

Defoe's Robinson Crusoe: A Mysterious Geography Representative of the 'Will to Colonize'



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ABSTRACT: This paper desires to obtain a deep scrutiny of the biased colonial discourse which has set the basic foundation tenets of the Western imperial project globally. It is evident that colonialism makes only one phase of the long process of imperialism as an encompassing movement. The fundamental premise of the present critical study is to demonstrate that the manner in which geography is represented in literature reflects the writer's ideological, political and cultural interests as well as those of his community. *Robinson Crusoe*, which belongs to the precolonial era, constitutes the germ of a new Western strategy of viewing the geography of the world as being vast, unpopulated, and affluent. Crusoe's story is made more efficient by wrapping it in the form a novel – a literary genre which emerged and grew side by side with colonialism. Defoe, throughout his journey across the ocean and his stay in the island, portrays the landscapes in positive terms, generally. Meanwhile, the indigenous population is either dehumanized or shown as lacking civilization. His aim, like the mainstream of his community, is to invite more young Englishmen to partake in the colonial enterprise and expansion. Crusoe's success story is meant to generate a colonial propaganda at a time when very few Europeans dare to leave their homeland.

1. AFRICA'S UNINVITING GEOGRAPHY:

This is an attempt to rediscover and reinterpret *Robinson Crusoe* as a set of discursive and narrative strategies which historicizes an embryonic stage of British imperialism. This type of narrative is eloquently described by Martin Green as “the energizing myth of English imperialism . . . they [colonial writers] charged England's will with energy to go out into the world and explore, conquer and rule.” (1979: 3) On the one hand, some historians date the rise of the British Empire in cultural productions to as early as the Elizabethan era; in Shakespeare, for instance, there is abundant allusion to the presumably new role of England vis-à-vis the rest of Europe and the world. *The Tempest*, most notably, reveals a colonial impulse both in the island as a space and the characters' relationships. On the other hand, other historians restrict imperialism to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, especially by the rise of such a highly influential literary genre as the novel. In this regard, Rudyard Kipling and Joseph Conrad received the lion's share of postcolonial theory and criticism. Nevertheless, Daniel Defoe is regarded by many critics as the precursor to colonial novelists. In *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said considers *Robinson Crusoe* as an allegory of colonialism and when he ties up the development of the novel with the project of imperialism he comes to the conclusion that “the prototypical modern realistic novel is *Robinson Crusoe*, and certainly not accidentally it is about a European who creates a fiefdom for himself on a distant non-European island”(xii). Martin Green shares with Said this idea when he writes that “Defoe, rather than Shakespeare, is my candidate for the prototype of literary imperialism” (5)

That said, Defoe's literary project cannot be dissociated from his nation's project of expansion but rather makes up its aesthetic backbone and cultural fuel. *Robinson Crusoe* is more of an energizer of colonialism and outright invitation for the English readers be involved in the project than it is a tale of adventures. When one reads it in its general context, it represents a blatant exploration of the geography of the world – albeit imaginative – and renders it accessible to the English public as part of their knowledge. The novel takes the readers from the common European scenery into unusual, exciting, and exotic landscapes of which they have no prior knowledge. The new lands and their inhabitants are sometimes described in very positive terms and sometimes they are demonized and portrayed as wicked and threatening. These representations depend, of course, on what sort of purpose is set for them to serve. While wrapping remote geographies in fictive patterns and bringing them home to the English reader, Defoe's aim cannot be naively limited to purely aesthetic entertainment of his fellow citizens as there are other undeclared objectives. It is true that *Robinson Crusoe* falls squarely within Europe's involvement in the project of rational modernity and the growing tendency for individualism; but still, the text obviously aims to stimulate the readers' ambition for expansion on other lands far away from Europe.

Defoe, as a matter of fact, does not summon his fellow citizens to participate in their country's project of colonialism but his manner of implicitly inviting them to do so is more efficient. The psychological effect of *Robinson Crusoe* on its readers largely

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bypasses all well-written and eloquently delivered speeches any politician can make. The depth of its political meanings needs a certain extra interpretative effort to be fully understood; unlike sermons and speeches, this text, which mixes between adventure tales and realism, addresses different levels of understanding and interpretation. It is no wonder that the word 'myth', which Ian Watt used to describe this novel, is relevant and well deserved because very few other texts have enjoyed the same fame and popularity as *Robinson Crusoe*; or at least its story. In addition to its taciturn political meanings, Defoe succeeds in infiltrating his ideology by tapping on the most sensitive features of the modern character, namely freedom and morality. His exciting story takes the reader's imagination to new horizons; it unravels the prospects and the possibility of experiencing life beyond the family's bonds and the country's boundaries, it stimulates the will to achieve the individual's self-fulfillment and economic prosperity, and it also promises freedom and teaches the concepts of rationality. Meanwhile, by opening these entire horizons for the European man, the novel, unfortunately, deprives – in different degrees – the non-Europeans of their simplest rights and undermines even their humanity. In other words, it celebrates Europe's supremacy over the other lands and their inhabitants.

Right from the outset of the novel, the young Robinson Crusoe – both protagonist and narrator – does not find much difficulty to convince himself of breaking up with his family and setting up his personal enterprise. At a certain time, when he travels to London, he has some thought about whether to carry on his journey to the sea or go back home to his city York; he says: "I travelled to London by land; and there, as well as on the road, had many struggles with myself what course of life I should take, and whether I should go home or go to sea" (20). As a potential colonizer, Crusoe would not need much time to find the way out of this dilemma; he immediately opts for going to sea to avoid feeling the "shame" if he returns home. In this phrase "go home or go to sea," Defoe is juxtaposing the "sea," a symbolically open horizon, to "home," which would be construed as enclosed space usually deserted, for different reasons, by young boys like Robinson Crusoe. For Crusoe, the sea, unlike his hometown, offers limitless opportunities for both personal and economic growth. In collective memory, the sea is associated with hazardous storms and the perils of being killed or taken captive, enslaved, and sold; but nothing of the like would stop Crusoe from going on his voyages. He is fully aware of these dangers but "there seemed to be something fatal" (Defoe 8) that drives him to meet his destiny. The seemingly fatal thing which stands behind his readiness to jeopardize his life is nothing but the vivid spirit to break the bonds of fear and apprehensions and depart in voyages to discover the world. In other words, Defoe, being an agent and propagandist of imperialism, is pushing his protagonist to leave his cozy home and family to face the unknown in the sea.

However, what might seem to be a hazardous journey with an unknown future to some readers is, in fact, a premeditated plan to explore the world and lay hand on anything valuable that exists. In this respect, Defoe's description of the explored geographies betrays his selective and pragmatic approach; he tends to portray some places in very attractive ways and presents them as potential colonies for his people. He, for instance, depicts the island as a livable space with a suitable environment for growing different crops and taming the cattle. Meanwhile, geographies such as the African coast and the forest between Spain and France are represented disagreeably as being repulsive, unpleasant, and full of savages and beasts. By so doing, Defoe draws maps of the most fruitful geographical spaces and orients his readers where he believes they can make profit and warns them to avoid other less profitable areas. This operation of mapping the world is what makes a major part of Crusoe's voyage. In what follows, I will illustrate how *Robinson Crusoe*'s representation of geography joins and advocates the British imperialist enterprise.

But before engaging in the detailed investigation of geographical representation and mapping of Crusoe's trajectory in the Atlantic Ocean and South America through the African coast, it is worthwhile to stress a relevant biographical detail related to Daniel Defoe. During his life, Defoe was not familiar with the geographies and peoples he describes; he did not travel to the places where his story takes place or either met the Moors, the African "savages" or the cannibals, but he knew them through reading travel accounts and trading journals as well as studying geography which he considers essential to the education of every person. So, the journey through which the text takes us is not a real description of one of Defoe's real travel itineraries as we might think; the novel's clever mixture between adventure and realism makes of it a highly deceptive narrative whose aim is to invite the reader to partake in colonial expansion under the veil of a civilizing mission, trade, or simply travel adventure. In a similar context, Edward Said, in the course of his discussion of imaginative geography and its representations, argues that "the Orient studied was a textual universe by and large; the impact of the Orient was made through books and manuscripts . . . Even the rapport between an Orientalist and the Orient was textual" (1978: 52). The rapport between Defoe and the geographies he represents is mainly textual; he did not have any direct contact with the "Otherness" that his text is trying to introduce to the readers. And so, what he introduces is not representative of a reality on which a country can build on to explore and colonize the world; what Defoe – and others before and after him – wrote constitutes, nevertheless, an essential foundation and starting point for the project of imperialism. It is true that the knowledge which Defoe has and presents about the world is similar to what Said terms "a kind of second-order knowledge" (Said 52) but still one cannot overlook the tremendous effects such a discourse has generated on the Western collective conscience up to the present day.

As soon as Crusoe's vessel approaches the North African coast, his vessel is attacked by pirates and the crew are taken prisoners into the Moroccan port of Sallee. By giving account of this incident, Defoe highlights the real dangers any voyage can face. His first message teaches a moral lesson preaching the idea that expansion is a long-term process wherein explorers or traders should expect plenty of difficulties but should never surrender in the first battle. Despite his captivity in Sallee, Crusoe does not

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give up; he makes use of his apparently intelligent modern character to escape and starts a new phase of his project. The second message, a more significant one, concerns Salée as the first encountered non-European land. The place is portrayed as insecure, controlled by pirates, and ruled by an emperor; thus, the possibility of trading or establishing colonies in this part of the world remains farfetched. After being caught prisoner and enslaved, Crusoe has to free himself and escape from that "horrid place" (27). The intriguing part of this story appears when Crusoe is distinguished from the rest of the crew and given the privilege of a special treatment by the Moors. He comments on this event:

The usage I had there was not so dreadful as at first I apprehended, nor was I carried up the country to the emperor's court, as the rest of our men were, but was kept by the captain of the rover as his proper prize, and made his slave, being young and nimble, and fit for his business. (23)

Why is Crusoe granted this privilege? The answer is embedded in the quote above: because he is young, nimble and fit for his master's business. Let us not question the truth of his being entitled of all these qualities; but is it logically true that he is the only young and nimble person on that vessel?

Defoe excels at creating scenes where Crusoe appears to be smarter and more knowledgeable than the Moors so he could defeat them and play tricks on them as if they were mere children. When Crusoe designs to escape from Salée, every other thing is favorably set to help him carry out his schemes successfully. The natives are represented as being naïve and lacking the mental and physical skills that Crusoe enjoys. While preparing to escape, he, with very little effort, manages to deceive both the Moor and Xury and make them serve his own agenda; the Moor is an easygoing person with a shallow character whom any European can take in easily, and Xury is a docile and obedient boy. In the course of setting the scheme to escape, Crusoe comments on The Moors' attitude saying: "Another trick I tried upon him, which he innocently came into also." (26) In addition to being naïve, the Moor is also untrustworthy; Crusoe says: "I could have been content to have taken this Moor with me and have drowned the boy, but there was no venturing to trust him" (28). Conversely, Crusoe is always smart, reliable and skillful; he generously praises his character and highlights his supremacy on the others and their dependency upon him: "we went frequently out with this boat a-fishing, and as I was most dexterous to catch fish for him, he never went without me" (25) Defoe attributes dexterity and intelligence to the European while he appropriates naivety and rudeness to the others so as to justify the upcoming act of enslaving and selling Xury and the involvement in the enterprise of imperialism generally.

Defoe's description of the African geography, mainly the shores, and its inhabitants bears little resemblance with the way he presents Brazil or the Caribbean Island. It is obvious that Crusoe has no intentions of exploring Africa per se; he certainly has "a mind to see the world" (Defoe 21) but he does not choose to see Africa: the voyage to Guinea is offered to him by a master of a ship. It is then interesting to investigate the causes why Crusoe is not interested in Africa and more particularly its northern coast. The novel implicitly discloses three main, though undeclared, reasons behind Crusoe's disinterest in this part of the world. The first one is the continuous threat of the "merciless" Turkish pirates who are known to operate in that region to take hold of any European ship that may pass by the place and kill or capture and enslave the sailors. North Africa is, by the way, the only region which Defoe associates with piracy attacks on trading ships; he does not mention piracy in any other area throughout his voyages in the Atlantic, including the way to Brazil. By ascribing piracy to the Turkish and the Moors, and trade to the Europeans, Defoe juxtaposes two different economic systems which have always existed in all regions of the world and have been practiced by people who belong to the same country. In other words, in reality, both trade and piracy exist in Africa as well as Europe, but Defoe prefers to attribute the former to his race and the latter to the Moors and the Turks.

The second reason behind Crusoe's disinterest in the northern African coasts is explained by the existence of another European colonizer in the area: Spain's control over the Canary Islands had preceded the British expansions by hundreds of years. When Crusoe only alludes to these islands and avoids approaching them or describing them either in positive or negative terms, he implicitly informs his fellow citizens and readers that the British imperial project should avoid confrontations with other European armies such as the Spanish. In this regard, Defoe seems to abide by an already existing agreement among the imperial forces to divide the colonies. In other stages of the text, however, the Spaniards are represented as cruel colonizers whose main goal is looting the riches of the colonies and killing the natives; the British and Spanish encounter is generally marked by an indisputable cultural, economic, and political competitiveness. Moreover, this allows Defoe to cast his English colonial project as benevolent and reasonable compared to other powers like Spain.

Crusoe, as representative of the English colonizer and trader, articulates Defoe's political and ideological standpoint concerning the other European colonial forces. Defoe draws clear lines between Crusoe's mode of colonialism and that of the Spaniards. Underlying this distinction is the English Protestantism and the Spanish Catholicism rivalry over gaining more economic and geopolitical terrains; the historical formation of the capitalist system required new markets as well as new sources of fortune, raw materials, and labor force. In this regard, geographical expansion and trading in goods and slaves were subject to competition among the different European colonial projects. The British Protestants deemed their project more humane with the aim of refining and civilizing the native people as well as saving them from both their "savagery" and the threatening grip of the European Catholicism. From their perspective, the British saw that their type of colonialism was regulated by commercial and trading intentions. Conversely, they criticized the Spanish for their desire and design to conquer and occupy the territories and subjugate

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the native people. In his comment on the Spanish colonizers' rapport with the natives, Crusoe disapproves of their cruelty and stigmatizes their historical existence in America. In the following passage, Defoe represents the Spanish colonizers like Crusoe in appearance but different in conduct:

He [Friday] told me that up a great way beyond the moon, that was beyond the setting of the moon, which must be west from their country, there dwelt white bearded men, like me, and pointed to my great whiskers, which I mentioned before; and that they had killed "much mans", that was his word; by all which I understood he meant the Spaniards, whose cruelties in America had been spread over the whole country, and were remembered by all the nations from father to son. (212)

Building on Defoe's standpoint, there are then two criteria which define the colonizer/colonized relationship: the first is religious affiliation and so the Protestants are portrayed as better colonizers than the Catholics; and the second is the adopted colonial strategies: the British usually seek peaceful encounters and trading whereas the Spanish tend to invade the lands and bring the inhabitants under domination. While Defoe is – understandably – trying to postulate a kind of colonial heterogeneity whose objective is, on the one hand, to legitimize some modes of colonialisms such as the British and, on the other hand, to ambivalently criticize others such as the Spanish. Yet, the history of imperialism and its repercussions as well as the postcolonial reality can easily refute those views. His narrative is undoubtedly inherent in the religious conflicts and political upheavals which marked Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In this regard, we find that Crusoe, as a protestant individual who aspires for religious freedom, builds relations of respect with the European catholic characters such as the Portuguese captain and sugar planters in Brazil. However, his trust in Catholicism remains shaky all the way through the novel. In an attempt to displace the English society onto the colonies, Crusoe tolerates and accepts his island to hold different religious beliefs: pagans, Protestants, and Catholics but he is incessantly eager to see Friday convert to Protestantism and adopt the English cultural patterns. By so doing, Defoe is aware that the imperial project cannot sustain itself without a cultural hegemony.

In addition to these factors relating to the dangers of piracy and the Spanish occupation of some islands, Morocco is portrayed as a sovereign state reigned by an emperor who has a court and a huge army, and this is the third reason why the area in northern African does not fall within Crusoe's interests of expansion. At a certain time, Crusoe's biggest hope is to quit that region no matter where else to go. He describes this moment of distress saying: "The wind blew from the north-northeast, which was contrary to my desire, for had it blown southerly I had been sure to have made the coast of Spain, and at least reached to the bay of Cadiz; but my resolutions were, blow which way it would, I would be gone from that *horrid place* where I was, and leave the rest to Fate." (Defoe 27, my emphasis) He would rather venture to the sea and risk his life than stay enslaved by the Moors. In a spectacular shift of roles, when he manages to escape, Crusoe himself finds no harm in enslaving the young Moor Xury to sell him later on. Underlying Crusoe's attitude towards Morocco we can discern the workings of Defoe's ideology in his narrative; he is perfect in choosing what to say about a given geographical location and how to deliver it to the readers so as to mold their worldviews and guide them into a full acceptance of and participation in the colonial enterprise. Historically, North Africa did not make an appealing site for the British Empire; they were more interested in central and south Africa, Asia, and America. Though he is being hesitant about inscribing North Africa in the map of the British potential colonies, Defoe –as a colonial propagandist – accepts the possibility of establishing plantations in Brazil and colonies in the tropical island and elsewhere.

Almost all the critics focus solely on Crusoe's experience on the island and dismiss the other geographical regions which, though they might seem secondary due to the short periods of time he spends there, are essentially significant in determining the sides of a comparative analysis of the text as a structure. So before tackling Crusoe's island and the fashion of its geographical representation in the narrative, I shall dwell on investigating the manner in which the African coast is mapped. In presenting the first scene southward "the Emperor of Morocco's dominions", Crusoe starts to echo the already-established Orientalist value judgments about Africa before even setting eye on its landscapes and inhabitants. He depicts the area as being "the truly barbarian coast, where whole nations of Negroes were sure to surround us with their canoes and destroy us; where we could ne'er once go on shore but we should be devoured by savage beasts, or more merciless savages of human kind" (28). The first striking thing about Crusoe's view is his hasty judgment about a place which he had never seen before; it is legitimate for a person to give a personal account of a given place after living in it but not before. The second striking thing in this passage is Crusoe's weird comparison between beasts and humans; for him the Negroes constitute more serious dangers than the beasts themselves. Notwithstanding, the further Crusoe goes on his voyage, his views start to change and take other shapes.

Crusoe's accounts of the African landscapes and people are sometimes determined by his instantaneous basic needs, such as shortage of drinking water or food provision, rather than by some other strategic concerns related to the colonial project. For example, the tension of Crusoe's negative attitude towards Africa abates at the time when he finds fresh water and hunts something to eat from that "truly barbarian coast"; he reveals his thoughts about Xury's arrival from an errand inside the African land saying: I saw him come running towards me; I thought he was pursued by some savage, or frighted with some wild beast, and I ran forward towards him to help him; but when I came nearer to him, I saw something hanging over his shoulders, which was a creature that he had shot, like a hare, but different in colour, and longer legs; however, we were very glad of it, and it was very good meat; but the great joy that poor Xury came with, was to tell me he had found good water and seen no wild mans. (Defoe 30)

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The most interesting conclusion one can draw from this passage is the ambivalence which underlies Defoe's narrative regarding the unknown spaces. It is obvious that Defoe is incapable and unwilling to discard the a priori assumptions he holds about the Other, their culture and their land; he is unable to provide impartial and unbiased accounts of the reality of these spaces. Consequently, his narrative falls into contradictions such as the one apparent in the passage above. The African coast is an unknown space to Defoe but still he depicts it as barbarian and full of beasts and savages; meanwhile, he admits that Xury manages to find fresh water, good food but no "wild mans".

Such aporias are prevalent throughout the novel and they betray Defoe's intentions to construct a narrative which serves as a discursive instrument to facilitate British imperialism. It is true that the text's general tendency corroborates a Eurocentric view superior to and disparaging the Other, but these aporetic instances in the rhetoric unveil weaknesses in Crusoe's concepts of managing the encounter with Otherness. His endeavor to dehumanize the natives in Africa does more harm than good to his enterprise; after all, it is Xury the man not Xury the slave who assists Crusoe and shows esteem and affection towards him. Despite his underestimation of Xury's mental abilities, Crusoe accepts his advice as to the manner of dealing with the "savage Negroes". When they fall short of water but cannot approach the coast for fear of being attacked by the natives or the beasts, Xury suggests shooting the guns; the advice which Crusoe accepts gratefully; "after all, Xury's advice was good, and I took it." (Defoe 29) In accordance with this, the use of guns is a determinant factor in settling several divergences during the cultural encounter; guns are shown to be efficient remedies to political and cultural problems which no other method would cure. Both Xury and Friday are made to admire weapons and deem them as a source of power which Crusoe alone possesses. Most importantly, despite Crusoe's defense for a religious and political pluralism and despite his claims of civility, all his encounters and relationships with the others are determined by violence through the use of guns and other European technologies.

Defoe is then prudent to dispense with the idea that British colonialism cannot be founded on civility and peaceful trading alone; he is conscious that violence is unavoidable in imposing the colonial hegemonic agency. Crusoe seems to disapprove of the violent Spanish intervention against the natives but, at the same time, violence against the Other constitutes an indispensable element of regulation in his own encounters. Defoe usually frames it as "defensive" violence. The African natives are represented debilitated creatures without any weapons at hand; Crusoe shows his interest in this point when he says: "I observed they had no weapons in their hands, except one, who had a long slender stick, which Xury said it was a lance, and that they would throw them a great way with good aim" (33). This binary opposition of presence and absence of weaponry as a main determinant of power aims to valorize the British latent abilities to defeat the others and invade them easily. Not only Africans are portrayed as defenseless and unarmed but also ignorant of the existence of something called a firearm. In the following passage, Crusoe curiously depicts the natives' reaction to his shooting of an animal on their shore:

It is impossible to express the astonishment of these poor creatures at the noise and fire of my gun: some of them were even ready to die for fear, and fell down as dead with the very terror; but when they saw the creature dead, and sunk in the water, and that I made signs to them to come to the shore, they took heart and came, and began to search for the creature. (35)

The African coast appears then to be less appealing to Crusoe and by extension to the British imperial enterprise. In the process of his mapping of the region, Defoe does not allow the possibility of a fruitful colonial encounter as he pensively does with the desolate island. Crusoe admits the abundance of fresh water, but he stresses the difficulty to penetrate the African geography. He also hints at the human aspect of the population – such as the possibility of communication through signs – and calls them "my friendly Negroes" (35) but, at the same time, he associates them with beasts and sketches them in denigrating terms: threatening, naked, afraid, untrustworthy, and the like. Notwithstanding, the narrative in *Robinson Crusoe* does not altogether deny the possibility of the colonial encounter in Africa as much as it endeavors to delimit it within a second-order pattern; one can interpret Defoe's disinterest in colonizing the African coast as being inherent in his country's classification of the world's lands in terms of their profitability to the empire. In this line of thought, Africa was not a priority for the British colonialism in the eighteenth century; it did not prove as lucrative as America, for instance.

2. Brazil and the Island as Utopian Colony:

Defoe attributes an extraordinary flexibility to Crusoe's character in order to construct a polyvalent colonial agency that is able to survive under any and all circumstances. So, in order for Crusoe to be an influential character with whom the British reader would identify, he is put to perform roles and functions as various as a ship commander, a slave, a master, a planter, a trader, a Christian preacher, a warrior, a governor and a king. This versatile colonial subject is juxtaposed to a primitive, simple-minded native who is good at practically nothing. In accordance with his tremendous ability to perform all this range of skills and tasks, Crusoe manages to defeat the hardships of his long journey towards Brazil where he sets up a plantation with the very little money he has. Unlike in Africa, the scenery in Brazil is very much welcoming and accommodating; the readers first discover this destination as being a peaceful asylum for Crusoe. He comments on his arrival saying: "We had a very good voyage to Brazil and arrived in the Bay de Todos los Santos, or All Saints' Bay, in about twenty-two days after. And now I was once more delivered from the most miserable of all conditions of life; and what to do next with myself I was to consider." (Defoe 38)

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Brazil is, thus, an accessible location; the country is depicted open to the sea via a bay. The name of this bay – All Saints' Bay – is emblematic of a land inhabited by virtuous people; namely Christians with whom Crusoe has a lot of affinities. It is true that his role transcends that of an explorer who is seeking wealth to a member of the Christian Church who is seeking delivery in a land of saints. Yet, the economic profit around which the whole colonial project revolves can never be undermined under any ideological move whatsoever; so, Crusoe does not have to spend a long time in Brazil before he decides to settle, purchase land, and invest in the profitable business of planting sugar cane and tobacco; the following passage shows his relaxed attitude towards Brazil as a colonial setting:

And seeing how well the planters lived, and how they got rich suddenly, I resolved, if I could get a licence to settle there, I would turn planter among them, resolving in the meantime to find out some way to get my money which I had left in London remitted to me. To this purpose, getting a kind of letter of naturalization, I purchased as much land that was uncured as my money would reach, and formed a plan for my plantation and settlement, and such a one as might be suitable to the stock which I proposed to myself to receive from England (38-39).

Not only do the Brazilian fields attract the British colonizers to make settlements and plantations but they drive them also to fetch the money they have at home to create even more wealth. Unlike the African coast, the Brazilian space is represented more welcoming and inviting Defoe's European readership – mainly the British – to fantasize flourishing landscapes far away from home. After leaving Brazil, Crusoe is shipwrecked and remains the only survivor on a desolate island which represents the most significant symbolic site for a utopian British colony in the eighteenth century.

In *Robinson Crusoe*, the island represents the most important space where the majority of adventures take place; Crusoe spends more than twenty eight years there and constructs distinguished psychological and political ties with the place. He calls it "my island" and "my colony" and names himself "governor", "king", and "emperor" of that geographic site on which he has no rights except that he is shipwrecked there on his way to Africa to bring "negroes" and sell them to the other planters in Brazil. At the beginning, Crusoe appears to have a cautious attitude towards the island when he finds himself cast away there; he is very wary of the new space where he is stranded and he declares that "the land looked more frightful than the sea" (48). Meanwhile, he has almost a similar attitude towards the sea as well; in a moment of confusion, he compares between the sea and the land, as he has earlier done with "home" and "sea" before going on his voyage. In the first occasion, he favors going to the sea to staying at home but now he considers the sea an enemy and the island a savior: "I saw the sea come after me as high as a great hill, and as furious as an enemy, which I had no means or strength to contend with." (48) Crusoe's confused stance will not last long as we see him lean towards appropriating the island to meet his desires of colonial expansion.

This ambivalent colonial discourse is not actually peculiar to Daniel Defoe alone but constitutes a tradition in colonial writings generally. That is why colonial texts such as *Robinson Crusoe* are oftentimes read through a romantic or humanist eye; an approach which proves of many deficiencies. Sometimes the ambivalent discursive strategies lead the readers to side with the colonizer, as it is the case with Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Kipling's "The White Man's Burden" for instance. Crusoe's psychological confusion about whether it is the sea or the land that will bring him relief is easily washed away once he sets foot on the island; he expresses his satisfaction when he lands on the shore saying: "I got to the mainland, where, to my great comfort, I clambered up the cliffs of the shore and sat me down upon the grass, free from danger and quite out of the reach of the water." (49) This satisfaction is generated by his "discovery" of a colony where he could fulfill his personal and national aspirations. Later, Crusoe's colonial gaze will allow him to discover, for real, the riches of the island. Besides, he will also utilize his European know-how to manage the new wild space and render it more appealing and lucrative.

Gradually, Crusoe starts penetrating the wild island to transform it into cultivated fields which are rich in all crops. He also works hard to tame goats to use them for his food and dress; he moves quickly from the phase of the hunter to that of a settler and capitalist producer. In his impressive article "Enclosures, Colonization, and the *Robinson Crusoe* Syndrome: A Genealogy of Land in a Global Context", Robert Marzec directly links Crusoe's ambitions to cultivate the island to Defoe's own belief in the efficiency of the act of enclosures that was applicable in England at that time; I will quote Marzec at length here:

It is not only Crusoe who fears uncultivated land and achieves order by enclosing it; Daniel Defoe himself was a great believer in the power of enclosures to establish a radically new mode of enlightened (imperial) existence that transformed the land into an object to be mastered by humankind. In *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, Defoe surveys the domain of England's immediate landscape, cataloging in some six hundred pages every quarter of English soil. Throughout, he advocates the scientific and market-driven normalization of the land, valorizing enclosures as 'islands of improvement in a sea of open-field.' In the fictional (but more widely read and thus more culturally significant) *Robinson Crusoe*, this same enclosing of the land authorizes Crusoe to spread God's table and allows him to climb down from the tree (yet 'remain' there in a metaphysical sense) to occupy the space of the Other (2002: 129-156).

Crusoe's malaise about the unknown space starts to diminish as he embarks upon the project of restructuring this wilderness in accordance with the already existing laws and norms applicable in England.

As far the colonial encounter with the native inhabitants is concerned, it first takes place in one of Crusoe's dreams. In his sleep, he dreams of possessing a "savage". Ironically this "savage" becomes the civilized man's savior; the Eurocentric self is in

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permanent need for an "other" against whom to identify itself. As it is the case in all Orientalist narratives, this "savage" – who is now a reality, not a dream – appears in the world without a past, a memory, a language or even a name. The first task Crusoe does after the encounter is naming Friday, just the way he has named his pets before; he calls Friday because the day they first meet is a Friday. Second, he teaches him to converse in English while he makes no effort to learn the native's language. In addition, from the first encounter, Friday shows his readiness to serve the superior European as he was born and brought up to be submissive to the "white man". Crusoe then inscribes his European culture in the natives the same way he does with the land. Nevertheless, the natives in the island, like those in *A Passage to India*, are not represented in the same way; Friday appears to be more human than his father for instance. This strategy of representation is adopted by the colonizer to differentiate among types of the colonized so as to facilitate the task of domination. Generally, the relationship between Crusoe and the natives is master/slave relationship, which favors and celebrates the European supremacy on the other races.

For a postcolonial reader, the act of displacing the English social and political contexts onto this desolate island, and allowing for the possibility to happen successfully, constitutes an explicit invitation for colonization through fiction. So, after settling Crusoe on the shore, Defoe's narrative starts paving the way for a full control over the island through "domesticating" nature and "tailoring" it to meet the colonizer's requirements. Shortly after the storm which has caused the shipwreck, Crusoe gives an account of the new situation: "When I waked it was *broad day*, the *weather clear*, and the *storm abated*, so that the *sea did not rage* and swell as before. But that which surprised me most was that the *ship was lifted off* in the night from the sand where she lay by the swelling of the tide." (51, my emphasis) Following his first errand up and down the island, Crusoe does not wait longer to put his colonizing apparatus in action; he makes immediate use of his guns to hunt for his food and then resorts to the materials available on the ship to build a habitation which he calls a "fortress". Almost all the geographical conditions are favorable to establish this habitation in a very short lapse of time.

Besides, unlike Africa, the island is portrayed as habitable place; in the following quotation, Crusoe draws a comparison between the two colonial landscapes: "I am cast on an island, where I see no wild beasts to hurt me, as I saw on the coast of Africa. And what if I had been shipwrecked there?" (69). The island is depicted as an easy-to-penetrate locale; it enjoys all the qualities of a utopian Eden about which any European reader would fantasize:

the country appeared so fresh, so green, so flourishing, everything being in a constant verdure or flourish of spring that it looked like a planted garden . . . to think that this was all my own; that I was king and lord of all this country indefensibly, and had a right of possession; and if I could convey it, I might have it in inheritance as completely as any lord of a manor in England. I saw here abundance of cocoa trees, orange, and lemon, and citron trees... (101)

On the contrary, India represents a threat to the English attempts to spread authority and power on its landscapes. In resonance with this, Marzec writes that "In *A Passage to India*, Forster foregrounds the tensions surrounding the English control of Indian land, making the land itself an entity in the novel that 'refuses' to be fully understood and mastered by British colonists" (2002: 129-156). This shift from the "will to be colonized", represented by *Robinson Crusoe*, to the anti-colonialism resistance, initiated by *A Passage to India*, is enunciated by the colonized lands and their inhabitants fairly well.

The representation of the European space in *Robinson Crusoe*, namely the Pyrenees Mountain between Spain and France. The European space, both land and sea, is presented as an unsafe place full of wolves and beasts; Crusoe describes his journey across the mountains as "tedious and difficult" (282). The weather also is very harsh and constitutes a real natural obstacle for any penetration of the landscape by any kind of strangers. While the island is portrayed fertile and open to the cast away, Europe is fortified by its mountainous geography, snowy weather and wild beasts. Furthermore, unlike the uncultivated wilderness of the island, Europe is geopolitically mapped; the borders between Spain and France are established and known to all. Political borders added to natural boundaries indicate the impossibility of exploring the place let alone occupying it. This motif, to my reading of the novel, insinuates Defoe's intrinsic conviction that the continental Europe can by no means be subject to the British Empire. Even Friday, whom Crusoe calls "friend" in the island becomes a mere "nimble creature" who cannot culturally and socially fit in the civilized Europe; he, as noble savage, essentially belongs to another world. More interestingly, Defoe goes as further as juxtaposing the European geography to the African coast; the same narrative strategies apply to the two spaces. Simply put, both Africa and Europe are strictly kept away from Defoe's colonial ambitions.

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