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The Socio-economic and Religious Aspects in Robinson Crusoe

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CLAREMONT McKENNA COLLEGE

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS ASPECTS IN

ROBINSON CRUSOE

SUBMITTED TO

PROFESSOR WARNER

AND

DEAN GREGORY HESS

BY

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Chapter One: Robinson Crusoe as a Man of Economy

In the novel, Robinson Crusoe, Daniel Defoe examines a wide range of complex issues. Defoe takes the typical adventure theme and transforms it into a thought-provoking reflection of many issues involving society. A blending of economic and religious issues is created by first focusing on economy, then bringing the issue of religion in, and finally allowing for the portrayal of the interpenetration between each. Defoe proves that it is possible to live by economic practices and monetary values while still maintaining a good, moral character. The emphasis on economic issues is extremely apparent, as Defoe calls into question the concept of money and its value, as well as its place in society. Crusoe is first portrayed as a man defined by money and ruled by economic principles. Even when removed from society, he is impelled to practice many economic conventions, such as investment, moderation and the idea of profit. Defoe creates Crusoe to be so greatly influenced by money and the economy in the beginning so as to better emphasize the intertwining of his economic side with his religious side. The Christian values and morals of Crusoe dominate the latter part of the novel. He rediscovers the Bible and its teachings and learns the importance of repentance and giving thanks. The provocative progression in unveiling the many layers of Crusoe allows for the reader to see that the man they thought to be defined by money is rather a man trying to live by the Word of God.

Economic issues are infiltrated widely throughout the novel. Criticism surrounding money-related issues is voiced early on, creating a means to connect various moral issues with economic values. When first reading the novel, it is easy to assume that

Crusoe is a man who is driven by money and its power. He not only takes every opportunity to accumulate money, but he falls victim to believing the fabricated value that is placed on it. Crusoe has been raised in a society that is concerned with social structure and ways to get around the tough economic system. Crusoe's father tells him, "that the Calamities of Life were shared among the upper and lower Part of Mankind; but that the middle Station had the fewest Disasters" (4). Here, Crusoe's father expresses the distinctions between each class; he believes that the upper class live in too much luxury and extravagance and the lower class is always in need of the necessities, yet both are never satisfied and constantly seek for more. From the very beginning of the novel, we then see that being conscious of the economy and class standing was something that Crusoe was taught to view as important and thus implemented this way of thinking into his lifestyle.

Defoe is able to comment on the corrupt influences of society through the actions of Crusoe and the realizations that he comes to make. After closely escaping a shipwreck on his first voyage, Crusoe is still driven to set sail again. Before embarking, he even draws attention to the "evil Influence which carried me first away from my Father's House, that hurried me into the wild and indigested Notion of raising my Fortune; and that impressed those Conceits so forcibly upon me, as to make me deaf to all good advice" (15). Crusoe directly addresses the "evil influence" of society that manifests the idea that we must exercise every opportunity to attain wealth and power. Society places such great importance on rising to the top and achieving monetary greatness at all costs and this attitude is reflected in Crusoe's actions; he shuts out all sound advice and shallowly follows the popular conception that money is everything.

While Crusoe does live out the negative effects of living in a society where money is placed on a pedestal and achieving power seems to be the sole source of happiness, he also engages in economical practices that demonstrate his natural drive to be practical and resourceful. Upon landing in Brazil, Crusoe has left all of his money back in London. Until he can have it remitted to him, he explains, “I acquainted my self by that means with the Manner of their planting and making of Sugar; and seeing how well the Planters liv’d, and how they grew right suddenly, I resolv’d, if I could get License to settle there, I would turn Planter among them” (32). Crusoe acclimates himself to a different country and sets up a plan for his future there. In the meantime, he decides to “purchase as much Land that was Uncur’d, as my Money would reach, and form’d a Plan for my Plantation and Settlement, and such a one as might be suitable to the Stock which I proposed to my self to receive from England” (32). Through these incidents, we are able to see how we can effectively navigate ourselves through the economy. He is unfamiliar with the area and the culture, so he acquires the skills that the people of Brazil rely on to make a good living. He does this sensibly, knowing to only purchase enough land that he is able to afford with the money coming in. This is, however, his first course of action when he gets to Brazil. Crusoe’s first thoughts are how to accumulate money and best profit from it. His economic drive is at the forefront of his mind, as his actions are immediately focused on attaining money. Where others may have sought family or safety, Crusoe’s thoughts are directed on profit and wealth. He does not bother to contact his family or attempt to go home, but instead chooses to continue his pursuit for power.

Crusoe further demonstrates his keen economic senses when he realizes the different monetary values of the country and finds that “my Goods being all English

Manufacturers, such as Cloath, Stuffs, Bays, and things particularly desirable in the Country, I found a means to sell them to a very great Advantage” (32). To recognize the value in his English products shows that he is always thinking about making business moves in situations. Crusoe ends up making a wise transaction, as he now “had more than four times the Value of my first Cargo, and was now infinitely beyond my poor neighbor” (34). Crusoe knows how to make a profit and utilizes every opportunity to do so. Regardless of where he is; at home surrounded by society, in a different country or alone on an island, Crusoe demonstrates his natural skills to live economically and execute smart business plans. His instincts to achieve power and wealth are largely driven by the standards of society and prove to be so powerful that he is truly never satisfied.

Once Crusoe begins to do well in Brazil, he grows weary and wants more, admitting, “I must go and leave the happy View I had of being a rich and thriving Man in my new Plantation, only to pursue a rash and immoderate Desire of rising faster than the Nature of the Thing admitted; and thus I cast my self down again into the deepest Gulph of human misery that ever Man fell into, or perhaps could be consistent with Life and a State of Health in the World” (35). Crusoe realizes his stupidity in leaving a perfectly lucrative situation in order to have more. He acknowledges that it was his own need for wealth that drove him to the most unfortunate of situations, but also notes that it is a mistake that many fall victim to. Here, Defoe is able to use Crusoe’s realization of the negative effects of society as a platform for his social commentary. Defoe feels that society greatly emphasizes the need to rise to the top of the social ladder, as this ensures power. Society also stresses the importance of monetary gain, which creates an egocentric attitude and drive within the population. Defoe creates situations that

explicitly portray the selfish and money driven side of Crusoe, which allows for us to recognize that that is how society leads us to act. As readers, we are able to take note on the evil influences of society as Defoe uses Crusoe as an example of the base motives we often pursue.

Crusoe continues to demonstrate the actions of a person who is a true product of a corrupt society. He acts rather shamefully while stranded on the island, even though he is apart from society and all of its pressure. In order to survive, he often wanders through old wreckages of ships, in search for any useful items that could enhance his living situation. On one of his first journeys, Crusoe finds about thirty-six pounds. On discovering this, he notes that he “smil’d to my self at the Sight of this Money, O Drug! Said I aloud, what art thou good for, Though art not worth to me, no not the taking off of Ground...I have no Manner of use for thee...Go to the Bottom as a Creature whose Life is not worth saving” (53). This telling metaphor, which compares money to a drug, is brilliantly used by Defoe to convey its worthlessness. Crusoe is no longer living under societal circumstances or influences, but is alone on an island; thus, the value of the money has been lost in context and the evil affects of society are strikingly noted. Like drugs, the money is of no benefit, yet Defoe takes the metaphor even deeper.

Crusoe is quickly overcome by his natural instincts to accumulate money and power, stating that, “upon Second Thoughts, I took it away, and wrapped it all in this Piece of Canvas” (53). The use for money on the island is absolutely non-existent, yet Crusoe cannot resist his covetous urge to take it. Crusoe cannot simply walk away from such a great treasure because he has grown accustomed to taking advantage of every

situation he is in. Defoe's metaphor then reaches new heights when Crusoe physically takes the money. Just like drugs, money has become an addiction for Crusoe. To resist the lure of drugs is unfathomable for an addict, yet the application of Defoe's artful metaphor proves that this resistance to temptation is just as unthinkable for Crusoe. If an opportunity to get ahead emerges, especially when linked to money and its power, Crusoe's inner addict arises. You can take the economical man out of the economy and place him in absolute isolation, yet the iniquitous impact of society still remains. The miserly demeanor of Crusoe is appalling, but we cannot help to applaud his great intelligence and work ethic.

We are first presented with numerous instances in which Crusoe establishes himself as being economically conscientious in all that he does. On a day out to hunt, Crusoe finds an "Infinite Number of Fowls, of many Kind" (102). He demonstrates great will-power and understanding when he admits that, "I could have shot as many as I pleas'd, but was very sparing of my Powder and Shot; and therefore had more Mind to kill a she Goat, if I could, which I could better feed on"(102). While most males may have gotten gun-happy, Crusoe, instead, realizes that he has little supply and it would be wiser to not waste his shots, especially on things that would not provide him optimal nutrients, like the she Goat. This sense of moderation was clearly learned from living in a middle-class state and understanding how to manage resources wisely. This is further seen when Crusoe documents that "I was at a great Loss for Candle; so that as soon as ever it was dark...I was oblig'd to go to Bed" (72). If there is anyone that could solve this problem, it would be Crusoe, and he indeed does when he decides that "the only Remedy I had was, that when I kill'd a Goat, I sav'd the Tallow, and with a little Dish made of

Clay, which I bak'd in the Sun, to which I added a Wick of some Oakum, I made me a Lamp; and this gave me Light" (72). Crusoe is able to sufficiently survive on the island because of his resourceful skills that were learned through growing up in a middle-class family and tough economy.

Crusoe further proves to be extremely observant of his surroundings and his supplies. In his journal, he writes, "Having perceiv'd my Bread had been low a great while, now I took a Survey of it, and reduc'd my self to one Bisket-cake a Day, which made my Heart very heavy" (77). Crusoe takes great notice of his stocks and changes his routine if necessary for his survival. In fact, Crusoe's routine is of the utmost importance to him, as he makes a schedule for himself to follow daily while on the island. He notes that, "This Morning I began to order my times of Work, of going out with my Gun, time of Sleep, and time of Diversion" (67). Rather than waste the days away and view his life to be pointless, Crusoe instead establishes a routine for himself. Being an economical man at heart, Crusoe knows that in order to be successful, he must be hard working and disciplined. He maintains his very scheduled day, recording that "Every Morning I walked out with my Gun for two or three hours...then employ'd myself to work till about Eleven-O-Clock, then eat what I had to live on, and from Twelve to Two I lay down to sleep...and in the Evening work again" (67). Crusoe plans his day down to the hour to get the most out of his work and his time. When most would lose track of the day and the hour, Crusoe instead keeps an accurate and detailed account of the days and his activities, demonstrating his need to control and optimize every situation.

The attention to detail that Crusoe has further solidifies his role as an economic man. This lifestyle is so intrinsic to Crusoe that even when on an island, he continues to follow such practices as supply and demand. When he discovers corn near his habitat, he saves the ears for the next season and “resolv’d to sow them all again, hoping in Time to have some Quantity sufficient to supply me with Bread” (74). Just as he practiced moderation by reducing his bread intake due to its low stock, Crusoe also demonstrates his investment skills by growing the corn and committing himself to cultivating this crop as his main food source. He recognizes what he needs to invest in and then capitalizes on it. For instance, he tells us that, “I killed a young Goat, and lam’d another so as that I catch’d it, and let it Home in a String...I entertain’d a Thought of breeding up some tame Creatures, that I might have Food when my Powder and Shot was all spent” (70). Along with growing the corn, Crusoe attempts to raise his own goats to prepare for the future when he has no ammunition. Crusoe is always thinking of the future and planning ahead; these skills are so natural to him and are intelligently executed, but when his intentions are solely for personal gain, it is difficult to remain impressed for too long.

In the first half of the novel, Defoe depicts Robinson Crusoe to be defined and driven by money. Defoe, from the beginning, reminds the reader of the economic struggles that society endures. This puts some perspective on Crusoe’s money-driven attitude because in order to get by in society, that is how one survives. It is not just Crusoe who adheres to strict economic practices, but most people in society who are also living under the tough economy. Crusoe’s father advises him to stay in the middle-class so that he will have the least amount of problems, both personally and economically. Defoe defies his father’s advice, however, and embarks on a life-changing journey. While

in Brazil, Crusoe acclimates himself to the culture and is immediately compelled to make money and profits. Once on the island, his natural economical instincts are significantly demonstrated through his use of moderation and investment. These skills are seen in the planting of his crops and the resourcefulness of his gunpowder and bread. Although he is in absolute isolation, Crusoe proves to be so influenced by money that he does not pass up a chance to accumulate it and enhance his wealth, regardless of its current value to him.

Not only does Crusoe hold this strong sense of monetary value, he also practices how to live sensibly and in moderation. Crusoe lives as an economical man, even when he is without an actual society, and therefore without a real economy. He is so innately accustomed to these practices that he cannot break away from them. Living in an economy where one needs to constantly maintain a certain status or class influenced Crusoe to become such an economic man. Defoe allows the reader to get inside Crusoe's head and understand his reasoning for all of his actions, which helps us to later see that there is more to Crusoe than just a man driven by money. Defoe first presents the character of Crusoe in this light to demonstrate the strong economical side of him, yet follows with an incorporation of his moral side. This allows for a powerful blending of two very different sides, yet ones that can, in the end, be quite compatible.

Chapter Two: Crusoe's Spiritual Development

Defoe interweaves religious morals and values throughout the novel, further reflecting on his own personal beliefs and conveying how he feels society should behave. The spiritual development of Crusoe is used as a means for Defoe to voice his thoughts on how society should act in a morally conscientious way and live life according to the Word of God. Crusoe undergoes notable religious growth while on the island and endures many struggles in his journey. Biblical references, such as the Prodigal Son, the Israelites departure from Egypt, and Elijah and the ravens are incorporated, as well, in order to parallel both Crusoe's spiritual attitude and the changes he undergoes. Defoe stresses the importance of repentance, as well as the message of being thankful for the many blessing of God. These crucial aspects of religion are brought forth through Crusoe's many revelations during his discovery of God; further, his change in attitude is revealed in his relationship with Friday and in his self-reflections. Defoe portrays this religious side of Crusoe that has not before been seen, allowing him to be viewed as not just an economical man, but a moral one, as well.

Throughout the novel, Defoe establishes parallels to Biblical stories in order to apply his Christian ideas to contemporary social matters. The story of the Prodigal Son is alluded to throughout the novel to depict the struggles people face in any faith journey. Robinson Crusoe has a great desire to sail out to sea, but his father discourages him from the reckless activity and does not permit him to leave. Crusoe is eventually tempted to follow his passion and he sets sail. His ship becomes caught in a mighty storm and he immediately makes "many Vows and Resolutions" and claims that if his life was spared,

he would, “like a true repenting Prodigal, go home to his Father” (8). Crusoe’s situation strongly mirrors the story of The Prodigal Son in the Bible, where a young son takes half of his father’s money and runs off and wastes it. Upon his return, the son is accepted with open arms and happiness, as his father views his son’s return as a celebration of one who was lost and has been found. The inclusion of this reference helps us to understand the message that God will always be there to accept us with open arms when we have turned our backs or lost sight of Him. Defoe uses the message of this parable as an overriding message for the novel as a whole. Crusoe exhibits the characteristics of the Prodigal Son as he grows to forget about God on the island, yet ultimately returns to Him and is saved, both spiritually and literally.

On his very first journey, previously discussed, Crusoe promises to return home if God saves him from the storm. Although Crusoe does live, he fails to live up to his word and admits, “my fears and Apprehensions of being swallow’d up by the Sea being forgotten, and the Current of my former Desires return’d, I entirely forgot my Vows and Promises that I made in my Distress” (9). Defoe uses Crusoe to exemplify the common struggles that come with growing in faith and being a believer in God. We often forget about God and only call upon Him in times of distress, just as Crusoe does. It is common to place our own wants and desires before God, which is what Crusoe does when he leaves again for sea. Defoe places Crusoe in situations that mimic real-life struggles in order to share his thoughts on how we should better our relationship with God. Crusoe largely forgets about God once on the island and attempts to survive on his own. After years of maintaining a rather passive relationship with God, Crusoe undergoes an

experience that changes his view on religion and influences his actions in the latter half of the novel.

While being sick with a fever, Crusoe cries out to God asking for pity and Mercy. He then sees “a Man descend in a bright Flame of Fire” who tells Crusoe that “seeing all these Things have not brought thee to Repentance, now thou shalt die” (82). This incident parallels the numerous visions that are found in the Bible, where God delivers His message through the Holy Spirit through visions and dreams. Crusoe is not only frightened, but he begins to reflect on his attitude and relationship with God since arriving on the island. He comes to an important realization and acknowledges, “I do not remember that I had in all that Time one Thought that so much tended either to my looking upwards toward God, or inwards towards a reflection upon my own Ways” (82). It is this sudden revelation that allows Crusoe to become self-reflective and realize that he needs to not only be more thankful to God, but to repent his many sins. Defoe includes this personal passage to acknowledge the fact that people become so busy and consumed with life that God is often forgotten about and left out of the picture. From a literary standpoint, the language used here allows for the reader to connect with Crusoe, as it expresses such sentimentality and genuine admission and the vivid imagery that is used creates for an intense read.

Crusoe’s newfound connection to God portrays the ups and downs of maintaining a relationship with Him and the need to constantly work at it. In the most extreme and helpless of situations, Crusoe still does not find any need to look to God for guidance or to even pray for help. It takes a profound, yet alarming vision for him to realize that he

has forgotten about God and needs to work on his faith and his character. The impact of this vision connects to Defoe's inclusion of the Prodigal Son reference, as it forces Crusoe to turn to God. When looking at the novel as a whole, Defoe also uses the vision to strengthen the religious theme that runs throughout.

As his sickness endures, Crusoe cries out to God, asking for help in his time of distress, and then notes that it was his first prayer said in many years (85). Crusoe finds the strength to open up the Bible and falls to the words, "Call on me in the Day of Trouble, and I will deliver, and thou shalt glorify me" (87). Crusoe sees just how applicable these words are in his situation and begins to grow hopeful. It is in this setting that Defoe, again, alludes to a biblical story. After reading the passage, Crusoe wonders "as the Children of Israel did, when they were promis'd Flesh to eat, Can God spread a table in the Wilderness; so he began to say, Can God deliver me from this place?" (87-88). The story of how God led the Israelites out of Egypt and provided for them is referenced here by Defoe to parallel Crusoe's newfound hope that God will guide him to safety and refuge, which He ultimately does. Crusoe remarks that "the words made a great Impression on me" (88) and we are able to see a great change in Crusoe's attitude and in the things he views to be of importance. That night, Crusoe shares, "but before I lay down, I did what I never had done in all my Life, I kneel'd down and pray'd to God to fulfil the Promise to me, that if I call'd upon him in the day of Trouble, he would deliver me" (88). A desire to connect with God is strongly expressed from Crusoe and his perspective has greatly changed. The language that Defoe provides again enhances the strong connection between the reader and Crusoe, as he paints such an honest and

helpless image of Crusoe in this moment. We are able to truly believe Crusoe's words and cannot help but to sympathize with him in his desperate situation.

Crusoe continues to act on his desire to strengthen his faith and better himself as a person, proving that underneath the money driven man, there is a remarkable spiritual integrity. He admits, "I pored so much upon my Deliverance from the main Affliction, that I disregarded the Deliverance I had receiv'd; and I was made to ask my self... Have I not been deliver'd, and wonderfully too, from Sickness? From the most distress'd Condition..." (89). Crusoe realizes that he has focused so much on needing to be saved from the island, that he has not remembered to be thankful that his terrible illness has passed. Defoe allows for Crusoe to reflect on his actions and admit his faults, creating a vulnerability in him that entices the reader. This telling self-reflection of Crusoe in order to further engage the readers and allow them to almost feel the very same emotions that Crusoe exhibits. He has grown tremendously in his relationship with God, which calls for a great dependency on Him to save Crusoe from the island and from himself. Defoe chronicles the development of Crusoe's spiritual attitude, pointing out the many holes that Crusoe previously had in his life. God was non-existent to Crusoe, which left him with a huge void in his life and led him to act in selfish ways. By finding God and establishing a relationship where he could rely on a stronger power, he grows to have a positive attitude and live in more of an altruistic manner.

Crusoe continues to reflect on his Christian duties and exemplifies the epitome of a selfless man, noting, "Had I done my Part, God had deliver'd me, but I had not glorify'd him; that is to say I had not own'd and been thankful for that as a Deliverance,

and how could I expect greater Deliverance?” (89). Crusoe begins to be thankful for the little things in life and remembers to acknowledge God for his many blessings.

Recognizing God’s gifts and returning thanks for them is an important aspect of the Christian religion that Defoe is sure to incorporate in the novel. Crusoe says that “this touch’d my Heart very much, and immediately I kneel’d down and gave God Thanks aloud, for my Recovery from my Sickness” (89). This tremendous religious growth is captured through Defoe’s powerful characterization of Crusoe and the raw diction that is used.

Crusoe perseveres in his religious obligations and takes to reading the Bible daily. He then admits that “I found my Heart more deeply and sincerely affected with the Wickedness of my past Life: The Impression of my Dream reviv’d, and the Words, All these things have not brought thee to Repentance, ran seriously in my Thought” (89). Crusoe’s self-reflection again helps him to see his previous misguided ways and allows him to focus on repentance. Defoe uses all of these realizations that Crusoe makes in order to contrast the very different ways of living that he has illustrated. Through Crusoe’s growth, Defoe makes it apparent that the way to live is to place God at the center. After his profound reflection, Crusoe then, “with his Heart as well as his Hands, lifts up to Heaven ... and cries aloud, Jesus thou Son of David, Jesus thou exalted Prince and Saviour, give me Repentance!” (90). This sudden enthusiasm that Crusoe exhibits further shows his true intentions in changing his ways and becoming a better Christian man. Defoe uses such intense imagery of “lifting up to the Heavens and crying out” in order to evoke from the reader this same strong emotion that Crusoe experiences, as well as to grab our attention.

Crusoe's development in his spirituality is further noted when he later states that for the first time "in the true Sense of the Words, I pray'd in all my Life, for now I pray'd with a Sense of my Condition, and with a true Scripture View of Hope founded on the encouragement of the Word of God" (90). This comment reveals an important change in Crusoe's attitude. In the first half of the novel, Crusoe only thinks of himself and does not have any thoughts about God. He spends much of his time establishing a home for himself and managing his crop investments, and his focus is on how he can optimize the tools and resources that he has on the island. While Crusoe manages to do this successfully, he makes no progress in leaving the island and returning to his life. He, in fact, admits that "I had no more Sense of God or his Judgments, much less of the present Affliction of my Circumstances being from his Hand, than if I had been in the most prosperous Condition of Life" (84). Crusoe was so involved in making the most out of his situation that he became consumed with exercising economic principles while on the island. He forgot entirely of his formidable situation and lost sight of God altogether. The earnest comments and reflections made by Crusoe present his growth in character to be all the more affecting. Defoe's heartfelt prose and detailed imagery grabs at the reader and takes us on the natural progression of one man's journey to finding himself.

Defoe is able to create this captivating journey by first portraying Crusoe as a man of economy. He presents Crusoe as being so disconnected from God and all spiritual matters to demonstrate that this lack of religion leads to having no purpose and ultimately, no hope of prosperity. Defoe then incorporates the theme of religion into the novel in order to portray Crusoe's religious side and show the importance and need for God. Once Crusoe realizes his need for repentance, he endures a great spiritual

development, which shows him that he needs God to truly prosper in life and escape the island. When he makes this realization, the reader is able to see Crusoe's demeanor and attitude change as he grows spiritually. Crusoe himself reflects on this change, noting "My Condition began now to be, tho' not less miserable as to my Way of living, yet much easier to my Mind; and my thoughts being directed by a constant reading the Scripture, and praying to God, to things of a higher Nature: I had a great deal of Comfort within, which till now I knew nothing of" (90). Crusoe seems to be almost astonished at the peace of mind his spirituality has brought him. His genuine joy in being at ease through a "higher Nature" is refreshing to read. Because of the relationship that Defoe creates between Crusoe and the reader, we find ourselves rooting for Crusoe's spiritual awakening.

Crusoe's sentimental admittance is further seen when he expresses, "I frequently sat down with my Meat with Thankfulness... I learned to look more upon the bright Side of my Condition, and less upon the dark Side; and to consider what I enjoy'd, rather than what I wanted" (120). The transformation in Crusoe's character is noted in this passage as he continues to show thanks and practices having a more positive outlook. He also "puts those discontented People in Mind, who cannot enjoy comfortably what God has given them; because they see, and covet something that he has not given them" (120). Crusoe has truly altered his perspective on life and we find that the more Crusoe reflects on life and his situation, the more his eyes are opened to the goodness of God.

Defoe uses Crusoe's observations to further comment on the negative effects of society and its destruction of moral principles. Not only do we see the impact in living in

a world concerned with money and power, but we are also able to notice the drastic change in Crusoe's actions and characters. His personal reflections allow us to see a side of him that we were previously unaware of. Crusoe continues to contemplate his circumstances and says, "to compare my present Condition with what I at first expected it should be; nay, with what it would certainly have been, if the good Providence of God had not wonderfully order'd the Ship to be cast up nearer to the Shore, where I not only could come at her, but could bring what I got out of her to the Shore, for my Relief and Comfort" (121). Even in such a helpless state of disparity, Crusoe manages to see that there is good to be found and that his condition could have been much worse had he not been saved by God's grace. Defoe reminds us through Crusoe's telling reflections to be thankful for what God has bestowed upon us and to not be so blind to the goodness that God has already provided.

This self-examination that Crusoe so deeply invests in is continued with a great spiritual contemplation. He sees that "with these Reflections I work'd my Mind up, not only to Resignation to the Will of God in the present Disposition of my Circumstances; but even to a sincere Thankfulness for my Condition...seeing I had not the due Punishment of my Sins" (122). God has provided for Crusoe, even though he is not worthy. He acknowledges this when he confesses that he "enjoy'd so many Mercies which I had no reason to have expected in that Place...that I ought to consider I had been fed by Miracles, even as great as that of feeding *Elijah* by Ravens" (122). In this passage, Crusoe not only declares his worthlessness, but another Biblical allusion is found. The continued references to Biblical accounts are used by Defoe to solidify his theme of religion and further address the spiritual side of Crusoe. The story referenced is found in

1st Kings, when God orders Elijah to hide himself for many years and has ravens bring him food and water to survive. This parallels Crusoe's situation, as both Elijah and Crusoe are isolated for a long period of time, yet God finds a way to provide for them and to ultimately save them. The allusions that Defoe uses strongly enhance the underlying aspects of religion seen throughout the novel and further establish Crusoe as a man of religion, as each reference is used in conjunction to the situation at hand or to the current disposition of Crusoe.

The many professions that Crusoe discovers during his spiritual journey lead him to establish a deeper understanding of God and an immersion in Christian values. Crusoe has truly accepted God and has altered his ways of life to become a better Christian man. This transformation is captured in an instance involving Friday, Crusoe's slave. Crusoe begins to wonder why God has taken "from so great a part of the World of his Creatures, the best uses to which their Faculties, and the Powers of their Souls are adapted... yet he has bestowed upon them the same Powers, the same Reason... and [whom] would make a much better use of it than he did" (193). Crusoe contemplates this in regard to the savage Friday, and we see that not only does Crusoe want all people to know about God and live by the Bible, but he admits that Friday would be an even better Christian than himself.

This account about Friday leads us to find that Crusoe is less concerned with himself and his possessions and more focused on God and being a better person. Crusoe truly cares for Friday and wants what is best for him, which is to know and learn about God. He teaches Friday how to live civilly and opens his eyes to the Christian religion.

The passion Crusoe has for guiding Friday to a better life is evident when he “pray’d to God that he would enable him to instruct savingly the poor Savage... to receive the Light of the Knowledge of God in Christ” (202). Here, Defoe conveys his opinion on the relations with others in connection to religion. Teaching others the Word of God and guiding people to live their lives as Christians is an important aspect of Christianity that Defoe seems to be advocating through the relationship between Crusoe and Friday. This attitude to spiritual matters makes a distinct change from Crusoe’s youthful self and miserly concerns.

One of the strongest examples of Crusoe’s change in attitude can be seen at the end of the novel when he is finally able to depart the island and arrives at home, in civilization. Upon his arrival, Crusoe re-connects with old friends and manages to accumulate his wealth and land. He does not, however, “forget to lift up his Heart in Thankfulness to Heaven...” (252). This starkly contrasts with Crusoe’s former attitude, which can be seen when he first lands on the island and finds himself to be the only one saved from the wreck. He admits to being simply “glad I was alive, without the least Reflection upon the distinguishing Goodness of the Hand which had preserv’d me” (83). The difference in Crusoe’s former disposition to his latter is a huge indicator of his religious development. Defoe demands for a great attention to his prose to allow the reader to pick up on this compelling contrast in the nature of Crusoe.

The emphasis on Crusoe’s spiritual growth and the importance made on repentance and thanks allows Defoe to promote his views on religious matters. Through Crusoe’s struggles in faith and growth in character, Defoe notes that all people go

through doubts concerning God and trials within their faith journey. Many Biblical allusions are incorporated in order to compliment Crusoe's current perspective on life and to parallel the tribulations he undergoes on the island. Crusoe not only makes many discoveries about God, but also comes to find himself, as he transforms his character and perspective on life. Defoe captures the tremendous growth that Crusoe makes in his spirituality in order to communicate his feelings on religion and to portray Crusoe in a light that has not before been seen. Crusoe proves himself to be a moral man and shows that he accepts God and has changed his selfish ways, allowing the reader to not only view Crusoe as a man of economy. His spiritual side is brought forth, and we are able to see that there is much more to Crusoe than the drive for money and power. Defoe establishes this dichotomy between an economical side and a religious side within Crusoe only to follow with interpenetration between the two. Both sides of Crusoe are solidified in order to strengthen the portrayal of the blend between economics and religion. Crusoe is then seen not as just an economical man, nor a spiritual man, but a man who demonstrates a profound blend of the two contrasting matters.

Chapter 3: The Interpenetration of Religion and Economics Within Crusoe

Daniel Defoe portrays the character of Robinson Crusoe as a man who endures the struggles of remaining moral when attaining power and accumulating wealth hold such great importance. Crusoe is first characterized as a man who is greatly a product of his environment and the ideals of current society. Each and every opportunity is taken advantage of and Crusoe is still never satisfied with what he has, but is always seeking more. The commentary provided allows us to reflect upon this selfish attitude that is often found in society, as Defoe demonstrates what eventually happens when we live our lives for superficial reasons. Crusoe ends up alone on a deserted island where he learns to live a fuller life and appreciates what he has been given by God. In creating a drastic change in setting, Defoe is able to make a remarkable statement; it takes one to leave society and its evil influences in order to see the true beauty in life and the absolute need for God. Once we have this greater awareness of life, we can incorporate practical and current modes of living that society so greatly enforces. Crusoe thus serves as an example of how we can undertake both roles of being economical and spiritual and combine them into our life.

In a deep reflection on the unfortunate circumstances that Crusoe has been living under, we find a man who holds a great spiritual awareness and positive outlook towards life, while still maintaining strong economical practices. Crusoe says, "I now began to consider seriously my Condition, and the Circumstance I was reduc'd to, and I drew up the State of my Affairs in Writing" (60). Crusoe, by nature, is an economically driven man who strongly desires to make a list of the circumstances that have afflicted him. He

notes, "I began to comfort my self as well as I could, and to set the good against the Evil, that I might have something to distinguish my Case from worse, and I stated it very impartially, like Debtor and Creditor, the Comforts I enjoy'd, against the Miseries I suffer'd" (60). Crusoe documents all of his misfortunes under a column listed "Evil" and then comments on the positive aspects of that particular misfortune under the column "Good." Crusoe structures his list like that of a debtor and creditor and remains detached from his observations, demonstrating his economical mindset and business-like mentality.

A defining presentation of Crusoe is then made as we find him to be an economical man in practice, yet a spiritual one in mindset. In creating a journal for Crusoe to voice his innermost thoughts, Defoe provides the opportunity for the reader to connect with Crusoe and understand his reasoning for many of his actions. As the sole survivor from a tragic shipwreck, Crusoe has been truly blessed. He notes that he is lonesome on the island, separated from all of humanity; however, he has found ways to survive completely on his own. While he does complain of being without any means of protection, Crusoe does acknowledge that he has been left on an island where there are neither wild animals nor any people to make enemies with (61). Defoe uses this passage to show just how natural it is for Crusoe to document all of his misfortunes in a formal and well thought out manner. Although his attitude is still very business oriented, the fact that the content of his actions are centered on seeking out the good and being thankful shows his spiritual strength and moral growth. The economic side of Crusoe that we examined in chapter one is still greatly apparent, as is his spiritual side seen in chapter

two. We find that Crusoe is able to maintain his inclination to think economically, yet also live in accordance with the Scripture and remain morally conscious.

Crusoe further upholds his moral integrity and spiritual perspective on life when he comments on his list of affairs, stating, “Upon the whole, here was an undoubted Testimony, that there was scarce any Condition in the World so miserable, but there was something *Negativ* or something *Positiv* to be thankful for in it” (61). The ability to seek the good in one of the most hopeless and lonesome of situations shows great strength in Crusoe’s character. Crusoe goes on to solidify this sentiment in saying “we may always find in it something to comfort our selves from, and to set in the Description of Good and Evil, on the Credit Side of the Accompt” (61). Defoe incorporates the use of business-like diction when expressing this moral view in order to further verify the interpenetration between the two seemingly contrasting sides of Crusoe. In this comment alone, we are able to see that Crusoe is an economical man with a moral drive. Defoe proves that Crusoe is not just one or the other, and more importantly, demonstrates that it is possible to be both.

This interpenetration between economics and religion is also seen in Crusoe’s daily schedule. When Crusoe writes out his schedule in chapter one, he is solely concerned with rationing his time between sleeping, eating and working. All of his focus is on making the most of his supplies and cultivating his stock. Once he realizes the need for God in his life and the importance of practicing religious values, he alters his schedule to incorporate his new way of living with the old. Crusoe claims that he “was very seldom idle; but having regularly divided my Time, according to the several daily

Employments that were before me, such as, *First*, My Duty to God, and the Reading the Scriptures, which I constantly set apart some Time for thrice every Day” (106). Crusoe is sure to place God and his religious obligations before anything else and acknowledges the importance of setting aside time for this. The man creating this list proves to have a much different outlook on life than the man who created the first one, where God was not even mentioned, let alone placed at the top of the list.

Crusoe then explains the rest of his routine, saying, “*Secondly*, The going Abroad with my Gun for Food, which generally took me up to three Hours in every Morning... *Thirdly*, The ordering, curing, preserving, and cooking what I had kill’d or catch’d for my Supply” (106). This list of duties demonstrates Crusoe’s innate drive to manage everything economically and practically. The Crusoe that was first introduced to us can be found here, as he still utilizes all of his resources and manages his supplies. His religious side, however, is also shown, as he declares his first and foremost responsibility to God. Crusoe is then presented as a man who embodies an economical view on life while maintaining a spiritual drive, as well. Defoe proves that both ways of living can be interconnected and often exercised simultaneously.

This connection is perhaps most prominently expressed in an instance when Crusoe contemplates his valuables and his stock with a spiritual outlook. He acknowledges the importance in valuing only the necessities in life and despairing from the need to always want more. This provides a striking contrast to his previous attitude of constantly searching for money and accumulating power. He states, “In the first place, I was remov’d from all the Wickedness of the World here. I had neither the *Lust of the*

Flesh, the Lust of the Eye, or the Pride of Life. I had nothing to covet; for I had all that I was now capable of enjoying” (119). Crusoe notes that in being in isolation, he is no longer influenced by the evils of society or surrounded by the temptations of sin. Being alone on the island has allowed him to become a better person and to find God, as there are no distractions or negative influences. This transformation that Crusoe makes in his character allows for us to stop and examine the effects of society and the impact of the many temptations we fall victim too. Crusoe recognizes his selfish motives and the shallow ways of living that society has impinged upon him. He changes his focus and perspective on life to include God and better morals. We are thus drawn to ask ourselves, would he have still made this change had he not been isolated from society?

Unlike his previous desire to accumulate the most money that he could in order to attain wealth and power, Crusoe has learned to enjoy what he has on the island and not be in constant want of more. The struggles that we encounter when trying to live a moral life become ever more apparent when we are able to see what can happen without the influential pull of society. We are able to recognize the predicament that we have in our day to day lives by merely being surrounded by so many opportunities that hinder our spiritual growth and lead us away from God. Crusoe supports this notion in saying that “The most covetous Miser in the World would have been cur’d of the Vice of Covetousness, if he had been in my Case” (120). Defoe uses the isolation of Crusoe to demonstrate the great change that one can make in one’s spirituality and character when away from the evils of the world. The relief of not feeling the need to live up to the meaningless demands of society is expressed by Crusoe as he states, “I had now brought my State of Life to be much easier in it self than it was at first, and much easier to my

Mind, as well as to my Body” (120). The stress in trying to achieve power and wealth takes its toll and makes us act in selfish and immoral ways. Defoe notes this challenge that we face in order to make us more aware of the temptations and to seek out positive influences in our lives.

Defoe continues to portray Crusoe as a man who desires to live out a Christian lifestyle while also remaining true to his natural drive to live economically. Defoe is able to capture the integration between Crusoe’s two ways of living through the means of his relationship with Friday. Crusoe admits, “to return to my New Companion, I was greatly delighted with him, and made it my Business to teach him every Thing, that was proper to make him useful, handy, and helpful” (194). Crusoe views his relationship with Friday as a friendship and wants to teach him how to be civil and guide him into living a better life. We see Crusoe’s religious side come through, as he truly cares for his new friend and wants to share with him all that he knows. At the same time, however, Crusoe cannot help referring to his good deeds as a business action that is driven from an economical standpoint. Crusoe does want what is best for Friday, but he uses his superiority over him as an opportunity to expand his resources and capitalize on another set off hands to contribute to the work. Both the economical and religious intentions of Crusoe are then captured in this passage.

While the motivations of Crusoe are two-sided, we are able to see that although he is very economically minded, his compassion towards Friday is genuine. He says, “I begun now to consider, that having two Mouths to feed, instead of one, I must provide more Ground for my Harvest, and plant a larger Quantity of Corn, than I us’d to do...I

told him [Friday] that it was for Corn to make for more Bread, because he was now with me, and that I might have enough for him, and my self too” (196-197). Crusoe is under no obligation to provide for Friday, but he befriends him and chooses to guide him while on the island. Crusoe’s immediate plan of action is to increase his stock in corn, as he will no longer be only feeding himself. His action is economically driven, but the intention behind it is full of benevolence, exemplifying a man who is motivated by both his economic passions and his religious ones, too.

The spiritual change in Crusoe was greatly noted in chapter two, and his devotion to God continues on throughout his stay on the island. He does not leave his economic practices behind though, and is able to incorporate both into his life. Crusoe notes that “I kept the Anniversary of my Landing here with the same Thankfulness to God for his Mercies, and if I had such Cause of Acknowledgment at first, I had so much more now, having such additional Testimonies of the Care of Providence over me, and the great Hopes I had of being effectually, and speedily deliver’d” (211). This quotation shows Crusoe’s own acknowledgment of his religious growth over his time on the island. He is all the more grateful for the grace that God has given him and recognizes this now more than ever. Crusoe also maintains his faith in God, as he is hopeful that he will be saved from the island and delivered by Him. While he recognizes the importance of maintaining his relationship to God; praying, reading the Bible, showing thanks and growing in faith, Crusoe still finds ways to exercise his want to abide by economic practices.

After stating his gratitude for God's mercy and proving to remain faithful in his deliverance off of the island, Crusoe does admit that "however, I went on with my Husbandry, digging, planting, fencing, as usual; I gather'd and cur'd my Grapes, and did every necessary Thing as before" (211). While the spiritual side of Crusoe progresses and he grows in his belief in God, remaining certain that He will guide him to a better life off of the island, he realizes that he can continue his diligence in living economically at the same time. His religious obligations do not interfere with his lifestyle and practical ways. Crusoe is able to develop his life around the two aspects that are of most importance to him and he proves that both religion and economics can coexist in many aspects of life.

Defoe's novel does not just provide an account of one man's adventures on an island, rather, it goes much deeper in portraying the struggles that many face when wanting to live a Christian lifestyle in a largely immoral society. The character of Crusoe is strategically developed throughout the novel in order to capitalize on the overall message that Defoe comes to prove; we do not have to choose between living by social standards and living with Christian values. It is possible to incorporate both views into our lifestyle, as Crusoe so accurately exemplifies. Defoe first depicts Crusoe to be a man consumed by society's influence of achieving power and wealth at all costs. He is so adamantly presented as this power-hungry man that it makes it near impossible for the reader to believe that he can be anything but a selfish person. We are able to change our minds, however, as Defoe further develops the character of Crusoe into a man who holds moral values close to his heart and learns to live his life for God. In being away from society, Crusoe establishes a deeper understanding of the Christian faith and is able to place faith in one day leaving the island, despite the lack of all external support. Once

Crusoe establishes his new, positive outlook on life, he is able to implement his natural ways of living economically and practically. The difference now is that he has taken out the selfish motivation behind his actions and instead follows economic practices in order to survive in the most productive of ways.

The interpenetration between the two aspects of religion and economics is captured through the development of Crusoe and the situations that he must overcome while on the island. In creating a natural progression of the incorporation of the two different dynamics, Defoe exposes the negative influences of society. We soon discover that the change Crusoe makes in his character and his perspective on life is largely contributed to his isolation. Crusoe does not realize how corrupt his ways of living are until he is away from the common practices of society and has no need to follow them. While he does discover God and finds that living with Christian values is more worthwhile than living for wealth and power, Crusoe still holds strongly to his economical practices. Defoe thus makes the point that when our actions are driven by selfish motives and unnecessary desires, we come to live a meaningless and disappointing life. When we act in ways that have a positive purpose, however, our life becomes all the more worthwhile. It is the purpose behind the practical actions that is of vital importance. Crusoe is therefore able to be a man who exercises in economical practices in order to live in a moral way.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

In his novel, Robinson Crusoe, Daniel Defoe tackles a wide variety of topics that force the reader to consider their own opinions on these important matters. The impact that socio-economics make on individuals is greatly emphasized through the habitual actions of Crusoe, as well as through his reasoning behind these accepted actions. We are first introduced to Crusoe as a power-hungry man that does not care about anyone or anything but himself and money. He leaves his family against their wishes in order to pursue a dangerous desire to set sea. Crusoe then seems to only be concerned with money and how to best accumulate it. When landing in Brazil, Crusoe becomes consumed with finding ways to make money and takes advantage of every opportunity he has to gain wealth. Once he proves to be living a tremendously lucrative lifestyle, Crusoe decides to go on another voyage because he is not satisfied and wants more. His attraction to wealth causes him to embark on a journey that will forever change his life, as it allows him to find God and alter his ways of living.

Once he is stranded on the island, Crusoe continues to exercise many economical principles, even though he is completely isolated from society. He capitalizes on resources that are abundant and keeps stock of everything that is used. When he comes across money, Crusoe takes it with him, even though he is fully aware of its insignificance on the island. Walking away from money, no matter what its value be, proves to be too difficult for Crusoe. Wealth has become an addiction to him and Crusoe seems to not be able to change his selfish ways. Defoe paints Crusoe in this light in order to show what society does to us. When we are surrounded by a society that promotes

rising to the top of the social ladder at all costs, it becomes difficult to act morally. Every opportunity that comes along is seen as a way to attain wealth, no matter what the consequences may be. People become consumed in trying to achieve this monetary greatness that other things are often forgotten about. Success in societal views is seen as achieving power and attaining wealth. This attitude forces people to become consumed with money and leads them to forget about all other things. Defoe first creates Crusoe to be a man who lives by society's standards in order to show us what an evil influence it can be. This mentality soon becomes all that is known and grows difficult to get out of, especially once any sort of monetary gain is made. Crusoe's selfish ways are depicted in such a brilliant way that keeps the readers wanting more. He takes Crusoe on an epic adventure and chooses a deserted island as the setting in which to capture the remarkable change that is made within Crusoe.

Defoe's writing style makes it easy for the reader to understand Crusoe's motives and intentions. He uses a strong journalistic approach by including narrative, descriptive and expository elements. In doing this, we are able to know Crusoe's inner most thoughts on everything that happens on the island, as well as read detailed accounts about his every action. This makes it possible for us to connect with Crusoe on a deeper level, as we are brought in on his personal feelings and can come to understand why Crusoe does what he does through his own reflections. Although Defoe presents Crusoe as this economical and one-minded man, he does it with such exposition, that we realize Crusoe acts the way he does because of the negative influences of society. Instead of hating or condoning Crusoe, we are actually able to relate to him and even see ourselves in him at times. This connection is possible because Defoe is so careful to include Crusoe's every

action and thought. Defoe further provides a tie to humanity by allowing Crusoe to admit his faults and point out his flaws. Once Crusoe makes a change in his lifestyle and in his ways of thinking, he is able to reflect back on his selfish actions and admit he was wrong. The honesty that Crusoe projects through his critical self-reflections creates a newfound respect for him. This then makes his transition into a spiritual man all the more believable and real.

Crusoe begins to realize that he has been greatly influenced by the negative ways of society and starts to live with new motivations and intentions. The religious aspects of the novel come forth and we find that there is much more to Crusoe than an economic man. Reading the Bible daily, repenting sins and showing thanks for the many blessings that have been bestowed are all actions that Crusoe begins to incorporate in his life. We thus see him in a completely different light that is not fake or unrealistic, all because Defoe has allowed us to become active participants in Crusoe's transition; this close relationship that the reader has with Crusoe is made possible through Defoe's brilliantly genuine narrative. Crusoe's realizations allow for us readers to also conclude that life is much more pleasant when living for a higher purpose and with moral integrity. Although Crusoe has led himself into one of the worst situations possible, he is still able to look on the bright side of things and find many occasions for which to be thankful for. He admits that living his life with God in the picture and with virtuous intentions proves to be much more fulfilling. Contrary to what society teaches us, the push for wealth and power does not lead to happiness, but rather to self-destructiveness. Defoe proves this sentiment through his depiction of Crusoe in the beginning of the novel.

Defoe primarily characterizes Crusoe in such an unattractive manner in order to stress the striking difference to the moral man he grows to become. Religion is brought into the novel as a way for Defoe to show how important it is to have God in your life; but also to beautifully portray a man struggling to survive in the most extraordinary of circumstances. Although isolated on an island, Crusoe finds the strength to maintain faith when all the odds are against him. His new attitude and outlook on life are uplifting and admirable, especially when knowing how Crusoe formerly lived his life. The juxtaposition between the man who lived for money and the man who lived for God could only be made by gradually developing the character of Crusoe.

The most provocative presentation that is made by Defoe comes near the end of the novel. We have seen Crusoe as a man of economy and as a religious man, as well, but Defoe is able to continue the progression of Crusoe's character and proves that he does not need to simply be one or the other. Crusoe has demonstrated an innate desire to live his life from an economic standpoint and engage in practices that are efficient and practical. Once he integrates God into his life and begins to repent and be thankful, we are able to see an overlap between the two sides of Crusoe. He begins to apply his moral views to his economic practices and we find that at last, Crusoe has found a very fulfilling way to live. Defoe uses the relationship between Crusoe and Friday to best portray the integration of Crusoe's two very different sides. Friday is cared for, fed and brought to know God, all because Crusoe whole-heartedly loves him. There is no true personal gain in this relationship, yet Crusoe befriends Friday and then cares for him by engaging in economical practices. We see a perfect execution of supply and demand, as he takes note of his stock in order to have enough for two people. The intentions behind

his actions are virtuous and selfless, as opposed to his former motivations, which were to attain wealth and power.

The transformation that Crusoe undergoes while on the island is made significant through the writing style of Defoe. There would never be such a great connection between the reader and Crusoe if we had not been able to capture Crusoe's reflections and feelings along the way. We are brought to understand Crusoe on a deeper level and this does several things for us, as readers. First, we are able to fully believe the changes that Crusoe begins to make. They are not superficial or forced, and we know this because we have experienced the monumental realizations that Crusoe makes right alongside him. Secondly, we are able to see just how true Defoe's presentation of society really is. This, then, takes us to an introspective state that forces an examination of how we, ourselves, are influenced by the evils of society. The selfish motives and immoral actions that Crusoe makes again and again are ones that many of us have unfortunately acted in, too. It is hard to not fall victim to the negative influences of society and the ludicrous standards that are set, but through Crusoe, Defoe proves that it is possible to change our ways and become more aware of our self-centered actions.

Robinson Crusoe becomes more than just a story of a man who comes to find himself while being isolated on an island. Defoe provides a telling reflection on the immoral ways that society promotes and allows us to see that in living a life that seeks only the superficial, we can never be truly fulfilled. The writing style that Defoe uses to present his reflections is a crucial ingredient that sets this novel apart from others. The concise descriptions and honest narrative that is used through the character of Crusoe

allows for a very real understanding to be made by the reader. The raw statements that Crusoe makes prove that he is genuine in his words and thus leads us to believe all of the struggles and changes that he goes through. We are taken on this powerful journey right along with Crusoe and find that in the end, we too are brought to a point of self-reflection through Defoe's brilliant novel.

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