

A Modernist Reading of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*

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Article Detail:	Abstract
Received: 30 Jul 2025; Received in revised form: 31 Aug 2025; Accepted: 03 Sep 2025; Available online: 07 Sep 2025 ©2025 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). Keywords—Modernism, Adventure, Isolation, Faith, Spirituality, Nature, Colonization, Self-Reflection, Human Resilience	<i>Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe (1719) is a narrative rich with adventure, suspense, horror, moral reflection, cultural encounters, and the tension between worldly desires and spiritual devotion. It dramatizes the struggle of an individual against nature, the challenges of isolation, and the transformative power of faith and determination. This paper aims to explore both the intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions of the text, with particular emphasis on the meaning and effects of isolation in shaping Crusoe's character. The novel, in many ways, anticipates elements of modernism, especially through its exploration of alienation, self-discovery, and the confrontation with the unfamiliar. The story takes readers on a journey beyond the boundaries of civilization – through perilous sea voyages, forced solitude on an exotic island, and the struggles of survival. Defoe's meticulous depiction of Crusoe's efforts to build shelter, cultivate land, domesticate animals, and explore new parts of the island not only highlights human resilience but also underscores the adaptability of man as a social being. The novel further reveals how changing social conditions and environments shape human values, conduct, and relationships. At its core, Robinson Crusoe emphasizes the protagonist's evolving relationship with God, illustrating the necessity of gratitude, faith, and acknowledgment of divine providence in the face of adversity. This study also speculates on the modern-day relevance of Crusoe's experiences, suggesting how similar narratives of isolation and survival might unfold in contemporary contexts. In doing so, it positions Defoe's work as both a reflection of 18th-century cultural ideals and a timeless meditation on humanity's struggle with nature, society, and spiritual consciousness.</i>

I. INTRODUCTION

Daniel Defoe's prefaces to the three installments of *Robinson Crusoe* reveal an increasingly complex attempt to grapple with the novel's world-forming qualities, amounting almost to a proto-theory of novelistic form. These paratextual elements

simultaneously claim historical authenticity for the narrative and wrestle with the inevitable tension that such a claim is fictional. In doing so, they attempt to reconcile the creative invention of the novel with the religious truth that was widely believed to stand above it. The enduring relevance of *Robinson Crusoe*

lies partly in its universal themes—adventure, human capability, the struggle against nature, isolation, survival, and the tension between divine will and human agency. Written at a time when psychology as a discipline had not yet been developed, Defoe nonetheless demonstrates remarkable psychological insight through Crusoe's characterization, his confrontation with solitude, and his gradual spiritual awakening. These themes continue to resonate with modern readers, securing Defoe's reputation as one of the most enduring novelists in the English tradition. From a modern perspective, *Robinson Crusoe* can be read as both an experiment in form and a meditation on exploration and human resilience. Its enduring features—adventure, determination, morality, secular ambition, faith, and the tension between free will and predestination—remain universally relevant. Frequently regarded as the first real English novel, Defoe's text earns its place in literary history not only through form but also by encoding within its pages the manners, values, and prevailing consciousness of the eighteenth century. Through the lens of New Historicism, *Robinson Crusoe* emerges as a cultural artifact that creatively represents its historical moment; through Reader-Response theory, it can be seen as a realist text, engaging readers across time through a transactional process of meaning-making. Yet, the novel's literary significance is complicated by its flaws. Many critics have noted its uneven pacing, repetitive detail, and problematic depictions of race and colonialism. Much of Crusoe's island narrative—his twenty-eight years of survival, punctuated by lists of provisions, routines, and violent encounters with "savages"—can appear tedious to the modern reader. Crusoe's domination over Friday, whom he compels to call him "Master," encapsulates the colonial mindset embedded in the text. These aspects, though troubling, remain instructive for understanding the ideological currents of Defoe's time. Despite such criticisms, *Robinson Crusoe* has retained its cultural prominence. This is partly due to the accessibility of abridged editions and adaptations in literature, film, and popular culture, which highlight the core adventure narrative while smoothing over its more problematic elements. Defoe's novel laid the groundwork for an entire genre of survival and adventure fiction, inspiring

countless retellings that often refine or subvert the original's moral and colonial assumptions. While it may not meet the standards of later literary artistry, *Robinson Crusoe* remains a text of enduring significance. It offers invaluable insight into the development of the English novel, the cultural anxieties of the eighteenth century, and the origins of themes—survival, isolation, mastery over nature—that continue to shape literature and media today.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative, text-based research approach, relying primarily on interpretation and critical analysis. Both primary and secondary sources have been consulted in order to address the research questions and achieve the overall objectives of the study. The primary source of data is Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, with specific reference to the 2015 edition edited by Dr. S. Sen and published by the Friends Book Corner Editorial Board. The novel itself—particularly its depictions of adventure, the vicissitudes of Crusoe's life, exploration, curiosity, and unique character traits—constitutes the central object of study. The secondary sources consist of scholarly research articles, critical essays, biographical information about Daniel Defoe, and other relevant materials. These include studies on the socio-historical and religious contexts of eighteenth-century England, as well as analyses of the novel's modern relevance and interpretations from contemporary literary criticism. Together, these sources provide the contextual framework necessary for deeper analysis. The research employs qualitative data analysis techniques, combining both deductive and inductive approaches. The deductive approach is applied where existing theories and critical perspectives guide the analysis, ensuring that the findings are systematically aligned with established frameworks. The inductive approach, on the other hand, allows insights to emerge organically from close reading of the text and supporting materials, particularly where new or unexpected dimensions of the novel arise. By integrating both approaches, the study aims to construct a balanced and comprehensive interpretation of *Robinson Crusoe*.

III. DISCUSSION & RESEARCH FINDINGS

3.1 Depth Analysis of *Robinson Crusoe* in a Modern Perspective

Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* challenges the political, social, and economic structures of his time by imagining a utopian environment outside society. Through the protagonist's isolation, Defoe critiques contemporary England while also illustrating Crusoe's intimate relationship with nature and his spiritual and personal development. Crusoe emerges as a universal figure—an embodiment of humanity's struggle with solitude, survival, and self-discovery. A central theme in the novel is the conflict between the individual and society. Crusoe's rejection of his family's expectations mirrors Defoe's own rebellion against parental and societal authority. Both author and character resisted prescribed paths—Defoe against the ministry, Crusoe against his father's counsel—highlighting a broader tension between individualism and conformity. The narrative's semi-autobiographical undertones, reinforced by Defoe's political dissent and imprisonment, underscore the novel's social critique.

The island functions as both a literal and symbolic space. For Crusoe, it becomes a site of survival, self-reliance, and spiritual awakening. His cultivation of land, domestication of animals, and construction of shelter reflect not only human resilience but also the possibility of a utopian order uncorrupted by others. The island, however, is more than a stage for survival—it signifies confinement, growth, and eventual enlightenment. Crusoe learns to reconcile with his misfortune, transforming punishment into renewal and finding faith in God. Nature itself, from the growth of corn to the rhythms of daily labor, symbolizes his inner development and harmony with the environment. Yet, solitude has limits. Crusoe's longing for companionship reveals the essential social nature of humanity. While isolation fosters spiritual growth and resilience, it cannot replace human connection. Thus, Defoe's novel exposes both the promise and the impossibility of a solitary utopia. Narrated in a plain, serious style, the text blends religious reflection with realism, offering authenticity to Crusoe's voice and experiences. This narrative technique explains its enduring popularity: *Robinson Crusoe* has inspired countless editions, translations, adaptations, and imitations across centuries.

Ultimately, Crusoe's transformation—from wanderer to survivor, from isolation to faith—illustrates not only man's contest with nature but also Defoe's critique of society, suggesting that a more harmonious order lies beyond the corruption of human institutions, even if such a society remains unattainable in practice.

3.2 Themes Portrayed in *Robinson Crusoe* Related to Modernity:

3.2.1 Christianity and Divine Providence

Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* is not only a tale of physical survival but also of spiritual transformation. At the outset, Crusoe disregards Christian teachings, ignoring his father's warnings and neglecting to acknowledge God's interventions in his early voyages. His turning point comes through a dream that compels him to repent, after which he embraces Christianity by reading the Bible and engaging in prayer. Faith allows Crusoe to interpret his misfortunes as divine punishment and his survival as divine blessing. Over time, he begins to view events such as the growth of crops, Friday's arrival, and his eventual rescue as manifestations of divine providence. The novel emphasizes that apparent misfortunes may serve a higher divine purpose, urging readers to trust in God's overarching plan. Defoe further reinforces this through the editor's preface, which frames the narrative as an illustration of providential wisdom.

3.2.2 Society, Individuality, and Isolation

The novel explores the tension between social belonging and individual autonomy. Crusoe rejects his family's expectations and the constraints of English society in pursuit of independence, only to find himself in extreme isolation on the island. His solitude compels him to develop resourcefulness and a self-sufficient way of life, which he interprets as morally purer and spiritually closer to God. However, Crusoe's commitment to individuality is flawed; he denies freedom to others, as seen in his enslavement of Xury and subordination of Friday, reflecting his self-centered perspective. While isolation fosters ingenuity, it also leads to loneliness and narcissism. Ultimately, Crusoe does not wholly reject society; he transforms his island into a colony and later reintegrates into English life, highlighting

Defoe's attempt to balance the values of individuality and social belonging.

3.2.3 Advice, Mistakes, and Hindsight

A recurring motif in *Robinson Crusoe* is the tension between disregarded advice and retrospective wisdom. Crusoe repeatedly ignores sound counsel—from his parents, the shipmaster, and even the widow—choosing instead to follow his own ambitions. His narrative perspective as both actor and retrospective narrator allows him to acknowledge these errors in hindsight. Through trial and error, he learns survival skills and moral lessons, gaining knowledge not from instruction but from lived experience. This paradox—that wisdom is achieved only through mistakes—shapes both Crusoe's development and the novel's didactic purpose. The preface reinforces this point, presenting Crusoe's story as not merely entertaining but morally instructive, encouraging readers to reflect on the value of prudence and obedience.

3.2.4 Contentment, Desire, and Ambition

Crusoe's restlessness reflects the conflict between contentment and ambition. His father advocates for the stability of the "middle station," yet Crusoe seeks adventure and greater fortune, repeatedly abandoning security for risk. This oscillation between satisfaction and ambition structures the novel: he leaves England despite comfort, disrupts prosperity in Brazil for slave trading, and desires escape even after establishing a sustainable life on the island. As narrator, Crusoe condemns his ambition as "the general plague of mankind," recognizing that discontent drives human suffering. Nevertheless, his ambitious choices generate the extraordinary experiences that define his life. The novel thus portrays ambition as both destructive and generative—capable of producing misfortune, but also of yielding a narrative of adventure, growth, and spiritual awakening.

3.2.5 Strangers, Savages, and the Unknown

Crusoe's encounters with the unfamiliar—foreign lands, strange animals, and non-European peoples—are initially marked by fear and prejudice. He consistently refers to indigenous peoples as "savages" and assumes a position of superiority, reflected most clearly in his hierarchical relationship with Friday. Despite moments of cultural tolerance,

such as refusing to interfere with native cannibal rituals, Crusoe imposes Christianity upon Friday and denies him autonomy, even naming him rather than respecting his own identity. His broader participation in colonial structures, including plantation ownership and the slave trade, underscores his acceptance of racial and imperial hierarchies.

Yet Defoe complicates this colonial vision: many of Crusoe's fears of the "other" prove unfounded. African natives show generosity, the feared wilderness sustains him, and Friday emerges as a loyal companion rather than a threat. The English mutineers, in contrast, embody greater danger than the so-called "savages." Thus, while the novel reflects seventeenth-century colonial ideology, it simultaneously questions the irrational fears and prejudices that sustain it.

3.2.6 The Ambivalence of Mastery

Crusoe's mastery of his environment initially appears admirable. He transforms the hostile island into a habitable space, domesticates animals, and demonstrates self-determination, shifting from passive victimhood to active survival. Mastery in this sense symbolizes resilience and self-reliance.

However, the concept becomes ethically problematic when applied to human relationships. Crusoe insists on being Friday's "master," extends this role to "king" over others, and treats hierarchy as natural. His instinctive superiority reflects the colonial mindset, blurring the line between praiseworthy self-mastery and exploitative domination of others. Defoe thus presents mastery as both empowering and morally ambiguous.

3.2.7 The Necessity of Repentance

Beyond adventure, Crusoe's narrative serves as a moral and religious allegory. The Preface frames it as a lesson in divine wisdom, emphasizing repentance as essential. Gratitude and prayer prove insufficient until Crusoe acknowledges his sin—primarily disobedience to his father, which he interprets as his "original sin." His feverish vision of angelic rebuke catalyzes repentance, paralleling Adam's fall and exile from Eden.

This turning point deepens Crusoe's spiritual consciousness: he accepts dependence on God, views his condition with greater optimism, and later likens

himself to Job in restored prosperity. Yet repentance also carries paradox: without sin, he would never have learned redemption. The theme thus underscores both the necessity and the ambiguity of spiritual transformation.

3.2.8 The Importance of Self-Awareness

Isolation sharpens Crusoe's self-awareness rather than reducing him to instinctual survival. His Presbyterian background emphasizes continual self-examination, reflected in his obsessive record-keeping. His calendar measures not time itself but his own duration on the island, while his journal meticulously tracks daily tasks. Even his parrot, trained to echo his own words, becomes an external voice of his self-consciousness.

These practices demonstrate that Crusoe's survival depends not only on material resourcefulness but also on sustained reflection. His constant self-reckoning transforms solitude into a site of personal growth, where self-awareness becomes both a survival tool and a spiritual discipline.

3.3 Robinson Crusoe and Modernity

Robinson Crusoe embodies the emergence of the modern individual: a secular subject who confronts the world through reason, labor, and self-reliance. At the same time, the novel gestures toward a religious interpretation of existence that remains unfulfilled, thereby exposing what modernity gains in rational mastery and what it simultaneously loses in transcendence.

First published in 1719, *Robinson Crusoe* was an immediate success, with four editions appearing within months and more than 80,000 copies sold. Formally, it is often regarded as the first true novel, foregrounding the subjective experience of the individual. Substantively, it dramatizes the myth of the sovereign self—master of nature, others, and himself. As Ian Watt has argued, alongside *Faust*, *Don Juan*, and *Don Quixote*, Defoe's work constitutes one of the foundational "myths" of Western modernity.

Part of the novel's early appeal lay in its dual address: it spoke both to a traditionally religious audience and to the rationalist spirit of the Enlightenment. Crusoe frames his sufferings as divine punishment for original sin, particularly his disobedience to paternal authority and Providence.

Yet his actions repeatedly undermine this theological account, instead aligning with secular modernity's emphasis on human effort, rational calculation, and pragmatic mastery. The novel thus oscillates between a search for divine meaning and its erosion by rationalist explanation.

This tension—between the yearning for transcendence and the insistence on secular rationality—explains the novel's enduring relevance. *Robinson Crusoe* is at once a narrative of spiritual trial and a parable of modern secular existence, dramatizing both the power and the limits of the self-sufficient individual in an age of emerging modernity.

3.4 Crusoe and Modern Natural Philosophy

Robinson Crusoe dramatizes the tension between religious interpretation and emerging modern natural philosophy. The fictional editor's preface emphasizes a moral and providential reading of Crusoe's experiences, yet the narrative often privileges secular, material ends over spiritual instruction. Crusoe's oscillation between divine interpretation and natural explanation reflects the epistemological shift of the modern age.

For example, when Crusoe discovers barley and rice growing on the island, he initially interprets this as a miraculous provision of Providence, prompting gratitude and wonder. Soon, however, he recognizes a natural explanation—the remnants of seed he had scattered—leading him to conclude that the phenomenon is purely physical. Defoe's phrase, "Then the wonder began to cease," encapsulates the dilemma of modernity: understanding the world through natural causes diminishes awe and spiritual significance.

This episode enacts the broader philosophical revolution inaugurated by Bacon, Descartes, and others, which rejects classical teleology and the pursuit of final causes. Classical philosophy sought to discern the "why" or purpose of each entity, as Aristotle emphasized, whereas modern natural philosophy isolates material and efficient causes, leaving teleological explanations aside. Crusoe's reasoning mirrors this shift: he initially perceives providential design but ultimately attributes events to natural causes, exemplifying the rise of secular rationality as the dominant interpretive lens.

3.5 Crusoe and Modern Political Philosophy

The secular rationality depicted in Crusoe also informs modern political thought. Just as natural philosophy abandons final causes, political philosophy, from Machiavelli through Hobbes and Locke, grounds human behavior in self-interest, fear, and survival rather than divine or teleological ends. Crusoe's conduct reflects this logic: the discovery of a solitary footprint provokes fear, prompting him to secure resources and assert dominion over the island. Self-preservation, labor, and property become his guiding principles.

Hobbes frames fear as the foundation of social and political order, while Locke links self-preservation to labor and property acquisition. Crusoe enacts both logics: his meticulous cultivation of the island and claim over its resources mirror modern notions of political and economic rights derived from labor and survival imperatives. Even his fixation on money, though useless on the island, underscores the internalization of these modern principles.

Crusoe's ultimate return to Europe, where he rejoices in inherited wealth, contrasts sharply with the classical hero, Odysseus, whose homecoming restores communal and familial bonds. In Crusoe, the modern individual's fulfillment is solitary and material rather than relational or civic. The novel thus stages a decisive critique of modernity: while rationality and self-reliance empower the individual, they simultaneously replace communal, spiritual, and teleological frameworks with a calculus of survival, accumulation, and secular reason. In Defoe's narrative, the modern world is mastered, yet its wonder and moral orientation are attenuated – "then the wonder began to cease."

3.6 Depth Analysis of the Protagonist

Robinson Crusoe embodies perseverance, industriousness, and self-reliance. Stranded on a deserted island for twenty-seven years, he confronts survival with practical intelligence, reshaping his environment through persistent labor. His actions reveal resilience, creativity, and a pioneering spirit characteristic of the rising bourgeoisie. Crusoe demonstrates courage in overcoming adversity, embracing adventure, and refusing mediocrity – qualities that allow him to maintain the appearance of a "civilized" individual despite isolation.

Yet Crusoe's identity is inseparable from his colonial and bourgeois sensibilities. He constructs himself as "self" in opposition to the indigenous "other," importing European cultural norms and practices to assert dominance. He establishes temporal order through European concepts of time, erects a cross marking his landing, and keeps a detailed diary, reinforcing his Eurocentric worldview. Crusoe extends this ideological colonization to Friday, whom he disciplines, educates, and assimilates into European language, religion, and habits. This transformation enforces Crusoe's authority and illustrates the colonial logic of civilizing and subordinating the "other."

Crusoe's worldview also extends to economic and racial hierarchies. He views indigenous peoples as inherently inferior and subjects them to labor and cultural assimilation. Later, in Brazil, he engages in the slave trade, exemplifying his participation in broader systems of exploitation. Collectively, Crusoe's actions construct a self-defined authority and reveal the intersection of colonialism, capitalism, and European racial ideology in shaping his character.

3.7 Crusoe's Faith in God and Moral Teaching for Modern Readers

Faith in God in *Robinson Crusoe* is portrayed as both grounding and transformative. Initially, Crusoe demonstrates conventional seventeenth-century Christian piety, relying on divine providence to navigate life-threatening situations. He makes vows, thanks God for survival, and attributes his rescue and sustenance to divine intervention.

However, as Crusoe confronts the practical realities of survival, his understanding of faith evolves. The miraculous growth of barley, initially interpreted as a providential act, is soon understood to result from his own actions. This moment marks a turning point: Crusoe begins to assume responsibility for his survival, blending divine faith with human agency. Ultimately, his spiritual journey illustrates the interplay of providence and personal effort, suggesting that faith does not preclude self-reliance.

For modern readers, Crusoe's experience conveys a dual lesson: faith can provide moral and psychological guidance, yet human initiative remains essential. His story emphasizes that belief in God

need not undermine personal responsibility; instead, it can coexist with rational action and self-determination.

3.8 Twenty-First Century Crusoe and Contemporary Audiences

The Crusoe myth persists in contemporary media, exemplified by Robert Zemeckis's *Cast Away* (2000) and the television series *Lost* (2004). Despite differences in medium, both works explore themes central to Defoe's novel: isolation, survival, and the emotional and psychological challenges of human endurance.

Cast Away examines modern life's disconnection, emphasizing individual struggle and the pressures of work-dominated, capitalist society. In contrast, *Lost* employs a multi-character ensemble to address broader societal issues, including violence, betrayal, family dysfunction, and addiction. Television's episodic nature allows *Lost* to develop complex narratives over time, responding dynamically to actors, audience feedback, and ratings, whereas film reflects a singular artistic vision with greater creative autonomy.

Both adaptations reinterpret the Crusoe myth for contemporary contexts. *Cast Away* foregrounds personal resilience and emotional reconnection, while *Lost* presents a globalized, morally complex landscape. Collectively, they demonstrate the enduring relevance of Crusoe's story: the tension between isolation and community, survival and moral growth, and human agency and existential uncertainty resonates across media and centuries.

3.9 Modern Science Fiction Robinsonades

"The hero, alone on his island, deprived of all assistance from his fellows, and nevertheless able to look after himself, is obviously a figure that will enthrall readers of all ages." – Ian Watt, *Robinson Crusoe as a Myth*

One of the enduring appeals of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* lies in the compelling narrative of a single individual's struggle to survive in the wilderness. As James Sutherland observes, the novel presents a satisfying story structure: a man triumphing over adversity, creating order from potential chaos. Crusoe's ingenuity and mastery over nature have captivated readers for centuries. The wilderness theme—man versus nature—is central to the Crusoe

story, addressing universal concerns such as survival, spiritual hope, and exploration.

John Dean notes in "The Uses of Wilderness in American Science Fiction" that while the wilderness theme has diminished in mainstream literature since World War II, it thrives in science fiction (SF), which reconstructs lost or imagined landscapes. SF substitutes traditional wilderness—forests, oceans, deserts, mountains—with space as the ultimate frontier. Accordingly, science fiction Robinsonades transpose Crusoe's story into these new settings: the sea becomes the sky, ships become spaceships, and natives become aliens. Survival remains the key theme, achieved through reason, determination, and technology.

Anne Colvin's *The Celluloid Crusoe* catalogues SF Robinsonades up to the 1980s; my update includes films post-1989. In all cases, protagonists confront unfamiliar environments, struggling physically, emotionally, and psychologically. SF Robinsonades prioritize human experience over spectacle; the central characters are ordinary individuals, akin to Crusoe, rather than superheroes.

This dissertation focuses on Byron Haskin's *Robinson Crusoe on Mars* (1964) as a prime example. The film explicitly references Defoe's novel in its title, following its plot closely while relocating events to Mars. Kit Draper, the protagonist, faces isolation and a survival challenge similar to Crusoe's, accompanied only by Mona, a space-traveling monkey. The film adapts the Crusoe narrative while entering into dialogue with Defoe, reflecting and critiquing its source text.

Greg Grewell argues that SF Robinsonades inherit the colonial narratives of Defoe's novel. He identifies three models: explorative, domesticities, and combative. *Robinson Crusoe on Mars* exemplifies the explorative model, depicting solitary survival in a hostile environment, while incorporating elements of domesticities and combative models. Thus, science fiction Robinsonades maintains the essence of Defoe's story while reimagining it for modern audiences.

3.10 Modern Metaphysics of Robinson Crusoe

Kirstin A. Hall, in *The New Atlantis*, situates *Robinson Crusoe* within modern metaphysics: Defoe's novel, published in 1719, remains a cultural touchstone,

inspiring a genre—the Robinsonade—encompassing works from *Treasure Island* to *Cast Away* and *Lost*. Hall emphasizes the novel's ability to accommodate multiple interpretations, from exotic adventure to spiritual allegory, economic individualism, and political commentary.

Early critics noted the novel's "double character": it simultaneously entertains and instructs, blending fact and fiction, genius and craft. Robinson Crusoe exemplifies Janus-faced modern consciousness, in which extraordinary events can be read both as miraculous and natural. The novel reflects the tension between enchantment and disenchantment, science and superstition—a defining characteristic of modernity.

3.11 Defoe's Psychoanalysis of Robinson Crusoe

Leopold Damrosch, Jr., observes that Crusoe's diary functions not to analyze but to record the self: it tracks daily activities, reflecting the modern distinction between the behaving and observing self. Psychoanalytically, this creates a disconnection between Crusoe's inner life and the narrative presented to readers. Although the novel offers detailed accounts of actions and practical problem-solving, it conveys little about Crusoe's emotional experience.

Even significant moments, such as his rescue, are described externally, creating an observational rather than participatory effect for the reader. Crusoe's diary, while meticulously cataloging events, leaves emotional depth largely unexplored, emphasizing productivity and self-regulation over introspection. Defoe thus presents a character whose inner life is shadowed by a disciplined, externalized narrative framework.

3.12 The Effect of Colonization in Robinson Crusoe

Robinson Crusoe reflects the colonial mindset of its era. Ethnic groups are frequently depicted as barbaric, and Crusoe's relationship with Friday exemplifies the colonial process. Crusoe rescues Friday, renames him after an English day of the week, imposes European cultural norms, and enforces Christianity, illustrating a comprehensive transformation of the colonized subject.

Robinson's actions—including regulating Friday's diet, clothing, and religious practice—demonstrate ethnocentrism and cultural imposition. Friday's

initial discomfort and eventual acceptance of Western clothing and habits underscore the psychological and physical aspects of colonization. Crusoe perceives these changes as beneficial, ignoring the coercion involved.

Colonial dynamics are further reflected in Crusoe's paternalistic attitude. He interprets Friday's loyalty as gratitude, framing domination as benevolence. Language reinforces hierarchy, with Crusoe frequently describing Friday as a "poor Savage" or "ignorant Creature," perpetuating dehumanization. These interactions allegorize British imperialism: Crusoe represents the colonizer asserting authority, while Friday embodies the subjugated native, highlighting the systematic and ideological brutality of colonial rule.

IV. CONCLUSION

Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* presents a profound narrative of repentance, transformation, and spiritual awakening. Crusoe experiences deep remorse for his past mistakes, a remorse that emerges as the conscience—the superego—responds to the desires of the id. This profound regret reshapes his outlook, leading him to place his trust not in his own abilities but in God's providence for guidance in the future. His habit of reading the Bible significantly alters his perception of faith and instills in him the conviction that God must be involved in every aspect of life. The once self-reliant Crusoe gradually evolves into a man who places unwavering reliance on divine assistance. Religion plays a central role in this transformation. Alone on a desolate island, Crusoe undergoes the pain of loneliness, which teaches him to value human relationships and to treat others with greater compassion and respect. He comes to understand that every individual holds intrinsic worth. As part of this spiritual maturation, Crusoe also recognizes the folly of his youthful defiance against his father's counsel. His trials eventually reveal to him his place within his family, society, and before God. Through the influence of biblical teachings, Crusoe realizes his guilt in neglecting God's strength and care. Unlike his earlier disregard, he now acknowledges God's constant watchfulness and learns to live by divine guidance. His faith inspires him to abandon his reckless pursuit of adventure and embrace a life of

peace, humility, and service. Every decision he makes henceforth is undertaken with God's involvement, and he seeks to spread goodness to others in hopes of securing divine blessing. This transformation marks Crusoe's passage from a restless, ambitious youth to a mature man grounded in faith and wisdom. He finds peace not in worldly pursuits but in surrender to God's will. Ultimately, Crusoe embraces his identity as a servant of God, having realized that his former ambitions brought only emptiness. Defoe's narrative not only dramatizes an individual's spiritual journey but also reflects the values and social attitudes of 18th-century England. From the perspective of New Historicism and Reader-Response criticism, the novel serves a dual purpose: it mirrors the cultural and moral landscape of its time while also affirming its status as a realist text with enduring relevance. *Robinson Crusoe* thus continues to resonate with modern readers as both a document of historical consciousness and a timeless exploration of faith, morality, and human resilience.

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