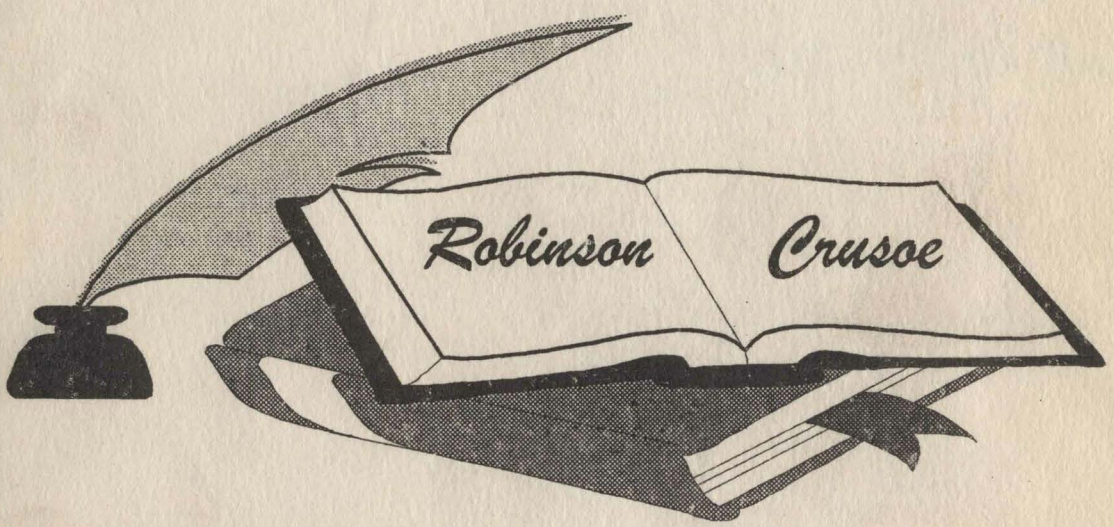
SORIN BACIU



Echoes in Romania

EDITURA UNIVERSITĂȚII DIN BUCUREȘTI
– 1996 –

Motto:

" We make out of our quarrels with others rhetoric but of our quarrels with ourselves poetry"

William Butler Yeats

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ROBINSON CRUSOE

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Lucrarea propune, pe de o parte, evidenţierea unor semnificaţii ale operei analizate, romanul *Robinson Crusoe* de Daniel Defoe, specifice asimilării sale într-un anume context interpretativ şi, pe de altă parte, relevarea anumitor aspecte ale culturii receptoare - contextul românesc -. Direcţiile de cercetare sînt bazate pe *teoria receptării* cu accent pe eliminarea *divorţului arbitrar* operat de unele teorii între critica şi istoria literară, între studiul operei în plan sincronic şi respectiv diacronic.

Receptarea ca tip de experienţă estetică este urmărită în cele trei componente ale sale, organic relaţionate: *poesis* (capacitatea artistului de a reconsrui lumea prin actul creator), *aesthetis* (forţa cognitivă a artei ca modalitate de percepere a realităţii) şi *catharsis* (aspectul comunicativ al experienţei estetice, prin implicarea agentului receptor).

Receptatrea a fost urmărită prin prisma tipului de erou *Robinson,* acest model comportamental generator de simbol care, prin fizionomia-i aparte, se poate implanta şi regăsi în cele mai felurite medii sociale şi geo-politice precum poate popula şi orice gen literar.
Este analizată mai întîi receptarea ca relaţie generatoare de noi semnificaţii ce emană din operă atunci cînd intră în rezonanţă cu orizontul de aşteptare a cititorului mediu pecum şi cu cel al criticului, în calitatea sa de ghid şi mediator al potenţialului de sensuri. În al doilea rînd, receptarea este văzută ca acel izvor zămislitor de noi opere literare, în care autorul, implicat iniţial ca cititor, va opera apoi o mutaţie în orizontul de aşteptare producînd o nouă creaţie şi/sau oferind răspunsuri/soluţii referitoare la problematica propusă de opera sursă.

Pentru considerente de claritate a exegezei propuse, într-o secţiune separată, am încercat o delimitare a genurilor limitrofe - *utopia* şi *romanul picaresc* - şi implicit o definire a conceptului de *robinsonadă.* Separarea este sugerată prin diferenţieri ale zonelor de interes ale autorilor care au produs astfel de tipuri de sciitură; pe rînd, interesul scriitorului este concentrat asupra *toposului,* a *tipului de naraţiune* şi respectiv asupra *eroului.*

Totodată, secţiunea destinată receptării prin traduceri româneşti (care acoperă un interval considerabil, 1817-1985), este însoţită de analize pe text şi explicaţii cu

caracter tehnic ce se pot constitui într-un ghid şi un exerciţiu de tehnica traducerii.

În secţiunile următoare, receptarea este urmărită prin ecouri semnalate în ziare, reviste, pefeţe, articole, critică literară, continuînd cu întruchipări ale eroului de tip *Robinson* în opere literare româneşti: romane, poezie, genul scurt.

Un capitol aparte este destinat unei amănunţite comparaţii efectuate pe diverse planuri, între romanul lui D.Defoe şi un roman românesc (*Robinson în Ţara Românească*, de Ion Gorun, 1921), considerat de noi ca cea mai completă întruchipare tehnică a unei robinsonade româneşti. Comparaţia acoperă repere şi clişee consacrate pentru tipul de scriitură în cauză: motivul *insulei*, *naufragiul* cu implicaţiile sale, *păcătul originar*, *actul reconstrucţiei*, *puterea exemplului*, *mitul ordinei bine apărate*, *eroul ca purtător şi transportor al unui clişeu moral şi comportamental*, etc.

În încheiere, pe lîngă critici detailate asupra altor încercări de analiză ale ecourilor romanului lui Defoe în Romania, am propus sugestii pentru exegetul doritor de a întreprinde demersuri similare. Pentru informare, celor doritori în a continua linia cercetării propuse li se oferă date şi resurse bibliografice amănunţite - traduceri, critică literară, robinsonade, ecouri.

Autorul

INTRODUCTION

Romanian letters and culture have always displayed a keen interest in the movement of ideas in Europe and the world round, being continuously receptive to messages of a most wide humanistic perspective.

With a commonsensical, yet most exigent sense of choice and a no less keen artistic taste and sense of history, Romanian writers have approached such ideas and have anchored them in the historical, socio-political and economic background, always in keeping with the national needs at certain given moments.

Within the scope of the European letters, Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe has enjoyed long standing reputation and displayed an interesting and most constructive influence upon Romanian literature.

The purpose of the present study is to be a survey of the fortune of D. Defoe's Robinson Crusoe in Romania. Its penetration and impact on Romanian literature has been traced down, in turn, at the level of translations, adaptations, introductory notes, prefaces, articles, literary criticism.

A separate section has been rightfully devoted to the echoes of this novel as they have materialised in Romanian literary productions. To use a more technical term, our analysis dears with the levels of ***reception*** (German: *Rezeption*) of Defoe's novel in Romania. The interest of the research is twofold. On the one hand it hopefully reveals new meanings of the analysed work due to its imbedding in a different interpretative context and, on the other, it presents certain facets of the receptive culture, its growth and maturation, the development of various ideological trends, etc.

The research is placed within the more extensive area of the study of the relation between literature and society. In this respect, the interest is focused on the succession of a number of critical views, thus combining the analytical, descriptive research at the synchronic level of the work with the historical, diachronic perspective.

The legitimacy of this type of research has been proved within the framework of what is now being called ***the reader-response theory***. This critical orientation starts as a reaction to the dissatisfaction with certain paradigms that have functioned in literary history and criticism; these have led to an arbitrary separation between literary criticism and literary history, as well as between the synchronic and the diachronic levels of approach.

Literary history, a synthesising discipline that had traditionally been entrusted with the study of that immense spiritual complex called ***literary heritage***, was going through a period of decline. This was due to the obvious limitations of the historical model used, amounting to a mere 'summation of the facts', in the manner of the ancient chronicles, under the well-known formula: "the life and work of.....".

A teleological perspective - one that employs an external teleological principle -, has become obvious at the beginning of the 19th century. This approach added a so-called objective substance to the historical dimension of literature, conceiving of it as an objective description of facts.

Two solutions have been proposed as ways out of this crisis, both of them casting light on essential aspects of the literary work, while also rather rigidly emphasising some of its dimensions and functions:

a). Marxist criticism views literature only within the framework of the socio-historical development of humanity, overstressing the role of the extra-literary factors.

b). Formal theories tend to exclusively promote intra-textual relations and suggest an evolution of 'structures through themselves', for internal reasons only.

The ***reader-oriented*** **aesthetics,** or theory proposes a symbiotic union of these two research modalities, a means to release the tension between the synchronic, critical study of the work and the diachronic, historical one. Literary history is now viewed as an ongoing process of ***aesthetic reception and production*** carried out via the reader or the critic who interprets it, as well a via the writer, a reader himself but also a potential producer of new texts. literature is thus conceived as a kind of communication between the author and the public through the vehicle of the literary work. It is, therefore, up to the literary critic or the literary historian to facilitate the constructive assimilation of the literary production against the background of a certain socio-economic or literary context. These 'guides' of the artistic value and artistic emotion are supposed to shorten the way between the creator and the receiving audience and contribute to the emancipation of them both. If research observes such working pineapples any literary analysis becomes a historical undertaking clearly related to a certain time and socio-economic context. Hence the responsibility of the critical act, its educational, formative character ultimately leading to the formation of skills and ideals about the concepts of beauty, relevance and usefulness.

Interestingly, George Călinescu anticipated many of these ideas viewing the inseparability of literary criticism and literary history when he wrote that:

> *"Literary criticism and literary history are two phases belonging to the same process. One cannot be a critic outside the historical background and one cannot make literary history outside the aesthetic norms, that is, without a critical standpoint. The political historian's task is to look into the facts which are always available in documents for the ordinary, civil eye. On the contrary, the artistic facts will not emerge as such unless a masterly wit warrants their artistic qualities; these latter facts are values. As I said, a fact that is still being overlooked, albeit of capital importance, is that the history of literature is a history of values and therefore the expert has to be able, first and foremost, to sort out these values - which means he has to be a critic -."* (1)

This illustrates the same idea of the responsibility one has to assume when promoting and disseminating literary phenomena. It is an enterprise that should unequivocally establish the genuine values and, at the same time, eject the noxious non-values which may well intoxicate a benign educational act and generate a retarded response from a mystified reading public.

Therefore, for the promoters of the ***reader-response criticism,*** literature does not exist otherwise than as an expression of what it itself is, namely a form of sui-generis communication whereby, through the work of art, a relation is being established between two distinct poles, -the author and the reader -. (2)

As literature is a phenomenon with a distinct physiognomy, its formal laws do never exactly correspond to those of the social development as claimed in dogmatic. outdated versions of Marxist criticism. At the same time, being a phenomenon which develops in a particular social context and which is necessarily interrelated with objective historical moments, it cannot be completely cut out from the external world; this is what, again dogmatically, the formalist theories of literature claim.

Equally blameworthy are, on the one hand, dogmas advocating a mechanical reception of reality by literature (thus reducing its function and purpose to the criterion of the *mimesis*), and on the other, those that grant excessive credit to the text in itself. Departing from the exclusively descriptive use assigned to the semiotics of the codes in formalist theories the ***reader-response criticism*** proposes a functional treatment of the text, an intense exploitation

of the moment of reception vis-à-vis that of its production. Consequently, a conceptual balance is established between the two poles of communication, the writer and the reader.

The result of this approach was a new ontological status acquired by the literary work. Art is only apparently individualised through finite, perfected works featuring ontological legitimacy as was assumed by Mikel Dufrenne (3) when he subordinated the aesthetic experience to the aesthetic object. The work of art exists as a complex of human activity nourishing itself on its own growth, without the need for any impulse from an initial, exterior *telos* invented by philosophers. It tends to constitute itself in a world per se, without cutting itself from the everyday practical universe.

We may reach the inherent truth underlying the literary work only if we see it as a unity of the creational element and that of its substantiation, both reflected in the reader's conscience. We cannot have an observer contemplate a literary work as a given object dressed in the same outfit everywhere and at all times. A literary work, as Hans Robert Jauss suggestively put it, may be rather paralleled with a musical score offering an ever fresher resonance with every new reading. Similar ideas had been earlier expressed by Roman Ingarden:

> "*The aesthetic experience proper takes place only when the subject whoa adopts an aesthetic attitude subjects the schematic construction of a work to a permanent topicalization and completion that finally give birth to the aesthetic object. The description of the contact between the subject and the work must observe the presence of the constant or variable factors characterising the two agents of the relation.*" (4)

This holds true provided that the work is a long-lasting one due to its freshness and an endless variety of meanings deriving from a multitude of reference points; these may will range from particulars such as age, cultural and/or instructional level or even mood to more comprehensive standards such as the economic and socio-political context or the historical moment.

Any literary fact is practically 'killed' when it is constrained to immutability by being stuck to a given time and place (*topos*). At the same time, a reaction of a somewhat paradoxical appearance may occur when the literary phenomenon utterly 'suffocates' the readers by virtue of their incapacity to ensure the freedom of its development and the measure of its universality.

Of special interest is also the view on the concept of ***aesthetic experience***, which incorporates three facets, three moments of the contact between the reader and the work, at the ***productive***, ***receptive*** and ***communicative*** levels. These correspond to what has been styled by literary criticism as ***Poesis, Aesthetis*** and ***Catharsis***, respectively.

Poesis concentrates the liberating force of art, the artist's capacity to re-make the world by removing the harsh, alien appearance surrounding reality.

Aesthetis covers the cognitive force of art as a means of apprehending the world - apparently the same for all of us, yet different for each.

Catharsis is the fundamentally communicative facet of the aesthetic experience, that which invites the receiver and offers him an active role in the process of constructing the imaginary world. The identification of the reader with the work may lead to the formation of models of behaviour, fact that testifies the active, social function of art.

Insubordinate as it is, art does not confine itself to rejecting certain norms of behaviour or to formulating daring questions whose systems of obligatory answers are there to enforce the authority of a particular view about the world. Yet, art may create new norms and propose them to the human praxis, so that their compulsory character can only result from the consensus of the subjects that may adopt them. Therefore:

"The artistic experience is perceived not from the angle of its productivity, as making something through freedom, but also from that of its receptivity, as reception is freedom." (5)

The process develops incessantly in congruence with the topicalisation of the literary discourse, via the regular consumer (the reader), the critic as the guide and moderator of the potential of the artistic phenomenon and, last but not least, via the writer himself as a potential maker of future texts. It is only within this context that the relation between the synchronic component (the issue of a new literary work) and the diachronic one (the national or the international heritage) will find an operational balance demanded and desired by both the producer and the consumer and, in a particular way, by the critic.

An important component of the aesthetic experience and, at the same time, a concept that elucidates to a great extent the function of literature as communication, is that of the ***horizon of expectations*** (German: ***Erwartungshorizont)***. This is the basic conceptual frame, wherein the meeting between the literary work and the reader takes place. At this imaginary 'round table', the work - the product of an author who is himself a reader -, reveals itself to its ideal reader. As such, the work accommodates in itself a certain anticipation, a kind of an established 'playground' based on previous experience and other previously assimilated literary texts that ascertain a cultural experience inherited by the reader who approaches them.

Elements of tension may arise at this point of impact where the reader is invited to co-operate with the author in the act of deliberate reading. Such tensions are sometimes liable to bring about ***shifts of horizon*** in the act of interpretation. It is at this point that familiar experiences may be identified or familiar meanings may be discovered.

The certitude of the element of value becomes apparent as a consequence of such recurrent shifts of horizon, sanctioned by the reader's verdict which, in turn, will undergo the same process of becoming.

The continuos re-orientation of the reading public in terms of the ***horizon of expectations***, - ***this ongoing prooess towards furthor original experiences derived from the*** literary work - is again the quality that bestows on it the universality of long-lasting masterpieces.

Such a communion, the result of the act of reciprocal education, may also give life to t characters in a work of fiction and, hence add to their significance. As Arthur Koestler put it:

"The extent to which the character in a novel 'lives' depends upon the intensity of the reader's participatory ties with him... This remains true regardless whether the reader admires, despises, hates or loves the fictional character. In order to become involved in this mechanism, the reader must produce an emanation from its conscious or unconscious self." (6)

Catharsis, as a fundamentally communicative experience, also includes that predisposition which is being created in the reader for adopting certain models of behaviour, an inclination which is stronger in the case of the literary work than in that of the stereotypes created by religion, tradition, nationalism, education or abstract morality. Following a certain aesthetic-attitude pattern, characters may produce cathartic pleasure. This is that element of seduction by means of which the reader meets with those models that actually stimulate him, by the force of example, towards attitudes or actions of the same scope. The aesthetic element is thus projected into the social one.

The novel we propose to study may be quoted as a paradigmatic example of this sort. Its value primarily rests with the fact that it has proposed an exemplary, a symbolic type of hero and, implicitly, a sui-generis pattern of behaviour. Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe may be considered a master work liable to exert a wide range of influences in various social and

geo-cultural settings, while the hero as such may generate most varied embodiments within the space of other literatures. Defoe's hero is a carrier of a thick and pertinent layer of meanings and, ultimately, a creator and not a violator of those values that give significance to duration. This character offers excellent proof that:

> *"Man is not a flat -earth dweller all the time. Like the universe in which he lives, he is in a state of continuous creation. The exploratory drive is as fundamental to his nature as the principle of parsimony which tends towards automatisation of skilled routines; his need for self-transcendence is as basic as his necessity of self-assertion."* (7)

Such an attitude towards existence and experience possibly urged a Hamlet, a Don Quixote, a Robinson Crusoe or a Santiago to come to grips with themselves and the environment underlying their existence and to 'wrest power from the Gods' in a very much Promethean manner. Such great effigies looming into foreverness can teach us, as Constantin Nioca said, that:

> *"Great works are not designed for bare contemplation. They are designed to breed further great works or at least to fashion you into a genuine human being. If not, the design of great works is to make you apologise for living on Earth."* (8)

As already mentioned, the present research focuses on the reception of D. Defoe's Robinson Crusoe in Romania in its various forms. On the one hand, ***reception*** means that relation producing new meanings attributed to the work, function of the horizon of expectations of the common ***reader***, as well as of the ***critics*** as guides of significant potentials of the work. On the other hand, reception is that relation which may produce new literary works in which the ***reader-as-author*** is involved, namely, that reader for whom the change of the ***horizon of expectations*** is manifest through the production of a literary work, offering new answers and solutions to problems raised in the preceding work.

Trying to cover all these facets of the reception act, the investigation started from the very fact that this work was chosen for being translated into Romanian. Therefore, we have examined its successive translations, observing the relation between the original and the Romanian translations, not only at the 'quality of the translation as such, but also at the level of the selections operated by the respective translator function of his aims and interpretation of the work. From the same perspective, we have examined the various adaptations of Defoe's novel. So, out of the about 59 translations and adaptations discovered, we have analysed those considered relevant both for the Romanian continuous interest for introducing Defoe' novel in our literature and, for the no less earnest and interesting exercise they feature as translation acts proper.

Together with this, in the chapter devoted to translations and adaptations, we have given some general remarks on the evolution of translation preoccupations in Romania. They are illustrated by opinions expressed important Romanian writers and philologists: Mihai Eminescu, Lucian Blaga, Petre Grimm, Cezar Petrescu, Leon Levițchi, etc. Finally, we have tried to substantiate our points of view through a survey of the translations of the novel into Romanian. In doing so, we have offered a sample of text analysis following Romanian versions of the same paragraph, - Robinson's discussion with Friday -, as they have been produced by Radu Rosetti (1900), Lascarov Moldoveanu (1945) and Petru Comarnescu (1943,1969, 1971).

Another section has been devoted to the survey of the reputation of Defoe's work and personality in Romania, trying to point out the increasingly diversified interest of the Romanian readers in Defoe's Robinson Crusoe along the years. For research considerations, we have resorted here to the chronological approach; the material surveyed includes prefaces, introductory notes, newspaper articles, commemorative studies, etc. When referring to pieces

of Romanian literary criticism devoted to the author and his work, the chronological perspective has been dropped in favour of pattern-focused analysis.

A separate chapter has been dedicated to the study of the relation between Robinson Crusoe as a perfect embodiment of a ***robinsonade*** and the so-called Romanian robinsonades. The analysis required investigations at the level of both literary history and literary theory. For a start, we have investigated Romanian echoes of the Robinson motif by tracing its embodiments in various Romanian literary productions. Some of them are: Robinson în Ţara Românească (Robinson in Wallachia) 1904, by Ion Gorun, Robinsonii Bucegilor (The Robinsons of the Bucegi Mountains) 1923, by Nestor Urechia, Viaţa în pădure (Life in the Forest) 1939, by Mircea Streinul, Mica Robinson (The Little Robinson Girl) 1942, by Nicolae Batzaria, Aventurile lui Ion Runcan, ultimul naufragiat pe insula lui Robinson (The Adventures of Ion Runcan, the Last Castaway on Robinson's Island) 1947, by Apostol D. Culea, etc.

The aim of the analysis was to demonstrate that the reception of this hero and his type of adventure ranges from overt imitations to approaches of a deeper nature or, sometimes to mere symbolic echoes of an obvious imagistic suggestion.

For reasons of research strategy again, as well as for the clarity of concepts approach and the analysis of the echoes, we have worked on a separation of the apparently related and frequently overlapping concepts of ***utopia, picaresque writing*** and ***robinsonade***. This has been then illustrated by an ample comparative analysis of two novels: Robinson Crusoe and Robinson in Wallachia, (1904), by Ion Gorun, a Romanian work which, in our opinion, comes closest to what may be called a Romanian robinsonade.

The comparison proper focuses on well-established motifs such as the island and the possible meanings derived thereby, the type of hero, the idea of adventure, the accident, the original sin, the relation man-nature, the myth of fruitful enterprise and work, the reconstruction, the problem of money and so on. All these have been considered in turn, together with the moral fable always present in the 'deep structure' of the narrative, in the ***manner they have been employed by the two authors so as to serve their purposes***.

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ROBINSON CRUSOE - ROMANIAN TRANSLATIONS

Along the years, the Romanian response with regard to translations and adaptations of Defoe's Robinson Crusoe has registered a remarkable performance carried out in most various ways. Some of the adaptations feature a wide range of their authors' preferences in point of selection, personal contributions and modifications as is the case, for instance, with the 1981 issue, where the contribution of the author (unknown) goes far beyond the most liberal paraphrase. Consequently, the product offers new prospects for an analysis of a differently structured novel, with lots of new elements fitted in and lots of original ones left out.

The large number of adaptations, rearrangements and translations of Robinson Crusoe appeared in Romanian have proved to be often regrettable facts in point of their achievement, remaining, however, profitable exercises for professional translators.

The amount of work devoted to the translation of this novel along the considerable interval between 1817 and 1971 provides a sample of massive exercise, if not a possible practical guide to the trade of translation. The early stages of this lengthy becoming of the novel up to its final settlement in its Romanian 'garb' offer, above all, a telling proof of how an original text should not be approached when turned into another language.

It is well known that, before 1944, Romanian translators and their products did not have an official status under the co-ordination and with the support of an authorised institution. Therefore, although good and sometimes excellent translations did occur, in most of the cases the capable, pertinent translator was rather annihilated by a faulty system which promoted and controlled the translation trade. It was a system where the publishers' mercantilism would well match their sense of responsibility and where the works proposed to be translated were often randomly selected.

Such a discomfiture, which could be styled as a national evil, could surely not last, though Romanian was not the only country struck by such incongruity. This state of things was doomed to suffocate for want of its vital fuel, namely, the acknowledgement of the public. It was something that the system seemed to have overlooked, but which history has not failed to sort out.

Stands against this state of affairs were taken, ranging from mild intimations down to severe criticism based on competent arguments. They appeared at the end of the 19th century and gained in bulk and vehemence in the interval between World War I and II, a time when the amount of literary translation also climbed up the figures.

Remarkable personalities of our national literature and culture distinguished themselves in this respect: critics, journalists, writers. Their professional probity as well as opportune intuition as regards the adoption of works from foreign literatures made them often assume and commendably carry out a translator's job. Alexandru Vlahuţă, Mihail Eminescu, George Coşbuc, Lucian Blaga, Tudor Vianu is just a random selection of names that undersigned contributions in the field along the years. Through the substance of their translations or through their essays meant to theorise and guide the translator's work, all these people have emphasised both the capital importance of this particular activity for a national culture and no less the dangers of neglecting its specific demands while performing it.

As a full inquiry into the evolution of these aspects in Romania goes beyond the interest of our research, only a selective illustration of the above mentioned facts will be provided.

Mihail Eminescu's activity as a translator may be a telling example of moral responsibility, of a firm standing against the pollution of the Romanian culture with a bulk of

second-rate and even downright debilitated translations. His had always a highly demanding position as regards the wide range of assignments and obligations required of any translator.

Eminescu, a Translator of English Literature, an article by Prof. Dr. Leon Levițchi, is a particularly suggestive display and analysis of Eminescu's work as a translator and counsellor in applied translation. The article contributes substantial bibliographic reference and text analysis to an accomplished picture of Eminescu's professional portrait. In a competent, sagacious discourse, the reader is led to discover yet another dimension of the poet's creative personality. The article is also a genuine guide along the laborious course of action that any respectable translator is supposed to cover before he sets out to do the job itself.

Another significant work that illustrates the position of a Romanian man of letters as regards translators and translations is the study: Traduceri și imitații din literatura română (Translations and Imitations from English Literature) signed by Petre Grimm (1). The reason for the selection of this particular study is that Petre Grimm presents many key aspects of the performance of a translation, norms which are now sanctioned by scientific statutes.

Of interest for any researcher in the field is also Petre Grimm's list of earlier Romanian translations from English literature, accompanied by the translators' names, as well as a record of the Shakespearean performances on Romanian stages, with the exact dates and the initial casts.

Besides this considerable amount of chronological material, Petre Grim offers pieces of valuable judgement on translation techniques, blaming clumsiness and other instances of misconduct. In doing so, the author stands up against mercantilism, rightfully considering it as something that not only brings dishonour on the specialist, but also fuels up a kind of 'cultural calamity':

> *"The belief is ever stronger that translations ought to be something more than a mere commercial enterprise, that they are true accomplishments, most of which deserve to stand beside the original works and whose achievement requires learning, talent and effort."* (2)

The translator's command of the respective source language and a careful handling of the original text are facts rendered evident for avoiding misinterpretations and inadvertence in point of construction, denotation or modality. The use of dictionaries is yet another issue approached by the author in his essay:

> *"It is desirable, for one thing, that the person in charge of a translation should have good knowledge and command of the language, that he should study every possibility of expression in the original work, and prove to be more than a primitive dictionary fumbler. This is not because dictionaries are without use, but they can only be of help to him who has a feeling for the weight of various nuances in the meanings of the word stock supplied by a dictionary, and who understands that no dictionary - not in the present state of Romanian philology, that is - is an accomplished work: on the contrary, it is a work that needs his own contribution to be perfected."* (3)

Petre Grimm stresses upon the translator's obligation to have a good grasp of the target language as well, to show proof of his own creativeness while weighing shades of meaning or the original author's intentions in terms of both form and substance. The translator should not, accordingly, misrepresent the original text by pushing the paraphrase to the extent of creating an altogether different text.

The translator's affinity for the piece he has chosen to translate, for one particular author, literary trend, genre or period is a further requisite for the achievement of a reliable translation. This is a fact that has often been overlooked, although it appears in perfect compatibility with a translator's professional probity:

"A translator should feel particular sympathy for the work he has undertaken to translate into his own language: he is supposed to take as much pleasure while working at it as the original author did, and he should be spiritually congenial with that author."(4)

Besides all these aspects Petre Grimm, as Eminescu before, insistently hovers over the problem of 'philology' - by this meaning the condition of the Romanian literary language at that time -. In his plea for common sense he reminds the reader of some worthy contributions to the enrichment and the ornamentation of the Romanian language along several generations of poets and prose writers: Mihail Eminescu, Vasile Alecsandri, Grigore Alexandrescu, Mihail Sadoveanu, Ion Creangă, Şt. O. Iosif, etc. On the other hand, he mentions injurious tendencies to force foreign items and arbitrary adoptions into the language, of which Ion Eliade Rădulescu's attitude after 1838 is an example. Much such annoying interference still occurs in the form of 'en vogue' ingredients even in the author's coeval social background. Nevertheless, time and the social character of the language will inevitably have taken control to sort out aberrant loans and preserve the profitable ones.

With respect to language development and cultural progress, the author suggests that translations should be evaluated from two complementary angles: the aesthetic one and that of a nation's cultural history. Obviously, Petre Grimm refers to those particular works belonging to the universal heritage and which have been assimilated by the Romanian culture in the wake of certain historical and socio-political events, with major impact upon the Romanian spiritual life. Examples of such moments are supplied: the year 1848, the Union of the Romanian Principalities, the War for National Independence. The Union Act and the accomplishment of national independence are emphasised by Petre Grimm as crucial points for Romania's spiritual assertion. From now on, the artistic concern becomes increasingly manifest and:

"...the translations that appear are of a steadily improving build and appearance."(5)

Though the essay is less than a scientific approach of translation strategies and patterns, given the moment when it was issued, it may well stand as a sensible and competent piece of the author's mind for the multitude of aspects he brought in support of his judgement. In reminding us of Mihail Eminescu's deadly scrupulousness to get the best and the purest out of literary Romanian, and of his urgent call for translators to work in none but this area of the language, Petre Grimm in fact pointed a searchlight of beneficial criticism to a matter that, in those times, was in serious need of structural discipline and control.

A further example that illustrates recurrent concern for major bearings in the field of translation in Romania is an article by Cezar Petrescu: Traduceri şi traducători, (Translations and Translators). It is, above all, an earnest address to translators and publishers. Much of the author's say is reasserted in another article, Experienţele unui traducător din literatura sovietică (Experiences of a Translator from Soviet Literature).

In a direct, firm and sometimes vehement discourse, Cezar Petrescu lashes against the crisis that was persistently playing havoc in the field of Romanian translations in general. A serious cause were the misty, unfair relationships existing between publishers and translators:

"Although translations are a major problem for every culture, in our country they have been left at the pleasure of private publishers who have reduced the matter to a mere trade with books, similar to any ordinary trade such as that with cheese or cloth or leather."(6)

A large number of translations were being issued under the apathetic eyes of irresponsible officials, polluting the Romanian culture with:

"...a downright noxious industry coming from the slums of literature and culture." (7)

The educated reading public was, in this way, hopelessly deprived of a requisite collection of essential works translated from the world classics.

Cezar Petrescu is even more intent than Petre Grimm on showing how desperately little the chance of competent, self-demanding authors and translators was to survive in the contest, let alone win over the more profitable producers of worthless pseudo-translations. In contrast with a picture of cultural betrayal, he brings forth the example of Romanian classics who contributed valuable pieces of translation, and appreciates this as a positive phenomenon, desirable of every emancipated national literature:

"...a process belonging to the encyclopaedic stages in every people's culture."(8)

The author proceeds to analyse the disastrous effects of pseudo-translation: modifications, omissions or random paraphrases - a deliberate massacre of the original text. These so-called 'original' contributions would materialise, for the most part, in cheaply popular happy endings, a further lamentable image of irresponsible editorial mercantilism. Translations which came to be about half of the original text such as versions of Don Quixote, a number of novels by Charles Dickens, E. Zola or Tolstoy are quoted for evidence. Confronted with such dubious manners of negotiating an original copy and its creator, the author understandably wonders to what extent one can still expect:

"...probity on behalf of the writer, the preservation and the reproduction of the genuine, original atmosphere or the use of a vocabulary congenial of the social, historical or geographic conditions of the heroes."(9)

In defence of the trade, Cezar Petrescu claims the protection of a framework of clear-cut techniques that should be indiscriminately observed by all translators. In this respect, he welcomes the initiative of several publishing houses to have organised monthly professional meetings. Himself a translator, the author pleads for the fact that any translator revealing a constant awareness of his professional responsibilities should always check on that feeling of 'artistic kindred' between himself and the creator of the piece he has chosen to work on. The case of Mihail Sadoveanu who performed a stylistic adaptation of a translation from Turgenev is a telling example, as is that of Ion Luca Caragiale's who gave a stylistic adaptation of Gogol's The Inspector and of Chekhov's short stories, once more proving his:

"experience of a master craftsman"(10).

In 1953 Cezar Petrescu, like Petre Grimm in 1924, signalled the need for an encyclopaedic dictionary. Moreover, a dictionary of synonyms and one of proverbs appear to him as indispensable requisites for the achievement of reliable translations.

With the increasingly refined demands of the readers and with the growing number of translations from various languages into Romanian, more profound and specialised pieces of criticism and theorising essays were issued. Such an example, a kind of a lab test to be consulted before an attempt at translating a text, is offered by Cornelia Comorovski in her article: W.M. Thackeray - aspecte ale măiestriei artistice, cu aplicații la probleme de traducere (W.M. Thackeray - an Artistry Survey with Applications in Translation Strategies). (11)

The essay gives critical opinions regarding Thackeray's artistic performance in point of composition and bias - irony, lyricism, pathos, sarcasm, etc. - followed by text analysis performed on the translated versions of the novels Vanity Fair, translated by C. Tudor and I. Frunzetti, ESPLA, 1953, and Henry Esmond, translated by Eugen Filotti, ESPLA, 1958.

A detailed analysis from various angles reveals misinterpretations as regards the dominant, the point of view, the modality, stylistic devices, unmotivated person shifts in verbs, omission of the explanatory parentheses and implicitly of their modal implications,

reinterpretations, additions, omissions, and so on. The inventory may be enlarged with aspects of wrongly deciphered denotative items which sometimes lead to the alteration of the characters' physiognomy and of the realia, or with faulty punctuation and word order, all of them with a devious impact on the context at large.

The author provides samples of interesting practical exercise, all of which eventually lead to the conclusion that any translator should necessarily:

> *"...be in full apprehension of the respective work, of the artistic pattern he wishes to transplant, with all its particularities, ranging from the larger architecture down to the single words."*(12)

Preoccupations in the field of translation have sensibly developed along the latest decades, calling for higher technicality and qualified competence concerning this employment in general and particularly the translation from foreign languages into Romanian.

A noteworthy instance of Romanian interest in the act of translation is Prof. Dr. Leon Levițchi's Îndrumar pentru traducătorii din limba engleză în limba română (Guide for the Translators from English into Romanian) the Scientific and Encyclopaedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 1975. The work, assisted with rich bibliographic information in a judicious, profitable arrangement, gives wide prospects for a systematic analysis of translation issues. It exhibits sound scientific argumentation and it is comprehensive, especially with respect to a translator's essential tasks.

By virtue of their specific bias such detailed studies, - with direct bearing upon the practical side of the translation activity -, would prove valuable for each of the languages of current circulation that make the concern of the Romanian translators today.

We consider it our duty not to overlook the fact that preoccupations for translation into Romanian have also been manifest among foreign researchers and linguists working in faculties or university departments of Romanian abroad. For a particular case we have selected the article: On Translation in General and on Translating Poetry in Particular by Radu Flora, professor and researcher at the Romanian Language Department of the Belgrade Faculty of Philology. The article was presented at the meeting of the Romanian staff in Vrsetzin 1969 and it was published a year later (13). Apart from some probing into the mechanism of translation in general, the author analyses translation samples of Serbian prose and poetry into Romanian, with many applications on texts to go along.

Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe has enjoyed notable contemplation from the Romanian readers, philologists and translators along the years. So far there have been over fifty adaptations or translated adaptations, translations and numerous revised editions or reprints. Especially during the interval between 1900 and 1971 there was a steady go at the story, a fact that left behind landmarks to tell of the positive evolution of the Romanian public's concern for choice quality in literary translation. The numerous editions - ranging from the lesser, commercially remunerative only, up to some refined productions - are as much evidence of an increasingly demanding audience in terms of translation standards.

The first account of Robinson Crusoe's adventures occurs in Romania in 1835 in the form of a translation performed by the Cavalry Commander (serdarul) Vasile Drăghici, after an adapted version of the original work signed by the German Joachim Campe.

Vasile Drăghici started work on his translation in 1817, while he was studying in Germany. Because of publishing difficulties, the issue of the book was delayed as far as 1835. A noteworthy fact is that the publication was also postponed for a while due to the author's scrupulous care for the technical accomplishment of his translation. As he himself mentions, he repeatedly turned back to the text for adjustment and improvement.

Besides these aspects regarding Drăghici's translation, quite interesting appears the ingenious epic stratagem through which the novel made its way into Romania - an aspect to be enlarged upon in a further chapter -. The hero's adventures are spun in a family along thirty long evenings, each one devoted to one chapter of the book, while pure narration adroitly alternates with copious colloquial pieces of conversation between the members of the family, providing genuine samples of early 19th century everyday Romanian with its lexical and morpho-syntactic characteristics.

After the year 1848, the Union Act and the War for Independence, all moments of social and political unrest that deviated the natural course of reading dispositions, Robinson Crusoe is brought back into focus, this time in a Romanian adaptation issued by the Alexi Printing House in Braşov, in the year 1891, under the signature A. V-----u.

1891 is in fact the year that inaugurates a true Robinson Crusoe parade through translations and adaptations. We consider that a comment on this succession (1892, 1898, 1900, 1908) should start with the 1891 issue as it seems to be an interesting Romanian contribution to the understanding of both the novel itself and the robinsonade at large.

The translation offered by Vasile Drăghici in 1835 seemed to perfectly meet the moral and educational requirements for a proper instruction of the young.

The 1891 paraphrase is a considerably amended performance in that it draws deeper from the original work in point of meaning, interpretation and lines of interest. The motivations underlying this new version rest in the more complex, late 19th century realities of Romania: the crystallisation and development of the bourgeoisie, the commercial upsurge, etc. The evolution is apparent in the very subtitle of the book (14). The narrator's art of story-telling is excellent and the choice of the episodes highly suggestive. Written in a surprisingly clear style for that age, the book somehow manages to stamp the figure of the hero and what it stands for in the mind of the reader. The author - unfortunately unknown by his full name - is sure to have studied V. Drăghici's translation and worked, if not with an original copy, at least with a more exact translation from another language; this is because his version follows the exact chronology of the episodes and preserves most of the character and verve of Defoe's original style. However, the division of the text into chapters belongs either to himself or to the translation that might have inspired him. The comments inserted here and there by the author in the form of moralising precepts and advice stress rather than depersonalise the novel as such.

This version is also remarkable owing to a noteworthy innovation; the author chose to eliminate the shipwreck from the hero's life till after the 11th year of his stay there. This might have been a consequence of the author's desire to be more convincing than Defoe himself. This artifice overtly stresses the apology of painstaking, hard work which brings along success even where hardly any material support is there to help the hero cope with adversities.

Surprisingly, however, even under these circumstances, the yarn of the story and Robinson's triumph underlined by this reinforced predicament do not look far-fetched and the reader may grant as much credit to this version as he will to Defoe's original narrative.

It is also true that this interference with the original was meant to be a simplification yet, one that brought along considerable complications. Striking is the manner in which the author managed to handle and render episodes such as the hero's survival, the film of his daily accomplishments or his steady, unwavering progress. Just like Defoe, in order to keep things within the boundaries of verisimilitude, this unknown author exhibits a first-class ability in wielding the circumstantial detail in a photographic record of the hero's moves or careful motivation of each of his actions, in order to keep things within the boundaries of verisimilitude.

On the other hand, this author's challenging choice forces him to face the consequences of having deprived the hero of all the facilities provided by the ruined ship stuck in shallow waters. Robinson is left somehow barehanded, he has not even as much as a knife to rely on.

New problems inevitably appear, which have to be suitably dealt with: the manufacturing of the first tools, putting up a shelter, cooking, hunting, fishing, taming animals, working the land, lighting a fire and keeping it on for eleven long years, and so on.

By declining the motif of the wreck and adapting the narrative to these new essentials the author, perhaps without knowing, offers a creditable solution to those critics who have often disclaimed Defoe's good faith only because he had his hero supplied with that frequently controversial *"maggazin of all kinds"* to assist him through his exile from the very first days of his predicament.

We are convinced, however, that the author had no real intention to build a deliberate demonstration on polemic grounds. The fact that he left the character unclad of all that material support, the wreck, - the only physical remnant of the world he had left behind -, seems rather an original experiment carried out with no less competence than the original story had been managed by its creator.

Starting with the 1891 adaptation we may therefore allege that the novel has been 'adopted' in all of its major bearings, which paves the way for qualified interpretations and complex analyses, although it will be still long before Robinson's story has ceased to be received by the public at large as literature for children, primarily and essentially.

No later than the next year, 1892, another issue of the novel appeared - the first, we believe, to have run sensibly closer to the original text (15). Yet, before this one, the Samitca Publishing House in Craiova had taken over, in 1891, the publication of a 'translation' by I. Bauman. It was in fact an abridged version specifically meant for elementary school use: Robinson în insula sa sau prescurtare din aventurile lui Robinson, uvragiu folositor pentru scoalele primare (Robinson on His Island, or Robinson's Adventures Abridged, a Work to be Used in Primary Schools). This adaptation was again created for educational ends only, to be employed in schools as a part of the curriculum in those days.

Coming back to the 1892 issue, we may say that this is the first real attempt to refer to the original text in good faith (or, again, to some translation into another language, an excellent translation, this time). It is an obvious step forward from the level of adaptation or random paraphrase. The break with the far-fetched paraphrase is especially evident here, although the work as such is far from being exonerated from all technical offence, if considered against the background of today's exigencies.

In spite of certain omissions and somewhat explicable loose paraphrases, the narrative respects the original order of events and the titles of the chapters. Hardly any personal comment, interpretation or conclusion interferes with the configuration of the original text.

A noteworthy fact in praise of the anonymous translator is his comprehension of certain aspects regarding the dominant features and the modal implications in the text, aspects that have often been overlooked by translators even later on. The subtle dialogue between Robinson and Friday, for example, was neither eluded nor distorted by careless paraphrase, as has often been the case with subsequent translations, the cause being the difficulty of transposing such language into Romanian. It is therefore a great merit of this translator to have succeeded an adequate Romanian equivalence for that piece of primitive talk which sounds so genuine in Defoe's English.

In 1898 a further attempt at translating the novel is made by B. Marian. A short Biographical Note precedes the text, offering information about the author, as well as some pieces of critical judgement on the novel as a whole (16). The text, a considerably shortened version of the original, abounds in personal contributions. The author often takes the liberty to add up to Defoe's imagery by widening the sphere of the detail in certain constructions or, an even more regrettable intervention, by reducing some fragments of laboriously achieved stylistic substance. It is our belief that the frequent misinterpretations and the avoidance of the

more complicated commentaries and collocations are imputable to B. Marian's comparatively poor command of the English language.

A downright deplorable sample of approaching a foreign literary production is the anonymous 'translation' issued by the publishing department of Leon Alcalay's book shop , in the collection 'Everyman's Books' in 1908. The title, Robinson Crusoe, (Voyages) opens the text of this pseudo-translation definitely prompted by sheer commercial interests. This may have followed a commissioning of the above-mentioned book shop which used to patronise the collection 'Everyman's Books' at that time and therefore had to be urgently delivered by the anonymous translator. There is hardly any other possible reason to account for this unhappy approach of Defoe's novel, especially if we think about its much more reputable antecedents which make this 1908 version both futile and ridiculous. Compared, for instance, with Radu Rosetti's translation which appeared in 1900 and which monopolised the approach of Defoe's novel till late in 1943, the 1908 issue remains a work of restricted, maybe only local, interest.

Radu D. Rosetti, in his preface to the 1900 edition of the novel, is not quite specific about whether or not he referred to a copy of the original text for his translation:

> *"There has been no integral translation of Foë's work in our country so far. The undersigned has assumed this task: the readers are now in a position to judge whether the attempt has been successful or not."* (17)

Among other things, the preface reveals the author's good knowledge of a considerable part of Defoe's work and, for the first time, detailed information is supplied about the history of Robinson's adventures and some of the author's sources of inspiration. The translation appears to be a fair company of the integral text as no massive amputations were operated. We cannot be sure, however, whether Radu Rosetti turned to an English version of the novel or still to a translation into another language, possibly a French one.

Even in this more faithful approach of the novel there are still many instances of defective paraphrases or miscarriage of the modality. It might be due to an alleged influence of *the French language, of which Radu Rosetti must have been an excellent master as against his* command of English. Till 1943, however, when Petru Comarnescu's first edition of the translation appeared, Rosetti's version remained the most reliable. This accounts for the fact that another five or so editions of this version covered the interval between 1900 and 1943. These editions, all published in Bucharest, have lots of differences concerning the extent to which the author operated selections within the text. This can be readily seen in the list of the editions of the novel in Romania, supplied at the end of this chapter.

The final step forward in the translation of Defoe's novel into Romanian is made by Petru Comarnescu in 1943. (18). In spite of a few hardly perceptible shortcomings, this approach stands for a correct attitude towards an original text. A series of ensuing editions, all of them enlarged and improved - the last of which appeared in 1971 - stand in confirmation of this translator's professional probity, the more apparently so if compared with Radu Rosetti's versions. As a matter of fact, no other signature except Petru Comarnescu's marked any renewed attempt at translating this novel between 1945 and 1971.

The year 1943 witnessed an interesting encounter of Petru Comarnescu's first edition and the last edition of Radu Rosetti's version. It was a profitable contest developed before an audience who naturally vouchsafed the more deserving of the two performances.

Before proceeding to analyse a set of translated fragments, we shall abide by still another version of the novel as translated into Romanian, namely, that of Al. Lascarov-Moldoveanu's in 1945. A lamentable attempt - if the year of its issue is to be considered - , although indirectly profitable, in that it certainly determined Petru Comarnescu to continue in his efforts to bestow higher refinement on his 1943 edition.

Although the original text is largely observed, Lascarov-Moldoveanu's paraphrase is often quite erroneous and frequently slips away, making the reading of the book tiresome and unattractive. Not only are the author's ways with the English language mediocre, yielding all kinds of misinterpretations, but even his employment of Romanian leaves behind a rough, clumsy and ungraceful text, sometimes quite the opposite of Defoe's narrative. Misinterpretations of the original connotations are strikingly apparent, as are some instances of denotative blunders, all of them proving the translator's poor compatibility with the prose style to which he had applied himself. Lascarov-Moldoveanu seems to have poor knowledge of quite a number of lexical items he candidly uses in Romanian, thus making the text artificial and most affected. The heterogeneous aspect of his style and an abundance of lexical inadvertencies from a diachronic point of view are further contributions to a poor literary achievement. There was hardly any serious motivation for the Cugetarea Publishing House to have warranted the issue of such a work which, as a matter of fact, soon sank, never to appear in a further edition.

Another similarly pathetic attempt, if not worse still, was made in 1954 and was signed by Cornel Ciucovski. It was, in fact, a curtailed adaptation of Defoe's novel, insistently recommended by its author to the young. The translator's incompatibility with the job perfectly matches his superficial and erroneous apprehension of a hero and of a work of such stature. Details remain to be discussed in a further chapter of this study. The translation itself, however, appears as little more than a regrettable accident - the more obviously so when confronted with Petru Comarnescu's long run of fruitful enterprise and earnest work.

As regards our investigation of various Romanian translation performances, we have selected the fragment including the discussion between Robinson and Friday, as we consider it a most interesting exhibition of both literary and translation competence.

The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe
(Penguin, London, 1975, pp. 216-217)

1. *I had in mind once to try if he had any hankering inclination*
2. *to his own country again, and having learned him English so*
3. *well that he could answer me almost any questions, I asked him*
4. *whether the nation that he belonged to never conquered in*
5. *battle; at which he smiled, and said,*
6 *"Yes, yes, we always fight the better", that is, he meant*
7. *always get the better in fight; and so we began the following discourse:*
8. *"You always fight the better", said I, "how come you to be taken prisoner then, Friday?"*
9. **Friday**: *My nation beat much, for all that.*
10. **Master**: *How beat? if your nation beat them, how come you to be taken?*
11. **F**: *They more many than my nation in the place where me was;*
12. *they take one, two, three, and me; my nation over-beat them in*
13. *the yonder place, where me no was; there my nation take one, two, great thousand.*
14. **M**: *But why did not your side recover you from the hands of your enemies then?*
15. **F**: *They run one, two, three, and me, and make go in the canoe;*

16. *my nation have no canoe that time.*
17. **M**: *Well, Friday, and what does your nation do with the men they take, do they carry them away and eat them, as these did?*
18. **F**: *Yes, my nation eat mans too, eat all up.*
19. **M**: *Where do they carry them?*
20. **F**: *Go to other place where they think.*
21. **M**: *Do they come hither?*
22. **F**: *Yes, yes, they come hither; come other else place.*
23. **M**: *Have you been here with them?*
24. **F**: *Yes, I been here (points to the N.W. side of the*
25. *island, which, it seems, was their side).*
26. *By this I understood, that my man Friday had formerly been*
27. *among these savages who used to come on shore on the farther*
28. *part of the island, on the same man eating occasions that he*
29. *was now brought for; and sometime after, when I took the*
30. *courage to carry him to that side, being the same I formerly*
31. *mentioned, he presently knew the place, and told me he was*
32. *there once when they eat up twenty men, two women and one*
33. *child; he could not tell twenty in English; but he numbered*
34. *them by laying so many stones on a row, and pointed to me*
35. *to tell them over.*

Comments

The dominant of the chosen paragraph rests mainly in the rudimentary language of the savage, strongly marked by a clumsy, faulty syntax.

Friday's language betrays, above all, a tendency towards approximation - he misses the capacity to make generalisations, which is typical of a primitive who has acquired some notions of English in a short period of time. His knowledge is understandably limited by a comparatively restricted horizon and practice in general. All these approximations, as well as the atavisms of his primitive native idiom are obvious in Friday's excessive use of the notion proper, of concrete elements and, in general, by heavily resting on the denotative range of the vocabulary. The faulty subject-predicate agreement and the absence of stylistic shades emphasises the importance of the ***notional*** rather than of the ***relational*** element in the primitive's language. Therefore, the simplistic, straightforward character of his speech, with short sentences often copying the structure of the preceding sentence or question, the frequent enumeration and the first degree repetitions of the synecdoche type replace or try to compensate for Friday's power of generalisation, synthesis, comparison or association, betraying the origins of an underdeveloped idiom.
Example:

6. *Yes, yes, we always fight....*: lexical modality expressed at the level characteristic of a rudimentary language. Such a repetition is not typical of a native speaker, especially when used so frequently. The recurrent approval of the *yes, yes* type replaces constructions such as: *oh, yes; sure; of course; indeed; by all means*, etc.
Regarding the relation between language and thought as a unity but not as identity, the sample above exhibits the role of the ***substratum*** manifest at different levels of the language. (19)

"The action of the substratum is relevant at all levels of the language, yet the morphology registers but scarce examples in this respect. This is because morphology in general is less open to borrowings. In the case of the vocabulary and syntax, borrowings are more frequent and the influence exerted by the substratum is nothing but such borrowings. It is only in the field of phonetics that the matter differs: sounds are more difficult to borrow, yet they may be readily taken over from the level of the substratum. This difficulty of borrowing sounds makes the speakers retain the sounds of the language they abandon in the very moment they adopt another one." (20)

Against the same background of the relation language-thought and the action of the substratum, the **time** element always stamps its decisive influence upon the process of abandoning the mother tongue and the adoption of anew one, of course, with the obvious characteristics featured by the bilingual phase. Within the framework of this process, phonetics is less yielding and, as the history of different languages prove, the period of accommodation may last even for centuries.

Along this very line of analysis, a comparison with Caliban's situation in W.Shakespeare's The Tempest would be suggestive. Caliban and Friday are in most similar conditions linguistically speaking, with the remark, however, that the time element makes the two cases nothing but embodiments of two stages in the development of the same phenomenon.

Both heroes are taught a new language and both are savages in contact with the purport of a superior civilisation. It true that the sphere of the literary work is not comparable with that of scientific exactness and yet, the different manners the two savages come to master the acquired language is evident and, to a certain extent, motivated by the respective authors.

According to Prospero, Caliban 'rests in his power' for about twelve years, whereas Friday finds himself in Crusoe's company (when the above given dialogue takes place) for less than a year, fact that naturally differentiates the kind of English each of them uses. So, in Caliban's case the process of accommodation may be considered almost accomplished, the phonetic element being possibly the sole sign that might still betray his condition of a slave.

Such aspects of phonetic and phonological modality would become all the more relevant if adequately considered and illustrated by the stage directors who approach this play. However, if this aspect may be somewhat neglected or may pass unnoticed with Caliban in *The* Tempest, it will not be the case with Friday and Robinson. It is something that Defoe seems to have clearly grasped and therefore properly illustrated through adequate modal implications. He managed to give a most suggestive image of the savage's speech by employing many of the devices sanctioned by comparative linguistics much later: lexical and morpho-syntactic inadvertencies (solecisms, juxtapositions, ellipses), first degree repetitions, hyperbolas, enumerations replacing other ways of expressing modality, etc.

A possible screening might also profitably take into account an enrichment of the modality pattern through such extralinguistic means as body language (gestures and mimicry). As it is, Friday needs to compensate for his deficiencies in the acquired language, in order to level thought with expression - which makes body language a natural, predictable fill-in for communication gaps.

Defoe's construction of the dialogue is of documentary importance in that it reveals the occurrence of such linguistic encounters at that time. Indeed, the trade with slaves, the progress of geographic discoveries, the colonisation of new territories or the missionary enthusiasm were as many opportunities for inevitable contact with languages exhibiting different stages of evolution. Under the circumstances, the power of the historical context imposed the more advanced over the lesser language.

An approach of the dialogue from the point of view of modality will first and foremost reveal Crusoe's intellective-inquisitive attitude in conducting the conversation with 'his man'. Robinson's stand is implied by his recurrent use of subordinate clauses of cause, either explicit or implicit:

a) Explicit causality:

2. ...*and having learned him...* for: and because\as I...
4. & 6. *I asked him whether the nation... never conquered in battle.*, and the answer: *Yes, yes, we always fight the better*, for: Yes, we did, because we...
8. & 10. ...*how come you to be taken...*
15. *They run one, two, three...* [because\as] *my nation have no canoe.*
30. ...*being the same...* for: as it was the same.

b) Implicit causality:

1. ...*to try if he had any...*
7. ...*and so we began the following discourse*, for: consequently, or that is why...

Instances of intellective-explanatory modality are in fact quite frequent throughout the book, as they are all along Defoe's fiction: they make, after all, his most reliable pre-requisite and tool in carrying out the circumstantial detail. Connectives like so, that is, namely, viz., he meant, respectively, occur quite often, only to mark the author's desire to render the illusion of unquestionable verisimilitude (Ex. 6; 24; 26; 29).

An obsessive tendency to explain, locate, account, and minutely describe, rests not only with Daniel Defoe: it is a wholemark of the Age of Reason. The exact, unequivocal judgement and the love for the concrete element was the banner hoisted along the whole Age of the Enlightenment, a time well rooted in Thomas Hobbes' and John Locke's philosophies.

c) Other details:

1. *I had in mind once to try...* = wanted to see\ find out (periphrasis);
2. *again* used with the meaning of still = type 3 ambiguity from the point of view of meaning;
1. & 2. *hankering inclination* = hyperbolic epithet;
2. *and* used for because or since;
4. & 5. ...*never conquered in battle* = catachresis: conquered used with the meaning of won;
8. ...*you always fight the better* = obvious tendency of emphasis; a repetition with an intellective-stylistic value explaining and at the same time acknowledging what was said before; also, ellipsis: if is omitted;
10. *How beat?* = ellipsis and the continuation of the repetition: *How come you to be taken?*, which suggests insistence to get an explanation;
12. & 13. the inability to make generalisations, compensated by repetition and juxtaposition. Friday's enumeration: *one, two, three, and me* , or: *one, two, three, a great thousand* implies a triple connotative aspect: an enumeration with an obvious intention to emphasise and

hyperbolize; synechdoche (pars pro toto) , and amplification. Naturally, a native speaker of English would be accused of homiologia in such a case;
30. *...being the same I formerly mentioned* = parenthesis;
34. *stones* for pebbles = catachresis.

Translations

Versions belonging to Petru Comarnescu

As against the other two translators selected, namely, Radu D. Rosetti and Al. Lascarov-Moldoveanu, Petru Comarnescu is the only one who successfully and clearly renders the dominant of the text, giving a fair paraphrase of the savage's speech. The text below also gives the amends and corrections operated by the translator in the editions between 1943 and 1969. From the point of view of modality, the translation renders properly the intellective-inquisitive and the intellective-explanatory character of the dialogue conducted by Robinson.

1. *Am voit să-l încerc o dată şi să văd dacă nu îi este dor de*
2. *ţara lui. Il învăţasem atît de bine englezeşte, încît ştia*
3. *să-mi răspundă la toate întrebările. L-am întrebat dacă neamul*
4. *lui nu iese niciodată învingător în războaie. Mi-a răspuns*
5. *surîzînd: " Da, da, în luptă întotdeauna mai bun." Voia să*
6. *spună că ei erau mai buni războinici decît vrăjmaşii lor.*
7. *Am început atunci următoarea convorbire:*
8. **Stăpînul**: *Dacă întotdeauna sînteţi mai buni în luptă -*
   (Dacă întotdeauna luptaţi mai bine - 1943)
9. *i-am zis (i-am spus - 1943) - cum de ai fost prins?*
10. **Vineri**: *Neamul meu bătut mulţi pentru asta.*
11. **S**: *Cum i-a bătut? Dacă i-aţi biruit, cum de v-au prins?*
12. **V**: *Ei mai mulţi ca noi unde eu eram. Ei luat un, doi, trei*
13. *şi pe mine. Neamul bătut (biruit - 1943) pe ei, în altă parte unde eu nu.*
14. *Acolo luat un, doi, trei, o mie mare (multe mii - 1943).*
15. **S**: *Atunci de ce nu au încercat ai vostri să vă scape?*
16. **V**: *Au dus fuga un, doi, trei, mine băgat în canu. Neamul meu*
17. *fără canu atunci.*
18. **S**: *Bine Vineri. Dar ce face neamul tău cu cei pe care îi prinde?*
19. *Ii duce şi-i mănîncă cum fac şi ceilalţi?*
20. **V**: *Da, neamul meu (meu omis - 1943) mănîncă om, mănîncă întreg.*
21. **S**: *Si unde îl duce?*
22. **V**: *Duce în alte locuri, unde vor.*
23. **S**: *Vine şi pe aici? (Vin şi pe aici? - 1943)*
24. **V**: *Da, da, vin aici. Vin în alt loc.*
25. **S**: *Ai fost şi tu pe aici?*

26. **V**: *Da, acolo fost (Imi arată spre partea de n-v a insulei*
27. unde, după cît se pare, era coasta lor).
28. Am înţeles că şi Vineri, slujitorul meu fusese printre sălba-
29. tecii care obişnuiau să vină în (pe - 1943) acea parte a insulei
30. pentru praznicele acelea îngrozitoare (neomenoase - 1943) la
31. care fusese sortit acum în urmă ca pradă. Curînd după aceasta
32. l-am dus acolo şi am văzut cît debine cunoştea locurile.
33. Mi-a povestit că a fost o dată cînd au (s'au - 1943) mîncat
34. douăzeci de bărbaţi,două femei şi un copil. Nu putea zice (spune - 1943)
35. douăzeci pe englezeşte, dar i-a enumerat,
36. aşezînd multe pietricele şi arătîndu-le pe rînd cu degetul.

Details:

1. *Am voit să-l încerc o dată* - a good paraphrase of the original;
3. *ştia să-mi răspundă la toate întrebările* - maybe better: *era în stare / putea; toate* is not the best solution for *almost any*: this is an instance of unmotivated detachment from the original, altering the reality and practically incriminated by Friday's own insufficient abilities with the language. We suggest: *la mai toate întrebările*;
3. & 4. *neamul lui* - for better emphasis on the difference between Crusoe's and Friday's speech, the translator could have used: *ai săi* for Robinson and *neamul* for Friday;
4. *războaie* - a term of too large connotative implications for the respective context. We suggest: *lupte*;
1., 2. & 3. For stylistic reasons the translator did not reproduce the sentence structure of the original. He split and fragmented it either through co-ordination or subordination, in order to avoid the use - as is Defoe's case - of the polysyndeton. In exchange, Petru Comarnescu makes use of the asyndeton, trying a less tiresome style. It is, in fact, the translator's merit to have assumed the risk of clearing Defoe's discourse of the obsessive yearning for tiresome exactness. To the extent that the translated text flows with easier grace, the risk has paid off.
8. The 1969 and the 1971 versions follow the original more closely by the exact taking over of *You always fight the better.* At the same time the *if* deletion is solved.
9. *zis* in the 1971 version is better than *spus* (1969 and before), considering the familiar bias of the conversation between the two heroes;
10. *pentru asta* - faulty translation of the phrase *for all that*, which means *totuşi / cu toate acestea*;
11. *cum de v-au prins*? We think that the use of the second person plural is unjustified and allows for ambiguity in Romanian. The original text motivates the singular acceptance of *you* through the exact repetition of the structure in 8. and 10. Friday's answer in 12. comes in support of this.
12. The translation exhibits some inconsistency towards the use of the savage's broken language. We suggest: *ei mai mult / mulţi decît neamul meu.* It would considerably add to the connotative colour of the combinations used by Friday, such as his constant repetition of *neamul*. The inconsistency stands out even as the translator offers a good alternative in the next line, 13.;
13. *bătut* (1971) sounds more appropriate than *biruit* (1943) , as it accounts for Friday's basic vocabulary and inability to discriminate between nuances;

14. *o mie mare* - a felicitous negotiation of both the periphrasis and its hyperbolic implication. The alternative *multe mii* shuts out the original semantic substance;
16. *dus fuga* (1971) or *au dus fuga* (1943) do not seem proper solutions. We suggest: *ei fugit*, as it must be noticed that Friday does not omit the subject, which is a compulsory presence in the sentence for any beginner learning English. See also 6., 12.: we consider that *Ei fugit, un, doi, trei, mine băgat canu* would be more suggestive of the rhythm of broken speech. On the contrary, a small prepositional intrusion (*în canu*) does much to spoil the rhythm.
16. & 17. Even the original text is rather ambiguous at this point. The ambiguity might be solved with the help of the motivations given in the rest of the paragraph. We think that the idea to follow would be: *ei fugit, un, doi, trei*, that is to say, the rest of them ran away, and Friday alone was caught and put into the canoe. To clear the ambiguity, we suggest: *Ei fugit, un, doi, trei, dar/numai mine băgat canu.*
18. For reasons already explained we suggest: *ai tăi* instead of *neamul* in Robinson's speech;
19. *...cum fac şi ceilalţi?* - wrong determination producing ambiguity. The original says: *...as they did?* (19) Within this context, the Romanian *aceştia* and not *ceilalţi* is the term that carries the right anaphoric load, as the common denominator of a fact valid for both heroes;
20. *mănîncă om* - a successful equivalent for *eat mans*, considering the semantic range of the Romanian noun. Perhaps *mănîncă om, mănîncă om tot* would have been more resonant than *...om întreg.* At the same time, the repetition of the noun *om* within the context: *Da, neamul meu mănîncă om, mănîncă om tot* might be closer to the English *...eat all up.*
21. *Si unde îl duce?* - defective translation. It seems that the translator was influenced by the preceding structure *mănîncă om* and therefore mistook the meaning already disguised by Friday's broken language. Here, the translation appears as a contextual synesis, brought about by proximity. The synesis persists in 22., although the 1943 version solves it by supplying the proper agreement;
23., 24. Superficial consideration of the original. For reasons mentioned at 21. and 22., the translator seems to operate a changing of the parts as regards the manipulation of the language by the two heroes. Consequently, Friday takes over the correct agreement in Romanian: *vin*, whereas Robinson mistakes it: *vine* ;
24. *vin în alt loc* - we suggest: *vine alt loc* (Friday's speech);
26. *acolo fost* - suitable paraphrase, revealing the absence of *also/too* in the original;
30. proper translation as against the 1943 version, where *praznicele acelea neomenoase* exhibited a faulty connotation;
31. The presence of *şi el* and *acum* would complete the meaning and balance the sentence: *la care şi el fusese sortit acum în urmă ca pradă.*
32. Omissions and a rather careless paraphrase, although the splitting of the original paraphrase do not seem too disturbing. We suggest, however: *Curînd/o vreme după aceea, cînd mi-am luat inima în dinţi şi l-am dus în acea parte a insulei, de care am pomenit mai înainte, el recunoscu pe dată locul/locurile şi-mi spuse că fusese cîndva pe acolo, cînd...* . The solution offered by Petru Comarnescu seems a bit lame because of the faulty combinations of *cînd, a fost, au mîncat.* We consider that the change of person in the verb is too abrupt for this context and the translation of *when* by *cînd* alters the rhythm and the balance of the Romanian version.
35. & 36. *...multe pietricele şi arătîndu-le pe rînd cu degetul...* could have been better rendered by: *tot atîtea pietricele la rînd, şi arătîndu-mi-le ca să-mi dau seama...;*
34. *Nu putea zice/spune douăzeci* - *could* in the original should have been rendered by *nu ştia să.* Such translation mistakes are quite frequent for constructions of the type: *he can swim, he can play chess, he can speak French,* etc., in which cases the Romanian *poate să* is wrong.

Lascarov-Moldoveanu's Translation, Cugetarea Publishing House, Bucharest, 1945

1. *Intr'o zi vrui să ştiu de n'ar fi avut pornirea să se întoarcă*
2. *în patria lui, şi cum îl învăţasem destul de bine englezeşte*
3. *că putea să răspundă lacea mai mare parte din întrebările*
4. *mele, îl întrebai dacă neamul căruia aparţine învingea*
5. *totdeauna în lupte. El începu să surîdă şi-mi răspunse:*
6. *Da, da, totdeauna ne batem cei mai bine. Atunci începurăm*
7. *convorbirea următoare: "Dacă vă bateţi întotdeauna bine, cum*
8. *se face, Vineri, că ai fost prins?*
9. **V**: *Cu toate acestea ai mei se bat foarte bine.*
10. **S**: *Cum bine? Dacă ai tăi au bătut pe ceilalţi, cum de-ai fost luat?*
11. *V: Ei mai mulţi unde eram eu. Ei au luat unul, doi, trei şi*
12. *eu. Ai mei se bat bine acolo unde nu eram eu. Acolo ei*
13. *prind unul, doi, o mie.*
14. **S:** *Atunci de ce nu te-au scos ai tăi din mîinile duşmanului?*
15. **V**: *Ei luat unul, doi, trei şi eu şi ne-a pus în barcă. Ai mei*
16. *atunci n-aveau barcă.*
17. **S**: *Ei bine, Vineri, ce fac ai tăi cu cei pe care îi ia? Ii ia şi-i mănîncă?*
18. **V:** *Da, îi mănîncă - îi mănîncă pe toţi.*
19. **S**: *Unde-i duce?*
20. **V**: *In tot locul - unde le place.*
21. **S:** *Vin ei pe aici?*
22. **V**: *Da, da, vin, vin prin tot locul.*
23. **S:** *Si-ai venit şi tu cu ei?*
24. **V**: *Da, venit şi eu - şi-mi arată cu degetul partea de n-v*
25. *a insulei, care, după cît se părea, era locul cel mai plăcut lor.*
26. *Prin aceasta înţelesei că slujitorul meu Vineri fusese dintre*
27. *sălbaticii care obişnuiau să vină la ţărm, în partea cea mai*
28. *îndepărtată a insulei ca să mănînce carnea omenească pe care*
29. *o aduceau ei - şi după cîtva timp, cînd îndrăznii să merg*
30. *cu el prin latura aceea, care era aceiaşi despre care am vor-*
31. *bit altădată, el recunoscu locul dintr'odată, şi-mi spuse că*
32. *venise acolo într'un rînd, şi că mîncaseră acolo vreo douăzeci*
33. *de bărbaţi, două femei şi un copil.*
34. *Nu ştia să numere pînă la douăzeci în englezeşte, dar*
35. *puse la rînd tot atîtea pietre - şi mă rugă pe mine să le număr.*

Details:

Although the beginning of the text has more appeal than Petru Comarnescu's version, the translation soon exhibits serious deviations, omissions and unmotivated augmentations together with a superficial rendering of the dominant. Friday and Robinson seem to be speaking almost 'on equal standing' as regards their respective linguistic performances.

1., 2., 3. & 4. A successful transplant of atmosphere and narrative fluency provides an alternative superior to that of Petru Comarnescu's. Unfortunately, it reads like a short-lived accident .

5. *începu* - improper, unsuitable contribution.

6. The denotative meaning is closely observed, but Friday's linguistic performance is grossly ignored. The fact leads to the omission of Robinson's explanation and the repetition of Friday's words.

8. Incomplete understanding of the original and a faulty rendering of *the better* by *foarte bine*.

9. & 10. Awkward translation, with obvious characteristics of literal solutions.

11. The article-marked form of the numeral in Romanian is not suitable for the savage's speech.The same goes for 12 and 15.

12. *eu nu eram* - unsuccessful equivalent. We suggest: *eu nu fost.*

13. The translator did not observe the hyperbolic connotation of *a great thousand.*

15. *luat* - misunderstanding of the word *run* in the original; *barcă* - improper translation for *canoe* and consequently the depletion of the original meaning.

17. *ai tăi* - in Robinson's case, it is a more successful version than that of P. Comarnescu's.

18. *îi mănîncă pe toţi* - erroneous perception of the original.

19. *unde-i duce?* - a solecism, unmotivated in Robinson' s case and quite inadmissible for a translator in 1945. The repetition of such solecisms at relatively short intervals exhibits stylistic superficiality .

21. & 22. *Vin ei pe aici?* - clumsy reproduction of the English word order.

26. *fusese dintre...* - a solecism due to faulty observance of the original and rigid formal dependence.

28. *...ca să mănînce carnea omenească...* - spoiled version of the original text.

30. *...să merg cu el prin latura aceea...* - arbitrary connotation and therefore faulty Romanian: *să merg prin latura...*

33., 34., 35. successful paraphrases.

Curiously indeed, the paragraph opens and ends with proper paraphrases in a display of easy, fluent Romanian, as long as the middle section of the text abounds in such blunders as would only make an excuse for a foreign speaker of the language. The stylistic aspect seems totally neglected and the dominant is far from being properly revealed.

Radu D. Rosetti's Translation, the Heliade Publishing House, Bucharest, 1900

1. *Intr-o zi vrui să ştiu dacă îşi regretă patria, şi fiind-că*
2. *ştia destul de bine englezeşte ca să-mi răspundă, îl întrebaiu*
3. *în ce împrejurare căzuse prizonier. Imi răspunse că naţia lui*
4. *fusese mai totdeauna biruitoare dar că fusese surprins împreună*
5. *cu alţi tovarăşi de nişte inamici mult mai numeroşi. Imi*
6. *mai spuse că compatrioţii lui obişnuiesc să-şi mănînce prinşii*
7. *şi adăugă că la o depărtare de cîteva leghe în mare, bate*
8. *întotdeauna acelaşi vînt şi curge acelaşi curent care seara*
9. *îşi schimbă bătaia în sens invers. Mulţumită numai acestui*
10. *fenomen, sălbaticii pot să străbată distanţa aşa de uşor.*

Radu D. Rosetti's translation - or, rather, pseudo-translation - is in fact a summarised report of the fragment. Since the dialogue has been completely obliterated, the problems regarding the dominant, the modal implications or the stylistic performance are out of the question. Even a superficial comparison with the original will prove the approximation and the carelessness of the paraphrase, the numerous augmentations and even interpretations of the original, although the version was labelled translation by the above-mentioned publishing house. Among other things, Rosetti's version, unfortunately published in several editions and reprintings, also includes regrettable diachronic inadvertencies. The Romanian equivalents chosen by the author, such as: *compatrioţi, fenomen,* or constructions like *regretă patria, pot să străbată distanţa, fusese surprins împreună cu alţi tovarăşi, mulţumită acestui fenomen,* etc., sound unnatural for Defoe's 18th century language and style. Throughout his text, the translator only vaguely follows the rough course of events, while he completely ignores aspects inherent to the proper achievement of a translation.

NOTES

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6. Petrescu, Cezar, 1953, *Din experienţele unui traducător din literatura sovietică,* in: *Despre scris şi scriitori, "Studii literare"* collection, ESPLA, p. 217.
7. ibid., p. 218
8. ibid., p. 219
9. ibid., p. 221
10. ibid., p. 224
11. Academia R.S.R., 1960, *Revista de filologie romanică şi germanică,* no. 2, Bucureşti.
12. ibid., p. 348.
13. *"Societatea de limbă română" of P.S.A.* Voivodina, 1970, excerpt.
14. Defoë, *Robinson Crusoe sau aventurile minunate ale unui naufragiat, prelucrat pentru tinerimea noastră,* 1891, Editura librăriei Nicolae I. Ciurcu, Braşov,.
15. *Aventurile lui Robinson Crusoe,* 1892, in *Cărţile copiilor, Samitca* collection, Institutul de editură Ralian şi Ignat Samitca, Craiova,.
16. *Aventurile lui Robinson Crusoe,* 1898, by Daniel Defoe, translated by B. Marian, Biblioteca enciclopedică română, Bucureşti.
17. Daniel de Foë, *Robinson Crusoe,* 1900, translated by Radu D. Rosetti, Bucureşti, *Preface.*
18. Daniel Defoe, *Viaţa şi nemaipomenitele aventuri ale lui Robinson Crusoe,* 1943, (translated from the original text by Petru Comarnescu, Editura ziarului *Universul,* Bucureşti,).
19. Graur, Alexandru, 1960, *Studii de lingvistică generală,* Editura Academiei R.S.R., Bucureşti, pp. 339-400.
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ROBINSON CRUSOE - ECHOES IN ROMANIA

This section is a survey of the echoes sanctioning Daniel Defoe's work and personality in Romania, observed, in turn, in newspaper articles introductory notes, commemorative studies, prefaces, reviews, as well as pieces of Romanian literary criticism.

The first part is a chronological approach of most of the material, which may facilitate further research work. A chronological survey also provides a wholesome picture of the way Defoe's work was received in our country, of the continuously ascending and diversified interest that Romanian readers have taken in this author's production along the years.

The first group of reviews and analyses will include introductory and autobiographical notes that accompanied various translations of Defoe's novels (some of them valuable through their mere presence along the years rather than their content), prefaces, newspaper articles, papers and essays of general, retrospective reference to Daniel Defoe and his work.

The second part, where the chronological order seems no longer relevant or useful, includes group comments on critical writings by Romanian authors who, within larger contexts, have approached Defoe's literary personality and place in the framework of European and world literature.

1. The first contact of Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe with the Romanian reading public occurs remarkably early, considering both the development stage of the Romanian literature and the number of translations from foreign literatures at that time. The moment is marked by the year 1835 and the translation belongs to the Romanian Cavalry Commander Vasile Drăghici. He translated, in fact, a German adaptation of Robinson Crusoe performed by Joachim Campe and quite in fashion in Germany at that time.

Vasile Drăghici's translation is accompanied by an introduction and by a letter addressed to his patron, Alexandru Kalimah, minister of domestic affairs, and to whom he dedicates the book. The letter is an expression of the author's gratitude towards Kalimah and a record of the reasons that made him undertake such an enterprise.

There were two impulses that urged Drăghici to embark on translating Campe's version. One was to offer the young readers:

> *"...the moralising precepts, bestowing the worthiest counsels upon the younger minds toward endowing them with the most precious of spiritual adornments."* (1)

Then he declared that the very lesson of ethics deriving from the book stood for his own position against the rigid and old-fashioned scholastic training that patronised the education of the youth in Romania at the turn of the 19th century.

In the foreword that follows, the author makes still another persuasive plea in favour of the adoption of the work for the sake of young readers, while stressing upon the moral benefit derived thereby. Vasile Drăghici's foreword is the first document advertising Daniel Defoe in our country.

The contact with the German culture and system of education made the Commander realise the awkward state of affairs and the inefficiency of the public school system in his own country. Under a combined influence of Defoe's character and probably that of I. A. Komensky's ideas and theories, Vasile Drăghici advocates the novelty of modern and efficient educational strategies. Ethical precepts should accordingly be illustrated by pure, true-to-life facts presented in an unsophisticated manner and therefore pleasurable and accessible to a youngster's mind.

Advertising his translation as a progressive means of education, Drăghici opposes the rigidity of the Romanian curriculum, so much dominated by the mechanical learning of Greek and Latin grammar. Young in age and spirit, the Cavalry Commander returns from abroad with an up-to-date proposal meant to wake up the slumbering Moldavian school of the time, marked by Middle Age remnants and the Oriental scars of a long Phanariot night. For him, therefore, the lessons of life and morality derived from Crusoe's adventures, which:

> *"...speak none of the tortuous ideas of the kind which yield elderly fruit in the spirit of the young, as once did the instruction in Greek, when the labour of grammar alone would suffice, in the lapse of several years, to wither the most precious flower of the disciples' young age, and to no distinguished avail in particular."*(2)

Like Jean Jacques Rousseau before, Vasile Drăghici took Robinson Crusoe for an excellent school book, a genuine challenge for the fresh enthusiasm of young students:

> *"I take much delight in believing that it shall greatly benefit the youth, who may hence learn the best of morals, as it is our knowledge that every man is more readily inclined to comprehend and acquire that which is dear to his heart."* (3)

Vasile Drăghici was inclined to regard his translation as handy educational reference because Joachim Campe himself had designed his adaptation in the framework of a long discussion between a father and his sons, while Crusoe's story is spun and then analysed and commented on. The story takes thirty evenings to tell and the titles of the chapters sound like a series of lessons. Every passage of the narrative is then subject to debate and thus deliberately turned into a lesson of morality, an act of education through the force of the example.

Moreover, the children consider Crusoe a living person and write letters to him, which reminds one of Santa Claus standing in wait on the children's yearly wishes. They wish him good luck and good health in all his enterprises, and praise him for his successes and sympathise with him for his failures and, most important, they promise to follow his good example in their future education.

Vasile Drăghici rejoices to have found in Crusoe's figure a remedy for the defective, obsolete educational pattern of his day, which seems to have been a serious concern with him. He is so convinced of the superiority of the solution that he proceeds to urge other enlightened minds of the epoch to embark upon the task and continue his fruitful enterprise for the benefit of the entire society:

> *"...greatly rejoicing to believe that still others of my kind would fain follow, and again dutiful to the most sacred commands, for them do I bequeath, in these here words only, that nothing is there to do them more justice than to seek and to find, for the sake of the community, a better and more charming writing than this."* (4)

The debut of Robinson Crusoe on the Romanian literary stage, first as an educational ingredient and later as 'literature of sensation' - as Dinu Pillat styled it - also found a fertile ground in the incipient manifestations of bourgeois progressive tendencies, steadily gaining in strength as the century matured. An interval of thirty-five years follows with no reference made to further translations or adaptations of the novel. It is only toward the end of the century that four Romanian writers from different parts of the country approach Robinson's story. The first two are mentioned in two issues of the 'Familia' ('The Family Review'), and are quoted in an article by Lucia Pavel: 'Literatura engleză în *Familia*' în primele două decenii de apariție, 1865-1884) (English Literature in the '*Family Review*' in the First Two Decades of Its Publication, 1865-1884). The article was published by the Pedagogical Institute in Oradea in the Philological Scientific Papers, in 1971. Says Lucia Pavel:

"Better known seems to be Daniel Defoe, although his work is sparingly referred to. The famous book Robinson Crusoe is recommended in an adapted version by Georgiu Popa, a scholar from Bihor (a book dedicated to the Romanian youth and adapted to our national need), in the 'Family Review' No. 24, June 17-29, 1873, pp. 252-283. The acquisition of the book Robinson the Young is again recommended in 1883, this time translated by S. Pamfiliu, headmaster of Tudor Vladimirescu School in Craiova, in the 'Family Review' No. 3, January 16-28, 1883, p. 34."(5)

As against these two, we consider the 1891 version to be the first more complete and much closer to the original, although it is not exactly a translation, but still an adaptation, as the title honestly mentions: Defoë - Robinson Crusoe sau aventurile minunate ale unui naufragiat. Prelucrat pentru tinerimea noastră (Defoë - Robinson Crusoe or the Strange Surprising Adventures of a Castaway. Adapted for Our Young Readers), Tipografia Alexi, Braşov, 1891, Editura Nicolae I. Ciurcu. Although it has no foreword or introduction, this adapted version proves to be one of the most interesting and best contoured echoes of Defoe's novel till late in the 20th century.

Confronted with Vasile Drăghici's translation, suitably equipped for educational requirements in 1835, the 1891 account enlarges on the spheres of meaning and possible interpretations of the book. This new form is motivated by the evolution of Romanian realities in the late 19th century: the crystallisation of the bourgeoisie, the development of the trade and international exchanges, etc.

In 1835, Vasile Drăghici dismisses the adventure at sea as a fact alien to a continental, pre-eminently agrarian country, where an industrial pattern is hardly noticeable and international contacts are poor. The 1891 approach reflects a clear evolution in the act of reception, as the very title announces 'the adventures of a castaway'. Indeed, all along the text the adventure is highlighted in an apology of the enterprising spirit of man , while work and personal effort in general are advocated as the true and safe support of human existence. The realisation of this particular message in Robinson Crusoe could only have occurred in a social context imbued with the aspirations and desiderata of an ascending social class - the bourgeoisie, for this particular case. Supported by Defoe in 1759, the industrious spirit of the 'burger' is assimilated with a characteristic delay of over a century, which speaks for the different rhythm of development of East-European countries.

With the 1891 issue, we can already speak about the *adoption* of this novel in nearly all its essential aspects. The road is now open to a wider range of interpretation, although the novel will be still, for a time, primarily acknowledged as literature for children by the common reader. A reinforcement of this particular evaluation is encouraged by another issue of the same novel in the same year, 1891, and designed for the instruction of elementary- school students. It is a shortened version, translated by I. Bauman for the Samitca Publishing House in Craiova, under a lengthy, cumbersome title: Robinson în insula sa, sau prescurtare din aventurile lui Robinson, uvragiu folositor pentru şcoalele primare (Robinson on His Island, or an Abridged Form of Robinson's Adventures, a Work to Be Employed in Primary Schools).

Samitca delivered again, in 1892, what we are inclined to consider the first *translation* with closer reference to the original text, or at least based on a fairer translation into another language. Again, there is no evidence or intimation as to what particular source this author, also anonymous, applied to for his task.

The reason why the word 'translation' occurs above in italic type is that some distinction must be made between a discourse scrupulously transplanted from one language into another, on one hand, and a more liberal approach, on the other. In the latter case, the 'translator' assumes unwarranted authority over the original source, which results in loose paraphrase, omitted or additional information, disrespect for stylistic implications, or even

massive personal contribution which definitely obliterates the build, mood and message of the original work. When such 'translators' engage in world classics, they should be treated as either irresponsible or - why not? - criminal. This particular issue will be discussed in more detail in a further section of our study.

Along this line of thought, the 1892 Robinson may be safely regarded as the first approach that exhibits the author's obvious *translational* concern. From the manner in which he offered it to the reading public we can derive at least two main features that characterise the 'literature of sensation', later summarised by Dinu Pillat:

> *a). "...however, the writer of sensation considers things from a moral point of view, watching for vice to be finally punished and for virtue to prevail."* (6)
>
> *b). "The skill of a writer of sensation is merely reduced to an ability of inducing maximum excitement in the narrative since the topmost goal is to keep the reader breathless."* (7)

The 1892 version contributes to making this kind of literature popular in Romania. In any case, the massive import of such literature between 1835 and 1845 should be considered as more than an isolated accident. During this interval, several world classics were entered for the Romanian audience by way of translation:

1835 - Robinson Crusoe, translated by Vasile Drăghici;
1837 - Gill Blas de Santilana, translated by D. Marcovici;
1839 - Intîmplările lui Lăzărilă Torma, translated by the Cavalry Commander Scarlat Barbu Tîmpeanul;
1840 - Don Chishot de la Mancha, translated by I. Roset;
1848 - Călătoriile lui Guliver în ţeri depărtate, translated by I. D. Negulice.

A final remark on the 1892 record of Crusoe's adventures: the title itself avoids the embroidered paraphrase as it appears for the first time in a straight, concise form: The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe.

In 1898 the Romanian readers are presented with one more account of Robinson's adventures. It is an adaptation bearing the same title as the 1892 translation and signed by B. Marian. Information on Daniel Defoe and his work is supplied in a short biographical note at the beginning of the book. Although technically inferior to the previous version, it is worth mentioning as a new attempt to popularise a piece of classic fiction.

The introductory note makes a short survey of Daniel Defoe's life and literary production and goes on to recommend the book as a must for the basic education:

> *"Robinson Crusoe is a praiseworthy book which everybody has read or else should read. It has enjoyed enormous success and its approval has mounted so high that translated versions or imitations are now available for all the peoples of the world, even for the Arabs. It has exerted an overwhelming influence, legitimately ranging with those special books which - in the world of the young mainly - open the heart and discipline the mind toward the most precious moral truths; for it is a classic work that has survived contemporary applause and has turned into a worthy acquisition for the generations to come."* (8)

B. Marian is also the first to make critical comments on Defoe's famous style. Moreover, he speculates on the evolution of the novel of adventures in close connection with the popular spirit of the respective epoch. Of considerable importance for the later

development of literary criticism, this aspect is largely approached in Dinu Pillat's already mentioned study:

> *"Daniel Defoe's style is an example of simplicity, charm and elegance. He managed to melt the sensibility of common people into a genuine literary form. That is why any one, young or old, will enjoy this book. [...]*
> *In general terms however, elaborated for and addressed to the public at large, the novel of adventures develops, along with the concessions made to the popular spirit, from one epoch into the next, so that the characteristics of its structure will primarily depend upon the norms of popular aesthetics."* (9)

B. Marian's initiative is reinforced by Radu D. Rosetti only two years later. The turn of the century is hailed with a more appropriate translation of Defoe's novel, as Rosetti assumed the task of actually *translating* instead of merely *re-telling* the original account. Despite numerous technical shortcomings, his version will be reprinted several times till late in 1947, with obvious improvements operated in some of the issues. Petru Comarnescu's first edition will definitely sort out this translation in 1947.

Rosetti's preface to the 1900 translation is worth mentioning, however, as it supplies interesting information about Defoe's life and work. In addition to Robinson Crusoe, many other writings by Defoe are introduced to the Romanian reader, such as: A New Voyage Round the World, The Political History of the Devil, The Complete English Tradesman, The Life and Adventures of Mr. Duncan Campbell, Memories of a Cavalier. The selection is indeed strange, as it records titles which must have been unknown to the common reader at that time. Even today, one has to be more than a Defoe fan to be familiar with these works. In fact, Radu Rosetti curiously overlooked the compact five-year interval (1720-1725) of Defoe's activity which includes nearly all of his famous novels: Captain Singleton (1720), A Journal of the Plague Year, Colonel Jack, Moll Flanders (1722), Roxana (1724). On the other hand, Radu D. Rosetti was the first to mention the Alexander Selkirk episode as a commonly alleged source of inspiration for Robinson Crusoe's story.

While introducing Robinson Crusoe in his preface, Radu D. Rosetti insisted on the educational quality of the novel, as well as on the almost encyclopaedic character of much of the information provided by the text. Educational availability and hot enthusiasm for practical information and fact are immediate, inescapable features that fed the audience in an age of fierce thirst for knowledge. Instantly, effortlessly attuned to the pattern, they hardly needed an advertising voice when Robinson Crusoe was originally issued - not in an age and a place where the Industrial Revolution was germinating, substantially fed by the means and energies of a powerful colonial empire. The spirit of this age and place took some time to spread and, as it reached our part of the world, well over a century later, Robinson Crusoe followed as an irresistibly stimulating ingredient. Cross-cultural influences take some effort to assimilate, however, and hence the necessity to advertise in the right direction. Largely to his credit, Radu D. Rosetti ranges with the effective advertisers of Defoe's masterpiece, contributing his share to the ready acceptance of Robinson Crusoe in Romania. The more so, it can be speculated, as he makes direct reference to the educational value of the text for the younger generations and mentions an earlier ingenious application:

> *"I. Campe, who rearranged Foë's text into a dialogue, made it a true pedagogical textbook. It elevates not only the mind but the heart as well; and not only does it delight, but also educates - a reason for having been introduced as one of the subjects of education in many schools, since it includes ethics, geography, physics, economics, trade, technics, politics and even military art."* (10)

With such insistently recurrent echoes, Robinson Crusoe - and, eventually, the name of the author - came to set a firm footing in the field of Romanian cultural interest. Thus, No. 548 (7th June, 1931) of the review (Adevărul literar şi artistic) (The Literary and Artistic Truth) commemorated 200 years since Defoe's death in its column Caleidoscop intelectual (Intellectual Kaleidoscope). The article, signed G. B., supplies rich biographical information on Defoe's social condition, his deceptions and his tumultuous political activity, the years of imprisonment, etc. There is also a record of his merits as a pamphleteer, a journalist, tradesman, historian, political economist and novelist:

> *"Daniel Defoe's lasting literary reputation is not ensured only by this unforgettable book, Robinson Crusoe. He was one of the most prolific writers of his time. He used to write, they say, with incredible celerity. A considerable part of his massive literary production can be ranged as choice quality. Nevertheless, of the bulk of his diverse, remarkable literary feat only one book has survived, the famous Robinson Crusoe, written at an advanced age and which is still touring the world today. And this will suffice."* (11)

The rest of the article is devoted to Defoe's famous Review and to his activity as a publicist, diplomat and specialist in trade affairs, especially those between England and France. The article seems to have been inspired from another one, published in Le Figaro littéraire in the same period, and signed Auge Galdemar. The prevailing tone throughout G.B.'s article is that of praising Defoe as an exceptionally active citizen of his age, a busy mind and pen at work for the benefit of his country - the figure of a true patriot.

Other adaptations of the novel may have appeared during the following years, but it is certain that we cannot yet speak of a true translation. For instance, in 1931, in an advertisement of the Socec Publishing House in the Galeries Lafayette Agenda, p. 504, we find a long series of famous world classics adapted for children: a version of Defoe's *Robinson* Crusoe is included, re-told by Paul Reboux in French and translated as such by I. Leonard.

The first contact of Romanian readers with Defoe's novel dressed in its 'genuine garb' occurred in 1943, when Petru Comarnescu published the first edition of Viaţa şi nemaipomenitele aventuri ale lui Robinson Crusoe (The Life and Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe), with the subtitle: A translation from the original text. The same year, another edition of Radu D. Rosetti's translation was issued, which was uncompromisingly dismissed by the public. Comarnescu's integrity and earnestness concerning the act of translation, as well as his respect for a classical work of such status made him never abandon his enterprise. In the years to come he offered new editions, revised and completed in accordance with the evolution of the language and the rising exigency of the reading public. Such constant and laborious work eliminated the necessity for another translation.

Petru Comarnescu's last edition was issued in 1971. In Cuvîntul traducătorului, (The Translator's Word) which is a respectful introduction of the novel and its author to the reader, he declares:

> *"As far as this translation is concerned, I have performed it after an English classical edition, paying due observance to the style and other qualities of this work, unforgettable for centuries to come. The Universul Publishing House has endeavoured to deliver this book with utmost scientific concern and under commendable appearance, without which conditions the translation of the classics would become an act of impiety. I have omitted only few redundancies in the original text, as they no more seem to match the dynamism and the rhythm - our own as well as that of the narrative itself - and I have tried not to forget that most readers of this translation will be Romanian children and youngsters, although the book is worth reading by whoever has not yet spoilt their taste, as Rousseau once said. The*

young Mihai Eminescu also read this great epos of man's fruitful orientation in the cosmos." (12)

After a short presentation of the author's life and work, P. Comarnescu proceeds to comment on the book, drawing many parallels and revealing resemblance between the protagonist and his creator:

"In Crusoe some might have seen - and justly so - the idealised portrait of the restless, soaring practical man of whom Defoe had been an impersonation himself and in whom features of the middle-class pattern, such as common sense, eagerness and, last but not least, adroitness, would so readily respond." (13)

While mentioning Alexander Selkirk's adventure with exact data and geographical details, Comarnescu clearly separates the act of inspiration from the author's literary merits and his genius:

"The plot, the conflict or the subject of Robinson's story have not therefore been imagined by Daniel Defoe. But he, like Shakespeare, was able to provide a subject taken over from other people or from ancient records with such artistic and moral substance that cannot be paralleled with the original source." (14)

In a concise but eloquent form, Petru Comarnescu proves conversant with both the realities of 18th century English literature and this particular type of hero whose solid, long-lasting career is largely due to a definite potential that bridges the gulf between classic and romantic qualities:

"Robinson has certainly less of the grandeur and complexity of a Don Quixote, but in this momentous book we find the same restless spirit of man, permanently anxious to strive for something and to surmount all difficulties, as well as that of the Enlightenment directly following his personal attempts and adventure. [...] Long before other modern writings, Robinson Crusoe brings forward the romance of the sea-faring, of the search for the unknown, of the exotic surroundings, of man's initiation in an open clash with the hard trials of life. As regards the form, Defoe's approach is essentially that of a classical writer, but he nonetheless unlocks the gate towards the romantic imagination profusely cultivated by the ensuing century." (15)

We have made a comparatively long survey of Petru Comarnescu's preface both for its documentary value of an echo matching the excellent translation (for that time, that is, and in comparison with previous versions), and for its value of a piece of literary criticism admirably exhibiting the work of a classic in a competent, concise and convincing way.

The fortune of Defoe's work, and especially that of his Robinson Crusoe, has known a continuously ascending line. Yet, the eye of the researcher cannot skip a misleading and superficial presentation of Defoe's hero which occurred in 1954, under the signature of Cornei Ciucovski. Biased towards narrow-minded political propaganda, which is utterly incompatible with a classical hero of such stature, Ciucovski's short preface entitled About Robinson Crusoe accompanies an equally mediocre and superficial translation of the novel, insistently addressed to the young. Although the author stresses upon Crusoe's industriousness, courage, strong will and undrained energy, infantile interpretations and simplistic formulation underlie the whole text. A sample might prove useful in terms of how literary criticism should not be performed:

"Naturally, many features in Robinson are alien to us, Soviet readers. He lived a very long time ago, in bourgeois England. He was a merchant and, as common to merchants, he was interested in nothing but his own profit. Before he found himself on the desert island, his only concern had been to raise as much money as possible

and all kinds of valuables. In his youth he went as far as making fraudulous gains. He brought to the inhabitants of Guinea a whole lot of trifles - bright, glittering beads and the like - and, taking advantage of their ignorance as regards the worth of gold, he got a large amount of gold powder in exchange. It is true that nobody would have considered such gains as dishonest at that time! But we strongly condemn his deeds. What we value in Robinson is his confidence in man's labour, the resolution he proved in overcoming obstacles, his courage and his tremendous willpower." (16)

We cannot help considering this an unhappy accident, the more so as the fortune of Defoe's work in Romania will record no further distortions of this kind. On the other hand, it was inevitable that the deviations of post-war political trends in Eastern Europe should cast long shadows that would dim the cultural background at home and deflect responses in cross-cultural contacts.

A new edition of Petru Comarnescu's translation was issued only two years later, thoroughly revised and completed and with a new preface. It was an authorised and well-grounded replica to what had been previously said, a restoration of Robinson Crusoe's deserved rights. The 1956 edition was issued by the Youth Publishing House, in one of its most popular collections with young readers: The Bold (Editura Tineretului, colecţia Cutezătorul).

The event was welcomed by an article in Steaua, (The Star) in Cluj, no.10, October 1956, entitled: Daniel Defoe - Robinson Crusoe and signed by Henri Jacquier. The article suggestively begins with the words: *Robinson is back* (*Robinson e din nou printre noi*). It was written in defence of Defoe's hero against misinterpretations along the Marxian line of thought. Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels and, earlier, Adam Smith and David Ricardo used to apply the terms *Robinson* and *robinsonade* to their economic theories. The comparison with Defoe's hero was meant to label an artificial homo economicus, a metaphysical creature isolated from the rest of the world - if not 'insulated', as H. Jacquier plays upon the meanings of the two English words. The author eventually advises literary critics to study Skeat's Etymological Dictionary more carefully.

Such comparisons, unilaterally and arbitrarily employed, could easily throw a deceiving light upon a masterpiece of world literature. The author goes on to explain that, when speaking about robinsonades in a critical manner, Karl Marx referred to the multitude of cheap and pale imitations that flooded the European and especially the German literature of the time. On the other hand, and with good reason, Marx praised Robinson Crusoe as the true embodiment of the English Puritan in the early 18th century, as a convincing example for the education of the young, and in no case did he limit the protagonist's stature to a mere homo economicus. For him it was obvious that Robinson's contact with the society was permanent, either through material objects - the lot of things rescued from the wreck - or through the lesson of education and morality, to say nothing of his steady hope to find *the society of the people* again.

Concerning the religious problem, Henri Jacquier warns the reader against another possible misinterpretation of Robinson's story, mentioning certain disputes among critics. Hyppolite Taine, for instance, was certain that Defoe was imbued with a sincere religious feeling of puritanical bias and therefore wrote Robinson Crusoe with the obvious purpose of demonstrating the work of divine providence. In this respect, Jacquier says:

"It seems highly improbable to us, however, that such feelings should match what we know of the writer's life, private or public, lacking not only in honour but also in mere honourableness!" (17)

In support of his belief the author refers to an episode where Crusoe discussed with a Catholic priest when he comes back to visit his island again. The passage was omitted by Petru Comarnescu in his translation. Here, Crusoe appears indifferent to all churches, a true partisan of religious tolerance and of the English philosophical deism which, quite often turned into atheism during the age of the Enlightenment.

Jaquier's article includes considerations about Defoe's place within the English literary realism - comparisons are provided with J. Swift and H. Fielding - and remarks on his famous style and the employment of the circumstantial detail:

> *"Circumstantial realism, the cult of the detail are often carried out to the limits of uselessness. And yet this faculty drives the illusion of reality almost to hallucination, so that an appearance of negligence and lack of artistry eventually results here into the effects of supreme art."* (18)

Round the mid-50s, the fortune of Robinson Crusoe in Romania enlarges its meaning especially after the publication of many classical novels of adventures and travels in the well-known collection *The Bold*. So, the rather simplified acceptation of the novel - so far mainly considered a body of moral precepts of excellent pedagogical character - enriches its meanings as the reading public becomes more coversant with the European literature of adventures and especially that of seafaring. Heroes such as Captain Nemo, D'Artagnan, Captain Grant, Gulliver, Robinson and many others become familiar especially with the young.

An interesting piece of reading in this respect is Ion Marin Sadoveanu's article: Două rude literare, Gulliver şi Robinson Crusoe (Two Literary Relatives, Gulliver and Robinson Crusoe), published in: Revista Literară (The Literary Review) no. 46, November 15, 1956. These two famous heroes are related in many ways as the author says:

> *"...by the time and thought of their heritage, by the immortality they have attained in those buried, in us, and in those to be born..., by their penchant to escape in travelling as well as by the tone of their recital."* (19)

Gulliver and Crusoe are presented as embodiments of that type of escape which was equally practical and fantastic for the English, combining the dream with the patterned solution for trade affairs:

> *"...the hankering for wealth and the romance."* (20)

After some critical considerations on the two writers' literary merits and on the construction of their novels, I. M. Sadoveanu differentiates between the two heroes presenting Crusoe as more settled, healthier and simpler than Gulliver, a hero lacking that famous yet hurting Swiftian grimace:

> *"Robinson is much more direct, much more colourful, much more adorable, leaving behind much more for the touch after his image has faded away from the ephemeral lease of the tale."*(21)

Coming back to the idea of escape, the author mentions that it characterised both the two heroes and their creators. Their discontent with the English political life during the reigns of William III and Queen Anne was overtly displayed in their novels:

> *"They both escaped: one, in a renewed vigour of thought and body (Defoe), the other shrivelling from his roots upwards, like a tree when autumn strikes."* (22)

I. M. Sadoveanu also points out the successful translations of the two books into Romanian, praising the talent and the craftsmanship of the two translators, Leon Levi]chi (Swift) and Petru Comarnescu (Defoe):

"The cultivated anglicist and gifted scholar Leon Levițchi managed an excellent translation of Swift's work. Lucidity, unaffectedness, a rich vocabulary, a well-balanced phrasing - expressive and profoundly Romanian and at the same time adroitly following the original - generously penetrate this new version. The introduction, through its exactness, equally proves the conversance of the author. Petru Comarnescu has also put much colour, lucidity and a somehow balanced tenderness in his translation of Defoe's Robinson Crusoe. His introduction also embraces everything that should be known about this splendid book."(23)

By word of ending, I. M. Sadoveanu once again stresses upon the perennial existence of this marvellous pair of heroes in the minds of the generations of all ages. He colourfully concludes that these two heroes:

"...await their long journey into an everlasting existence warranted by an everlasting creation. They speak in the same manner, tell their stories almost in the same way, which, however, will not prevent them from falling silent every now and then to look at each other in wonder and make the others wonder as well... and then to resume their course." (24)

The commemoration of 300 years since Daniel Defoe's birth in 1960 also brought him back to the headlines of the Romanian literary attention. In Contemporanul (The Contemporary) no. 15, April 8, 1960, under the headline: *Defoe astăzi (Defoe Today)*, Alick West, an English writer and literary critic invited to lecture on this particular occasion, marks the importance of the event by presenting new aspects of Defoe's work. It is for the first time in Romanian journalism that Defoe is presented to the reading public not exclusively through his Robinson Crusoe. The readers are now given information about another of Defoe's famous novels, A Journal of the Plague Year (Jurnal din anul ciumei), rarely, if ever, approached or even mentioned by others up to that time.

Although at first sight this novel might be of interest only for those who were not alien to the event as such - the plague, that is - , Alick West tries to present it as a realistic recording of some adversities of life which, in their essence, may be encountered with by any kind of people in any part of the world and at any time. In a short presentation of the novel he compares its tone and atmosphere with that experienced by himself and so many others all over an occupied Europe during the horrible years of World War 2. The sound of the abominable air raids, the panic, the fear of death made him often think of the no less dreadful event experienced by his fellow countrymen in 1664 - 1665. However, in this novel, as everywhere with Defoe, the triumph of life is obvious and goes hand in hand with man's boundless power to stand against any adversities of life:

"This is what explains the viability of Defoe's work; he is a realist, revealing all the hardships of life and, while doing so, exhibiting man's indefatigable struggle to surpass them. His heroes and heroines will never surrender, his characters will never grow tired of life. The whole of Defoe's work is based on the strong belief that man's creative power is the elementary force of life itself." (25)

Research interest as regards Defoe's work has gradually increased and the compasses of their approaches have enlarged the sphere of their analysis. In 1965, in her article: Daniel Defoe, precursor al ziaristicii moderne și al romanului modern (Daniel Defoe, a Forerunner of Modern Journalism and of the Modern Novel), in: The Annals of Science, Al. I. Cuza University, Jassy, Book XI, Viorica Dobrovici makes a survey of Defoe's career as an essayist, pamphleteer and journalist, offering the readers information on Defoe's activities in fields other

than that of novel writing. The article is the first more detailed survey of Defoe's life and work as well as of the historical context of his age, a useful instrument for any research on this topic.

Besides data concerning Defoe's life and work, the author supplies detailed information on those events and ideas that gave birth to Defoe's political, socio-economic and journalistic writings. The reader may accompany Defoe during his college years at Charles Morton's Dissenting Academy in Newington Green, then as a member of various associations opposing the absolutist feudal order and as a partisan of the 1685 upheaval led by the Duke of Monmouth against the reign of Jacob II; later, he is a fervent supporter of the Reform and a devoted pen in the service of Robert Harley or that of Sidney Godolphin. His activity as a trade agent and his round of visits to several European countries, his years of imprisonment for political dissent or for debt, as well as his business life and his proverbial clash with the creditors are in turn reviewed and analysed by the author. Special attention is devoted to the years 1704 - 1713, which cover the regular publication of The Review, a period that fully reveals Defoe's ability and talent as an editor, political journalist or columnist covering almost all the fields that interested his contemporaries.

The second part of Defoe's career, that of a novel writer, is also covered by the study, thus introducing Defoe to the reading public in all his complexity. As the research interest continues and diversifies, another article is recorded in 1968, exclusively concentrating on Defoe's masterpiece : Robinson Crusoe şi ecourile lui în România (Robinson Crusoe and Its Echoes in Romania). The authors, Georgeta Loghin and Hertha Perez from the University of Jassy, offer the first survey of the Romanian literary works that follow, in one way or another, the pattern of Defoe's Robinson Crusoe. (26)

The first part of the book includes comments on the vast influence exerted by Defoe's book on various literary personalities and orientations both in Europe and overseas since its publication in 1719. After mentioning the immense success enjoyed by the book on its first publication and its immediate influence on the development of the English novel, the article centres on its echoes materialised in the form of the so-called robinsonades which have flooded world literature. Herman Hettner, a 19th century literary historian, is quoted in this respect:

> *"Nearly every country, nay, every separate province, had their own Robinson; there was a Brandenburger Robinson, a Berlinese, a Bohemian, a Franconian, a Silesian, a French, a Dutch, a Greek, an Irish, a Jewish Robinson. And again, each trade, each profession and each generation also had their Robinsons. There is a Robinson of the booksellers, one of the physicians and even a maiden Robinson and an invisible Robinson. Up to 1760, the famous German bibliographer Koch had recorded forty different Robinsonades."* (27).

The authors of the article also mention the diverse employment of the motif as such within various trends and orientations in different countries and literatures, in keeping with the socio-political, historical or philosophical interests of the time:

> *"The local historical and social conditions, long-established traditions or their absence from the literature of adventures of different peoples, their different levels of cultural development, all these contributed to a diversified reflection of the work or of the theme, to a different assimilation and often to misrepresentations of the model followed."* (28)

The second part of the article focuses on the echoes of Defoe's novel both in newspaper articles, essays or prefaces, and in Romanian literary productions that followed the Robinson motif. The usefulness of such kind of study is undeniable as it facilitates research work on the influence exerted by literary works belonging to the world culture patrimony on

Romanian literary productions. Moreover, in the case of Defoe, it was the only attempt of this sort up to that date.

Comments on the latter section of the Loghin-Perez article will be resumed in a further chapter of this dissertation, since we do not entirely agree with the selection criteria and the manner of analysis employed by the authors. The chronological approach, which goes well with the kind of echoes recorded in the first part, no longer applies to the second: the more diversified information provided here definitely requires a different analytical strategy.

The interest in Defoe's life and work in the field of criticism soon extended as the public at large - especially in the sixties - became more conversant with the work of the famous novelist. After the publication of Moll Flanders in 1958, followed by a second edition in 1964, and the successive reprintings and editions of Robinson Crusoe, both in Romanian and in the languages of the co-inhabiting nationalities, Defoe could no longer be presented to the readers in fragmentary comments.

In the preface to the fourth edition (1969) of Robinson Crusoe translated by Petru Comarnescu, critical remarks are integrated with the historical, social and literary backgrounds underlying the fortune of this work in our country. The short preface, signed by Andrei Bantaş, is a good example of rigorous criticism performed with scholarly poise, untainted by propagandistic interpretations. In quick, stern but meaningful brush strokes, A. Bantaş attempts a contour of Defoe's personality and merits against the background of his diverse employments and preoccupations. He refers to the hallmarks of his literary, journalistic and political career which showed interest in:

> *"...the most imperative problems of the epoch: the development of humanistic studies, the progress of geographic discoveries, the upsurge of capitalism, the religious fights."* (29)

After signing the birth certificate of the modern English novel in 1719, Defoe, with his remarkable ease in handling the pen, produced an avalanche of novels of adventure in the form of manuscripts belonging to someone else. The preface mentioned above makes short surveys of Colonel Jack, Captain Singleton and Memories of a Cavalier. Comments follow on the most remarkable novels belonging to this series: Moll Flanders and A Journal of the Plague Year. Dealing with Moll Flanders, the author shows, among other things, that it illustrates:

> *"...one of Defoe's modern devices - the identification with the character who gives a recital of her own life and at the same time accounts for her actions and feelings."* (30)

As regards the Journal of the Plague Year, which: *"...combines the features of the reportage and those of the picaresque novel"* (31), the author points out that Defoe drew on more than 200 official documents or contemporary writings, as well as on personal contact with different people. Walter Scott's significant remark with respect to this novel is mentioned:

> *"...even without Robinson Crusoe or his other novels, he would still have earned a place in literature, as well as the mark of a master writer, be it with this one book only."* (32)

At the end of the preface, after a well-conceived presentation of Robinson Crusoe, there are general remarks on Defoe's art of novel writing, of which we quote:

> *"Defoe did more than lay the bases of the novel of adventure: to a great extent, he modelled the taste of the public for the literature of adventure, to which he offered unprecedented radiance. A realist in manner and style, the writer did not try to take advantage of some readers' gullibility, but strongly wished to gain the confidence of*

his audience in order to make them learn new things, to enlighten them and elevate their spirit." (33)

The publication of the last version of Petru Comarnescu's translation of Robinson Crusoe in 1971, in the 'Editura Tineretului' ('Everyman's Library') collection, crowns the activity of an excellent translator and researcher who has earnestly fostered the fortune of Defoe's masterpiece in Romania. Comarnescu's new preface exceeds the frame of a general presentation of a book and its author, as was the case with his introduction to the 1943 version. This time, a thorough study shows the translator's deep concern and well-documented research work. Primarily focused on the fortune of Defoe's work in Romania, this preface may be rightfully considered an excellent starting point and an incentive for any researcher interested in an analytical approach of this kind. This is how the author begins his preface:

"After almost two and a half centuries since its original publication, the novel has not lost the fame it enjoyed from the very start; moreover, we may say that the lapse of time has added new possibilities of philosophical and scientific interpretation, by far richer and more diversified, to the pleasure of those who first read it. After inciting the interest of the author's contemporaries, the novel entered the consciousness of scholars of almost all generations and countries, being analysed from different standpoints and most varied perspectives." (34)

Starting with Samuel Johnson - a contemporary of Defoe's who placed Robinson Crusoe next to Cervantes's Don Quixot - and continuing with J. J. Rousseau, K. Marx, F. Engels and so on, Petru Comarnescu underlines the fact that Robinson has become a myth and a symbol in the philosophy of culture, the purport of the progressive spirit of 18th century European bourgeois societies. He therefore considers it quite natural that the book was translated and circulated in the Romanian Principalities as far back as 1817.

Petru Comarnescu pays homage to Vasile Drăghici's translation in a minute analysis of the multifarious aspects underlying both the Romanian realities at the turn of the 18th century and the value of the book in all its complexity, as seen through the eyes of an 18th century progressive young man, eager to promote the new for the benefit of his country and, above all, for the young generation.

As regards other translations, Petru Comarnescu only mentions those of B. Marian's and Radu D. Rosetti's. He ends up with his own version of 1943, as the first to have followed the original text. The translator goes on to confess that the interval between 1943 and 1971 gave him the possibility to examine English versions that differ from the original text of 1719. In fact, this first edition was reprinted by William Lee with certain omissions and modifications which persisted in later reprintings, to the effect of affecting, to a certain extent, especially Robinson's religious meditations on his island.

Distortion of personal faith in the service of political interests has always occurred, and almost everywhere, after all. The ravages of this kind of intrusion, however, are the more tangible when it comes to somebody who has become a public figure of such impressive stature as that of Defoe's.

The author continues his preface with a detailed biography of Defoe and a review of his works, suggestively integrated with the socio-economic and political life of England at that time. Defoe's masterpiece is introduced as a necessary turn in the history of fiction, considered against the background of a steady social becoming and of an ascending civilisation. The interest of the reader is aroused by the presentation of some turning points regarding the destiny of Defoe's hero along the history of literary interpretation. Some of Defoe's sources of inspiration are reminded, including the story of Alexander Selkirk's adventures as published in 1712 by Captain Woodes Rogers under the title: Voyage round the World, and a short essay

by Richard Steele, published in "The Englishman" in 1713, where Selkirk's adventures are again mentioned.

A new edition of W. Rogers' book in 1718 seems to have urged Defoe to take on the challenge. And, as he did, he came to turn one event into a pattern of immeasurably wide application. Says Petru Comarnescu, in this respect:

> *"The author had every premise for the creation of the modern English novel and, as William Shakespeare before, he was able to handle apparently ordinary themes and to provide them with an artistic shape and moral significance far beyond the original source. [...] It is no less true that, without his literary gift, the story might have been soon forgotten, like so many others."* (35)

Petru Comarnescu also makes it clear that Robinson Crusoe should not be simply interpreted as a back-to-nature story in the Rousseauistic sense, and in this respect he quotes Karl Marx:

> *"The 18th century individual who wanted himself in the bosom of nature producing something alone and isolated is but a product of the unravelling feudal social forms and at the same time of the development of the new forces of production that emerged roundabout the 16th century. The 18th century ideal, the natural individual, belongs to the past. "* (36)

Continuing the analysis, the author rightfully concludes that Robinson's grandeur lies in his modern activism that brings him close to the heart of any modern enterprising spirit and at the same time grants him universality:

> *"Time has not aged Defoe's book; on the contrary, it has retained its charm and augmented and multiplied its meanings."* (37)

2. *In extension of the above commentaries and considerations, we shall proceed to make a* survey of some prominent works of contemporary Romanian criticism where the figure of Robinson Crusoe and the motif of the robinsonade are projected against the ampler background of 18th century English literature or integrated with the even larger context of the cultural life of that particular age.

Reference to Robinson Crusoe has been frequently made by writers who approach matters of educational principles. It is the case with Solomon Marcus in his book, Timpul (Time) (38). In a chapter devoted to Erik Erikson's theory on the stages of development in the child, Marcus speaks about the conflict arising between *industry* and *inferiority*, especially within the age group 6 to 11. This is the period of a child's transition from naive games to those based on rules, to the curiosity of apprehending the surrounding objects and phenomena, their build, the way they function and, above all, their utility. Referring to this and paraphrasing David Elkind, the author declares:

> *"Typical of this period is Robinson Crusoe's reaction. Elkind notices that Robinson's enthusiasm and the minute description of his activities stimulate in a child the inclination towards the formation of the practical, scientific and technical abilities."* (39)

It would be preposterous to assume the risk of stating that Defoe's intention while fashioning his Robinson character was a deliberate appeal to a child's mind, in total awareness of infantile psychology. Defoe's analytical framework had a firm practical anchorage, far from the later speculations in theoretical psychology.

On the other hand, a fairly safe ground for speculation in this particular issue is the scientific conclusion that 'ontogeny largely resumes the course of phylogeny'. Therefore, what is wrong in assuming that whatever changes occur in a lifetime may well be traceable in a cycle of history? The passage from innocent spontaneity to purposeful inquisitiveness may be traced in the history of the species, as well as in that of the individual. Accordingly, the chance was that Daniel Defoe's individual life should coincide with this very turning point in European experience - namely, with that which is commonly known as The Age of the Enlightenment. This particular interval, to which Defoe's voice was an introductory contribution, is peculiarly similar with what Elkind distinguishes in the behaviour of an infant human individual. True enough, Defoe stood the additional, greater chance of being providentially bestowed with the rare gift of an inborn, indefatigable enthusiasm of which he may well have been unaware, but which perfectly served the providential purpose of yielding, at the tip of his pen, the feeling of the age. The heavy mark of Robinson Crusoe is the best of evidence to testify in favour of felicitous attunement of an individual life to the spirit of the age.

The interest in Daniel Defoe's biography, personality and global literary production is becoming ever more pregnant in Romanian criticism. In his book Dionyssos, Mihnea Gheorghiu devotes an essay to Defoe, entitled: Daniel Defoe's Robionsonade (40). Defoe and his work are presented here in a manner close to meeting the requirements of the less specialised reading public. Nonetheless, some interesting hints and even some suggested dilemmas might draw the attention of the specialised critic.

Mihnea Gheorghiu begins his essay on Defoe's life in the form of travelling notes. As his business incidentally takes him to Kinsale, UK, he stops to visit the place where William Dampier met Captain Charles Pickering in 1703. Pickering's boatswain on his ship, the 'Cinque Ports', was Alexander Selkirk - alias Robinson Crusoe, as the author puts it -, the man who inspired Defoe's masterpiece and who,

> *"...after the well-known adventure, came back right here as captain of the 'Increase' and then went to London to claim that the story of his solitary captivity had been stolen by Mr. Defoe who raised a fortune thereby, while he was left to go and whistle for it!"* (41)

It may sound like a typical Kinsale fisherman's tall tale - and yet, as is known, the truth cannot lie far from it. Further in the essay, Mihnea Gheorghiu mentions Crusoe's log book which starts September 30th, 1659, and wonders why Defoe should have chosen this particular date to begin his robinsonade. Referring to the novel proper, he continues:

> *"Defoe's book - just like Gulliver's Travels, with which it is contemporary, according to the chronicles of the English letters - is a deliberate work written by a most gifted author, yet one highly disappointed with his own life and trade as a professional writer; for it was a time when the pillory was not only a journalistic metaphor in England, but a strong and stable institution, quite similar with the church conformism of the debtors' prison. These were institutions of the blessings of which Defoe had tasted enough, so that the mere thought of them might have driven him to the verge of despair."* (42)

Considering all this, it is interesting that Mihnea Gheorghiu takes the liberty of 'filling the immaculate blank left by history for three centuries' as regards Defoe's birth date, which, he assumes, may playfully coincide with the Date of Crusoe's first note in his log book.

Leaving this as a merely speculative, though interesting, hypothesis, the author continues his essay with a minute chronological review of Defoe's life and literary, political and journalistic work - all presented against the most relevant aspects of the socio-political and literary background of the time. Well-known literary and biographical data are combined with

inspired comments and rhetorical questions that enrich the text with both flavour and meaning. Apart from that, the author urges the inquisitive mind of a critic by suggesting various ways for further possible interpretations. Here is a telling sample of these:

> *"After he said all he had got to say about Robinson, Defoe wrote, in 1720, Captain Singleton; then, in the following year, Moll Flanders, and in the same year, Colonel Jack, A Journal of the Plague Year, then Roxana and so on, with the vigour of a gladiator (he had successfully practised boxing in his youth), with a poet's vision, with a skilful merchant's practical mind, with a surgeon's objectiveness and with a most English popular humour, as English as is his permanent hankering after the moralising sermon; we must not forget that England is the only country in the worldwhere the Humanism of the Renaissance or that of the Reform were both pulpit preaching... and sometimes even pillory preaching. What kind of humanism is that - you would have the right to ask the critics of the history of modern literature - , comprised in the biography of a solitary man like Robinson or in that of a whore and a thief like Moll Flanders whose repentance, when grown old, has never convinced anyone?"* (43)

Mihnea Gheorghiu also speaks about Defoe's puritanism quoting, in this respect, J. P. Hunter's book, The Reluctant Pilgrim, and G. A. Star's Defoe and Spiritual Autobiography. Like many others, these critics have deeply believed in Defoe's Miltonian sincerity and have ranked him among the writers representing the English Puritan tradition in literature and have even brought him close to Samuel Richardson's sentimentalism. Considering this, the author supports the idea that some Orthodox adapters of Defoe's Robinson Crusoe rightfully turned it into a kind of moralising dialogue, as was the case with Vasile Drăghici's book in 1817.

The multitude of approaches and directions for investigation of Defoe's work and of Robinson Crusoe in particular makes Mihnea Gheorghiu conclude, with good reason, that:

> *"The file of the robinsonade remains open for posterity."* (44)

The theme of the adventure at sea has always provided fertile ground for literary debate. In her book, Alegoria şi esenţele (Allegory and the Essentials), Vera Călin (45) approached the delimitations between the allegorical and the mimetic structures of the narrative, focusing on certain confusions that may appear, especially with sea-faring based allegories.

> *"Seafaring places the allegory in an environment of geographical boundlessness and offers it many features that seem to bring it close to realistic literature."* (46)

This is a point where confusion is quite possible between picaresque fiction and other kinds of narrative hosting either adventures at sea or travelling in general. The robinsonade may be an easy trap in these cases. It is further pointed out that such confusion is hard to imagine with Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels - primarily due to the overtly fantastic character of the protagonist's adventures, which occur in unmistakably imaginary surroundings. On the contrary, the danger is there with works like Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, as the allegorical pattern is flooded by mimetic details which individualise the plan of the narrative, thus gradually decreasing and eventually ousting much of its allegorical substance.

Since literary criticism has frequently pointed out possible interference's and even confusions between the robinsonade, the picaro story and the utopia, this aspect will enjoy more detailed consideration in another chapter of our dissertation. At this point, however, Vera Călin's conclusion is worth mentioning - namely, that Robinson Crusoe has clearly won the independence of a well-defined literary character, due to the transition from allegory to mimetic literature.

In another volume of literary criticism by Vera Călin, Romantismul (The Romanticism) (47), the author brings in the element of the 'exotic setting' while speaking about the huge variety of romantic landscapes. This has been a long-lasting attraction for many writers and has generated most different poetic results. However, such a setting will not turn into a generator of certain atmospheres or feelings till late with pre-romantic writers:

> *"The exotic characteristics of the Enlightenment (Voltaire or Montesquieu) primarily represent an expression of certain ideas or a certain interest in manners, both tributary to some given theory of the environment. Similarly, the landscape of Robinson's island did not arouse any original emotion in the hero; it simply represented a certain setting, deliberately chosen so as to exhibit the hero's experience with loneliness and with the clash with nature."* (48)

The exotic setting as a generator of environmental feelings and emotions will appear much later:

> *"It is only late, with a Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, that the tropical landscape will turn into a creator of a certain 'atmosphere', and that we can speak of a certain 'feeling' of exotic nature."* (49)

Any competent probing into 18th century European literature at large and into the novel of that age in particular will have to pay due respect to Daniel Defoe, if only for his Robinson Crusoe. Tudor Olteanu does no less in his volume, Morfologia romanului european în secolul al XIX-lea (The Morphology of the 18th Century European Novel) (50), a work of criticism of ample scope, scrupulous documentation and brilliant argument. One of the ideas suggested by the author is that the 18th century novel exhibits a twofold connection, two contradictory destinies based on the opposition of social and natural life:

> *"On their way, the novelistic characters walk either outside society- like Robinson Crusoe-, towards nature where, in solitude, they re-live a primitive phase of mankind, or else outside nature - like the savage Huron in Voltaire's The Naive."* (51)

Robinson Crusoe is again quoted as an excellent example illustrating the harmony between the performer of the action and the author of the narrative, as any first-person narrative enforces the idea of the unquestionable existence of its author. The critic enlarges upon the case of Crusoe, propounding the judgement that the 18th century novel proves its capacity of integrating reality by contemplating its own subjectivity. Maybe this is why, in this century, the 'personal novel' is the centre of the novelistic scene. This century approaches reality from a natural perspective which generally does not exceed the life span of an individual. With some narrators, this interval is pushed to its utmost limits, as the first moment of the narration is posterior to the last moment of the action (Gil Blas, Moll, Marianne, Gulliver, etc.).

> *"However, things are different with Robinson: as a narrator, he is placed in the immediate aftermath of the experienced events and, as his experience has not come to an end, he may be expected to resume his journeys and adventures any time."* (52)

The 18th century narrative obviously shows that the story springs out of a deliberately manufactured sentence:

> *"Robinson, Gulliver, Marianne, Primrose, Stilling tell the stories of their lives just to show what they have understood out of them. Experience has, with them, already borne the fruit of a certain philosophy of life. The narration is nothing but a reconstruction of the stages that have given shape to this sentence. This is why they*

remember only the philosophically necessary elements: Moll, the steps of her social decadence; Gulliver, the means of investigating the social systems of the discovered worlds; Robinson, the moral exercises imposed by solitude, etc." (53)

The author's critical survey of the 18th century novel continues with emphasis on the basic dichotomies performance-substance, experience-symbol, the Object-the Name. The 18th century landscape, he says, clearly exhibits two poles that have the novels oscillate between them: the pole of an excessive reduction of the events for the benefit of the ideas (the stage romance), and that of an excessive agglomeration of adventures and characters, aimed at highlighting the desired programmatic truths (see Defoe's and Prevost's novels). From this bird's eye view, the critic narrows down on how the dichotomy works in Robinson Crusoe. In the act of education, he says, through the direct observance of the 'natural show', it is absolutely necessary that the sign should not substitute the object. As Jean-Jacques Rousseau had it, it is the sign - therefore, the act of reading - that diverts the attention of the child and that consequently makes him forget the represented object. This explains why Rousseau, a faithful advocate of Defoe's masterpiece, styled Robinson Crusoe as:

"...the happiest treatise on natural education." (54)

This is possible only because here, as in most 18th century novels, the object proper is not rendered as a surprise for the act of perception; its reception is considerably simplified since verisimilitude, a commanding principle in these narratives, is constructed and based on its notional sign. In Robinson Crusoe, more than in Gulliver's Travels or in Gil Blas, the reader wants to offer the reader special cognitive qualities. So prepared and trained by the structure of the narrative, the reader becomes an expert who, *"...even when he wanders, he can indulge in it, in spite of the fact that nothing can surprise him."* (55)

Such a device may easily lead to the construction of a world of objects arithmetically and geometrically presented. It is the act of enumeration rather than a detailed scanning of the spaces covered that actually builds up Robinson's world. Crowded with objects, his world turns him into an inventor of technical vocabulary that eventually defines the human being in terms of environmental fact, revealed and imposed by experience. This is one of the aspects that made literary critics consider Defoe's novel as a purport of a conception typical of the Age of the Enlightenment:

"The primitive, as against the man from the civilised world, demonstrates the original virtues of the race." (56)

It is also a fact that Robinson does not turn to primitivism. He remains a contemporary of his age not only in his behaviour, but also in the purpose of his experience:

"...the discovery of the natural basis of morality, the re-establishment of the original contact with Divinity, faith in man's indefatigability, the necessity for purification. To motivate this commentary, Robinson set to work a considerable inventory of objects." (57)

At this point, we may say that the circle closes in upon itself, according to Tudor Olteanu's dichotomy between the natural and the social: the object gives birth to its name, experience engenders the convention of the symbol and the social performs upon the natural in search of its own substance.

Robinson's mostly descriptive declarations bring the logic of the actions and their careful motivation to the reader's immediate attention, giving them top priority. A strong

argument in support of this strategy is the commentary, which - as Tudor Olteanu observes - is carried out in three distinct registers. One of them is quite typical of the prose of the age: an account of facts accompanied by suitable moral reflections. Then, to avoid the danger of becoming overrepetitive or even redundant, the author introduces another device - the log book - as a parallel register, which works as a mirror reflecting the same, already narrated, facts. The third register consists of comments on the log book, made as the latter is introduced into the story.

By avoiding the exhaustion of the narrative while resorting to this rather complicated scheme, Defoe manages to keep it stationary, yet no less captivating for the reader, and altogether efficient in carrying out his moralising purpose. It is only when he considers that Robinson has had enough interior monologue that the door opens for Friday to enter the stage. Now the author is free to continue along a seemingly fresh narrative pattern - although, on second thought, one cannot help realising that it is basically the same.

From this point onward, Tudor Olteanu analyses the 18th century novel in terms of the frustration produced by the absence of the 'visual dimension' and what the realisation of this fact - with its psychological implications - has yielded in the novel-writing technique of the time. With the 18th century novel, says the critic, the movement in space is rapid and is performed so as to always trigger out something significant. The 18th century itinerary spaces seem to pile up huge accumulations of objects through which the universe may acquire its meanings. This state of things, as the author observes, may be due to the absence of what he labels as 'the visual dimension'. Daniel Defoe is one of the writers who employ such modalities, because:

> *"He does not see the worlds where all his travels criss-cross; he must create and ensure some kind of perpetual motion in order to master reality. The end of the novel, under the circumstances, becomes a mere matter of strategy."* (58)

In such a case, the reader is continuously besieged by an avalanche of action pouring from the outside and claiming intellectual response. The facts themselves are derived only afterwards, yet they never reveal themselves to the reader, who seems to exhibit no sensitive reaction when receiving them. Moreover, since the object exists only by force of its name, it acquires a quality of permanency which practically eliminates all possibility of evolution in time: the object is apparently condemned to the status of an inventory item. Here is what the critic says, in this respect:

> *"With these writers, the unchanging character of the object favours both the discovery of the unknown and the capacity of the language to be applied everywhere and to all kinds of unexpected situations. It is only later, with a Laurence Sterne, that the century will experience the tragedy of the incapacity of the language to cover the infinite variety of objects."* (59)

The absence of the visual as well as of the psychological dimension are obvious features of the 18th century narrative that intently claims the introduction of the 'technique of the list'. Chain lists of objects, spaces, portraits or character behaviour are frequent and they are all consequences of the missing visual dimension. For these lists, travelling appears as a necessary organising device. The feeling is that the object can never be corroded by the lapse of time and it therefore remains the same, irrespective of place. Tracing back this distinctive feature of the 18th century novel, Tudor Olteanu mentions that:

> *"The origin of this state of things can be discovered in the birth and the development of the novel from the collection of stories. The story (conte or rascaz) is centred round the display of a series of actions which are ordered so as to demonstrate the validity of a certain chosen truth."* (60)

As far as the psychological depth is concerned, it may again be traced back to the mere denomination of the object, which reminds one of the Lockian static perspective on the experiment. The situation applies to character and portrait as well. In the 18th century novel, the 'mask' takes its shape by following the peculiarities and the symbolic pattern of the body:

> *"...the small and the huge with Swift, the same signifying length with Lesage, the age as reference point for growing wickedness with Voltaire (...) are all material imprints corresponding to a certain pattern of inner behaviour (...)*
> *The prose that conceives static objects, determined once and for all, will also construct static portraits."* (61)

The example of Robinson Crusoe is again supplied to confirm the image of a hermetically sealed and uncorroded portrait that can never be enriched by extra features. When he leaves the island, Robinson is considerably older, but he himself does not see this as a consequence of changes felt in his body or showing on his face. Growing old is for him nothing but a smooth and clean arithmetical estimation of the years accumulated.

The text goes on to mention still another feature of the 18th century narrative which is clearly apparent in Robinson Crusoe - namely, the creation of the illusion through the generalising force of the word rather than through the evocative one.

> *"There is no tension between the object proper and its denomination. Through the words, the objects acquire a pictorial existence. Such a way of approaching reality implies maximal omniscience."* (62)

The absence of the pictorial element seems fundamentally necessary to an author like Daniel Defoe, who claims possession of an irrefutable truth and wants to pour the exact reality into the text. Hence, his seemingly exaggerated care for detail, a fact that endows him with the power of exactness and enables him to stay in firm command of the text, even in the most pressing situations. Every reader who enters the universe of such a narrative will inevitably discover the rhythmical dictatorship of the word:

> *"Words become the unifying gesture of all evolution, and their succession influences the succession of the facts narrated."* (63)

This may be the reason why a reader of 18th century narratives saves largely on memorising effort.

> *"The huge number of characters is now reduced to a few central ones, the narrated events flow at such speed and reveal such transparency of ideas that a minimal memorising effort is required."*(64)

Substantial contribution to the same desideratum are also the long titles, the extended introductory notes that go with every chapter, the prefaces that offer the theoretical plan of the author's intentions or instances of first-person retrospection that frequently diminish the suspense in the events and allow for large possibilities of analysis. Most recurrent in this respect is the checking and testing of the present through elements belonging to a social past. This is the device that grants demonstrated solidity to all the ideas underlying a certain historical moment. Within the same context of ideas, and no less essential for the 18th century novel, is the exact dating of the narrative in general and of all of the facts exposed by the narrator in particular. It is due to these facts, says Tudor Olteanu, that:

> *"...through the convention of orality and that of the manuscript, Des Grieux, Gulliver, Marianne or Jacob, Robinson, Saint Preux, Dr. Primrose, Jacques,*

Roderick Random or Werther, all of them address a reader who is their equal, implicitly." (65)

This is therefore the supreme device that creates the identity narrator = reader, which ultimately yields immobility of the characters, a fact dictated by his vocation of a narrator.

Returning to Robinson, it is obvious that the experience of life that modifies him is written by an already advanced Robinson who, in the preliminary phases of his development, sees little but bits of his verified experience. Tudor Olteanu concludes:

"By growing into a narrator, Robinson records his becoming without re-experiencing it." (66)

Another prominent figure of modern Romanian criticism, Romul Munteanu, turns the Robinson motif and other structural elements of Defoe's work into solid critical fulcrums of wide operational range within the scope of 18th century literature. One of his volumes, Literatura europeană în Epoca Luminilor (European Literature in the Age of the Enlightenment) (67), premises the idea that, starting with Defoe, Swift, Marivaux, Lesage, and up to Voltaire, Diderot, Fielding, Sterne, Richardson, Rousseau, Goldsmith and Goethe, the 18th century novel undergoes a most varied evolution, bringing along new human types and new aspects of everyday life. All these are supported by a wide diversity of artistic devices that have considerably contributed to the emphasis of the compositional structures underlying the art of novel writing.

In a review of some attempts at classifying the novel (Wolfgang Kayser, Rolland Barthes, Franz K. Stanzel, Lämmert), Romul Munteanu criticises Lämmert's typological classification, especially for its lack of operational criteria. Lämmert classifies the novel starting from the elements of its construction. Accordingly, he points out three fundamental structures. The first is the novel of a lifespan or of a crisis, where he includes Defoe's Moll Flanders, Fielding's Tom Jones, and Lesage's Gil Blas. Secondly, there are the novels with linear, ramified and changeable plots. In this group he includes Robinson Crusoe as typical of the first model of plot presented, whereas the second should characterise all the picaresque novels, and the third, only one 18th century work: Voltaire's Candide. Finally, the third fundamental structure is that of the 'mixtum - compositum' novel, of which characteristic is Laurence Sterne's Tristram Shandy, although its structure does not quite match the 18th century pattern.

Rather mechanical and obviously limited, such a classification is barred by Romul Munteanu for lack of unity and for a narrow pattern of criteria. Speaking of this and other classifications reviewed, Romul Munteanu concludes:

"However contradictory these typological classifications may be, they do spot some real novel structures, even if they cannot totally reject others, viewing the same literary works but seen from a totally different angle." (68)

In another section of his study, Romul Munteanu points out that, while introducing Moll Flanders, Defoe pretended not to have made a novel of fiction at all - something that proves relevant for a writer such as Truman Capote, in our time. The same goes for Robinson Crusoe, which the author also pretended to be non-fiction, although he actually produced the very opposite. Defoe's claims stand a chance only to the extent that he advertised a panoramic view of the 18th century society.

Like Mihnea Gheorghiu, R. Munteanu mentions rumours about a possible contact between Alexander Selkirk and Daniel Defoe and the profit derived thereby for the future author of Robinson Crusoe. For want of documentary evidence, however, the author classifies the event as mere speculation. Proceeding with his analysis of Robinson Crusoe, the critic labels it as a:

"...parabolic novel with obvious educational tendencies, exploring man's destiny when confronted with a limit situation." (69)

In this respect, he points out that Defoe's work is vastly different from those narratives of eventful travels that flooded the epoch, doing little more than exploiting, within always a different context, the old pattern of chivalrous adventure. From Cervantes's Don Quixote to Melville's Moby Dick the pretext of the voyage, real or imaginary, generated a vast bulk of fiction. In contrast with this,

"Defoe does not limit his novel to the presentation of the hero's destiny and mishaps; (...) he actually builds up his hero against the data of an exemplary biography." (70)

In view of the afore-mentioned considerations, Romul Munteanu emphasises the fact that, when speaking about Robinson Crusoe, we should understand that Defoe did not conceive it as an ordinary travel tale. The novelist's concern for dialectical unity of his discourse runs as deep as providing the premises for the hero's future clash with all kinds of adversities, in the form of Robinson's nonconformism as a child and his craving for the unknown. It is this very unrest that, in the critic's opinion and in Defoe's own intuitive choice, brings about the final victory of man's spiritual abilities, which eventually enable him to control his immediate environment.

Speaking about the time span that covers the protagonist's work of reconstruction, Romul Munteanu intimates:

"...this existential time can no longer be marked by ordinary devices such as a calendar, but only by events that re-construct the line of a certain civilisation through the touch of a man whose 'cultural memory' is not drained by his previous experience." (71)

The success enjoyed by the novel throughout Europe is also mentioned. The first translation of Robinson Crusoe was in French, in 1721, only one year after its publication in England. A German translation followed, and then most of the peoples of the Continent were introduced to the brilliant hero, in their own respective languages.

Quite a few points of Romul Munteanu's critical approach to Daniel Defoe's literature are resumed in another, enlarged, study: Cultura europeană în Epoca Luminilor (European Culture in the Age of the Enlightenment) (72). The shift from the concept of 'literature' to that, more generous, of 'culture' allows for more freedom of movement in a field that offers copious information. The argumentative arsenal of the critic is richly provided with items belonging to the socio-historical side of the matter - to say nothing of the fact that the literary compartment will necessarily have to be integrated into the cultural pattern of an epoch. This time, Romul Munteanu's literary comments will serve the purpose of completing the larger cultural picture of the 18th century. Within this context, Robinson Crusoe becomes a fulcrum supporting the idea of movement and what comes thereof, while the critic speaks of the plot conceived as an itinerary - an excellent pretext in the making of the literature of manners.

Taking Defoe as an example, the critic states that his kind of 18th century writer assumes the role of a real or an imaginary reporter and makes use of the diary or the epistolary technique as well as of the routine journalistic style.

Another interesting speculation forwarded by Romul Munteanu in this study refers to Defoe's matter-of-fact narrative:

"...quite often overloaded by useless details and digressions, it exhibits a certain existential triangle represented by Robinson, the island and Friday. All other characters and events are mere background particulars."(73)

According to the critic, this triangle stands for a positive utopia, with a marked optimistic tinge.

As has already been mentioned, some of the comments of his previous work are resumed by R. Munteanu in this enlarged text on 18th century culture, under a more or less similar appearance. An instance of these is the parallel between Montesquieu's Persian Letters and Defoe's Robinson Crusoe. It is mentioned, within the context, that Montesquieu was concerned with the destiny of a society passing through a period of crisis while Defoe explores a single man's destiny in his clash with a limit event.

Considering literature as part and parcel of the socio-cultural context, it can be said that the universe of the novel in the 18th century exhibits the philosophy of a society that begins to apprehend its typical way of life. The characters that populate this universe are the purport of a reality in which man could never come to terms with his own existential context and this is why most of them appear frustrated, as victims of some biographical accident. The picaros, the vagrants, the orphans or the lost children, the prostitutes and the sailors wandering across unknown seas, they all build up a range of victims at odds with certain social conventions that check their own desires and thus bar their way towards their goals in life. The aspect is apparent in most of Defoe's novels, and this is why Defoe and other novelists of the Enlightenment are:

> *"...preoccupied with sorting out the puzzle of an often opaque reality, they are tempted to clarify some biographic mysteries and the leading feature of the prose of all kinds remains the obsession with authenticity."* (74)

NOTES

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ROBINSON CRUSOE - ECHOES IN ROMANIAN LITERARY PRODUCTIONS

Along the years, the reception of D.Defoes's Robinson Crusoe has been reflected in various ways by numerous Romanian literary productions. A selection ranging from fiction to poetry will be supplied in an attempt to illustrate the integration of the Robinson motif into Romanian literature, according to different manners of approaching and exploiting the original model. They include overt imitations, fiction that plays upon the fundamentals of the pattern to more creative effects, as well as cases of merely symbolic suggestion of the Robinson hero and what he stands for.

Other novels by Defoe were translated into Romanian considerably later (Moll Flanders, 1964; Captain Singleton, 1971; Colonel Jack, 1971; A Journal of the Plague Year, 1980) and did not manage the impact of marked influences on Romanian literature.This is probably because their prominent character of literary documents with a somewhat restricted area of interest. The limited range of their topics and their inherent nature of autobiographical journals, unequivocally rooted in the realities of 18th century England, made these novels fall short of the rare, lofty mark of universality. The Romanian public has received them as translations only, and they will probably remain so, since they hardly managed to feature a hero of such grandeur as Robinson.

As the initiating, educational side of the Robinson pattern was most largely exploited by writers throughout the world, and as this was also the way it was introduced to Romanian readers through Vasile Drăghici's translation in 1835, we shall open the list with a novel of a similar character: Robinsonii Bucegilor (The Robinsons of the Bucegi Mountains) by Nestor Urechia, published in 1923 (1).

The Rousseau-istic desideratum is apparent from the very first start, and there is some reason to speculate that the author may have engaged on the already known path paved by the long-lasting success of Rudolf Wyss's Swiss Robinson Family.

Compared with Vasile Drăghici's production, Nestor Urechia's is substantially more than a collection of comments on Robinson's adventures: it is a self-contained illustration of the pattern, with independent constructional elements. The author organises the material in the form of an attractive story designed to educate the younger audience, and it is in this manner that he approaches the Robinson pattern of adventure.

The story starts round the year 1875 in Câmpina, in the home of a Romanian landowner, Toma Verescu, who takes close interest in the education of his son, Mitu, his nephew, Dinu and Nelu, an orphan.

Under the influence of the world of fairy tales - where Jules Verne and Daniel Defoe come first and foremost -, the three children plan a trip to the Bucegi Mountains in search of opportunities to apply their knowledge of botany, zoology and geography. Their guides will be Toma Neguţoi, an experienced hunter, and Ciulică, a shepherd and a farm hand, himself an orphan, born and raised on Toma Verescu's estate.

Ciulică is a lover of nature, open air exercise and travelling. He does not care to learn much besides reading and writing. Yet, he is very much fond of a few books: Genoveva de Brabant, Robinson Crusoe and Povestea vorbei (The Tale of the Words) by Anton Pann, which he kept on reading with great pleasure and obstinacy. As he confesses to the children,

he loves Robinson for his *"...industriousness, that is, the wonderful way he solves the problem of surviving on a desert island for a great many years."* (2)

When everything has been settled, the landlord has them supplied with travelling kits and a table full of proverbs and sayings, carefully selected for each child, according to his character. A historical and geographical survey of the Prahova Valley at that time is made as they are on their way to the Caraiman.

After parting with the hunter, Ciulică takes the boys to a place called the Desert Valley. An accident occurs - a bridge is broken -, which isolates them from the rest of the world. It is here and now that the children's robinsonade actually begins. They have not the faintest idea that everything was carefully planned by Toma Verescu and the two guides to the deliberate purpose of trying the children's courage and resourcefulness in coping with unexpected, limit situations.

Episodes like building a hut, making a sledge, arranging a desert cave, lighting a fire, hunting, cooking, selection and use of herbs, fruit and mushrooms, will be spun in turn. Protected and almost imperceptibly guided by the shepherd, the boys are full of self-satisfaction as they turn to good account the knowledge acquired at school.

Deus-ex-machina techniques, as part of their adventure, are compared in most of the cases with Robinson's luck to have had the wreck of a ship at hand. After two weeks' successful survival, Ciulică 'happens' to find a way out. They all return home with a bagful of stories and experience that will never leave their minds for the rest of their lives.

As it takes over and exploits mainly one aspect of the message of Robinson Crusoe, Nestor Urechia's book appears as an obvious lesson for the instruction of the young. The idea of surviving in a hostile environment and, above all, the moral lesson derived thereby form the core of the narrative.

In 1939, a somewhat similar scheme of Robinson-like survival was applied by Mircea Streinul in his novel, Viața în pădure (Life in the Forest) (3). In this novel, which has a comparatively extended topic, the Robinson episode appears as more self-contained, without necessarily having a strong connection with the rest of the story.

In the beginning, the narrative focuses on the ups and downs of a teacher's life and career, all seen against the background of the turmoil and socio-political unrest caused succesively by the Austrian and the Kossack occupation of the Cernăuți area at the turn of the 20th century. The hero's dull and confused life swings between outbursts of patriotism and the desire for a comfortable life and a safe position. His name, Ioniță Nimeni ('Nobody', that is), suggestively defines his anonymous and compassless existence at this point.

Ioniță tries to stay on good terms with all the occupants in turn, although he feels strongly that there is no excuse for his cowardice and lack of standing:

> *"The gentlemen at the Inspectorate are wrong. Though I've stopped making loud propaganda and telling the peasants about Stephen the Great. I'm not so sure that my Romanian conscience has remained untainted, after all."* (4)

Further on, as the figure of Ioniță Nimeni seems to have nothing else to offer, the writer's attention turns to his son, Stan, and his friends. The children's world, itself affected by the hard times and by the ups and downs of their parents' lives, is shaken by misunderstandings of all kinds, animosities or acrimonies. Class differences will trouble the world of the playground as much as they affect that of the adults and here, as everywhere else, the poor will have to carry the heavier burden. It is the case of one of Stan's best friends, Luca.

Luca is an orphan, mistreated by an elder brother of his at home and by his playmates outside his home. He eventually runs away, trying to find peace and shelter in the forest. Avoiding the villages, taking refuge under the trees, eating fruit and herbs and finding his way along with the help of the sun and the moss on the bark of trees, the boy finally stops in a clearing on the bank of a creek, where he finds a conveniently large hollow in the trunk of a secular tree. Here he meets with a she-wolf that becomes his companion after he rescues her cub. Now Luca starts gathering and drying fruit, lines up the hollow with the furs of the rabbits caught by the wolf and so prepares himself for the winter.

Having nothing at hand but his pocket knife and the companionship of the wolf, Luca surrounds the tree with a fence of pointed sticks and branches, very much like Robinson himself. The weather deteriorating, the boy realises that he cannot survive through the winter and decides to go as far as the neighbouring village and get some extra commodities. He breaks into the village pub one night and collects his stock of supplies.

What we consider quite interesting at this point is the list of objects that the author draws up, very much in the way of Defoe, with the obvious purpose of lending credibility concerning the act of survival due to begin. Luca's stock of stolen commodities amounted to:

30 boxes of matches
20 packages of tobacco
23 packages of tobacco paper
2 electric lamps
150 batteries
10 bars of chocolate
3 jars of sweets
2 bottles of strong brandy
5 loaves of bread
3 kippers
1 bag of olives
1 hammer
1 small hatchet
2 thick-cloth sacks
1 box of nails
5 pieces of lead
1 box of thick string
16 books →
12 needles
100 pins
2 balls of thread
(a black one and a white one)
1 kitchen cooker
1 stove pipe
2 copybooks
(a simple one and a lined one)

- *2 illustrated calendars*
- *a book on Alexander Machedon*
- *a book on Don Quixote*
- *a book on Till Eulenspiegel*
- *a book on Păcală*
- *a book on Harapu Albu*
- *Everyman's History of the World*
- *A. Pann's The Tale of the Word*
- *A Trip to Africa*
- *Iancu Jianu, the Outlaw*
- *two books in another language*
- *one picture book*
- *Tunsul', the Outlaw*

(5)

Carried away by his zeal to draw up a complete list of domestic utilities, the author seems to have overlooked the fact that such a heavy load cannot be transported by a boy on a single trip, the more so even the fittest of adults could hardly do it. On the other hand, such slips and even grosser ones may be detected in more popular authors of robinsonades. The success of Rudolf Wyss's book The Swiss Robinson Family, for example, was hardly

troubled by the picture of an impossibly composite flora and fauna gathering up the features of irreconcilable geographic areas on one single island, just to serve the purpose of adventure-at-all-cost. Nor was the public disturbed by the implausible achievements of the heroes while putting up the basic structures of an old-age civilization in comparatively no time.

Going back to Mircea Streinul's novel, mention must be made of the fact that the protagonist's robinsonade only covers a limited section of the narrative, supplying the image of 'a story within a story'. Curiously enough, however, the author does not include Robinson Crusoe among the books collected by his hero, although the content of the list of supplies and the way it is drawn up directly points to Defoe's novel. As a matter of fact, overt allusion in this direction is totally avoided by Mircea Streinul: unlike Nestor Urechia, he never mentions Robinson's name or anything relating to him or his adventure. This certainly does not credit the author with much originality if we think that Robinson Crusoe used to be part of the educational strategies in fashion - an educational programme, in fact - in Romania at the beginning of the 20th century and the book itself must have been available in most private libraries.

As mentioned before, Robinson strongly marked the universe of Nestor Urechia's novel, being even included in the shepherd's short record of favourite books. Things appear even clearer if we think that Urechia's novel was published in 1923 and Streinul's one in 1939, their plots being set round about the years 1875 and 1902 respectively.

To come back to Luca and his robinsonade, we could mention that this section seems the most successful and the best designed part of the novel.The author manages minute and most credible descriptions of his hero's efforts to survive in the forest till the following winter.

Luca re-arranges the hollow in the tree and builds a sort of oven outside it, introducing the stove pipe inside to keep him warm. He spends most of the days and evenings reading, while the wolf and her cub go hunting for him. The spring and the summer that follow provide the happiest moments in Luca's life; he hardly even notices the lapse of time, although - just like Crusoe - he keeps close evidence of the calendar. Luca's paradise is ruined by the sudden death of the wolf, which is shot by the new forest warden. The shock makes him return to the village, where things have become even more complicated in the meantime. There is war again, and this utterly ruins Luca's health and mental balance. Disgusted with the atmosphere and, above all, the atrocities seen in a concentration camp built in the neighbourhood, and then disappointed by a frustrating love affair, Luca goes to the place of his blessed days in the woods on a short goodbye visit and then commits suicide.

An ambiguous, awkward and poorly constructed piece of literature, Mircea Streinul's novel has sunk into oblivion and is possibly quoted for research purposes only, as has just been the case here.

Romanian literature for children continued to tackle and exploit the Robinson adventure during the former half of the 20th century. A sample that almost strictly assumes the essential pattern of the survival adventure is Nicolae Batzaria's novel Mica Robinson (The Little Robinson Girl), published by the Universul Printing House in 1942 (6).

Nicolae Batzaria, alias Moş Nae, was a prolific writer of fairy tales and novels for children, some of them quite remarkable and frequently reprinted even in our days. Yet, often enough, the bulk of his writing took precedence over its quality. This was especially obvious in his fiction adapted after well-known classical pieces of literature. Rather dull and careless about the style and the control of the story, Batzaria's imitations failed to acquire perenity.

It is interesting, however, that Nicolae Batzaria, like Mircea Streinul before, adopted the Robinson motif against a background of political disturbance and social unrest. Such events, in both cases presented out of obvious patriotic impulses, bring about the heroes'

breaking with a certain environment and lifestyle, which is the motive that engages the story on the course of a robinsonade.

The main characters of The Little Robinson Girl are Mariana Neculea and her father, a teacher persecuted for his political ideas and fervent patriotism. Through their figures, the author brings forth aspects of a century-old tradition of our people: the fight for independence and national autonomy. The context chosen by Batzaria is the liberation of the province of Ardeal from the Austro-Hungarian oppression in 1918.

Continuously harrassed by the Austro-Hungarian police and frequently fined, threatened and imprisoned, Neculea leves for the Argentine on exile, invited by an uncle of his, an old farmer who took refuge there long ago, also because of political persecution. Neculea's departure, often postponed, becomes a real fact after the death of Mariana's mother, as he understands that his political activities and the frequent imprisonments would deprive the child of a proper education.

After spending two years in the Argentine, where he continues his political activity in support of the Transylvanian cause, Neculea returns to Europe in 1918 and volunteers in the war for the liberation of the Ardeal province. After the victory he goes to the Argentine again and the whole family - the uncle included - decide to come back home. On the return trip, the ship sinks and Mariana, now a girl of fifteen, is cast on an uninhabited island together with her dog (symbolically called Ardeal). The happy ending occurs after three years, when the girl is rescued by her father and the reunited family set off for their native land at last.

The heroine's character, her courage and resourcefulness (features that are carefully motivated by the author through Mariana's education and her accumulated experience during her stay on her uncle's plantation) manage to provide a challenging example, worth following by the young readers.

Following Defoe's technique of handling the circumstantial detail, N. Batzaria is careful enough with the data selected and employed in the construction of his robinsonade. The story as a whole manages reasonable credibility and, although the girl's robinsonade follows most of the classical events sanctioned by Defoe, it does not look like some trite imitation of the master model. Despite a certain awkwardness of the style and an often unbalanced use of the language, Nicolae Batzaria's robinsonade does not appear as less accomplished than the already classical, by then, Swiss Robinson Family by Rudolf Wyss.

In 1947, the Socec Publishing House in Bucharest issued the novel Aventurile lui Ion Rancan, ultimul naufragiat în insula lui Robinson (The Adventures of Ion Runcan, the Last Castaway on Robinson's Island), written by Apostol D. Culea (7). A novel of adventure and seafaring, the book exceeds the strict affiliation to children's literature. The story follows the hero's fortune, largely prompted by his lust for the sea, his adventurous wanderings round the world down to the final halt, the island of Juan Fernandez.

After the death of his parents, a couple of Romanian peasants from the Bărăgan fields, Ion Runcan decides to go to America and become a farmer himself. There he goes through various employments and finally embarks on a ship at San Francisco as a simple seaman. From this point on, A. D. Culea throws his hero into a whirl of incredible adventures at sea and on land, in different parts of the world. Along ten chapters, Ion Runcan exhibits himself as a common denominator of loose adventures that seem to come closer to a picaresque tale rather than a robinsonade.

The reader is first taken to the Touamotu archipelago, where Runcan learns the skill of the Polynesian oyster fishermen, then on to the Nakemo island, where he meets the captain of an American submarine who initiates him into life under the sea and diving techniques. From submarines and bathyscaphes we move up to surfing, water skiing and the aquaplane. Runcan

tries them all and always proves an expert. To crown a fallacious manner of handling the hero, the author makes the fatal blunder of presenting Runcan in the position of a circus actor. This happens when he is employed by an American film team in his quality of a 'professional diver' and a 'specialist' in underwater shark fighting!

When the long expected shipwreck finally occurs, the protagonist comes to the island of his robinsonade, later called by himself Goats' Island. With Robinson Crusoe for a spiritual tutor, Runcan starts to imitate him. All the well-known episodes are hastily reviewed in less than two chapters: the wreck of the ship and the inventory of objects, the building of a raft and that of a hut, goat hunting, fishing, the calendar, etc. The protagonist later proceeds to explore the surroundings in a boat and in this way he reaches the island of Juan Fernandez, later called by him 'Robinson's island'. Here, he finds a settlement of about fifty families and he meets a governor, Mr. Oliver Barnaby, an Englishman who was cast on that same island further to a shipwreck in 1915. Barnaby himself had started as a Robinson and later brought colonists from Valparaiso, had populated the island and even settled its capital, San Juan Battista. He invites Runcan to go on living there and *"...fulfil their duty toward civilization"*. Another avalanche of successes and accomplishments ensues, much in the same pattern of irresponsible enthusiasm that underlies the string of adventures crowding the preceding chapters. All kinds of technical innovations and up-to-date facilities will soon make the life on the island flourish to incredible standards, as if under a hurried touch of the patronising gods of old sagas.

Cured of his lust for wandering, Ion Runcan becomes now an expert in wood carving. It sounds like a detail of implicit, even if possibly unaware, reference to the earthly trade of Jesus Christ, in response to some intuitive archetypal prompt that accompanies the mood of settling down.

With the help of Norwegian merchants, they will further build a tinned-fish factory, a hydraulic saw, an electric power plant and, just when the story seems to come to no end, there it comes. One evening, in his home flooded by the miracle of electricity, while listening to a radio broadcasting, Ion Runcan says:

"We are no longer Robinsons. His life is now nothing but a remote and sad story." (8)

Apostol D. Culea's protagonist does not even manage to acquire a definite physiognomy, which is a cardinal requisite of a Robinson hero. In spite of the copious display of trying adventures, Runcan remains rather 'naked' in terms of the specific meanings that define the deep structure of the original hero. We suggest a solution of this puzzle: the adventures were designed to be phisically, rather than morally, trying. They were seemingly designed to either impress the 'muscled reader' or frustrate the physically handicapped. For the more informed, dedicated reader, Culea's story is unfortunately of little avail.

The end of the story, abrupt and irrelevant for such massive dissipation of narrative effort (or was there any?), completes the image of a poor, pathetically unaccomplished imitation. Apostol D. Culea's attempt is much closer to a degradation of meaning rather than to a successful employment of the Robinson pattern with its multifarious aspects and possible ways of interpretation and exploitation.

Another example of the reception of the Robinson motif in Romanian literature is Ion Gorun's novel Robinson în Ţara Românească (Robinson in Wallachia), published in 1904 (9). We consider that this novel represents a unique example among the Romanian writings that have approached the Robinson motif. Since the next chapter of our study is dedicated to a detailed comparative analysis of Defoe's Robinson Crusoe and Ion Gorun's Robinson in Wallachia, only general information will be provided on the latter novel at this point.

Although the product of a purely Sămănătoristic bias, created with peremptory prapagandistic and programmatic tendencies, the novel remains a unique achievement in the evolution of the reception of Defoe's masterpiece in Romania. As against the other novels presented, this one does not take over either the geographic setting or the classical string of events. The episodes with the famous 'Robinson' label attached to them - episodes which, due to their power of suggestion and the message conveyed, have long become corner stones in literary criticism - are absent here. The presence of the Robinson hero is only suggested by the title of the novel and, as far as the story itself is concerned, it is felt at the subtle level of the archetypal implications of the motif, to which the totally different context manages to grant all the more operational efficiency.

It seems to us that Ion Gorun's application of the essentials succeeded in providing the structure the closest to what can be defined as a Romanian robinsonade.

The perennial character of the Robinson pattern and of this particular type of adventure was successfully exhibited in the field of science fiction as well. An example in Romanian literature is the novel Robinsoni pe Planeta Oceanelor (Robinsons on the Planet of the Oceans) by Radu Nor and I. M. Stefan (10). The book accounts the adventures of a team of Romanian astronauts who, after an accident in space, are forced to land on a remote planet where they will survive for quite some time. A rescue team finally arrive at the place of the accident but unfortunately only the diary of the astronauts is found (a transparent adoption of the log-book motif). In the diary Prof. Anton Brebu, the protagonist, gives a full account of all their happenings, accompanied by lots of personal reflections, of which the following refers us directly to Robinson:

> *"Over and over I hear Francesco say that we are Robinsons of the cosmos. He is right, and it sounds beautiful. And yet, we are luckier than Defoe's clebrated hero. We have brought along, in our spaceship, the scientific progress of the 21st century. [...] We do not have to make such great efforts as Robinson Crusoe, for the machines we handle are genuine miracles of our century's technology; and yet, we have worked a lot..."* (11)

Adaptations and shortened forms of Defoe's novel occurred not only at the turn of the century, but continue to appear in books and collections of stories for children. Mihail Drumeş, a master of the genre, adapted Defoe's style to the taste and understanding of young readers. In his volume 10 cărţi celebre (10 Famous Books) (12), Mihail Drumeş concentrates Crusoe's story in a vivid and colourful narrative. With his gift for story-telling, in just thirty-one pages, the author surveys all the classical episodes of Robinson's account.

A novel and a volume of poems are to be further presented in order to exemplify what we have suggested as the third aspect of the reception of Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe in Romanian literary productions - namely, that particular angle from which the abstract imagery or the general metaphor is nearly all that is preserved after the 'coating' of a typical robinsonade has been dismissed.

Ion Gorun, on one hand, did much to transfer the structural gist of the robinsonade and of the configuration of Defoe's hero into specific, originally framed Romanian realities. On the other hand, Irina Grigorescu, in her novel Robinson şi inocenţii (Robinson and the Innocents) (13), fosters the picture of a symbolic Robinson, an assemblage of firmly interwoven elements and, by virtue of their perennial quality, forever planted into the spiritual fabric of adolescence. This time the hero no longer stands for a model of sermonising substance, but is actually turned into an intimate incentive, felt as a positively stimulating

presence, to the extent of becoming a reliable fulcrum in the teenagers' world. Robinson is not any more the classical character locked in his classical adventure, as Irina Grigorescu does more than handle a trite copy of the prototype. She casts the aura of the hero into a functional, active symbol - which, however, retains one of its capital implications: the irreversible quantum of previously accumulated civilization.

In Irina Grigorescu's approach, Robinson can be measured on a symbolic scale where he can secure enough sustenance in view of a successful encounter with the turmoils of the 'irrational' nature on one hand and those of the human nature on the other. Robinson's figure is, we might say, melted in the spirit and the life of the characters of the book, hovering over as a tutor and an equipoise in whatever they perform. Then, in final triumph, it is he who helps them out of the world of innocence, as richly populated with ideals as it is with noxious illusions.

The teenage world, so much exposed to evil, accident, psychic trauma or routine, appears as an inevitable life trial. After mute dialogues with Robinson, their 'protective ghost', the young heroes of the book seem to develop their own systems of befitting antibodies in search of balance and a reliable support. The outcome is the 'Club of the Innocents', founded in the forest outside the town and far from the school - another inevitable reality in the world of the children. Robinson is appointed spiritual patron of the club. The children are dominated by the figure of Ron, the chief of their group, who wants to teach his friends how to *"go under the river"* - a parable to a retrospective understanding of the natural course of existence, a kind of an upstream approach of history. So, the children try hard to unlock the gate that opens on to the realm of connections, of analysis and synthesis. The meetings organised by the club in the park outside the town - their 'island', in fact - are an attempt to escape into a different kind of 'survival', a world created by themselves and as tangible for them as that left behind. This new world is their exclusive asset, crystal-clear to them but opaque and delusive to grown-ups. It is a somewhat elementary reality, yet a solid pedestal for a child's blooming conscience.

Robinson's symbol has been perfectly assimilated and integrated with the new pattern and looks as real and helpful in the children's daily life as are the books, the park, their bicycles, their parents.

The contrast parents-children is itself suggested by this same symbolic presence. The parents, victims of a so-called *"blindness through forgetfulness"*, are unable to grasp Robinson's image beyond the curtain of the metaphor. A parent will not see Robinson as some elementary dough of a primeval nature, but rather, as a complementary illustration, a transmissible image - via the effect of the example - of a certain storage of experience. On the contrary, Robinson's image, once projected from the screen of art into a palpable incarnation, moves freely within the space of the child's conscience which stays open to further accumulation. In this new attire, Robinson is apt to become, in turn, a state of mind, a certain reaction, a gesture, a word or a thing, while he faithfully goes on steering the children's steps.

Such possibilities of interpretation of the matrix novel are beautifully fused into a symbolic whole featuring a wide variety of functional valences. The colourful, vivid mood of Irina Grigorescu's novel is a perfect stylistic match for the kaleidoscopic pattern of fervent and tumultuous queries, revelations, enthusiasms and doubts that populate the secret world of the teenager. The book is an excellent opportunity to contemplate an original strategy within the framework of a classically fresh and flexible motif.

The volume of poems mentioned at the beginning of the chapter may be approached along a similar line of analysis. Its title is: Adio Robinson Crusoe (Farewell to Robinson Crusoe), and it was written by Emil Brumaru and published in 1978 at the Cartea Românească Publishing House (14).

Some of the poems exhibit the figure of Robinson in a manner quite similar with that of Irina Grigorescu's. However, they pre-eminently apply to the reader's power of decoding symbolic suggestions rather than reveal themselves through metaphorical motivation. The image of the hero is often projected against the universe of the childhood, reminding one of the manner in which Mihai Eminescu evoked Robinson Crusoe in his poem Copii eram noi amîndoi (When Children Both We Were). Just like this universe of the child, Robinson's picture appears most clear and serene, painted in bright colours and always wrapped up in an aura of positive essentials. His island is a secret and sweet invitation, a gate open on to the peaceful world of the child, a world nostalgically contemplated by the adult author.

Robinson's soothing presence is also a kind of medicine, always at hand and able to cure any of those moral or spiritual crises that are so frequent in the stormy flow of human existence. Such curing is a symbolic intimation of the desperately craved peace of mind which is the most intimate and ultimate goal of human existence.

At other times, Robinson's island brings along a feeling of seclusion and desolation. Then, the poet's reaction is prompt: he tries, with all his might and main, to break free and tear away the suffocating veil that brings him to despair. These are the moments when the poet does everything to populate his island and then stand in happy contemplation of people coming and going.

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ROBINSON CRUSOE - ROBINSON IN WALLACHIA

The main concern of this chapter is a comparative analysis of the novels Robinson Crusoe by Daniel Defoe and Robinson în Ţara Românească (Robinson in Wallachia) by Ion Gorun, in terms of how the Robinson pattern was employed in an early 20th century Romanian piece of fiction. We shall consider, in turn, a set of symbolic elements characteristic of a so-called 'robinsonade', some basic features that, in a way, made possible the metamorphosis of a proper name and an archetypal adventure into a notional concept - in short, the shift from a proper noun to a common one. The term 'archetype' will be employed throughout the analysis with the meaning of 'an original model or pattern from which something is made or something develops'.

To avoid ambiguities, we have also attempted a distinction between the apparently related and sometimes overlapping terms of ***utopia***, ***picaresque story*** and ***robinsonade***.

For operational reasons, a short survey of certain socio-economic, political and literary aspects of early 20th century Romania has been made with a view to indicating certain realities specific to an eastern European geographical, socio-economic and cultural setting that proved suitable for the integration of such a pattern. For much the same reasons, a summary of Ion Gorun's novel has been provided, together with a few remarks regarding the author's literary and publicistic

activity in the main literary trends which were manifest in Romania at the beginning of the century.

The comparison proper will regard the two main heroes, Robinson Crusoe and Nechifor Pădureanu, and their adventures, with special emphasis on the specific features of their respective robinsonades as well as on the influence exerted by the Robinson pattern on the creation of the Romanian writer.

The chapter will end with considerations regarding the literary and stylistic abilities of the two writers, as they are revealed in the two novels under analysis.

If most of Defoe's various employments in the field of the letters had their immediate significance for the early 18th century, the last one, that of a novelist, was by far the most fruitful inheritance left to the English literary prestige. It is well known that at the age of 59, when most people contemplate retirement, Defoe engaged in his new career. This stage was definitely marked as he inaugurated it with his Robinson Crusoe, a piece of fiction which, in its singularity, was to stamp an indelible 'footprint' in the history of English and world literature and to give free way to the further development of the modern novel. René-Marill Albérès referred to this particular aspect as follows:

> *"This success of a few distinguished books, just a few as a matter of fact, but comparable to the 7th Symphony, such as Don Quixote, Robinson Crusoe, The Cloister of Parma, The Idiot, War and Peace, The Human Condition - this novelistic success evidently ranks beyond any school debate and appears to be independent of any specific technique as well as of the novelist's own intentions."* (1)

Defoe's book ranges with these outstanding masterpieces of world literature, styled by George Călinescu as 'patricidal', as the force of the character depicted totally effaces the author (2).

Meant for the instruction of his contemporaries, as the author himself presented it, the book enjoyed remarkable success. The idea as such was not entirely a novelty, since Defoe had borrowed and imitated lots of motifs and even sets of incidents from previous works of fiction of similar or near-similar narrative substance (3). His audacity to re-cast information collected from sundry sources was backed by traces of genuine human experience (Selkirk's adventure), or by compilations based on well-grounded economic and geographical knowledge. All the same, Defoe's undeniable merit in outdoing his predecessors was precisely the manner in which he managed to blend all those loans into an original, distinguished product. It was an inspired enterprise as he succeeded, unaware of the fact itself, to supply the world literature with much more than a remarkable novel or a famous hero: he offered a pattern of human behaviour which soon came to be considered a symbolic notion with various possibilities of exploitation and analysis.

The notion, labelled as a 'robinsonade' or 'Robinson story', not apparent in previous literary productions or documentary tracts, received full contour only after Defoe's success. This is how Pat Rogers comments on the phenomenon:

> *"Defoe's Robinson Crusoe made a sort of impact on Europe; yet, the novel by itself attracted a huge body of imitation down to outright plagiarism. Posthumously, it inspired an entire subbranch of continental literature. This was the Robinsonade."* (4)

It is difficult to give a clear-cut definition of the concept of **robinsonade** as such, as its treatment along the years and especially today seems to continuously add to its basic core. It is commonplace that, in the field of literature mainly, the restricted and sketchy character of the definitions often leads to ambiguous interpretations. In this particular case we consider that ready ambiguity may arise, first of all, between a robinsonade and a utopia, and second, between a robinsonade and a picaro story. More detailed explication of the three patterns of fiction will be of considerable help and interest.

Although for working purposes definitions are inevitable and no less useful, we shall try not to indulge, to an addictive extent, in such a manner of analysis, often employed by some literary theoreticians, who 'simplify' things to the point of misleading transparency. Peremptory formulations will be avoided, as they tend to parcel out the analysis into distinctive fields, which would endanger our approach of marginally intersecting varieties of fiction.

1. To begin with, we have selected A. L. Morton's definition of the **utopia**, supplied in his book The English Utopia:

> *"In the beginning Utopia is an image of desire. Later it grows more complex and various, and may become an elaborate means of expressing social criticism and satire but it will be always based on something that somebody actually wants."* (5)

The dream element is therefore essential for the understanding of the atmosphere in a utopia - those instances of the imagination playing upon visions of happiness as they may underlie a certain generation, community or race in a definite period of time. Generally, but notably in its classical forms, this play of the human imagination and desire for illusion, originally located in a precise ***now-here***, has always tended to reach a kind of unquestionable accomplishment within a timeless and placeless ***no-where***. This has become the epitome and

the everlasting label of every utopian writing and, by and by, it came to melt itself in the very word 'utopia'.

However, the word *no-where* itself :

"...contains levels which, through their movement round a certain, though hardly perceivable, axis, alternately organise different structures, all of them well-rooted in the equation of the utopia: the nowhere can exist only in relation with a certain time and a certain place, both unequivocally real and at the same time underlying the status of the writer of the respective utopia. (6)

With every utopian writer, this desire for illusion nourishes a hidden impulse of rivalling in creation with the very work of Mother Nature. The supposed Eden, the Sublime Nowhere is his inescapable obsession. The created product offers him some compensation for a while, but once he has accomplished his ideal, the utopian writer feels that he must guard it against any suspicion of imperfection - a task that he fervently assumes and carries out to the most of his artistic potential. So, due to its being locked in its perfection, any utopia reveals itself as a *dead end*, no matter how hard its creator might strive to demonstrate that it is useless to change it, while sealing its substance with all kinds of hermetic barriers.

The immutable world thus created appears as frozen in its glare of perfection and exhibits such lack of kinetics as matches its shortness of horizon. Plato's Atlantis, Augustine's De Civitate Dei, or Campanella's Civitas Solis, as well as Thomas Morus's Utopia lead to the same framework, although quite a few differences can be identified between the former three and the latter one.

For example, social conditions were not the basic source of inspiration in the case of the three utopias first quoted. They did not imagine the welfare state, but claimed, in turn, human wisdom, a religious basis and intellectual capacities, to define the respective nuclei of their would-be worlds. They were worlds supposed to be ruled by intelligence only, and where hardly any room was left for ordinary people to live a life of their own. (7)

Morus's thinking - which may be considered a link between the social theories of the ancient world and those of the present - also gave birth to an imaginary state, but this time it was *"a state enjoying a perfect social, legal and political system"* (the definition of Morus's Utopia as supplied by the NED). The illusion of an earthly paradise, this dream as old as mankind itself, is also present in Morus's work, but he undoubtedly goes far beyond the three afore-mentioned philosophers. Morus's commonwealth is enlarged geographically and, at first sight, it looks less static in character. Morus exceeds Plato's conception of the ideal truth, beauty and justice and, above all, that of history - which, for the ancients, did not mean *"...a development towards new forms of society, but towards their own form of society."* (8)

Although of a more profound character, Morus's revolutionarism eventually freezes in a perfect 'roundness', - that is, in what may be called the framework of a utopia with its lack of perspective.

Utopian writings along the centuries have covered the opposite side of the coin as well. Starting from what literary criticism considers as the first negative utopia, Mundus Alter et Idem written by Bishop Moll, probably round about 1600, and published in 1607, and then going on with the Swiftian antiutopian spirit - often labelled as 'antiutopian exasperation' (9) - we still find ourselves under the influence of the same peremptory classical option directed toward one or the other extreme of the genre.

Swift's antiutopian outburst is also rooted in a subversive criticism and protest against the very antiutopian world that he reflects:

"Under a more refined image, in his inner self, the author of a counterutopia keeps hidden the same spiritual thirst of the ideal and of the absolute, typical of any utopian writer." (10)

Unlike the classics, with their black or white manner of designing a utopia, the modern utopian will deliberately try to compromise between the two extremes by directing his investigation in both ways. He will blend means specific of the classical utopia and of the counterutopia. A decisive step forward in this respect was made by Herbert George Wells, whose A Modern Utopia is a landmark for the approach of the matter. As in most of his writings, Wells engages in debunking the myth of the classical utopia, destroying much of its polish of unerring pretence. He offers a display of elements that justify the right of a utopian even to doubt the perfection of a utopia. The classical image of a world of harmony is now replaced by another, populated with dynamic social and spiritual oppositions as well as an active attitude toward the product of his invention:

> *"Deliberately cultivated and programmatically accounted for, the impression of an unpolished work shows the tendency of a modern utopian to surpass, through its unaccomplishment, that almost inexpressive rigidity of its classical counterpart."*
>
> (11)

Considering the classical utopias as cages too close to move around, the modern utopian breaks loose from the fetters while trying to humanise the geographic and social setting. It is a prompt of the primordial instinct to search for the dignity of the human condition, which is supposed to match man's genius and moral qualities.

Some of Wells's works, of which The Invisible Man, The War of the Worlds, The Time Machine, The first Men in the Moon or The Island of Dr. Moreau, were successively labelled by literary criticism as negative utopias, satirical utopias, counterutopias, disutopias or antiutopias, depending on the momentary interpretation of the term as such (12). However, we consider it a relevant fact that the same theoreticians could not help admitting the presence of many features typical of the classical utopia in the same Wellsian writings, all of which would supplement the conspicuous philosophical character of his complex allegory.

It is this very allegory that lays the foundations of the modern utopia - on one hand, through the courageous combination of a profoundly dialectical way of thinking with the inherent dynamism of the allegory, and on the other, through the persistence of those elements characteristic of an educational utopia. So, although the modern utopian casts a glance into the future, he cannot rid himself of the illusory impression of his imagined world. The reason for the fact is that his utopia, irrespective of its design, tends to assume the part of Destiny.

A clear-cut definition of the modern utopia as against its classical counterpart seems even more difficult to formulate now. One reason rests in that, through the elements it contains - imaginary travel, miraculous inventions, social satire, and, above all, technological and scientific anticipation - any modern utopia merges into science fiction, which considerably enlarges and complicates the range of the analysis.

When it comes to a short survey of the main features of a utopia, the first thing to mention is that any such writing is meant to offer an illusory compensation of a specific socio-political aspect. The alternative provided is ostensibly flawless and ideal. On second thought, however, it proves unattainable, as it ignores a given socio-political background and the objective laws of its development.

Less important ingredients, travelling and adventure are designed as the preliminary means to carry the reader to the chosen corner of the world - which, more often than not, is as remote as to prompt the hint of *nowhere*. On this safe site, out of the reach of a world patronised by uncomfortable laws, the writer will begin the construction of his envisaged pattern of perfection and equilibrium.

At this point, devices like the desire for illusion, the dream element or the author's play upon his own imagination are used to serve the utopian's purpose.

Such motifs as the unexpected, the ups and downs of success and failure, or the characters' progress due to fruitful enterprise are neither clearly nor necessarily exploited. Especially in classical utopias, heroes are less significant and by no means liable to enjoy a configuration as clearly contoured as that of the worlds they populate. The heroes, as well as the ideas they may advocate, if any, are deliberately blurred to the point of lack of distinction or personality. Actually, in a utopia, the human element, the hero, rarely 'exists' or gets contour through ideas. Heroes receive little concern from the author as their development or becoming is totally irrelevant here. Moreover, literary attention focused on the hero would be in sharp contradiction with the general atmosphere of perfect roundness and so-called frozen glare of a utopian setting and it may seriously undermine the very substance of a utopia - **the topos**.

*"The **idea** is something personal and inalienable. If you and I have some reflection in common, it will most probably be the exact opposite of an idea, which is a **topos.**"* (13)

.....

*"**Topos** is the place, the common place of human coincidence to the point of overlapping identities - which cannot possibly occur as long as the human substance is not dehumanised down to mineral substance"* (14).

A fair conclusion is that the gravity centre of utopian fiction lies in the **topos** and its accomplishment as a world-pattern of self-contained perfection which admits of no creative concern. Stylistic devices - circumstantial realism in particular - are also designed to serve and back up the same desideratum. The author's force of persuasion must be dedicated to lending credibility and guarding his perfect, if illusory, accomplishment against the faintest shade of suspicion.

A utopia may be viewed as an archetype in as much as it is necessarily directed towards a certain correspondent in the field of the ideal. In this respect, the notion of 'archetype' lies somewhere between its definition according to **(a)** scholastic philosophy and **(b)** Lockean philosophy:

a) *"...the idea of the divine intellect that determines the form of a thing"* (Webster's Third New International Dictionary);

b) *"...one of the external realities with which our ideas and impressions to some extent correspond"* (Webster's Third New International Dictionary).

2. The origin of the **picaro story** seems more exact and clear to define. The so-called picaresque literature is a kind of lay, realistic narrative biting at the roots of the evil and stirring the still waters of the declining feudal society. Its appearance was a kind of revenge of the oppressed, an unusually virulent criticism originating in the crisis and the socio-political unrest that characterised Spain after Philip II's death in 1598. A flood of gold crowded the banks at that time instead of being turned to good account by the burgeoisie. It is known that the Spanish Inquisition practically 'beheaded' the burgeoisie as a social class and consequently left the country crippled and organically unfunctional, socially speaking. So, it is this flood of gold that suffocated Spain as an economic power and a political system, producing a sharp social crisis characterised by poverty and emigration. Above all, it turned almost a whole social class, the peasantry, into highwaymen.

These people, the future *picaros*, are the heroes who will populate this genre of the literature of adventures, which lacks grandeur but not amplitude.

Generally, this type of hero exhibits a well-meant slyness (scaróneria) as his only weapon destined to assist him against tyranny and the evil doers. This *déclassé*, an offspring of the afore-mentioned social unbalance, will give birth to an entire epic of wanderings, not

only from one place to another, but also up and down the social hierarchy, as well as to a continuous fight against the rigid and inviolable dogmas.

The picaresque heroes may differ in accordance with the social position of their creators. Although they are not necessarily *saccaróns* (see for instance Candide or Tom Jones), they all come to be wags telling their adventure in the first person and thus offering the illusion of a genuine autobiography.

Such a hero who will populate almost all literatures is liable to store up in himself a vast experience gathered along his chain wanderings, chain connections and encounters. With a picaresque hero, travelling appears as a sort of Brownian motion and at the same time provides the background against which any picaresque story develops or against which such a hero fulfils his literary destiny.

In most cases, the picaros come from the amorphous group of the dispossessed. They are uprooted or disillusioned individuals often belonging to the lumpen. They leave a world and a life they can no longer bear, out of different reasons, ranging from an objective state of affairs to mere caprice. They roam carelessly and aimlessly, in hope for some ideal that they are not even capable to define or to envisage. They seem to gain and to store up a lot from what they experience, yet this accumulated knowledge fails to acquire a certain contour and shape.

The prevailing feeling derived from any picaresque writing is that the characters exhibit that kind of random orientation, being doomed to roam either in space or up and down the social scale. Therefore, travelling - this avalanche of loose series of events and encounters - definitely makes the structure of any picaresque story.

Most of the characteristics underlying any picaro hero might spring from the fact that, by his very nature, such a character has nothing to lose. He does not start from stability and durability, but from chaos or a discomfort of a certain nature. The flashes of human experience which he gathers around him like a magnet seem to remain simple externals for him. Although each of them is heavy with meaning if taken separately, all together appear as hardly signalled and with no traceable consequences for an eventual becoming of the character.

The composite background - the essence of any picaresque yarn - reveals itself gradually only further to the passage of the hero who plays the part of a witness, of a detached conscience, a mere photographer of events and slices of life. In his inner self the hero thus fails to become the beneficiary of his own accumulated experience. This may appear as a consequence of the feeling that such a diminutive creature cannot assume cognisance of such vast experience.

In short, being above all a sort of a binder of events, the picaro is more or less of a tool, a means of creating a type of literary technique materialised in the form of the picaresque narrative.

3. With the **robinsonade** the focus of interest shifts from the level of the narrative to that of the hero. A Robinson hero (from which the narrative as such derives its name) continuously appears in the headlines of the literary attention as, in this case, he is mostly alone or part of a restricted group throughout the story.

As far as the robinsonade is concerned, we have selected a sketchy but suggestive definition given by Romul Munteanu in his review of Michel Tournier's book, Friday and the Limbos of the Pacific:

> *"After the publication of Daniel Defoe's famous book Robinson Crusoe in 1719, the concept of 'robinsonade' emerged. This was meant to label a special kind of travelling exhibiting an initiating character. The road to initiation is opened by some adversity that wrenches an individual off his normal course of existence; after having*

come away with his life, the hero is further driven to a limit situation - usually a desert island - where he will survive, mostly on himself, for as long as he can." (15)

Whether he is alone, or surrounded by a world of objects, or part of a group (family, friends, new acquaintances), the Robinson hero is the one who actually pulls the strings in the mechanism of his story.

Unlike a utopia, a robinsonade is not a compensation for something else, an alternative that should be unquestionably adopted in its perfect, ready-made appearance. Robinson's ideal order and perfection is being shaped step by step under the eyes of the reader, through the inspired and skilful touch of the protagonist himself. The feeling of progress and becoming underlies the ascending kinetics of any robinsonade, which is both created and populated by its hero.

Unlike a picaresque story, with its string of halts, a robinsonade is essentially a journey between two stations, where the latter constitutes the accomplishment of the robinsonade proper. Travelling plays no important part in the initiation or the becoming of the hero; it is not the spine of the narrative, but just a means to take the hero to that second halt where the author has him set about the laborious task that eventually reveals him as a model of existence and, above all, of behaviour.

Also crucial for the robinsonade is the adversity, the accident which practically triggers its true beginning. Up to this step, the narrative may be considered a simple novel of adventure or travelling. Generally, this turning point marks the end of the journey - and, just like with the utopia, when the journey has come to an end, the actual story begins.

Any Robinson hero appears as a character with a well-contoured physiognomy and, somehow, with a well-defined 'mission'. The utmost purpose of his task and then of his accomplishment is to regain the stability and durability he has left behind and therefore to reconstruct the world he has lost by accident. In future acceptation and employment of the pattern of behaviour, the element of reconstruction will sort itself out as essential and defining for any Robinson story.

Any Robinson hero will manifest himself as a purport of balance for the setting where the accident he has experienced will throw him. No such hero ever plays with the illusion of creating an ideal world, an epitome of perfection in the sense of that existing in a utopia, and in no case does he leave his original setting and background for such a purpose. When Robinson embarks on the path of his adventure - and by this we mean the act of reconstruction he lays his hands on - he does so with a precise purpose; such a hero is first thing born to reconstruct and far less to wander, be it either on earth or in the realm of the illusion. For any Robinson, this act of reconstruction is always an open means to diversify the literary spectrum of such a story.

Whether he brings to life again a world of his own or helps others to do so - as for instance Ion Gorun's Wallachian Robinson - such a hero has a way wide-open before him. He continuously looks toward a horizon, while his resourcefulness works out his paradise. The illusion, the ideal perfection, alien to any error and failure, are not tools employed by a Robinson to carve his universe. This is merely because the world he recreates has no meaning or value for him as an ideal but only as a real one.

Regarding mostly the hero and less the background that hosts him, the implications derived from a robinsonade are above all of an educational, initiating, ethical character rather than of a socio-political or philosophical one.

A pattern of human conduct, the Robinson hero remains the invention of an author, Daniel Defoe, a creation that soon proved to function in all possible times and places. This creation acquired the value of an archetype basically in its acceptation of a pattern, a model primarily rooted in the field of the real rather than descending from an ideal, primordial

matrix. Such a hero is both well locked up in a solid armour of essentials and yet open to a wide variety of interpretations and employments which ultimately are as wide and as varied as mankind itself.

As Romul Munteanu showed in the same article, the range of the so-called robinsonade has had a considerably long career: Voyage to the Sunset by the Chinese U Cengen, The Labyrinth of the World and the Paradise of the Heart written by Comenius in 1631, The Criticon, a baroque writing by Garcian, 1657. A shift occurred later towards romantic robinsonades and finally to the so-called anti-robinsonades such as the one written by Jean Giraudoux: Susan and the Pacific.

The motif as such has acquired various valences; it included heroes of both sexes and all ages and it expanded from ancient to modern environments and even to outer space. The core of the pattern has always remained elastic in its wide openings to different approaches. In the evolution of the term and the multifarious directions of psychological, philosophic and literary interests that have turned to exploit it, some suggestive halts can be mentioned in order to illustrate its well-rooted nature in the literatures throughout the world. Jules Verne's L'école des Robinsons or his Deux Ans de Vacances, Rudolf Wyss's The Swiss Family Robinson, then William Golding's Lord of the Flies, Jean Giraudoux' Susan and the Pacific, etc., may be considered some of the highly suggestive embodiments for the becoming of the term.

Then, just when the literary efforts seemed to have exhausted the pattern, Michael Tournier published his Friday and the Limbos of the Pacific, shifting the focus from Robinson to Friday and thereby supplying further significant meanings and directions of analysis. The fact is that the basic set of reference elements typical of most robinsonades has always varied with the literary stages, trends, authors and national literatures and it has always borne the idiosyncratic stamp of them all.

The following analysis will attempt a survey of some of these basic elements and show to what extent they can be applied as a common denominator to both Defoe's Robinson Crusoe and Ion Gorun's Robinson in Wallachia. Accordingly, motifs such as the island, the idea of adventure, the accident, the relation man-nature, the myth of work and fruitful enterprise, the idea of order, the problem of money and so on, together with the moral fable derived thereby, will be considered successively with a view to showing how they were employed by the two writers so as to serve their purposes.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Romania's socio-economic life was a mixture of capitalist relations and still strong feudal remnants. The industrial pattern of the country, backward and of a low technological level, appeared as a huge fief enslaved by foreign capital and influences. This 'economic feudalisation' inevitably led to a unilateral industrial development that soon culminated in the general crisis of 1907 - 1908. Yet, for Romania, a pre-eminently agrarian country, the rural problem was by far the most acute. For a long time the country had been facing an agricultural crisis for which Al. I. Cuza's Rural Legislation of 1864 had done very little.

According to statistics, in the first decade of the 20th century 4,000 landowners possessed 60% of the arable land, whereas more than 900,000 peasant households had only 34.18%. Backwardness and poverty were permanent characteristics of the rural population that now came to endure a twofold exploitation, that of the landlord and that of the kulaks - the capitalist elements steadily pervading the rural life. Moreover, almost 80% of Romania's rural population were illiterate at that time.

The 'peasant question' (chestiunea țărănească), as the politicians of the time used to call it, came to be a recurrent topic in the literary productions of the age. Prominent figures among the writers at the turn of the century continued to be those whose personalities had

become well-contoured before 1900: Ioan Slavici, Barbu Ştefănescu Delavrancea, Ion Luca Caragiale, Alexandru Vlahuţă, Alexandru Macedonski, George Coşbuc, and so on. Some of the literary magazines issued before 1900 - *"Convorbiri literare"*, *"Literatorul"*, etc. - continued to appear and at the same time others were issued: *"Sămănătorul"*, *"Viaţa Românească"*, *"Luceafărul"*, *"Viaţa nouă"*.

Against this background of increased socio-political unrest preceding the events round the year 1907 and World War 1, the literary disputes with strong political tinges became more and more fervent among the literary trends and the reviews that represented them.

The main trends animating the literary scene in the first decade were Sămănătorismul and then Poporanismul, which grouped most of the old as well as many of the young writers. These trends had a prominent place and, through their aesthetic, literary and political implications - some positive, others negative -, they included supporters both among the writers and the politicians or the historians of the time.

Alexandru Hodoş, alias Ion Gorun (1863 - 1929), the author of the robinsonade under analysis, was one of the first editors of the " *Sămănătorul"* review which, as George Călinescu mentions, was initially:

> *"...a paper meant to cultivate and issued under Spiru Haret's guidance. Vlahuţă brought in the programme and his collaborators from 'Vieaţa', Ion Gorun, Constanţa Hodoş (Gorun's future wife), St. O. Iosif, Dimitrie Anghel, Vasile Pop. The journal was to deal with 'life' and to 'sow' ideas in the people's souls."* (16)

Although a mediocre writer who never managed to match a Mihail Sadoveanu, a George Coşbuc or an Al. Vlahuţă even in their sămănătoristic writings, Ion Gorun had a busy publicistic activity, taking special interest in aspects concerning the rural life. As George Călinescu says again, his writing was:

> *"...a humanitarian and genial sort of journalism taking interest in the humble classes, petty officials, innkeepers, kerosene sellers, and bringing forth social problems."* (17)

In fact, Călinescu's opinion about the same Ion Gorun had been worse before, since in his History of Romanian Literature (1941), he says:

> *"Nothing can possibly be selected of the socialising poetry and prose of Ion Gorun (Alexandru Hodoş), appointed editor at the 'Vieaţa', and the same can be said about the literature produced by Constanţa Hodoş, herself a collaborator there. Ion Gorun's stories are mainly populated with 'miserable people' tormented by the ordinary tragedies of life, most of which tragic love affairs, but only of the kind to be found with the lowest people."* (18)

It is true that many critics - G. Călinescu, E. Lovinescu, O. Crohmălniceanu, D. Micu, Z. Ornea - mention Gorun as a fervent sămănătoristic writer and concentrate primarily on his rich publicist activity as a collaborator of various magazines of the time: 'Vieaţa' (1893), 'România junâ' (1893), 'Curentul literar' (1901), 'Pagini literare', 'Sămănătorul', and so on. Out of them all, the most clearly contoured appears his activity at the 'Sămănătorul', where he contributed articles, reviews, notes and short stories, starting with the very first number of December 2, 1901.

We do not intend an exhaustive analysis of Ion Gorun's life and literary activity; however, a short survey of the sămănătoristic and poporanistic literary environment is necessary in order to illustrate how I. Gorun employed such ideas in his robinsonade.

It is interesting to mention from the very beginning that none of the major critics dealing with analyses of the Romanian literature at the turn of the century stopped to mention Gorun's novel. The same goes for those critics who have strictly approached the sămănătoristic and the poporanistic literary trends: Z. Ornea, D. Micu, E. Lovinescu, etc. It is true that his novel had a very short span of interest, as after 1920 both the sămănătoristic and the poporanistic ideas ceased to exert strong influences upon the development of Romanian literature. Their relatively short life is proof of their failure to have offered long-lasting and sound solutions for the crisis that generated them.

Robinson in Wallachia exhibits plenty of both incipient and late sămănătoristic clichés, but it can hardly be labelled as an exclusively sămănătoristic product. Unlike the pure sămănătoristic productions, Gorun's book tries to offer some solutions for the state of things it presents.

It is commonplace that most of the writings grouped round the 'Sămănătorul' review, strongly animated and urged by Nicolae Iorga's personality and verve, embarked upon the dissemination of the typical sămănătoristic propaganda, criticising and accusing, but scarcely giving any directions for improvement:

> *"Within the trends of ideas of romantic-anticapitalist essence, the Sămănătorism holds the peculiarity of advocating nothing... All, or nearly all, is but a flow of critical imprecations. Things are being denied, and violently so, but nothing is offered instead."* (19)

In writings of a pure sămănătoristic bias, besides the presentation of the rural-urban discrepancy and the overstressed adversity against city life, frequently occurring topics were also those of the unadaptable intellectual or the intellectual's duty to 'raise' the Romanian village. Picturesque, idyllic descriptions were constantly employed and most of the plots were wrapped in a thick layer of rural romanticism. Immobility, lack of energy and dynamism, a blurred atmosphere and dubious patterns of human existence also underlay this kind of writing. Later, Al. Vlahuță and his collaborators Paul Bujor and Constantin Stere, grouped round the 'Viața românească' review, or H. Sanielevici, founder of the 'Curentul nou' review in Galați, all of them promoters of the newly appeared trend, Poporanismul, started to speak about the necessity of a rural democracy, of which the instruction and the emancipation of the masses were essential characteristics.

Although basically a sămănătorist in most of his writings, with his Robinson in Wallachia Gorun shows that, out of the propaganda that characterised both the Sămănătorism and the Poporanism, he tried to select and exploit only the progressive ideas and solutions. Ion Gorun did not indulge in advocating and disseminating an undifferentiated sămănătoristic propaganda. In his novel he chose to operate with a so-called archaic village atmosphere only in the beginning and, nevertheless, his village is not presented as totally isolated in its century-old purity. In fact, as the very title of the book shows, Gorun's aim is to present a robinsonade that, through its very nature, is meant to eliminate stagnation, passivity, resignation and, above all, the lack of enterprising spirit. The very nature of Gorun's novel makes itself conspicuous as a progressive tendency, an attempt to do away with the monotony and inefficiency of the sămănătoristic dogmas.

Without being able to detach himself entirely from the sămănătoristic clichés, Gorun tried to give a sort of a compromise presentation combining decorative idyllic aspects with those engendered by the gradual development of Romania towards capitalism. In doing so, he readily abandons the sămănătoristic tendency of restoring the village life that would-be patriarchal atmosphere by supporting the revival of the ideal landlordism of noble descent. The old, amiable landlord, preserver of the national dignity, the omniscient caretaker and 'gentle father' living in harmonious communion with his subjects is not to be met in this village. This careful evasion shows that even writers of a strong sămănătoristic bias doubted the existence of a once serene, trouble-free life which they were supposed to advocate.

At the turn of the century, one form of pervasion of the capitalist relationships in Romanian rural life showed itself in the persons of the kulaks. Their hideous portraits and negative influence on the peasants' life also formed the object of many literary productions of the age. Soon enough however, the kulak's image came to concentrate all the evils manifest in Romanian rural life as the conservative representatives tried to overstress and deform reality in order to distract the people's attention from the real causes of the increasingly acute rural crisis. Instead, the patriarchal image of the ideal landlord and the rural serenity it radiated were set forth and at the same time presented as destroyed by the noxious influence of the rapacious kulaks.

This was therefore another facet of the peasant crisis at the turn of the century, when a new land reform was systematically delayed by the government in power.

In Gorun's village, Scăieni, no notorious kulaks of the Tănase Scatiu type are to be found, yet the adversity against capitalist relationships invading the rural life is made obvious from the very start. The wood-cutting business that spoiled the peasants in this village by supplying them with a ready gain in cash and consequently making them abandon or modify their old pattern of life is a means of displaying:

> *"...severe indictment of capitalism, seen as unnaturally implanted in a patriarchal zone. It was a romantic criticism of capitalism, often violent and, more often than not, a legitimate one, springing out of the belief of some rural intellectuals who thought that they could change the natural course of sociological laws through sheer polemic enthusiasm."* (20)

Gorun's Robinson, Nechifor Pădureanu, is the germ of what progressive literary figures such as G. Ibrăileanu considered indispensable for the achievement of a rural democracy carried out through emancipation and reform. Having combined some sămănătoristic clichés with poporanistic ideas and solutions, Ion Gorun was aware of the fact that the Romanian literary poporanism was not a mere copy of its reactionary counterpart manifest in the political life of the country under the influence of the narodnicist movement:

> *"The literary poporanism, viewed in its essentials, is not the aesthetic variant of the diversionary trend called the Poporanism and which worked to noxious effects in our political life."* (21)

Having therefore nothing in common with the reactionary side of the trend, Nechifor's mission and, above all, his educational attempts basically remind us again of that typical rural romanticism embraced by remarkable figures of the Romanian literature such as Ioan Slavici, Mihail Sadoveanu, Alexandru Vlahuță, George Coșbuc, and so on. In keeping with them, Ion Gorun also expresses that generous and almost utopian feeling of abstract sympathy for the Romanian peasant.

Considering the socio-economic and political background of these literary trends it is obvious that, however artificial the given solution may appear, they still represent progressive

ideas that animated most of the writers of the time. In this respect, they all embraced Nicolae Iorga's idea that:

"This peasant question is first of all a cultural problem." (22)

It was a positive yet insufficient attitude, and therefore of a restricted span for the solution of the rural crisis. Just as Nicolae Iorga, most of the writers did not realise that the moral and the educational improvement of the rural masses was hardly possible without a sound programme of social reforms. However, all of them tried to point out the huge gap existing between the upper classes and the peasantry and considered it their duty to urge the intelligentsia to turn towards the humble and the poor and at the same time to abandon the cosmopolitan and epigonic tendencies that were about to deprive our literature of its national character. Says George Coşbuc, in his article, Primele vorbe (The First Words).

"We have broken the course of our traditions; we are choking down our laughter at national aspirations and we are forever importing all sorts of literary ideas, totally alien to our Romanian character." (23)

The literary disputes over the young generations of writers, strongly supported by Nicolae Iorga and by representatives of other conservative tendencies, sharply condemned the assimilation of foreign influences - the French ones above all - and vehemently accused the young writers of having forgotten their place of origin. It was again a unilateral conservative reaction that totally dismissed the novelty and, through its exaggerated moralising idyll, trumpeted a noxious, demagogic nationalism.

It is, roughly, against this background that Nechifor Pădureanu's instructional and missionary attempts must be considered and in this respect we are given a rich, fertile ground for the development of his Robinson-story as well.

Ion Gorun's Robinson în Țara Românească (Robinson in Wallachia) was published in 1904 by the Carol Göbl Institute of Graphical Arts in Bucharest, and it was subtitled by the author: Povestire din zilele noastre (A Story of Our Days). The adoption of the Robinson motif is explicitly declared by the title, although it is doubtful whether the Romanian writer ever intended to create a robinsonade by closely following Defoe's masterpiece. We have found no evidence that Gorun could even speak English, and no written document proves that he might have been in any way familiar with Defoe's work as a whole and especially with Defoe's keen preoccupations in the fields of sociology, political sciences or economics.

Unlike other, later Romanian attempts at writing robinsonades (Nestor Urechia, Apostol D. Culea, and so on), Gorun employs the basic and almost universally sanctioned Robinson motif in a more creative way, while adapting it to a totally different socio-economic and political context and which he exploits in an innovative manner.

Again, unlike most of Defoe's imitators, Gorun did not take over sets of events, episodes of symbolic suggestion or character behaviour directly reminiscent of the original hero. From the very beginning of the book it can be seen that the Romanian author turned to this particular motif as he found it suitable for an attempt to supply a remedy for the state of things existing in the Romanian rural life at that moment. Thereby, he added and constructed upon a pattern which, once again, proved open to various approaches.

As Ion Gorun's novel is not very well known, and as it has never been reprinted, a short summary of his robinsonade will be profitable for a better understanding of the analysis to follow.

The story begins in Bucharest, round about the year 1904. A 21-year-old student, sick of the city life and disappointed at the gloomy prospects for the future offered by the bourgeois society, finds himself on the verge of committing suicide.

A short examination of his life as a student shows how he has been vitiated by the bourgeois urban environment, while gradually disregarding his parents' efforts to support him. His name, Nechifor Grozăvescu in the beginning, is also suggestive and sums up the unbalanced character of the hero. Later on, when his robinsonade actually begins, he will change his name into Pădureanu. In fact, all the proper names selected by Gorun for his characters or places have a symbolic tinge of a Caragialean type completing the delineation of the respective characters or places.

To come back, in this 'moment of truth' Nechifor cannot find a way out of the mess he has made of his life. Suicide is imminent and, to complete the background, the reader is given all the premises and facts leading to it: the moral crisis, a nervous breakdown, a farewell letter to a friend, a gun. In this mood, the hero leaves home and town for good. Going towards the outskirts and then out of town, he is seized with panic as he soon finds himself surrounded by darkness in the middle of what looks to him like a century-old forest. Overcome with exhaustion, hunger and thirst, he takes refuge overnight in the attic of a deserted windmill where, scared to death, he accidentally witnesses the sharing of a stolen fortune between two burglars. The daybreak makes him feel safe again. Nature, which at first had a terrifying effect on him, seems quite friendly now and the refreshing touch of its wilderness drives away his idea of committing suicide.

Although a rather trite romanticism permeates most of the atmosphere in the novel Gorun employs, at the beginning, the essential romantic idea according to which external nature is synonymous with harmony, freedom, providential guidance for the human being and, ultimately, life itself. Such ideas take us back to W. Wordsworth's Preface to the Lyrical Ballads and, more precisely, to his famous Prelude.

Partly recovered from his crisis, Nechifor exclaims:

> *"No. Nature is no foe to man! She is the sweetest, most gentle friend... Only, man ought to apprehend her, know her, love her, seduce her, and he should plunge into her realm with bliss and confidence in his heart."* (24)

With nature as a first true support, the image of the cruelty and the misery of city life gradually subsides and Nechifor proceeds in search for a way out of the forest. On his way he meets with a woodcutters' team and the contact with the countrymen is at first as shocking as that with the wild, apparently hostile nature. His first reaction, that of running away, is the outcome of a townsman's idea as regards the image of the Romanian peasant at that time: a sullen, peevish, unmannerly creature dressed in rags, revengeful, wicked and alcoholic. On second thought, still reluctant, he asks them to let him join in and work with them. After a while, the peasants' own suspicion vanishes, and when they are assured that he is no criminal or some fugitive convict they take him along to their village, Scăieni. There, Nechifor is accommodated in the home of Gheorghe Ion Coman - *badea Gheorghe* (25) -, who will even adopt him later.

By and by, Nechifor becomes affectionate of his new company and he gets to understand their true nature and their way of living, in eventual admiration of and respect for their simple, yet sound and meaningful philosophy of life. The kind-hearted Ion Coman helps Nechifor how to handle all kinds of tools. At first, the young man is a workaholic, desperately trying to forget his past. Little by little, however, he comes to understand the true meaning of work and, when he considers himself to be fully integrated with the new environment, his

educational background and intellectual training helps him to analyse the life of the country people and the state of things in the village.

Scăieni used to be a prosperous place once, and the inhabitants would take good care of their households, orchards and fields. Gradually, they gave up on their traditional farming trades, attracted by ready profit in the form of cash offered by a dubious character, ostensibly an engineer, for felling down the forest in the neighbourhood. All of them became the victims of this transient enterprise which, although a good source of hard cash, at the same time brought their households and lives to ruin. Every soul, save for the women and children, left home in spring and returned in winter with a handful of money, most of which was spent on drinking at the village pub. With no alternative left, all they had to do was wait for the next spring and start it all over again.

Inexplicable for these peasants, the new situation had gradually changed their way of behaving and dealing with one another. Almost all turned into harsh, quarrelsome, suspicious creatures, stumbling in the darkness of an aimless existence. Even the intelligentsia in the village - the schoolmaster and the priest - could not think of a possible remedy. As a consequence, they, too, deserted their missions and stood in helpless contemplation of the disaster. Their awkward efforts - the priest's boring sermons and cliché pulpit preaching or the schoolmaster's highly theoretical and artificial propaganda - failed to bring about the slightest change for the better. So they gave it all up in eventual discouragement and did nothing but complain that the people had got estranged from church and learning. The teacher took refuge in his intellectual 'ivory tower' and devoted himself to writing a study, pretentiously entitled: Studiu despre țăranul român și cauzele stagnațiunii sale fizice, morale și intelectuale (Study about the Romanian Peasant and the Causes of His Physical, Moral and Intellectual Stagnation).

It is at this point that Nechifor's robinsonade takes full shape. He realises the cause of the evil and, through the power of his own example - an efficient way to cope with the psychological framework of the peasants, as it offers them free choice -, he tries to change things for the better. His decision is made and the following spring he does not go into the forest again. He settles down to work and, by and by, Ion Coman's household recovers its former prosperity. He brings the orchard back to life, takes care of the beehives and poultry, fixes the shattered hen-houses, fertilises the garden and the field. Then he sells some of the fruit and dries the rest for the winter, when he expects to get a better price for it. He also makes good profit selling eggs and, with the money raised, he buys tools, fertilisers and selected seed for the next sowing season.

In a short time, this 'magic of a boy', as the villagers now call him, manages to bring the village back to life and, just as the rest of them, he is:

> *"...enchanted with the secret, till then undreamt-of, contentment at beholding the fruit of painstaking, pondered industriousness, as it is growing and thriving ever more beautiful and plentiful by the day."* (26)

Nechifor, 'the kid', has come to enjoy everyone's respect and, hand in hand with the 'reawakened intelligentsia', he will try to find new ways to secure further prosperity for the people.

In a parallel, subordinate plot, Nechifor does justice in a murder affair and through his own pursuits and investigations he determines the authorities to reconsider a wrong and superficial former judgement that sentenced an innocent and decent villager to the gallows. Assisted by Ioniță, a lad who has trusted in him and everything he has done from the very beginning, Nechifor rescues Stan Oprea, the forester, and ensures that the actual murderers, Oanță and Buturugă (the rascals he chanced to see inside the windmill at the beginning of the

story), are properly punished for their horrible deed. Together with them, all other 'noxious weeds' will disappear from the now sound and clean atmosphere of the village. Blejoiu, the incompetent headman of the village, and the rapacious innkeeper, both of whom took considerable advantage by the local state of affairs formerly, are driven out of Scăieni.

The story is inevitably supplied with a happy ending. Nechifor marries the ex-convict's daughter, Anica, and settles down in Scăieni. Later on he goes back to the world he once left behind, where everyone thought him dead, to take his younger sister along with him. She was a poor girl working as an apprentice in a seamstress' workshop. He takes her along to Scăieni, a place considered by everybody as the ideal environment for a sound, prosperous and virtuous life.

As can be seen, Robinson in Wallachia is altogether different from all other stories included in our previous inventory of robinsonades. In the first point, the motif of the island is altogether missing, apparently.

It is already quite normal to consider the island, or whatever it may stand for, as a *sine-quod-non* element in the making of a robinsonade. For 18th century people, this autarchic setting seemed perfectly fit for a display of their aspirations:

> *"Thus, during the Age of the Enlightenment, the figure of Robinson impersonated the thought of those who wished to cast, to fashion and to restore to the society that cradled them a new world, mimetically shaped after the image and the system of the old one, the sovereigns of which they had become and which brought them glory and wealth altogether."* (27)

As a moral fable of the enterprising spirit of man in a triumphant clash with an apparently hostile environment, any Robinson story needs an isolated setting, usually far from the civilised world and, in a way, free of any 'history' in social, economical and political terms. In Defoe's case, the island provided fertile ground for displaying his doctrinal principles of a keen sociologist, tradesman and colonist, a bourgeois apologist, economist and, above all, a moral preacher.

> *"Many writers on economics and politics had located their utopias on islands isolated from western civilisation, but it was Defoe's unique contribution to begin with a single man."* (28)

In Gorun's robinsonade there is no seafaring adventure, no shipwreck, no island. His is a perfectly continental story about farmers and woodcutters for whom the sea may well be little more than a hearsay reality and travelling is reduced to the forest and back. However, one does not have to be an extremely experienced reader to translate the metaphor of the island into the very community of the village of Scăieni, where Nechifor was transparently 'shipwrecked'.

Although virtually isolated from the so-called civilised world, the island-village is revealed to the reader as 'full of history', socially and economically speaking. Its apparent autarchic character proves, under closer analysis, a small cell of a well-defined socio-economic and historical context.

Different in their respective embodiments, both ***islands*** are reached by the protagonists of the two robinsonades further to a crisis engendered by a break and a transient divorce between the heroes' inner selves and the world around them. This inevitably leads to another important element characteristic of such stories, namely, the idea of adventure - the hero's dissatisfaction with a certain set of data underlying his existence and his desire to change them.

If this operational motif readily applies to both Robinson Crusoe and Nechifor Pădureanu at the beginning, their actual destinies will however part along different tracks - and another reference point has to be considered this time: the idea of chance, without which no proper adventure could occur.

Crusoe's existence, on the one hand, is changed by his restlessness, his lust for travelling, for plunging into the unknown. His adventure matches the inquisitive, energetic and self-reliant spirit of the social class he descends from and whose interests he will forever pursue and defend.

On the other hand, Nechifor's crisis is triggered by his disapproval of urban life and an improper educational system, as well as by his own experience of personal waste in pointless, frivolous pursuits. This sad picture engages the hero's personal adventure toward the extreme solution of suicide: since the world seems unable to supply any adequate remedy, he decides to leave it for good.

Like Robinson, Nechifor starts by committing a sin, and even a more serious one. Crusoe's sin against nature and God - the fact that he abandoned home and family, against his father's will - was in fact refuted by his further happenings. Crusoe was to become by far richer than his decent father and so he proved to have taken, financially speaking, the most advantageous way, wide open at that time.

Considering all premises, it is quite natural that the two heroes should be driven into different kinds of happenings from the very beginning, according to the two writers' respective pursuits.

Once out of the tumultuous and noxious atmosphere of city life, Nechifor's rather abrupt and shocking contact with the external nature of the countryside has the effect of deflecting his initial decision. The instinctive urge of self-preservation takes precedence over all his perverted, intoxicated thoughts. Now Nechifor, like Crusoe before, is on *terra firma* again and his outburst of irresponsibility has been alleviated. The touch of nature brings about the triumph of life over death and Nechifor's robinsonade may safely carry on:

(Nechifor)

> *"What! Can the instinct of life preservation clutch down so deep in the poor human soul that, in spite of the simplest logical thought, it may seize even the reins of those illustrious souls resolved to flee our sensuous world down here? Oh, Life! Oh, Life! How mighty strong you are and how promptly you ordain your claims, wherever the tiniest spark of lust may be left..."* (29)

(Crusoe)

> *"I believe it is impossible to give life-size expression to what the ecstasies and transports of the soul are when it is so saved, as I may say, directly out of the grave."* (30)

Both heroes survive their respective 'shipwrecks' and, at this stage, it is chance that drives their adventure on to their definite establishment in the new environmental setting, featured by a different existential challenge.

Having lost his way in the forest, and frightened to death, Nechifor wanders desperately in search of a safe refuge. The deserted windmill, his first shelter overnight, is a parallel to the tree that accommodated Crusoe on his first night on the island; it gives him both a certain feeling of safety and a 'respiro' to figure out the new situation he finds himself in. The break of the dawn finds both Robinsons with improved moral and, in a way, ready to face what is further in store for them.

Nechifor, however, has not yet reached his *island*. Awaiting for him is still the encounter with the woodcutters's team. When this happens, his first reaction and attitude towards the Romanian peasant is that of the average townsman at the time:

> *"Why, the lot he had read about the peasant, so sturdy and dirty and pellagrous and alcoholic, so famished, starving and naked...and how could such a man possibly be if not callous, wicked and revengeful. What else could he see under the clothing and the appearance of a townsman if not an enemy, and how could he possibly miss the opportunity to take revenge against one who belonged with a rival class, with a different people within the same nation."* (31)

At this stage, nature for both Robinsons - and for Nechifor human nature, too - seems apparently out of control, unfriendly and chaotic. This is emphasised by both Robinsons' reactions and attitude during this transient period of crisis that created the gap, but which will also bridge the gulf between the old and the new co-ordinates of their existence.

Crusoe and Nechifor, each in his own way, try to retrieve a lost way, to re-order and re-balance their lives, to come to terms both with the natural environment and with their inner selves - especially in Nechifor's case. All along their further enterprises they will constantly endeavour to find meaning and to give a moral quality and purpose to whatever they lay their hands on. Life, both natural and human, will be rearranged and enlightened by the human spirit. An aura of restored moral poise, a desire for the purposeful order of a 'blossoming garden' replacing the 'chaos and the desert' are qualities that permeate any Robinson story.

If we analyse this reconstruction enterprise in both cases under consideration we can notice that for Crusoe this primarily involves the idea of space, of some geographical data, whereas Nechifor's mission associates both the spatial and the temporal dimensions.

Both heroes are carriers of a thick layer of material civilisation as well as human experience, yet Crusoe does not try to amend, to add extra meanings and qualities to the pattern of civilisation that he brings along stored in himself. He acts as an almost mimetic re-creator of certain standards of civilisation in another part of the world. The transport is purely spatial and the re-created world checks itself thanks to the master pattern left behind. What separates them is only a couple of thousand miles:

> *"This is not a matter of restoring the atmosphere of some old times, but of demonstrating the perennial character of certain ideas originating in a certain historical moment."* (32)

This explanation may be considered sound enough if we take into account Crusoe's isolation and solitary enterprise, the so-called 'stop of the economic clock'. However, the transparency of the story reveals a recurrent tendency manifest throughout 18th century European literature. The influence of the Age of Reason with its alleged solidity and self-confidence are at work here. A tenable explanation of the attitude towards the time dimension underlying most 18th century fiction is offered by Tudor Olteanu:

> *"Based on an irreconcilable gap in time, the historical novel imposes a retrospective jump into the past for its creator who cannot elude his inherent condition of being a contemporary of his readers. And it is exactly here that the difficulty concerning the historical novel of the century lies: ignoring the historical novel and the chivalry romance, the novelist does not concede to make a switch to the past, but he will transfer the past into the present instead."* (33)

Because of this, for Defoe as well as for other 18th century writers the convention of orality and that of the manuscript proved essential as they best suited the need to put together

the progressive advancement of the oral tract of the story and the regressive moment of the narration:

> *"If the reader of Balzac, Dickens or Zola is first of all made to see the happenings and the progress of the characters, a fact that makes him little if anything of the narrator's presence, the reader of Defoe, Richardson, Marivaux, Proust or Rousseau is required to contemplate, first and foremost, the narrator's performances and their timing."*(34)

The 18th century writer descends and melts with his characters, creating that harmony which perfectly mirrors John Locke's vision of time. The narrator's omniscient character and the lack of mobility and becoming are obvious in Robinson Crusoe. All temporal discrepancies are consequently eliminated. The narrator achieves this by overlapping three temporal dimensions: that of the events as such, that of their transcription and, finally, that of their reception. In our case, Crusoe being himself a narrator, he does not seem to exhibit the manner he experiences his own becoming; all he does is to offer bits of verified human experience.

For Defoe this was of considerable help, both for the desired moralising effect of the story and for stylistic considerations, as this proved to be solid ground for lending credibility and for exhibiting the alleged 18th century optimism and 'everlasting ideas'. As Arthur Lovejoy mentioned:

> *"The common thesis of the 18th century optimism was the proposition that this was the best of all possible worlds."* (35)

It is true that the Crusoe who leaves the island after about 30 years is not very much different from the one who initially came there. Of course, he is older, but in spite of it he is ready to embark on similar experiences again. In a way, the end of the story can be labelled as: 'mission accomplished'. The hero leaves the setting, himself basically unaltered after having carried out the transfer of civilisation while creating a European-like oasis on that desert island. In fact, even his further adventures show Crusoe as a flat character adding nothing to what he was initially endowed and credited with by Defoe.

A Robinson-type character, Crusoe cannot justify himself and live on as a powerful and meaningful character if torn away from the island. It is only within this framework that Crusoe reveals himself as a well-contoured character who is set to work with precise objectives, of which the moral fable prevails. It is again only within this context that Defoe's obvious intention could be achieved, namely, to create a story dedicated to man and to set forth an archetypal example and a pattern of human conduct meant to help man work through difficulties in either ordinary or extraordinary walks of life.

Ion Gorun's hero also stores up in himself a certain load of socio-economic and cultural reality, yet the bypass this time is not operated in an apparently 'empty' environmental setting. Nechifor's 'island', the village, is just another part belonging to the same socio-economic context. However, the way the author presents the village and what it will actually stand for, both for the hero and for the writer's purposes, makes it function perfectly as the island of Nechifor's robinsonade.

In the beginning, the village means what Nechifor calls '*Limanul*' ('the Haven'), after his initial adventure that might have well turned to disastrous consequences. Further on, this spot of land, autarchic and isolated enough, both geographically and by the force of the socio-economic and political circumstances, will show itself most fit for the development of a robinsonade.

In both cases the island is the refuge and the cure for the initial crisis and alienation experienced by the two heroes. It is this same island that later helps them return to good

communion with their fellowmen - a fact especially obvious in Nechifor's robinsonade. The feeling of frustration and alienation that seized Nechifor when he lived in town steadily fades away and the hero regains his confidence in man. Paradoxically, the same holds true for Crusoe: his stay on the desert island does not bring about alienation and Crusoe is not turned into a primitive savage.

Through his island, Crusoe communicates with his fellow-beings all the time. The difference here is again marked by the temporal dimension. Unlike Nechifor, Crusoe communicates with people belonging to his past, to the world he has left behind. Nevertheless, the genuine communication is brought over to the present through Crusoe's famous log-book, an essential element in the construction and for the equilibrium of Defoe's robinsonade.

Both Robinsons are therefore initially forced out of a certain set of data and then both prove good guardians of a given standard of accumulated experience which they are ready and willing to make use of. What distinguishes them is, of course, the different accomplishments imposed by the two different sets of socio-political and moral desiderata.

Besides the greatness of the moral fable viewing human nature as such, and only vaguely sketched in Gorun's book, through the transparency of his missionary activity, Crusoe also instructs on another issue specific for the epoch. This was represented by the colonising tendencies of the time, strongly imposed by the rapid development of trade and facilitated by the capitalist expansion of England with its steady growth into a great maritime power.

The alleged freedom and autonomy of the individual, together with the unsatiated desire of getting most profitable advantages out of any setting make Crusoe disregard national boundaries, sex, colour or religious beliefs. Whereas Crusoe colonises new territories, the so-called missionary characteristics of Nechifor's robinsonade are mainly directed toward the salvation of human beings who have gone astray, to the annihilation of retrograde social prejudices that have gradually brought the village and its inhabitants to the condition of a wreck.

Each in his particular way, the two Robinsons are involved in a clash with an apparently hostile environment - an essentially natural one for Crusoe and a primarily human one for Nechifor. Both Crusoe's contemporaries and the posterity do not seem to be indebted to him for having created a 'new quality', but for having sanctioned a master-pattern of human enterprise and proved the validity of a then progressive social class and economic creed.

Nechifor, on the other hand, does create a new quality eventually - provided, of course, that we consider this within the limits of the ideology in fashion at that time.

As creators of their own specific 'norms', Crusoe and Nechifor show that they both know something that their *islands* do not. They both create an order strongly defended against any attempts at considering it a utopian one. It is an order built on real elements, which gradually grows enriched through work and practical terminology. Man and the natural environment, that is, nature and nature *per se*, fully meet in happy marriage in both robinsonades. In L. C. Knight's terms of analysis as employed in his study on William Shakespeare's Macbeth:

> *"...nature in its wildest sense can be evoked as an order underlying, invigorating and in a certain sense offering pattern for human nature."* (36)

This applies perfectly to any literary work conceived in the form of a robinsonade.

Both heroes' adventures verify themselves in the fact that Man is the inhabitant of both worlds - and, above all, that he is free to choose. It is this choice that, in Crusoe's case, rejects all possible interpretations as a 'back-to-nature' story. Similarly, Nechifor's choice

turns him into the creator of a new quality, a satisfactorily progressive step if we consider the state of things that generated it.

Both heroes conquer the environments that they are confronted with. They do not return to the 'elements' and do not develop themselves into flat, stylised characters like those created by W. Golding in his Lord of the Flies.

In his novel, Golding primarily concentrates upon the conflicts of one human being, and therefore social features are scarcely apparent:

> *"His heroes are more aware of elemental nature than of social adaptation. They are flat and stylised; they do not seem to belong in novels, at least not in those we are used to. Golding's psychology shapes his novels. He wants to give the 'poetry of disorder' and not the 'science of order'."* (37)

Of course, Gorun's robinsonade places itself at the other end of the string in this respect. His, as well as Defoe's robinsonade, is not meant to plunge, to a degenerating effect, into a universe of fear, violence and ultimately human inadequacy.

The two Robinsons are creators of that 'happy garden' and there is a prevailing sense of sanity and percipience that always goes with the making of a robinsonade. For a suggestive contrast in this respect, the famous Shakespearean quintessence given in Macbeth's final words does not possibly apply here:

> *"It is a tale*
> *Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury*
> *Signifying nothing."*

These heroes are not violators but creators of those values which give significance to duration. Their stories are not devoid of meaningful relations and do not degenerate into a plane and senseless repetition. Time's power is positively relevant here, and their 'tales' do signify a lot.

It is, again, commonplace that Robinson Crusoe, just as journalism before, was Defoe's pulpit from where he could preach to his fellow-Englishmen on all topics dearest to his heart. Yet, in this respect, both Defoe and Gorun dressed their educational and moral enthusiasm in the representation of concrete material goods, rather than offered tracts of dogmatic propaganda.

Both Robinsons are educating through the language of things rather than that of concepts. Their experiences, while acquiring symbolic values, are strong assertions of the power of the example. It is the example as such, and not its theorisation, that concentrates the two writers' literary attention. Crusoe's and Nechifor's universes are gradually conquered and humanised with a very strong weapon, namely, the language of physical objects, a genuine orchestration of practical terminology. This is what makes possible that display of triumphant achievements, a leit-motif of all classical or otherwise positive robinsonades. Inevitably, therefore, the vitality of the character's enterprises, and not its idiosyncratic picture, is of primary interest. The deed proper is placed above everything and the heroes exhibit themselves through what they do and not by what they are.

Speaking about Defoe's characters, E. A. Baker suggestively comments:

> *"All his men and women are extremely simple and strikingly bare of idiosyncrasy. [...] He put interest not in personal traits but in what the people of the story do and undergo and what effect it has upon their lives."* (38)

As a matter of fact, this perfectly verifies Martin Heidegger's opinion that man is not only existence, but equally co-existence. This idea was taken over by Mihai Ralea and Traian Herseni:

"That is why the humans are constantly compelled to accommodate their existence to co-existence; that is how culture and civilisation appeared, and their foremost and perennial means are to cultivate and civilise the people, to fashion them for socio-cultural life, for more than sheer biological existence, for noological experience."

(39)

Experience and experiment are equally at work in both robinsonades, yet the absence of the psychological dimension is obvious in Robinson Crusoe as against Gorun's work. The environment, for Crusoe, is no means of expressing inner feelings. In fact, it is the period when the 18th century novel cultivates a so-called quality of the objects, making its escape from the universe of feelings:

"If we do not consider Cervantes, Defoe, Sade, Dostoyevsky - and it is only then that we shall understand why Malraux quotes these novelists as the only few who will resist anxiety - we shall see that, for the first time, the novel escapes from the universe of emotion, a context that originally swaddled it in the form of the chivalrous romance, these novels that cradled heroism in such benign, feminine qualities. Even the picaresque or the social novel, the novel of a Lesage, Balzac, Zola - to say nothing of Dickens - used to aim at tendering the heart, a feature on which such novels built their pathetic dimension." (40)

The objects exist and populate the world of the hero but they do so only through their nominalisation and not through the relationships established among them or their possible influence on the becoming of the hero. Every success, every step forward is for Crusoe a reason for momentary joy which soon becomes part of the list, an inventory entry. They all come and go, not without being carefully recorded in the log-book, but they do not interfere with the equilibrium of the hero, who is always available and fresh for new enterprises. Once constituted, this inventory remains unchanged to the end, and the relationship of man and object does not seem to be enriched at all.

"With little more than its nominal existence, the object has an emblem of immutability attached to it. The novel of the Enlightenment shall remain, for some time, dependent on a static outlook on experience, in the way John Locke formulates it." (41)

In Gorun's book we do not have this overstressed empiricism. Nechifor's co-operation with the objects that surround him is different. In his case, it is the very world of the objects that underlies his becoming, his new and modified existence.

The relationship man-object does modify Nechifor's personality and psychological background. At the end of the story, the image of a matured Robinson emerges - aged, but at the same time rich with experience. By becoming part and parcel of the new life, to which he contributed substantial dedication and which he is determined to continuously improve, Nechifor can no longer abandon it or think of any other way of living. The end of Gorun's story does not resemble the end of the island episode in Crusoe's case. His robinsonade may continue, revealing other possible facets and spheres of interest, whereas any advancement of Crusoe's story beyond the island episode is merely redundant.

A new way of living does not only save Nechifor but also absolves him of his original sin, creating a perfect balance between the beginning and the end of the story. By its very nature and motivation, Nechifor's robinsonade appears as the beginning of a long way to go, whereas Crusoe's is a perfectly rounded and successfully accomplished account. In fact, both the critics and the reading public looked upon Crusoe's further adventures as a flat tautology

compared to the initial story, a mere commercial speculation after an original smashing success.

To come back to the world of objects populating the two robinsonades, it is also obvious that, by the very nature of the story, Nechifor's attention is not ultimately focused on things. Unlike Crusoe, he does not move about in a world of objects for such a long time and, therefore, the cataloguing of the outer world and the emphasis on the generalising and not on the evocative power of the words is not highly relevant or necessary.

In this respect Defoe and his Robinson Crusoe anticipate J. J. Rousseau, in that, for the latter, nature was like a temple where social relations were supposed to be as pure as possible. In his educational principles, the contemplation of the natural environment was essential and by far more important than the study through reading. Crusoe's silent dialogue and co-operation with nature and the objects around him perfectly suit the requirements of Rousseau's desiderata. In his deliberately emphasised educational tendencies, Crusoe cancels the difference between the meaning and the form of the word. This is because instruction in general and education with children in particular requires that the form of the word should not take precedence over its meaning; otherwise, the learner's attention would be distracted and he might forget the very substance of the signified object.

Having discovered the natural substance and origin of ethics, Crusoe perfectly manages to educate through the language of things, both when he is alone and when Friday makes his appearance.

It seems therefore quite natural that Rousseau, in his book Émile, ou de l'éducation, 1762, mentioned Defoe's novel as most significant and efficient for any child's education:

> *"I want him to learn in detail everything one would have to know in such a case, not through books but through things."*

It is true that, in his robinsonade, Ion Gorun is far from having created famous episodes like those in Robinson Crusoe: the dressing of bread, pottery making or the hunting or taming of the wild goats. Such episodes, by now classical, universally valid pieces of experience for man's education epitomise Defoe's instructional tendencies through immediate and silent dialogues with nature and the world of objects. At the same time, they exhibit the writer's exquisite ability in handling the circumstantial detail technique, due to which invention appears even truer than plain truth.

Nechifor realises that there is a possible way out of the decaying course of events in Scăieni, and is determined to no longer limit himself to the condition of a mere onlooker. This is the moment when the hero starts to interfere with the 'wild nature' and the state of disorder on his 'island'. It is also the moment when the storage of civilisation, education and experience he carries along with him is set to work. At this point, his choice is definitely made.

In the beginning, just like Crusoe, he always analyses former failures and tries to make out the right to follow. For both heroes, this survey of previous failures is also a good opportunity to estimate the human potential available at the moment. As the priest's and the school master's propaganda failed to amend the situation, Nechifor turns to good account the knowledge derived from the books he once referred to and exhibits himself as an example of fruitful enterprise and efficiency. No preaching, no propaganda, but again that silent, purposeful and, for a while, solitary array of an individual's capacities.

Nechifor, like Crusoe, learns how to do a job properly: he experiments different variants and eventually comes to understand that work is both the most valuable of human activities and the only reliable way toward both spiritual and material achievement. The leit-motif of Defoe's creed, according to which *'God helps those who help themselves'*, is obvious in Nechifor's determination to try his chance in the new environmental setting where fate has

thrown him. This is done in spite of the pessimistic attitude of the others, including good old Ion Coman:

> *" 'Well then, farewell my child, and God bless us both with good luck...'*
> *'Don't worry, papa Gheorghe; a man's own diligence makes his luck', answered Nechifor."* (42)

Step by step, Nechifor is surrounded by increasing inventories of practical terminology that abide his successful enterprises. However, he does not need any diary or log-book to stress or confirm his steady progress. Crusoe's record of his daily ups and downs are replaced by Nechifor's positive influence and fruitful materialisation of personal example among the inhabitants of the village. His success is checked on the spot, so there is hardly need for a written record for posthumous use.

From the very beginning, Gorun's hero has also an aid and supporter in the person of Ioniță, the young lad who joins him in his incipient attempts and soon becomes his close friend. Their relationship goes beyond the framework of Nechifor's rural, agricultural missionarism. Analogous aspects may be identified with the relationship between Robinson and Friday, but there are certain underlying features that differentiate between them. Differences can be traced back both in the spirit of the age and in class affiliation, which in Crusoe's case is fairly explicit and actually stamps his entire existence. Yet, the re-discovery of the natural basis of ethics may operate as a common denominator of both cases.

Crusoe's social relationships are also the outcome of his economic individualism and egocentrism (43). This is valid not only for Crusoe, but for all of Defoe's characters. The overall impression leads to the conclusion that guarantee and trust in man is always estimated in terms of commodity values.

Crusoe's way of dealing with Xury, with '*his man*' Friday, with the lady in London, as well as the famous 'drawing of the lots' episode when the future inhabitants of the island are each supposed to choose a wife, are all telling proof of this prevailing egocentrism and individualism. It is all a natural outcome of the utilitarian Age of Reason and the development of capitalist relationships, with a strong bias toward economic specialisation.

To better see the difference between the two Robinsons in this respect, we must not forget that Nechifor is an almost exclusively sămănătorist Robinson. His educational mission is meant to supply a kind of *deus-ex-machina* remedy for the disastrous condition of the Romanian village at the turn of the century. However artificial this task may appear, if seen against the socio-political and economic background of the age, his robinsonade is a perfect sample of man's adjustable potentialities and undrained energy in the service of a good cause.

Starting to teach the illiterate Ioniță, suggesting to the schoolmaster and the priest the efficient way to turn their missions to good account, Nechifor acts as an invigorating spirit and does not in the least turn into a dull propagandistic preacher. In fact he himself learns a lot, both theoretically and practically. He goes to the city and buys books that will reveal to him the secrets of modern farming; then he further disseminates his acquired knowledge, both through his own example and by offering good advice to whoever applies for it.

There is wisdom, resolution and commitment in all Nechifor's pursuits, and a detailed survey is given of all his accomplishments as well as inevitable difficulties. He is always ready to help the villagers and everything he does is meant for the prosperity of the village and its inhabitants. Before long, his endeavours yield and the whole village looks like a beehive:

> *"Arms were toiling all round, forging a fresh large garden out of the barren, derelict old one."* (44)

The hero's refreshing touch succeeds in turning chaos into order and, through fruitful and well-planned exploitation, the wilderness - both natural and spiritual - is humanised. The obvious changes will persuade even the priest and the reluctant teacher to change their attitudes in dealing with the villagers:

> *"Now, there's the trick! The churchman to stoop and learn from the mob and not the mob from the churchman..."*

Or again:

> *"And in the whirl of so great transformation and invigoration, Mr. Ionescu himself had taken heart a little and his lofty reformatory spirit, claiming radical changes in the very groundwork of the society, had somewhat abated. Before any reformation of the groundwork was done, he was happy to have managed - even beyond his expectations - to unveil for his schoolchildren the secrets of cultivating vegetables and weaving straw and reed into much profitable basketry, replacing, at least for the moment, all the equalising principles of a righteous economic distribution."* (45)

The teacher's socialist and communist ideas, collected from his red booklets, show that this kind of propaganda was available among the intellectuals at that time even in remote corners of the country. In fact, these were the incipient manifestations of the future radical changes which, at that historical moment, appeared as rather utopian and far-fetched. Gorun does not hesitate to allude to such ideas, to the extent as he opposes them to Nechifor's immediate, practical success at local level. As a matter of fact, in dealing with their heroes' accomplishments, both Defoe and Gorun try to present and to carefully account for the respective feats so as to avoid any possible utopian considerations.

Literary critics along the centuries have frequently attempted to disparage Defoe's Robinson Crusoe and take it for a piece of sheer utopian writing, imbued with primitivism and highly improbable. It is no accident that these approaches have always been overruled by solid argument against any tendency of minimising Defoe's masterpiece.

As Ian Watt showed, by reducing this hero to a mere 'economic cell' in order to make him survive, Defoe strongly pointed out that Crusoe's silence and solitude does not degenerate into primitivism - on the contrary, it turns into a functional and triumphant struggle (46).

The wreck, another issue frequently controversial in literary criticism, was often used to diminish Defoe's idea of self-reliance and to label his novel as a 'setting back of the economic clock'. In this case, chance plays an important part again. True enough, one does not always have a shipwreck at hand, to supply them with tools and victuals. But again, we must not forget that Defoe conceived his story as a taught lesson and, without the wreck, it would have all been less captivating and, consequently, less instructive. The motif acquires the value of a symbol, as *"the biggest maggazin of all kinds"*, as Crusoe calls it. Moreover, it can represent the wreck of normal life and order, and then it may be considered an open door for an array of the individual's inexhaustible resources. After all, the wreck is the only vestige left of a world of which the protagonist has been locked out and, paradoxically, it is an element that compensates for much of the fantastic character of the story.

The shipwreck for Crusoe and the wrecked condition of the village and its inhabitants for Nechifor seem both part of their respective 'islands' and offer a fresh and a fertile starting point for their robinsonades. Through these two little universes of concrete elements, both writers will build up a narrative devoid of any irony and misanthropy of the Swiftian type. A world of pure fact and closely described objects are underlying features of this typical kind of narrative.

Programmatic as it may appear, and of lesser scope, the accomplishment of Nechifor's robinsonade is also carefully observed by Ion Gorun. Far from matching Defoe's skill in

handling narrative techniques, he manages to persuade his readers that Nechifor's enterprise is a possible and credible solution.

Although most of Defoe's contemporaries were averse to his abilities of a social economist and political analyst, many of them sharing Saintsbury's idea that a man had rather hang himself than read Defoe for anything but his stories, research on this work along the years strongly supported Defoe's knowledge as regards the body of the material presented, as well as his complex preoccupations in the field of economics. In this respect, the following comment seems suggestive:

> *"Defoe transmitted his economic theories into fiction in much the same manner as he fictionalised his economic tracts."* (47)

A forerunner of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's theories and well acquainted with John Locke's ideas, as well as with the works of other prominent philosophical, literary or political personalities (Josiah Child, Thomas Hobbes, Davenant, Niccolo Machiavelli, The Third Earl of Shaftesbury, J. Harrington, and so on), Daniel Defoe tackled in his works a wide variety of economic, social and educational aspects highly significant for his country and government.

Poverty and the miserable living conditions, drunkenness, vagrancy and the children's education, the opiating tendencies of the church, the world of business and trade, etc., were constantly present in his writings.

In dealing with the problem of poverty, Defoe looked for solutions in the economic conditions of the country and the society he lived in, rather than blamed the morals of the lower classes. As R. H. Tawney mentioned:

> *"Defoe regarded poverty as a social malady upon whose cure the survival of the state depended."* (48)

Without giving a thorough analysis of the matter as such and strictly following the sămănătorist and the poporanist optics, Gorun's 'Robinson' sees poverty only as a consequence of the penetration of capitalist relationships which ostensibly spoiled a serene, patriarchal order.

With both Defoe and Gorun, drunkenness is tackled as a social plague leading to spiritual alienation and material degradation of the life of the poor. In Gorun's book, although present, the matter is dealt with in a more simplistic way. In the beginning, alcoholism is part of the peasant's portrait as seen by reactionary optics, but the prosperity of the new life in the village eventually eliminates it. Both historical and economic documents, as well as the literary productions of the time, sanction that drunkenness, especially in the rural regions, was by no means a negligible aspect. Its roots were running deep into the general picture of the living conditions of the masses. Although a central topic of debate for economists and social analysts, this has never come to be considered a national vice in Romania. Speaking about Defoe's England in this respect, the historian G. M. Trevelyan mentions:

> *"Drunkenness was the acknowledged national vice of Englishmen of all classses, though women were not accused of it. A movement for total abstinence was out of the question in the days before tea or coffee could be obtained in every home and the supply of drinking water was often impure. But tracts in favour of temperate drinking were frequently circulated by religious bodies and anxious patriots."* (49)

Defoe's attitude towards this issue was largely the same but, at the same time, he considered the matter from a more complex perspective. He also admitted that a tenable solution was difficult to offer and that he could not be radical in this respect, as his concern for the life of the poor was often contradicted by his bourgeois principles of supporting trade and business. At that time, distilleries were a huge basis of profit and it is this, rather than the

tea, coffee or the problem of impure drinking water, that made their total elimination impossible.

Here, as in many other cases, Defoe appeals to the consciousness of the masses and, besides accusations, he indulges in preaching common-sense. However, his merit is that of having been one of the first to give an almost complete pattern and image of the situation at large, being aware of its degrading effects on the English social life as a whole and on the labour power in particular.

In Nechifor's village, alcoholism also leaves its vitiating stamp for a while: it is a contribution to the general decay tending to gain ground. Like Defoe in most of his novels, Gorun insists on impending negative consequences: poverty, spiritual and moral alienation, crime, social disorder.

Oanţă, Buturugă, the inefficient village headman, or the innkeeper's booming business in Scăieni - just as the sailors' mutinies and their murderous thoughts, often described along Crusoe's seafaring experiences - are also aspects menacing the desired order and balance in the life of the characters.

Piracy for a great maritime power like England, just like crime, violence and abuse in the Romanian rural life as presented by Ion Gorun, were all utterly negative aspects and front-page topics of debate for the contemporary socio-political life of the two countries. Under such circumstances, both Nechifor and Crusoe take a firm standing and manage to bring things back to their normal course. While doing so, the two Robinsons again exhibit all their arsenal of moralising and educational principles. They do justice and at the same time assume a heroic glory, an excellent opportunity for the two authors to add extra valences to their Robinsons. Crusoe consolidates his position of an absolute monarch on 'his estate', and Nechifor gains more respect among the inhabitants of the village. Once again, Gorun's hero makes proof of his good intentions and abilities as a guardian of the welfare of the community and not of his own, constantly pursuing a better integration of man with a given socio-economic context.

Besides the lack of order and equilibrium, another agent leading to crime in both robinsonades is money. It is perfectly clear that Oanţă and Buturugă committed murder for the old man's chestful of money, just as the mutineers attempted to take over the ship with clear intentions of taking to piracy and accumulating big fortunes.

Daniel Defoe's preoccupations in the field of economics were of a wide span of interest and a considerable amount of criticism has been devoted to the analysis of matters such as his theory of value, his labour theory, the concept of wealth accumulation, *laissez-faire*, mercantilism, money and the mechanism of the monetary system, etc. A comparative approach on this basis would be irrelevant, as Ion Gorun's work and preoccupations are far from providing anything near Defoe's. However, the problems of money and accumulation of wealth interfere with the adventures of both Robinsons.

As shown before, getting rich by fraud is an aspect common to both cases. In response to this both writers, each according to the characteristic data underlying their respective robinsonades, oppose fraudulent accumulation to honest earnings through dedicated work. Of course, Defoe's attitude towards money, as apparent in Robinson Crusoe, is much different from the rest of his productions, fiction or non-fiction.

If considered against the background of Crusoe's exploitation of the island in a most capitalistic fashion, the hero's famous rejection of the money found on the wreck is a paradoxical statement on its uselessness in the state of nature. With this, Defoe supports John Locke's idea according to which value is not inherent in nature, but it is supposed to be created out of it by human labour (50). In another of Defoe's novels, Colonel Jack, we get the opposite side of the coin:

"Jack has to discover the use of money in society whereas Crusoe discovers its intrinsic worthlessness." (51)

Living in a society that made a fetish of gold and silver, Defoe clearly separated the intrinsic worthlessness of money from what it actually stood for in a given socio-economic context:

"The romantic Crusoe can condemn the money, but the prudent streak in his nature cannot resist the temptation to take it away." (52)

Never mistaking the actual value of the goods with their conventional evaluation in terms of money, Defoe agreed with John Locke that, due to the intrinsic value of gold and silver, these became the best means of exchange. At the same time, Defoe did not embrace the univoque attitude of the mercantile system of valuing money as the only form of wealth - an idea strongly supported by Adam Smith later - although, as a true bourgeois apologist, he could not afford to completely overlook it.

What actually proves interesting in the analysis of this matter is the manner in which the idea of money is associated with that of the island in both robinsonades. In Crusoe's case, the fetish character of money considerably enriches the symbolic value of the island. On the contrary, money is an intruder in Nechifor's village through the woodcutting business, to the effect that it brings along prejudice, troubling the traditional image of such a setting as conceived and desired by the poporanistic and sămănătoristic theories.

The issue allows for various and suggestive tracks of analysis. However, the basic conclusion is unable to elude the fact that, if money were considered as a means in itself, the inevitable outcome would be the image of a self-consuming humanity. It is against this background that both Robinsons enrich their portraits and possibly their symbolic acceptance as teachers of humanity, order and equilibrium.

This comparison might be continued, and many other directions of analysis are available for literary criticism. By word of ending, we shall make some considerations on the style and the use of the language techniques by the two writers in their robinsonades. To begin with, we should mention that Ion Gorun's literary as well as journalistic merits and talent can in no way be taken as a match for Defoe's. Gorun was, admittedly, a mediocre writer who scarcely enjoyed the attention of literary historians or critics. It is also true that the romantic, idyllic and often exceedingly picturesque character of the narrative was essentially dictated by the requirements of the two literary trends which more or less sponsored most of the Romanian literary productions during the first two decades of the 20th century. At certain moments in their careers, great literary figures such as Mihail Sadoveanu, George Coşbuc, Alexandru Vlahuţă, Ioan Slavici, were also influenced by sămănătorist and poporanist clichés. Nevertheless, even these strongly biased productions, with often an obvious propagandistic character, still carried along the touch of masterful prose writing typical of each of them - which cannot be said of any of Ion Gorun's productions.

Ion Gorun did not prove an inspired or particularly gifted manipulator of the language. His style is often boringly repetitive, abounding in tiresome prolonged descriptions and redundant series of epithets that overload his prose. Although within the bounds of literary language, his style exhibits a strong affiliation to the above-mentioned trends, which considerably diminish the value of his writing. Because of the specific propaganda, conspicuously forced into the narrative flow, the author unhappily mixes up registers: the newspaper language or the pulpit rhetoric is constantly at odds with sweet, colourful, picturesque descriptions and with moralistic and psychological recipes. First and third person

alternate, not always in an inspired manner, and elevated language frequently stumbles upon the vernacular, full of regionalisms or childish, awkward combinations remindful of fairy-tale atmosphere. All this makes some otherwise accomplished passages fade away in the maze of mixtures and alternations of rhythm and register. The overall effect is a lack of that specific dynamism and concentrated vigour essential for the design and progress of a truly successful robinsonade.

Unlike many other writers, Daniel Defoe became famous gradually and got to be a reference point in literary criticism for his original employment of the language and style. In his case, one can speak about a genuine art of narration. Although loose, lamely ungrammatical or overwhelmingly repetitive, his language has a great force and vividness which definitely ranged his work with the greatest classical productions of the world's literature. Here is an evaluation made by René-Marill Albérès of the overall structural balance of Robinson Crusoe:

> *"Daniel Defoe's abundant, detailed and somewhat scrupulous and austere imagination was in 1719 exactly what Robinson's story needed to achieve perfection of form. Just an extra grain of morality would have made the book boring; just another speck of fantasy would have made it dull; a somewhat less obsessive mood would have sucked its force away. A lecture of the ensuing robinsonades is all we need to convince ourselves."* (53)

The exquisite manipulation of the circumstantial detail, the vividness and efficiency of the rhythm of the narration, the dynamism of his verbal constructions combined with obvious flaws are all melted in an original, unique whole. In fact, any critical approach of Defoe's style makes inevitable mention of these two extreme features. For a suggestive picture in this respect we have selected some critical remarks regarding his art of a narrator. The most of the following quotations will cover only the 18th and the 19th centuries, in order to avoid repetition of already known criticism of a more recent date. Such a survey may be of help for further research as it shows the increasing interest of literary criticism in Defoe's literary and stylistic abilities and shortcomings.

1. *"De Foe wrote many other poetic pieces, and political and polemical tracts, the greatest part of which are written with great force of thought, although in an unpolished, irregular style."*

(Daniel De Foe, in The Lives of the Poets, 1753, attributed to Theophilus Cibber)

2. *"If the language of his narrative want the dignity of great historians of the current times, it has greater facility; if it be not always grammatical, it is generally precise; and if it be thought defective in strength, it must be allowed to excel in sweetness."*

(George Chalmers, in Robinson Crusoe, 1790; the text appeared in fact in his Life, vol. 2, pp. 435 - 9)

3. *"It cannot be the beauty of the style which thus commands the reader's attention; for that of De Foe's, though often forcible, is rather rendered so by the interest of a particular situation than by the art of the writer. In general the language is loose and inaccurate, often tame and creeping, and almost always that of the lower classes in society. [...] To what, then, are we to ascribe this general charm attached to the romances of De Foe? We presume to answer, that it is chiefly to be ascribed to the unequalled dexterity with which one author has given an appearance of REALITY to the incidents which he narrates. Even De Foe's deficiencies in style, his homeliness of language, his rusticity of thought, expressive of what is*

called the Crassa Minerva, seem to claim credit for him as one who speaks the truth, the rather that we suppose he wants the skill to conceal or disguise it."

(Sir Walter Scott, 1834, The Miscellaneous Works of Sir W. Scott, Bart, Edinburgh, vol. IV, pp. 248 - 81)

4. *"The narrative manner of De Foe has a naturalness about it beyond that of any other novel or romance writer. His fictions have all the air of true stories. To this the extreme homeliness of his style mainly contributes. We use the word in its best and heartiest sense - that which comes home to the reader."*

(Charles Lamb, 1903, in: The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb, edited by E. V. Lucas; the text is dated 1829)

5. *"As a narrative replete with incidents, it stands unrivalled for its natural and easy transitions from one part of the story to another, unencumbered by irrelative matter or display of useless announcement. [...] De Foe paid but little attention to the graces of composition. He wrote too fast to study correctness, and seems to have read more for the purpose of storing his mind with ideas, than to express them tastefully. His style is often negligent and sometimes coarse and vervose. Yet there are many fine passages in his writing distinguished alike for vigour and thought, smoothness of language and even elegance of expression; but his unusual characteristics are plainness and simplicity; he writes with ease, and generally expresses himself with force and perspicuity."*

(Walter Wilson, historian of the dissenting churches, 1830, in his volume: Memoirs of the Life and Time of Daniel De Foe)

6. *"The readers of poesy will find little to gratify them in De Foe, beyond propriety of sentiment, keenness of satire, and benevolence of design; and these, probably, compensated with the vulgar for the want of harmony. [...] With the exception of the True-Born Englishman, in which are some tasteful and even elegant lines, the poetry would scarcely rescue his name from oblivion."*

(the same as above)

7. *"Defoe's style was somewhat of the driest. He lacked the poetic touch, and neither in his prose nor in his verse had any of the divine afflatus which warms the blood of the reader. His verses are as poor as common-sense and a stiff manner can make them; and his prose is as uniformly as plain and logical, though not so wordy, as a lawyer's brief. He had the merits of precision and concision, and scarcely ever used a word that would not have been plain to the least educated; but he was utterly deficient in enthusiasm, and had none of the fine frenzy which in some writers stirs the heart as with the sound of a trumpet."*

(Charles Mace, October 1869, A Great Whig Journalist, in: Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine)

8. *"But his careless, desultory, as well as inaccurate style, the result of constant writing against time and for daily bread, no doubt placed him a great disadvantage in the eyes of the polished world, and permitted Swift - the only contemporary whose genius equalled or surpassed his own - to call him 'a stupid illiterate scribbler', 'The fellow that was pillored, I have forgotten his name', without animadversion from his readers."*

(Herman Merivale, writer on political economy; the passage is extracted from a review of Lord Stanhope's History of England, 1701 - 1713, in the 'Edinburgh Review', CXXXV, October 1870, pp. 548 - 50)

9. *"His natural infirmity of homely plain writing, as he humorously described it, might have drawn students to his work, but they ran considerable risk of lying in under oblivion. He was at war with whole guild of respectable writers who have become classics; they despised him as an illiterate fellow, a vulgar huckster, and never alluded to him except in terms of contempt. He was not slow to retort their civilities; but the retorts might very easily have sunk beneath the waters, while the assaults were preserved by their mutual support. The vast mass of Defoe's writings received no kindly aid from distinguished contemporaries to float them down the stream; everything was done that bitter dislike and supercilious indifference could do to submerge them. Robinson Crusoe was their sole life buoy."*

(William Minto, 1879, Daniel Defoe; he was a famous critic and journalist and Professor of Logic and Literature at Aberdeen University from 1880)

10. *"When Defoe turned in the last decade of his life from fact to fiction, the change is not so remarkable as at first sight it might appear. For one thing, his fiction is remarkable like fact. That he invented most of the facts seems almost irrelevant; it is still the factual that interests him. [...] Given his facts, however, he is a master at making truth seem even truer. No one was ever better than Defoe at turning his reading to the uses of fiction, appropriating it to some particular context, making it come alive and appear to be a matter of personal recollection."*

(James Sutherland, 1965, Defoe, Mildner & Sons, London, pp. 14 - 15)

11. *"Defoe's attempts to capture emotions are apparent not only in the elevated diction but also in quantitative increases of the language, such as lists and repetitions. [...] If unsatisfying as a stimulator of high emotions words nevertheless produce an order. Language is repressive of the fearsome inner energies and only obliquely expressive."*

(Everett Zimmerman, 1975, Defoe and the Novel, University of California Press, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, pp. 23 - 24)

NOTES

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6.Opriţă, Mircea, 1983, *H. G. Wells - Utopia modernă*, Editura Albatros, Bucureşti, p. 8.
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10. *ibid.*, p. 14.
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17. Călinescu, George, 1968, *Istoria literaturii române (Compendiu)*, Ed. pentru Literatură, Bucureşti, p.211.
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20. *ibid.*, p. 116.
21. Micu, Dumitru, 1964, *Istoria literaturii române la începutul secolului al XX-lea*, Ed. Politică, Bucureşti, p. 155.
22. Iorga, Nicolae, 13 Nov. 1905, *O nouă scriere în chestia ţărănească*, in: *'Sămănătorul'*, No. 46.
23. Vlahuţă, Al., 1902, *Cărţi pentru popor*, in: *'Sămănătorul'*, No. 3.
24. Gorun, Ion, 1904, *Robinson în Ţara Românească*, Bucureşti, p. 39.
25. 'Badea Gheorghe' was Ilarie Chendi's pen name as director of the *'Curierul literar'* where Ion Gorun was one of the collaborators in 1901.
26. Gorun, Ion, *op cit*, p. 103.
27. Slăvescu, Micaela, 1978, *Preface* to *Vineri sau limburile Pacificului* by Michel Tournier, Ed. Univers, Bucureşti.
28. Novak, M. E., 1962, *Economics and the Fiction of Daniel Defoe*, University of California Press, p. 49.
29. Gorun, Ion, *op cit*, p. 19.
30. Defoe, Daniel, 1965, *Robinson Crusoe*, Penguin Books, London, p. 65.
31. Gorun, Ion, *op cit*, p. 42.
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44. Gorun, Ion, *op cit*, p. 202.
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47. Novak, M. E., *op cit*, p.66.
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52. Novak, M. E., *op cit*, p. 6o.
53. Albérès, René-Marill, *op cit*, pp. 431 - 432.

CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this final chapter is twofold. On one hand, we shall attempt a review of a previous study on the fortune of Daniel Defoe's novel in Romania: 'Robinson Crusoe' si ecourile lui în România ('Robinson Crusoe' and Its Echoes in Romania), by Georgeta Loghin and Hertha Perez (1). On the other hand, considering the scarcity of such analyses and as against these preliminary results, we shall sum up the conclusions of our research.

As the above-mentioned article is the only fairly detailed investigation of the Romanian response to Robinson Crusoe, we shall try to select what we considered to be positive elements and at the same time indicate some of the shortcomings of the study. The latter are undoubtedly due to the pioneering conditions in which this particular topic was approached.

Especially at the beginning and at the end of the article, the authors offer a series of well-grounded opinions on the fortune of Robinson Crusoe in Romania and positive remarks on the book and its protagonist as carriers of a symbolic and universal acceptance. From the very start they observe that in Romania, for a considerably long period of time, Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe has been underestimated, in terms of complexity, as belonging to the level of children's literature. Arguments are provided to compensate for unfair evaluation of a masterpiece:

> *"...the whole becoming of the hero exhibits by far more profound and wider meanings. The immense efforts that enable Robinson to survive, his intelligence, his perseverance and labour capacity, his inquisitiveness and aspiration towards the unknown, the employment of each and every possible means to achieve physical and moral victory become - save for some secondary meanings - a genuine fable of the clash between man and the adverse nature."* (2)

Indeed, the approach of a robinsonade and the estimation of a Robinson-like hero has to be devoid of any biased motivation and must necessarily exceed the primary level of surface-structure analysis. The authors also realise the symbolic and the archetypal value of a character of Robinson's stature and the fact that his ways have to be accepted as a pattern of behaviour, which assign him a badge of universality:

> *"Robinson's true mythical energy, his patience, his resolution, all aimed at defeating the adverse nature, epitomise man's perpetual force; hence the modern character of the work, its permanence and the everlasting value of the hero."*(3)

The diverse nature of the echoes reviewed is considered, and structural differences in various European literatures are mentioned concerning the response to and the adoption and often the adaptation of the Robinson pattern. The differences are accounted for in close relation with certain socio-historical data or local literary traditions. Consequently, the rich and colourful impersonations of the Robinson pattern, wrapped up in a variety of structural coating, are an undeniable reality that has constantly supplied an ever wider range of meanings (4).

> *"The local, historical and social conditions, the absence or the presence of long existing traditions in the literature of adventure of different peoples, as well as different levels of cultural development, all these have led to a diverse apprehension of the work or its theme and, quite often, to the distorsion of the model followed."* (5)

The conclusions of the authors also appear as relevant, a sum-total of justified desiderata with respect to the fortune of Defoe's novel in general:

> *"The huge interest aroused by Robinson Crusoe reveals specific manners in the affirmation of the work in various countries; it exhibits its diverse fortune in one country or another, even new, self-imposed aspects which meet the requirements of certain local conditions and outlooks, the specific preoccupations and ideals pertinent to each and every nation that has adopted this work."* (6)

Similarly commonsensical comments are made on the fortune of Defoe's novel in Romania:

> *"Due to the historical conditions existing in Romania at the beginning of the 19th century - which claimed for a quick development of the nation through work, perseverance and promotion of handicrafts and trade -, the interest of the book was almost exclusively of a moral, educational and programmatic nature. The penetration and the affirmation of Defoe's work have exhibited almost everywhere variations typical of one historical period or another and, in this respect, have illustrated every new step in the literary development."* (7)

What has been quoted so far, however, seems to have little in common with the general manner in which the authors approached the material surveyed, and their analysis does not really warrant all these basically correct conclusions.

From the point of view of our research, a first shortcoming of this study is a methodological one, as the authors indiscriminately divide into two periods both the evolution of the translations of Defoe's novel and that of its echoes, the boundary being Petru Comarnescu's translation in 1943:

> *"The evolution of the penetration of Defoe's work in our country, as well as that of its echoes in Romanian literature andliterary criticism may be grouped into two distinct periods. The first one - from the beginning of the 19th century till 1943 - exhibits a partial and indirect reception of the work, whereas the second - marked by the first translation following an original text - shows a better and more complex understanding of the English writer's masterpiece."* (8)

As already shown in the previous chapters, as a research strategy we have considered it necessary to separate the evolution of the translations from that of the literary productions inspired by this novel. Therefore, if the year 1943 may be taken as a relevant landmark in the evolution of the translations and even of the literary criticism on the subject, the same operational device does not work efficiently in an estimation of the echoes. Obviously, this separation line alone cannot constitute a solid basis for comparative literature analysis and would not entitle anyone to pronounce such verdicts as: *"...partial and indirect reception of the work"*, or again, *"...a better and more complex understanding of the English writer's masterpiece."* Judgments of this kind sound hollow when they are not backed up by convincing motivation.

In other words, this artificially established chronological division is apt to lead to faulty estimations and misleading critical appreciations. For instance, a consequence of this is the fact that G. Loghin and H. Perez are forced to group together the Vasile Drăghici moment, B. Marian's and Radu D. Rosetti's translations or Nestor Urechia's and Ion Gorun's novels, while other translations and adaptations are put together with Apostol D. Culea's novel. As we showed in the previous chapter, Defoe's Robinson Crusoe had produced a pertinent echo in Romanian literature - Ion Gorun's Robinson in Wallachia is a telling example of this - before a direct translation of the original was even available.

It should be added that the authors of the article under consideration made no attempt to distinguish between the various translations of the novel proper, on one hand, and the impact that the novel worked on certain Romanian literary productions, on the other. Deficiencies related to some of the translations are reported in a general manner only, and they are not traced, grouped or analysed as consequences of certain socio-political, economic or literary contexts that might have generated them. This sort of analysis can be most rewarding in that it may offer interesting issues, the more as the numerous Romanian translations of Robinson Crusoe cover an interval of wide social and historical relevance: 1835 to 1971!

Further objections: many erroneous and contradictory remarks in the article seem to be basically due to the authors' failure to have clearly defined and employed the terms **robinsonade** and **Romanian robinsonade**. Similarly, explicit information is not provided on the term 'Defoean substance', which is frequently used in the critical material signed by G. Loghin and H. Perez.

Because of such indiscriminate estimations things grow even more confusing when the idea of the 'model followed' and that of the achievement of a 'Romanian robinsonade' are put together. As used in the article, the term 'robinsonade' appears to be overloaded with meaning, including a variety of elements - although, perhaps, missing the essential one: the hero. In the authors' opinion, these fundamental elements are: the theme, the setting, credibility, credibility, factual realism. Later in the essay further elements appear, also considered to be essential for the same robinsonade: tension and dramatic circumstances, or the dramatism of the facts.

The elements mentioned last undergo contradictory remarks along the analysis. For instance, at the beginning of the article, the authors rightfully mention that:

> *"The meaning of Robinson's adventures is not given by the dramatic circumstances that the hero is confronted with, but by his undrained labour capacity which stands for the universal human desire for activity."* (9)

On the other hand, when the review of the echoes comes to Nestor Urechia's Robinsonii Bucegilor (The Robinsons of the Bucegi Mountains), this novel is quickly dismissed as follows:

> *"Like Ion Gorun, Nestor Urechia does not start from the essential elements characteristic of what has been called a robinsonade."* (10)

And again:

> *"...the absence of tension and of the dramatic element definitely estranges it from the alleged source."* (11)

The motivation given in support of these statements is that Nestor Urechia's novel exclusively serves the Rousseau-istic desiderata and that it totally lacks dramatic circumstances.

The same want of a sound operational basis in the evaluation of the echoes led to superficial and, we believe, mistaken conclusions on Ion Gorun's novel. For G. Loghin and H. Perez, the novel represents little more than:

> *"...a partial adaptation and a distortion of the model followed"* (12),

or:

> *"...a pale construction that ignored the fundamental elements of a robinsonade: the theme, the setting, credibility, realism of the facts."* (13)

A somewhat limited point of view is again obvious when the novel is dismissed as an unaccomplished robinsonade only because it was produced to serve the 'Sămănătorist' trend:

> *"Regarding the literary creations in this first period* [up to 1943, that is], *they were founded by the Sămănătorist movement, against the background of which the first Romanian robinsonade appeared."* (14)

Acknowledging, however, Gorun's novel as a robinsonade, no further probings into the core of this literary work are attempted in support of the originally expressed desideratum - namely, to discover what a Romanian robinsonade is all about. After a superficial presentation of the subject of the book, the conclusions run as follows:

> *"The simple narration of its subject proves that Ion Gorun's story does not descend from the Defoean substance. In the flattest possible way, schematically and artificially, Robinson in Wallachia only meets the requirements of the Sămănătorist programme: the monstrous city, destroyer of the human soul, and hence the necessity to take refuge in the rural world, which is idyllically conceived as the only place where you can find peace and happiness. It is only a few marginal episodes and Nechifor's way of thinking and acting that palely borrow the features of Defoe's hero."* (15)

This statement alone is contradictory enough as, while dealing with a robinsonade, it indiscriminately groups together such elements as the episodes of the adventure, the setting of the story, the hero as carrier of a certain pattern of human conduct or the historical context which triggered the appearance of a novel of this sort. Moreover, the authors consider the historical context as a primordial element in the case of Gorun's robinsonade, whereas the protagonist's way of thinking and acting are dimmed as marginal elements palely borrowed from Defoe's hero.

As a consequence of such research deficiencies along the article, the analysis of the echoes inevitably turned towards encouraging the so-called 'hoest copies' after the Defoean masterpiece, although - just as naturally - they had been originally condemned. After the review of Ion Gorun's and Nestor Urechia's novels, the authors turn towards Apostol D. Culea's book and claim that:

> *"The Adventures of Ion Runcan, the Last Castaway on Robinson's Island, the product of considerably greater abilities and of a more exact apprehension of the meanings of Defoe's hero, represents a more accomplished instance of a Romanian robinsonade."* (16)

As Ion Runcan was awarded the prize of a superior Robinson hero, the authors must have been impressed by the more strident and photogenic pictures telling of the clash between the protagonist and nature, the harsh enemy. Nevertheless, in spite of its shortcomings, the study signed by G. Loghin and H. Perez is the only more extended approach of the subject that we have found, and it has undoubtedly provided our analysis with important clues.

The research carried out in the previous chapters will enable us now to draw certain conclusions regarding the methodological, aesthetic and especially the descriptive literary level. In this respect, we have considered that any relevant analysis of the echoes of a literary work should be carried out in the sphere of aesthetics by properly relating these echoes both to the model followed and to their intrinsic features and value. At the same time, while passing judgments in this respect we also tried to distinguish between the influence exerted by the master-work, on one hand, and the literary merits of the author who has assumed the pattern,

on the other. The manner in which we have structured the material analysed has also led to an implicit methodological idea, namely, that any research dealing with the fortune of an artistic product within the context of a different culture should keep distinct from one another the translations of the respective work, its critical echoes and the artistic productions that it inspired.

If the evolution of the Romanian translations is confronted with that of the Romanian literary productions inspired by Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, for instance, it will be noticed that the progress achieved in translation is fairly independent of the development of the literary productions that drew on the Robinson pattern. The reason may be that works of great communicative potential gain some independence from the infra-structural pedestal of their text by directing urgent flashes of the message to certain areas of the recipient's horizon of expectation. Resonance of the reader's mind with the new idea ensues naturally and, with the more creative minds, the idea becomes productive. The reader of the main source, now himself an author, will breed the idea in the soil of his own specific context, marked by personal and social experience. This experience involves social and historical awareness, ethnic and individual identity, comparable to as many media of diffraction which receive and re-distribute the original beam of light. The result is an adaptation of the revealed message according to personal talent and affinities, or an attunement of it to social commandments, or both.

There may be some time before technical attention is paid to the text itself. Far from being a case of blameworthy intellectual idleness, the delay lies in the wake of commonly human reactions: taste first, and buy next. Industrious and earnest intellectuals are often slow to invest, and choice quality products are often the result of a thoughtful passage from original suspicion to enthusiastic engagement and eventual commitment.

On the other hand, adoption and adaptation of an idea is rather a matter of spontaneity, and therefore much quicker to apply, if not irresistible sometimes. The discourse may take a comparatively free course and requires the creative restlessness of a poet's mind, rather than the ponderous task of a translator's technical qualification. In any case, a self-respectful translator will predictably frown and hesitate before approaching a masterpiece; unlike an original or a second-hand author, he is aware of his unrewarding task in terms of fame, as well as of dutiful responsibilities to both the original author and his own people.

Indeed, good translations will always contribute to the good fortune of artistic productions, to their impact on the audience and to a better understanding of complex, covert meanings. Ion Gorun's Robinson in Wallachia - which we consider the most accomplished, if not the only true robinsonade produced in Romania so far - appeared at a much earlier date (1904) than the first complete translation of Defoe's Robinson Crusoe into Romanian (1943). At this point of our study, tentative translations, although once useful as an operational necessity, are no use reminding again. The reading public at large have already decided on their choice, and so have the critics.

Petru Comarnescu and Ion Gorun appear as the legitimate patrons of the two main directions along which the Robinson Crusoe case was assimilated in our country. Comarnescu is the legitimate winner of the translation race, whereas Gorun has supplied the sample the most compliant with the structural framework of a robinsonade.

Along the course of our study, an estimation of Robinson Crusoe's echoes in Romanian literary productions required an exact understanding of the term 'robinsonade'. The previous chapter displays an attempt to identify the specific difference within the proximate genre, starting from a semantic analysis of the terms **utopia, picaresque story** and **robinsonade**. Reduction to the essentials yielded the respective paraphrases: **topos, narrative technique** and **type of hero**, which provided ready access to a definition of the robinsonade as a 'typical novel structure primarily based on a certain type of hero'.

Specific features to delineate such a hero and such a novel structure would be: the type of adventure, the island (which may be metaphorically represented) and the possible transport of meanings derived thereby: a range of adversities confronting the protagonist; the cult of indefatigable labour; determination and effort spent in the act of reconstruction, and so on.

All this somewhat 'item-oriented' analysis was perhaps necessary because - as is the case with many critical evaluations of this topic - ambiguous interpretations or possible misleading tracks during the investigation may readily occur due to the perfect fusion and happy communion of the hero, on one hand, and such auxiliary elements as the setting, on the other (which is the case in Defoe's robinsonade, in fact).

From a more restricted perspective, a robinsonade appears as an account of the trying experience of an isolated individual or group of individuals confronted with hostile displays of the natural surroundings. In an elementary manner, this has always been assumed as an indispensable ingredient in the making of a robinsonade. However, such limited optics would drive any approach of this kind towards the imitative, even transcript-like manner, rather than towards a constructive one.

This relentless confrontation - an inherent feature of human nature, in fact, and at the same time a cornerstone in the design of a robinsonade - could not be limited to the natural environment. As the previous chapter shows, to follow such a narrow path would mean to plunge headlong into the pool of sterile redundancy and away from every chance of creative alternatives. Also, the conflict man - nature must necessarily include the act of reconstruction, either in its overt acceptance, or else in some ingenious metaphorical disguise. In the absence of the reconstructing effort, or whatever it may stand for, the genuine substance of a Robinson hero and a Robinson adventure curdles to sour stuff.

Faulty evaluations within this analytical framework may also occur unless the research focuses on the hero. The human presence must take precedence over all other components: theme, type of adventure, setting, factual realism, etc. All these elements gain in meaning and building potential only to the extent that they succeed to accomodate the intended type of hero. As a matter of fact, they are designed to serve a well-contoured pattern of human conduct.

As for the credibility and the realism of the facts, they are terms that refer to other planes of novel writing and consequently do not have to be involved with the structural pattern of a robinsonade. Credibility, realism, dramatic circumstances range with the author's pictorial instruments, indeed; they are a matter of manner, but they can be no substitute for the protagonist's figure, or for the setting. Furthermore, the specific manner in which an author handles such a story, with emphasis on either the hero or the setting, may result in the accomplishment of a classical robinsonade, of a picaresque story or a utopia or, possibly, a mixture of them all.

The analysis of the setting along this particular line of research should point out the fact that any kind of setting is apt to serve the purpose of a robinsonade, provided that it hosts the right character. The setting can be altered, and so can the very nature of the environmental challenge, without the least intrusion on the basic claims of a robinsonade. On the contrary, clever flexibility inside the pattern works to the effect of promoting a successful adaptation. Which no longer holds true in the case of the protagonist.

In the framework of a robinsonade, the features of the hero are the most strictly defined. This particular component stands as an 'axis mundi' to coalesce all other elements into a coherent pattern. Heavy concentration on the protagonist is self-implied, since he is the **living part** of the scheme. As such, he is granted freedom of decision, which rings the bell of unpredictability, triggering much of the reader's tension which stimulates the act of reception. The hero is also invested with power to deliberately transform his immediate environment according to his purposes. But the greatest gift bestowed on the human character of the story

is **awareness.** His self-consciousness, the capacity to reflect the universe up to reflecting his own reflections, breaks him free from and brings him in control of the environment and of himself. At this point equalising strategies become inefficient, as an immeasurable gap has been created between the human protagonist and the less than human setting. Setting and character can no longer work at the same level of categorisation, and careful discriminations have to be performed in critical approaches of the matter.

We are therefore inclined to consider that any creative attempt at writing a robinsonade or any critical attempt to approach this model should primarily concentrate on the protagonist. Otherwise, the value of the respective robinsonade may be considerably diminished, even down to the condition of imposture: a pathetic reproduction of the model followed. A faithful copy of the Robinson setting - a desert island - cannot become the basis of a robinsonade, without the hero's will for reconstruction and the ascending dynamism of his human potential in the service of his purpose.

The manner in which the setting is selected and then exploited by the author , with its intrinsic yet complex messages that can be diversely turned into account, will possibly enable most elastic manifestations of the Robinson hero. In a muffled struggle for priority, the setting will eventually yield its original configuration under the compulsion of the protagonist's touch. The success of any robinsonade will be secured by the way in which this 'operating tool', the hero, manages to alter the original condition of the setting while attaching new meanings to it.

The inherent features of the Robinson type of hero and the manner in which the author handles the narrative may be compared with the two sides of a coin. When they match in happy marriage, the result is a masterpiece - of which Robinson Crusoe is a relevant instance.

If proper use is made of these devices and strategies, a clear distinction can be performed among the Romanian literary productions inspired by Defoe's novel in terms of *a)* robinsonades, *b)*children's literature with an obvious educational and instructive programme, and *c)* superficial reproductions of the master novel or works symbolically echoing Defoe's masterpiece and the prototype of the Robinson hero.

a) According to this classification, we have selected Ion Gorun's novel, Robinson in Wallachia, to represent the closest achievement of what has been defined 'a Romanian robinsonade'. The fact that this novel was the product of the Sămănătorist environment is not enough reason to dismiss its qualities of a robinsonade. The circumstances of which the novel was the result were most convincing - to say nothing of the bulk of Sămănătorist writings that flooded the Romanian literature at the turn of the century, or about the large number of Romanian literary personalities who brought their contribution to this special mood.

For a less informed reader of our days this novel may appear as unconvincing, but in no way should research on this matter ignore the diachronic perspective as judgment is passed with respect to quality or value. Within the present study, it becomes imperative to demonstrate that an historical context which stimulates a literary production of this kind will necessarily penetrate the general mood of the work and influence the manner in which the Robinson pattern has been exploited.

In his robinsonade, Ion Gorun employed data underlying the deep structure of the classical hero and his adventure. He applied to this model as a kind of recipe designed to cure the historical crisis of that particular moment. The model worked perfectly under the circumstances, as it primarily featured the encounter between the individual's creative force and an anachronistic social context. The programmatic character of the novel cannot efface its qualities of a robinsonade, the more so even Daniel Defoe's masterpiece abounds in missionary-like tracts on various topics. On the contrary, Gorun's novel appears to be even

more valuable an echo as it applies the pattern to a range of circumstances altogether different from those of the original source.

The analysis of the novel from this angle proves excellent exercise in *"...the study of the filiation of various aspects of the literary phenomenon"*, as Al. Dima put it while formulating the principles and the targets of the comparative research in relation with the natural specificity of the literary phenomenon (17). Although not the product of great literary talent, this novel, as a part of a larger Romanian literary context, provides evidence on the Romanian response to literary messages of European circulation and value.

b) Of the second group of Romanian literature inspired by Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, the most accomplished productions seem to be Nestor Urechia's The Robinson of the Bucegi Mountains (1923) and N. Batzaria's The Little Robinson Girl (1942). In closely following educational desiderata of the Rousseau-istic type, the authors insistently exploited this facet of the Robinson portrait. They deliberately conceived their accounts as lessons of courage and exemplary moral conduct meant for the children, in a literary form that fully meets the requirements of their destination. If understood as such, these novels will have earned a legitimate place in the range of Romanian literary echoes of this kind.

c) According to our classification of the Romanian echoes, we have considered Apostol D. Culea's novel (1947) as a lamentable reproduction of both Defoe's hero and his type of narrative. Comparing it with Gorun's novel (1902), a first-sight reading can hardly take the former as the product of superior literary abilities, especially if the respective moments of their appearance are considered. The way it was written and the manner in which the author employed the Robinson pattern after a considerably long career of Defoe's hero in Romanian literature gives it very little credit in general.

In our opinion, this novel might be considered a robinsonade only in a very superficial acceptation of the term. It can also be hardly called a Romanian robinsonade - except, perhaps, for the facts that it was written by a Romanian author and that the hero was given a Romanian name and descent.

The hero's obsessively recurrent clashes with natural elements of all kinds are always spectacular, yet trite, as the book exploits the environment quantitatively rather than qualitatively. Neither the novel nor the hero exhibit any of the more profound meanings underlying such symbolic confrontations. The message derived is consequently unsubstantial and perfectly unconvincing. A. D. Culea takes over the essential feature of dramatic man-nature encounters in the form of a scenario overcrowded with obsessively heroic deeds, to a near-ludicrous effect. Overwhelming suspense and dramatism of the circumstances choke the faintest suspicion that the author may have intended anything besides just as much. The air, the sea and underwater life have practically no secrets for Ion Runcan, the superhero. Due to the avalanche of wandering and infinitely variegated adventurous feats, the book can hardly be called a robinsonade. The way the hero hurriedly passes through the stages of his periplus brings the narrative closer to the quality of a picaro story than to a robinsonade - or, at the most, it can be considered a mixture of both. The fact becomes even more plausible as the ascending dynamism of the reconstruction act is almost totally absent and, when it abruptly emerges toward the end of the book, it appears as a kind of ready-made element, devoid of its original emotional, educational or ethical charge.

By the way it is revealed to the reader, this picture of the final accomplishment hardly betrays 'the hero's touch'. It is a most rich and shiny picture, yet equally scarce in meanings and curiously disrupted from the copious collection of the protagonist's former adventures. The protagonist's eventual settlement does not appear to result from his endeavours. Moreover, even now, Ion Runcan does not seem to feel at home, but rather a guest in a world that he does not deserve.

The setting is another feature that does not help to bring A. D. Culea's book closer to a robinsonade. The way the author designed and exploited the setting does not urge the hero into the specific pattern of behaviour which ultimately yields significance to a robinsonade. The too frequent, therefore redundant, use of the accident also contributes to its annihilation as a meaningful constitutive element.

All these flaws in the composition of the novel seem to ultimately turn against the hero himself, who fails to acquire a well-contoured physiognomy. The protagonist's traits are largely blurred by a massive collection of ostentatiously dramatic heroic deeds, to the effect of shrinking his picture and effacing his personality, rather than gradually turning him into a prominent figure. At the end of his wanderings, Ion Runcan himself concludes the story by praising his new living conditions which, as he candidly admits, have nothing in common with *"...Robinson's remote and sad story."* (18) Indeed, an archetypal configuration commensurate with the master model would never be a reasonable claim with Ion Runcan..

Further along an analysis of the echoes, a proper understanding of the term 'robinsonade' allows for a distinction between the act of designing a robinsonade according to Defoe's model and other possible ways in which Robinson, as a hero, may exert his influence on another literary production.

In Ion Gorun's novel, where no character is called Robinson, although the story is perfectly entitled to the quality of a robinsonade, the reader can perfectly cover the account without having read Robinson Crusoe. The title of the novel is, in fact, the only suggestive prompt to an informed reader.

On the other hand, Robinson and the Innocents does provide a Robinson character, which, though physically absent, looms over the whole narrative with his impressive stature and transport of meaning. And yet, the story is not a robinsonade. Robinson's fictitious image is ubiquitous and acquires, in the children's hearts, the authority of an icon, summoned simply by calling his name or by recalling details of his appearance, such as his clothes, for example. The island, the next most important element in this context, may also arouse fresh symbolic associations: lost innocence, paradise, Edenic happiness, rebirth of world, etc. And any of these fictitious worlds may receive the visit of Robinson, the carrier of their symbolic values.

The projection of the Robinson character on to such a framework, whose range of meanings adds to those underlying the master model, is an instance of definite acknowledgement of his solid contour, a contribution to paving the hero's way towards universality.

Such works of fiction as Robinson and the Innocents are not necessarily robinsonades, but they enjoy a more dignified status, in that they do not range in the class of inert imitations of a revered prototype. In decent modesty, they pay dutiful homage to the archetypal value of Daniel Defoe's masterpiece.

Robinson Crusoe has exerted a richly differentiated influence and has generated a copious display of cross-cultural echoes in response to a legitimate claim to immortality. The robinsonade, a derivation directly stemming from the impact of Defoe's feat on the world of literature, proves a protean and amazingly elastic novel structure, capable to operate with the most varied economic, geo-cultural and ideological data - a fact that epitomises its perennial functionality and universal value.

Such accomplishments of immeasurable scope are highlights of culture, standing in evidence of man's potential to escape his precarious condition of a slave of time, and giving him yet another chance to bow in thoughtful gratitude before the Author of All Creation, Whose likeness he was assigned to dutifully impersonate.

NOTES

1. Loghin, Georgeta; Perez, Hertha, 1968, *Robinson Crusoe şi ecourile lui în România*, in: *Studii de literatură universală*, tome 11, Bucureşti, pp. 73 - 86.
2. ibid., p. 1.
3. ibid., p. 1.
4. See quotations (27) and (28) in Chapter 2.
5. Quoted article, p. 3.

6.; 7. ibid., p. 13.

8. ibid., p. 3.
9. ibid., p.1.
10. ibid., p. 8.
11. ibid., p. 9.
12. ibid., p. 6.
13. ibid., p. 8.
14. ibid., p. 6.
15. ibid., p. 7.
16. ibid., p. 9.
17. Dima, Alexandru, 1969, *Principii de literatură comparată*, Editura pentru literatură, Bucureşti, p. 207.
18. Culea, Apostol D., 1947, *Aventurile lui Ion Runcan, ultimul naufragiat pe insula lui Robinson*, Editura Socec, Bucureşti, the final page.

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C. ROMANIAN WORKS INSPIRED AFTER DANIEL DEFOE'S ROBINSON CRUSOE

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D. ROBINSON CRUSOE PRINTED IN ROMANIA
(A Chronological List of Publications)

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174. *Robinson Crusoe*, după Ioachim Enric Campe, tradus de Gheorghiu Popa şi apărută la Pesta (cartonatu), 1873, cu menţiunea autorului: " *Junimei române închin această carte.*" (This volume is mentioned by Radu D. Rosetti in his preface to the 1900 issue, together with another two translations: one by Mr. Rîureanu and the other one by Mrs. Adelaida Olteanu; these two editions have not been found.)

175. The 1875 Catalogue of the Socec & Co. Book Shop mentions: "*Robinson Crusoe*, o broşură în 4^0 cu ilustraţiuni mari în culori, tradusă de B. P. Vermont, din: 'Mica Bibliotecă pentru Copii'."

176. *Robinson Crusoe seu aventurile minunate alle unui naufragiat*, prelucrat pentru tinerimea noastră. Cu şese chipuri. Braşov, Editura Librăriei Nicolae Ciurcu, 1891, 160 pg.

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179. Daniel de Foe, *Aventurile lui Robinson Crusoe*, în româneşte cu o notiţă biografică de B. Marian, 'Adevărul', Bucureşti, 1899, 'Biblioteca Enciclopedică' No. 5; 68 pg. cu ilustraţii.

180. Daniel de Foë, *Robinson Crusoe*, traducere de Radu D.Rosetti, Bucureşti,1900; 336 pg.

181. Daniel de Foë, *Robinson Crusoe*, traducere, Biblioteca pentru Toţi, No. 262, Bucureşti, 1908; 112 pg.

182. Daniel de Foe, *Aventurile minunate ale lui Robinson Crusoe*, Editura Librăriei Universale Leon Alcalay, Bucureşti, 1915; 112 pg.

183. Daniel de Foe, *Robinson Crusoe*, traducere, Bucureşti, 1921, Biblioteca pentru Toţi, No. 262; 262a; 262b; 262c; 112 pg.

184. Daniel de Foë, *Robinson Crusoe*, traducere de Radu D.Rosetti, Bucureşti,1922; 142 pg.

185. Daniel de Foe, *Robinson Crusoe*, traducere, Editura Librăriei Universale Leon Alcalay, Bucureşti,1927, Biblioteca pentru Toţi, No. 262; 262 bis; 113 pg.

186. Daniel de Foë, *Robinson Crusoe*, traducere de Radu D.Rosetti, Bucureşti, 1934; 103 pg. şi 4 planşe.

187. Daniel de Foe, *Robinson Crusoe călătorul pe mări*, povestire, Bucureşti, 1936, 'Cultura românească'; 320 pg.

188. Daniel de Foe, *Robinson Crusoe călătorul pe mări*, Bucureşti, 1936, 'Cultura românească' ; 345 pg.

189. Daniel de Foë, *Robinson Crusoe*, traducere de Radu D.Rosetti, Bucureşti, 1937; 103 pg. şi 4 planşe.

190. Daniel de Foe, *Robinson Crusoe*, tradus şi prelucrat de Ad. Z., Bucureşti, 1937, Editura Papetăria Românească ; 64 pg.

191. *Reboux Paul povesteşte micilor săi prieteni pe Robinson Crusoe*, traducere de I. Leonard, ilustraţii de Campbell, Editura Socec, Bucureşti, 1937, 'Biblioteca Noastră', No. 9; 222 pg.

192. Daniel de Foe, *Robinson Crusoe*, prelucrare de Sorin B. Rareş, Editura Ticu I. Eşcanu, Bucureşti, 1938; 112 pg.

193. Daniel de Foe, *Robinson Crusoe călătorul pe mări*, povestire, 'Cultura Românească', Bucureşti, 1938; 296 pg.

194. Daniel de Foe, *Robinson Crusoe*, traducere, Editura Librăriei Universale Leon Alcalay, Bucureşti,1927, Biblioteca pentru Toţi, No. 262; 262 bis, Bucureşti, 1939; 114 pg.

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197. Daniel de Foë, *Robinson Crusoe*, traducere de Radu D.Rosetti, Bucureşti, 1943; 107 pg. şi 4 planşe.

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201. Daniel Defoe, *Viaţa şi nemaipomenitele aventuri ale lui Robinson Crusoe*, traducere după textul original de Petru Comarnescu. Cu 28 gravuri; desene şi coperta de Mariana Petraşcu. Ediţia II-a. Editura ziarului 'Universul' S.A., Bucureşti, 1946; 236 pg. şi 4 planşe.

202. Daniel de Foë, *Robinson Crusoe*, traducere de Radu D.Rosetti, ilustraţiuni de Dadu, Cartea Românească, Bucureşti, 1947; 114 pg., o fotografie şi 4 planşe.

203. Daniel Defoe, *Viaţa şi aventurile minunate ale naufragiatului Robinson Crusoe*, povestire de Cornei Ciucovski, ilustraţia de Jean Granville. In româneşte de Ecaterina Antonescu şi Ştefania Diamant, Editura Tineretului, Bucureşti, 1954; 225 - 258 pg., cu ilustraţii şi erată.

204. Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, Jugendverlag, Bukarest, 1956; 208 pg.

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221. Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, aus dem Englischen von Ludwig Friedrich Viseher, Kriterion, Ferienbuch Reihe, Bukarest, 1976; 461 - 463 pg.

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223. Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, Liverpool, England, Davis Products, Bucharest, Romania, 1981 (D. P. Classics); 256 pg.

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227. Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, the text retold and adapted for the illustrated version. Illustrated by Iacob Dezideriu and Cătălina Iacob, Ion Creangă Publishing House, Bucharest,1985; 120 pg.

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