoe has built up - from his typical, ideal Englishman Robinson Crusoe, he makes an old fool who does not remember from where he came from and from his island, which had flourished in Robinson's time, he makes rather spooky place from which everyone would like to escape as quickly as possible rather than to stay here and admire the beauties of the island.

4.2.6 Comparison to *Robinson Crusoe* and *The Coral Island*

The novel *Foe* differs from the previous two books because the story is not so much focused on the life on the island, but rather on the main character's thoughts and her desire to tell the world her story. *Foe* can be considered a parody of *Robinson Crusoe*. The author rewrites the characters from *Robinson Crusoe* – from Robinson is Cruso, who is old and confused, Friday is still called Friday, but he has no tongue, which means he cannot speak and cannot express his thoughts and feelings. Another big difference is the perspective from which the story is told. It is from the perspective of a woman, which was not possible in previous works, as the world of Robinson and the boys was almost womanless. There is also the character of the author, Foe, who is supposed to represent Defoe, but with the difference that Foe wants mainly money and he is not so interested in the truth of the story.

CONCLUSION

The aim of the thesis was to map and describe the genre of the island novels since the colonization, across the Victorian era in the 19th century until 20th century post-colonialism and postmodernism and show, how this genre has changed and evolved over the centuries. The main focus was to analyze three works all of which represented one of these periods– Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*, R. M. Ballantyne’s *The Coral Island* and J. M. Coetzee’s *Foe*.

In the thesis was firstly introduced the genre of island literature and its development since the early literature until contemporary works and then, the authors of the analyzed works were mentioned in the literary context, along with theoretical knowledge of the books they wrote.

Secondly, the thesis focused on the work of Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*. The analysis went from Robinson as a first colonialist of the uninhabited island. In this chapter, his personality and his opinions are described and analyzed in great detail and also the similarities between Robinson’s behavior and the common enlightenment ideas are emphasized. Then the description of the island as such is given, including all the animals that lives there. By the time of 18th century, it is important to note that people were more interested in Christianity and the faith in God, so Robinson’s conversion to Christianity has proved to be one of the key ideas as it can be seen that in the beginning Robinson is rebellious and he runs away from his parents and also from God. However, on the island he turns to God again, accepts the faith and he actually makes Friday to convert too. It is also important to stress that in 18th century, Europeans believed that they are the kings amongst the other, so it is no wonder that Robinson Crusoe is also portrayed as a ruling man over “his” island and the other people who get there are only his subordinates.

Next, the thesis analyzed *The Coral Island* written by Robert Michael Ballantyne. In terms of analysis of the narrator, who is in this case Ralph Rover, 15 years old boy from England, it is interesting that although Ralph is the narrator, the leader of the boys is Jack, the oldest of them. But that does not matter so much, because unlike Robinson Crusoe, who has all his power to himself, the boys share power and government equally and democratically. They are also far more open to the new opportunities that life on the island offers them, and their island is described as richer, in terms of both food and animals. As for Christianity, it has more important position in this book than in *Robinson Crusoe*. References to God, the Bible, and Christianity are present here from the very first moments of the story, and unlike Robinson, Ralph says he has never forgotten God, and although he did not have time to read

the Bible, he always remembered some of the passages from it. Boys are even witnessing missionary expeditions that spread Christianity to islands where cannibals and savages live. Thus, boys become teachers of Christianity in some parts too.

The thesis also analyzed Coetzee's *Foe*, a postmodern work with the elements of feminism as the narrator and the main protagonist is a woman, Susan Barton. Susan presents a character who claims to be on the island with a man named Cruso and his black servant Friday. At any cost, this woman wants to assert herself and wants to be included in the story, so there are visible elements of feminism. Postmodernism is present in the case of a mysterious writer, to whom Susan dictates his story and wants him to write it. At the end, Susan starts to wonder if the people around her are real, and during the story, she feels like a mysterious writer is playing with her, just as postmodernist authors are playing with the reader's mind. This work absolutely undermines the work of Daniel Defoe, as in addition to Susan there are characters who are parodies of characters from *Robinson Crusoe* and even the mysterious author Foe is a parody of Defoe himself. Robinson Crusoe, in *Foe* named Cruso is described as an old and crazy man, Friday is an African and he has no tongue, which symbolizes the oppression of Africans by Europeans, and Foe is a cunning author, who is primarily concerned with the profit and he wants to make the story looks as interesting as possible and he does not care about the truth much. The island is also described as a hostile place, which means the destruction of Robinson's legacy, who took good care of his island and lived there pleasantly, and even after years spent here, he returned home and was able to live a normal life.

To sum up, Daniel Defoe has built a certain phenomenon of island novels with his *Robinson Crusoe* and has shown that anything can be survived in good health using one's wits. This phenomenon continued in the 19th century, when Ballantyne described the beautiful island on which the boys lived ideally and ruled together and in friendship, adding a message of Christianity because it was important at that time. Lastly, this phenomenon should not endure forever, since in the 20th century people became interested in oppressed people, who were mainly women and slaves. Therefore, in his work, Coetzee builds up the character of a female main character and tries to build an African identity based on the efforts to get Friday to his nation and finally to set him free. Coetzee is no longer interested in perfect Englishmen who want to have control over their island and over the life of the others, on the contrary, he mocks them.

In conclusion, the thesis proved that although the first two book seems to be more optimistic; it might be because they are not telling some things. For example, they are only

focused on the good ones – Englishmen, Englishness and European nation as superior to the others. On the other hand, they do not deal with oppressed people and those who have no space to express themselves. That is why it is necessary to undermine these ideals so that people who have not previously been able to express their thoughts and opinions can be on the same level as those who have been ruling all the time, as shown by Coetzee in *Foe*.

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