

Bea Klüsener

Racism in Literature for Young Europeans? A Discussion of *Robinson Crusoe*

Abstract

Although not intended by Daniel Defoe, his novel *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) has become, ever since Rousseau's praise of it in *Emile ou de l'éducation* (1762), a *Bildungsroman* designed for the moral improvement of a young audience. Interestingly enough, whenever he finds himself in a situation of intercultural contact, Defoe's protagonist speaks of himself not so much as an "Englishman" but rather as a "European". It is especially in these scenes that the text establishes, on the one hand, a savage/civilized dichotomy in which "Europe" is taken as the norm and "the other", the non-European, is treated as assumedly inferior. On the other hand, the text also includes some relativist ideas which call for tolerance with regard to the non-European "other". The article discusses the question whether Daniel Defoe's novel contains "racist" elements with regard to terminology and plot: It suggests that the depiction of "the other" oscillates between tolerance and strategies of exclusion.

Sommaire

Bien que Daniel Defoe eût une intention différente, son roman *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) est vu, depuis l'éloge par Rousseau dans *Emile ou de l'éducation* (1762), comme un roman d'éducation que l'on peut présenter à des lecteurs jeunes en vue de leur amélioration morale. Il est intéressant que chaque fois que Crusoe face des personnes d'une ethnie étrangère caractérisée par une autre couleur de la peau il dénomme soi-même un "européen" plutôt qu'un "anglais". C'est dans ces scènes que le texte établit une dichotomie "sauvage vs. civilisé" et contraste "l'Europe" en tant que la norme et l'autre, le "non-européen" en tant qu'inférieur. En même temps, il y a un certain relativisme qui semble encourager la tolérance envers toute chose étrangère. L'article discute si le roman de Daniel Defoe, en ce qui concerne la terminologie et l'action, contient des éléments "rassistes": Il est proposé de voir la représentation de l'autre comme une oscillation entre tolérance et exclusion.

Zusammenfassung

Obwohl von Daniel Defoe anders beabsichtigt, gilt sein Roman *Robinson Crusoe* von 1719 seit Rousseaus Lob des Buches in *Emile ou de l'éducation* (1762) als ein Bildungsroman, der jungen Lesern zur moralischen Unterweisung an die Hand gegeben werden kann. Interessanterweise spricht Crusoe, wann auch immer er sich Angehörigen einer fremden Ethnie mit anderer Hautfarbe gegenüber sieht, von sich selbst als "Europäer" und weniger als "Engländer". Gerade in diesen Szenen baut der Text eine Zweiteilung "wild : zivilisiert" auf und stellt "Europa" als Norm dem mutmaßlich minderwertigen Anderen, dem "Nicht-Europäischen", gegenüber. Gleichzeitig findet sich ein gewisser Relativismus, der für Toleranz im Umgang mit dem "Fremden" zu werben scheint. Der Artikel diskutiert, ob Daniel Defoes Roman mit Blick auf Begrifflichkeiten und Handlung "rassistische" Elemente aufweist: Es wird argumentiert, dass die Darstellung des "Fremden" zwischen Toleranz und Exklusion oszilliert.

1. Introduction

Assumedly "good" and "superior" European peoples versus assumedly "bad" and "inferior" non-European peoples – a topic that is getting revitalized these days. Hidden racism can be felt in many news stories that we read or hear about in the media. Sometimes commentaries criticize such tendencies, sometimes they support them. Even if an author may use a racist style only subconsciously, it nonetheless has a certain influence on people's thinking. But not only non-fictional texts shape people's minds, also fictional texts influence the way we think – especially texts that are really read all over Europe. And this does not just hold true for *Harry Potter*. Some decades- and century-old books and stories are still popular today and are read by young readerships that simply find the story interesting and absorb the language of the novel rather

subconsciously as the wording of the original may still be used today (also in translations), although the connotations of the words today were different then.¹

Such a case is Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), the seemingly realistic story² of a marooned sailor who survives on an island where he fights cannibals and finally makes friends with one of the indigenous people.³ Although not intended by Daniel Defoe, the text has become a piece of literature for young readers ever since Rousseau's praise of it in his 1762 work *Emile ou de l'éducation*.⁴ One reason for this is that, in the course of the narrative, Robinson Crusoe seems to develop from a careless person to a deeply religious and mature man, which is why the text has also been labeled a *Bildungsroman* or novel of education designed for the moral improvement of the audience. This narrative turned out to be one of the most popular stories in literature for children and young people ever. There are not only all the European post-texts known as *Robinsonades* in books and movies.⁵ The original and its translations, too, still have their place in youth libraries. And if the youth reads only part of *Robinson Crusoe*, it is those parts where Robinson meets other people on his way to and on the island. Crusoe, whenever he finds himself in a situation of intercultural contact, speaks of himself not so much as an "Englishman", but rather as a "European". It is especially in these scenes that the text establishes, on the one hand, a savage/civilized dichotomy in which "Europe" is taken as the norm and "the other"⁶, the non-European, is treated as assumedly inferior. On the other hand, the text also includes some relativist ideas which call for tolerance with regard to the non-European "other".

The concept of Europeanness and non-Europeanness has been changing since the Middle Ages, but the words used in the novel to describe "Europeans" and "non-Europeans" have stayed the same in translations of *Robinson Crusoe* all over Europe. It cannot be taken for granted that the modern reader realizes the importance of the historical cultural contexts – such as the religious troubles of the Restoration Period⁷, the social mishaps in England⁸, the conflict between Whigs and Tories, philosophical theories of social contracts and human rights (such as the one developed by John Locke⁹), England's colonial politics and its involvement in slave trade, for example in the context of the *Asiento*.¹⁰ The question then is: Do such books still support a feeling of an assumed European "superiority"? Just as fictional texts from other cultures support a feeling of superiority of their cultures? Can it be that Defoe's choice to use the label "European" and to abstain from valuing one European country more than another European country may have contributed to the Europe-wide success of the book? At least, the success of the book could, in part, have contributed to the consolidation of seeing Europeans as assumedly "superior" to non-Europeans.

¹ Cf. Petzold (1982: 86).

² Cf. Morrissey (2008: 286) and Henke (2005: 117).

³ Petzold (1982: 33f.) gives an overview of Defoe's sources, such as the story of Alexander Selkirk, who got shipwrecked and spent a couple of years on a desert island (about 1704-1709), William Dampier's *A New Voyage Round the World* (4 volumes, 1696-1709), Robert Knox's *An Historical Relation of Ceylon* (1681) and Henrik Smeeks's *Beschryvinge van het magtig Koninkryk Krinke Kesmes* (1708), to name but a few. Cf. also Clinton Hutchins (1925) for the different editions of the text.

⁴ Rousseau (1762). Cf. Petzold (1982: 42).

⁵ Cf. Morrissey (2008: 285), Zupancic (1976) and Reckwitz (1976).

⁶ Cf. Ashcroft/Griffiths/Tiffin (2000) and Horatschek (2005a and 2005b).

⁷ Cf. Morrissey (2008: 287), who mentions Defoe's biographical context and the influence of his Puritan background.

⁸ Cf. Petzold (1982: 14).

⁹ Cf. Locke (1963 and 1982). Cf. Morrissey (2008: 287f.) and Petzold (1982: 17). The latter states that Crusoe's being torn between Puritan tendencies and enlightened rationalism mirrors Defoe's personal view on life and human nature.

¹⁰ Cf. Petzold (1982: 13f.) and Morrissey (2008: 285, 287, 289).

2. Racism in Literature for Young Europeans? A Discussion of *Robinson Crusoe*

Defoe's narrative presents a first-person narrator who tells the story of his life. He begins by reflecting on his days as a young man in a middle class household¹¹ and his crucial decision to become a sailor against his mother's and especially his father's will.¹² His first voyages turn out to be rather troublesome and, on his way to Africa, Crusoe is even captured by pirates and sold into slavery. After his escape, he settles down as a planter in Brazil and afterwards goes on another journey with the aim of becoming a slave trader. This leads to a disaster as the ship is caught in a storm, the crew drowns and Crusoe as the sole survivor finally manages to reach the shore of an island where he has to stay for 28 years and where, over the years, he begins to feel like a "king"¹³ ruling over his kingdom.¹⁴ In the following, the savage/civilized dichotomy that has been mentioned before will be elaborated on by taking a closer look at the textual construction of what is said to be "European", the "imagined community"¹⁵ Defoe's Crusoe thinks he belongs to, and at forms of "non-European" otherness in the text.

Having been caught by pirates and being enslaved at Sallee Rover, Crusoe accidentally manages to escape. All he can think of then is his hope to come across a "European ship"¹⁶ to save him from having to "perish there among the negroes"¹⁷ which seems to present a horrible nightmare to him. Skin colour, here, seems to represent an important marker in distinguishing the "European" from the "non-European".

He takes another young slave named Xury with him, who can be said to be a first representative of "the other" in the text. Xury is described as rather inferior and naive. He immediately and completely submits to Crusoe – "[...] and [he] swore to be faithful to me and go all over the world with me."¹⁸ As soon as they reach a foreign shore, Xury is terribly afraid and "ready to die with fear" due to "dreadful noises" coming out of the darkness which presents him as superstitious and as less rational than Crusoe.¹⁹ Nevertheless, he is ready to sacrifice himself for his "master" Crusoe which becomes obvious when he tells him: "If wild mans come, they eat me, you go wey"²⁰ – an offer that Crusoe, who somehow seems to feel responsible for Xury, refuses by telling Xury that they will simply kill whoever approaches them in an unfriendly manner – thus behaving like a real colonizer.²¹ Xury, as a first example of the "other" in this text, can be said to represent something "foreign" which is, at the same time, rather "tame" and in need of protection by seemingly powerful Robinson Crusoe.²²

¹¹ Cf. Morrissey (2008: 286).

¹² Defoe (2010: n.p.). Cf. also Morrissey (2008: 287), who comments on parallels between Defoe's narrative and the biblical story of the "lost son" (St. Luke 15, 11-32)

¹³ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

¹⁴ Cf. Morrissey (2008: 285) and Nowak (2010: 224).

¹⁵ Cf. Anderson (1991) and Hague (2004: 16-21).

¹⁶ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

¹⁷ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

¹⁸ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

¹⁹ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

²⁰ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

²¹ Cf. Defoe (2010: n.p.).

²² As Morrissey (2008: 287) points out, there seem to be certain parallels to John Locke's *Second Treatise on Government* in this respect with its concept of attaching value to things or persons according to their usefulness, which seems to be applied to "the other" as well in this context: "If we take Crusoe at his word, if 'everything' in the world is good only if it is useful, the point would apply to humans as well, and could justify slavery, as it treats people for their usefulness, without regard to what Locke calls intrinsic values."

Crusoe and Xury finally come face to face with the assumedly frightening, and, as Crusoe notes, “naked [savages]”²³ (with nakedness being a marker of “otherness”). In the course of the meeting, Crusoe, with ostentation, shows his superiority towards Xury and the natives by using his fire arms to kill a leopard: “It is impossible to express the astonishment of these poor creatures at the noise and the fire of my gun; some of them were even ready to die for fear, and fell down as dead with the very terror.”²⁴ For Crusoe, this is a kind of game, and he enjoys the admiration of his “friendly negroes”, as he calls them.²⁵ Again, this example of “otherness” presents the other ethnic group as rather naive, harmless and easily impressed.

It is somewhat remarkable that Crusoe, after facing these adventures together with Xury as his faithful servant, sells the young man to the Captain of the “European”²⁶ ship that has picked them up. Although he is sorry to lose Xury, he thinks that the Captain’s offer of setting Xury free after ten years if he turns Christian is more than fair. Interestingly enough, there is never the idea of turning Crusoe into a slave – as he belongs to the same community, “Europe”, as the captain of the ship. It is even more remarkable that right after that Crusoe decides to buy a “Negroe slave”²⁷ although he knows by now what it is like to be enslaved. The fact that the journey he makes to buy more slaves is the fatal one²⁸ can perhaps be taken as an example of poetic justice.

Having got shipwrecked and being about to reach the shore of the unknown island in the storm, Crusoe states that the mere sight of the place makes him feel afraid: “[...] the land looked more frightful than the sea.”²⁹ The impending encounter with the “other” is indicated as something frightful in this scene.

Nevertheless, Crusoe makes the best of his situation by “Europeanizing” and “civilizing” the island: He builds a fortress³⁰ because of his fear of wild beasts or savages, he goes hunting and he explores the place. After recovering from the first shock, his intention is to get as many “European” goods from the stranded vessel as possible, such as “a little remainder of European corn” and “European coin” to establish a sort of European civilization *en miniature*.³¹ In his agricultural projects, Crusoe is more than happy to be able to raise barley – “[...] I was surprised, and perfectly astonished, when, after a little longer time, I saw about ten or twelve ears come out, which were perfect green barley, of the same kind as our European [...] barley.” Even with regard to his pets, the “European” is established as the norm according to which the quality of everything is measured when Robinson contrasts the “wild cats” living on the island with “European cats” as more peaceful and “civilized”.³² Crusoe also keeps a calendar to keep up with the “European seasons” while reflecting on how the seasons on the island differ from the ones he knows from Europe³³. He starts to write a journal³⁴ and reflects on how he makes his peace with God to finally accept his “fate”. He reads the

²³ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

²⁴ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

²⁵ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

²⁶ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

²⁷ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

²⁸ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

²⁹ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

³⁰ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

³¹ Cf. Defoe (2010: n.p.).

³² Cf. Defoe (2010: n.p.).

³³ “I found now that the seasons of the year might generally be divided, not into summer and winter, as in Europe, but into the rainy seasons and the dry seasons, which were generally thus: – The half of February, the whole of March, and the half of April – rainy, the sun being then on or near the equinox.” (Defoe 2010: n.p.).

³⁴ Cf. Defoe (2010: n.p.).

Bible, he prays and starts to feel thankful for at least having been sent to such a plentiful place. Thus, it can be said that he has established his personal utopia on the island.³⁵

With the discovery of a footprint in the sand, Crusoe enters a new stage in his stay on the island: “[...] I was exceedingly surprised with the print of a man’s naked foot on the shore [...]. [...] I fancied it must be the Devil; [...]”³⁶ At first, he feels deeply afraid and even thinks the devil might have paid a visit to the place – which implies that there is something assumedly devilish and evil about the “other”.³⁷ Crusoe prepares for an encounter with the savages, whom he almost immediately assumes to be his enemies:

“[I thought about] how I might fall into the hands of savages, and perhaps such as I might have reason to think far worse than the lions and tigers of Africa: that if I once came in their power, I should run a hazard of more than a thousand to one of being killed, and perhaps of being eaten; for I had heard that the people of the Caribbean coast were cannibals or man-eaters, and I knew by the latitude that I could not be far from that shore. Then, supposing they were not cannibals, yet they might kill me, as many Europeans who had fallen into their hands [...]”³⁸

These “cannibals” are described as being worse than animals and they are directly contrasted with the “Europeans” here who, as Defoe has his narrator remark, are likely to fall victims to them. Crusoe’s worst fears concerning the savages are confirmed when, one day, he finds the shore covered with bones after a cannibal feast:

“it is [im]possible for me to express the horror of my mind at seeing the shore spread with skulls, hands, feet, and other bones of human bodies; and particularly, I observed a place where there had been a fire made, and a circle dug in the earth [...] where it is supposed the savage wretches had sat down to their inhuman feastings upon the bodies of their fellow creatures.”³⁹

Crusoe’s reactions are manifold: He feels glad about his own assumed moral “superiority” with regard to the savages – “[I] gave God thanks [that] [...] I was distinguished from such dreadful creatures as these.”⁴⁰ At the same time, he thinks about how he might take revenge for what they are doing, assuming that he has to punish the “brutish”⁴¹ natives for their “inhuman, hellish brutality”.⁴² Therefore, he makes preparations for a fight: “[...] for night and day I could think of nothing but how I might destroy some of these monsters in their cruel bloody entertainment [...]”⁴³ However, he soon becomes doubtful about his plans⁴⁴ and about the prospect of killing the natives because he sees a theological dimension of his inner moral argument: If the savages are tolerated by God in what they are doing, who is he, Crusoe, to judge them? – “What authority or call [had] I [...] to be judge and executioner upon these men as criminals, whom Heaven had thought fit for so many ages

³⁵ The island would then represent a contrast to conflict-ridden England and at the same time also a form of criticism, as Morrissey (2008: 288), hinting at the fact that Crusoe leaves England in 1651 at the beginning of the Interregnum and stays there until briefly before the Glorious Revolution, explains: „[...] a central metaphor of Robinson Crusoe might be said to represent a Dissenter’s sense that life in England during the Restoration or prior to the Glorious Revolution was like being stranded on a deserted island. In this way, Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe offers a Whig vision of the history of the second half of the seventeenth century, celebrating the Glorious Revolution, connecting it to the democratic moment of the 1640s, and creating a lineage between the decade’s range of Puritans and early eighteenth-century Dissenters” (Morrissey 2008: 289).

³⁶ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

³⁷ Cf. Petzold (1982: 83).

³⁸ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

³⁹ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁴⁰ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁴¹ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁴² Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁴³ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁴⁴ Cf. Petzold (1982: 84ff.).

to suffer unpunished to go on [...]?”⁴⁵ Crusoe feels no longer entitled to assume the role of a judge and concludes that God has not yet revealed himself to these poor “wretches”⁴⁶ who do not know that they are but poor sinners. He places them in a somewhat superior position now because they do not know anything about sin and therefore, they cannot sin. Finally, he even includes them in the human race which represents quite a change from his original ideas about the natives. He furthermore criticizes “European” attempts of colonizing the world as standing in contrast to the Christian faith when referring to “the Spaniards in all their barbarities practiced in America, where they destroyed millions of these people”⁴⁷, an act which is now, as Crusoe claims, regarded “by all other Christian nations of Europe, as mere butchery.”⁴⁸ Interestingly enough, it is only the Spaniards that are criticized here while the image of the imagined community of Europe is kept intact by emphasizing that “Europeans” in general condemn such practices.

However, in spite of the relativist tendencies that have just been mentioned, Crusoe is still a colonizer after all, which becomes very clear when he explains that he is planning to “get a savage in his possession”.⁴⁹ When the time has finally come, Crusoe thinks of his future companion as a “servant” or an “assistant”⁵⁰, which stresses the idea of an assumed superiority of Crusoe, the “European”.

The savage that Robinson Crusoe names Friday belongs to the last category of possible “others” in the text. He is accepted by Crusoe for different reasons. After he has saved the naked savage’s life, Friday places Crusoe’s foot on his head in an act of submission:⁵¹ “[...] he kneeled down again, kissed the ground, and taking me by the foot, set my foot upon his head: this, it seems, was in token of swearing to be my slave forever.”⁵² Thus the “poor creature”⁵³ shows subjection, servitude and submission – like a “slave”⁵⁴.

Defoe has Crusoe point out Friday’s closeness to European standards and, in doing so, has his narrator display a Eurocentric worldview when Crusoe describes his new companion as follows:

“He was a comely, handsome fellow, perfectly well made, with straight, strong limbs, not too large; tall, and well-shaped; and, as I reckon, about twenty-six years of age. He had a very good countenance, not a fierce and surly aspect, but seemed to have something very manly in his face; and yet he had all the sweetness and softness of a European in his countenance, too, especially when he smiled.”

Crusoe then starts a process of colonization *en miniature* with Friday as the colonized subject in the microcosm of the island: He gives him clothes because nakedness is considered a sign of “otherness” and as indecent.⁵⁵ Crusoe teaches Friday his language, and here it is remarkable that Friday has to call Crusoe “Master”⁵⁶ and that Friday’s language is not considered to be real language but rather something barbarian. Crusoe furthermore dissuades Friday from cannibalism by making it clear to him that he will be killed should he ever make the attempt to eat human flesh

⁴⁵ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁴⁶ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁴⁷ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁴⁸ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁴⁹ Defoe (2010: n.p.). Cf. Morrissey (2008: 288), who calls Crusoe a “colonial plantation owner who not only owns slaves but puts himself in a position he could never have had in England.”

⁵⁰ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁵¹ Cf. Nowak (2010: 224).

⁵² Defoe (2010: n.p.). Petzold (1982: 86ff.) emphasizes that, as Crusoe has saved Friday’s life, he thinks he owns him.

⁵³ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁵⁴ Morrissey (2008: 287).

⁵⁵ Cf. Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁵⁶ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

again.⁵⁷ Last but not least, Crusoe provides Friday with theological instruction in the Christian faith⁵⁸ – “the knowledge of the true God”⁵⁹ – which Friday proves to be receptive for: “I described to him the country of Europe, particularly England, which I came from; how we lived, how we worshipped God, how we behaved to one another, [...]”⁶⁰ With regard to this quotation, it is highly remarkable that Crusoe refers to a “country of Europe”⁶¹, which emphasizes that he feels like a member of this imagined community while Friday comes close to the European ideal but is still excluded from it.

The cultural contact between Crusoe and Friday can be called rather one-sided because Crusoe basically transfers his culture to Friday, regarding himself as Friday’s owner when talking about “my man Friday”.⁶² This is slightly tempered by a kind of understanding between the two of them⁶³, which is expressed when Crusoe describes Friday as a “true friend”⁶⁴. Friday, who gets more and more “European” over time, is increasingly connected with positive values when he is called “loving”, “faithful” and “sincere”⁶⁵. Defoe even has his narrator express that he “loves the creature”⁶⁶, who is still not considered a human being but rather a “creature”. In spite of the development of their relationship, Crusoe is absolutely out of his wits when he gets the chance to save another “European” from the hands of the cannibals: “I was filled with horror at the very naming of the white bearded man; and going to the tree, I saw plainly by my glass a white man, who lay upon the beach of the sea with his hands and his feet tied with flags, or things like rushes, and that he was an European, and had clothes on.” Although Friday has become something like a friend for Robinson Crusoe, the prospect of meeting a person of the community labeled “European” seems to be slightly more valuable to him.

Daniel Defoe’s text seems to include terminology and ways of behaviour on the European side that today’s readers would consider rather improper. Nevertheless, these seemingly racist ideas are somewhat relativised in Robinson’s acceptance of the savages’ behaviour and in his friendship with Friday. Nevertheless, after all, the colonial hierarchy between them is actually never put into question and one can assume that Friday is only tolerated because he has the “sweetness and softness of a European”.⁶⁷ One could conclude that Crusoe is presented as a Christian colonizer with a certain concern for “the other”, but still with the idea of a European superiority on his mind.

3. Conclusion

The text seems to present a savage/civilized dichotomy in which Europe is taken as the norm and “the other” is treated as inferior. Robinson is victorious over the cannibals and “civilizes” Friday by making him adapt “European” values. The original culture of Friday is more or less ignored in this context and he is only considered appealing when he shows himself to be willing to accept European norms and codes of behaviour. The terms used to describe the different categories of “the other” underpin the assumed inferiority that has just been mentioned.

⁵⁷ Cf. Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁵⁸ Cf. Petzold (1982: 86).

⁵⁹ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁶⁰ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁶¹ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁶² Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁶³ Cf. Petzold (1982: 86).

⁶⁴ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁶⁵ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁶⁶ Defoe (2010: n.p.).

⁶⁷ Defoe (2010: n.p.). Cf. Nowak (2010: 225).

The text, at the same time, also includes relativist tendencies which call for tolerance with regard to “the other” and which go hand in hand with the ideas uttered by Defoe in his essay “The True-Born Englishman”⁶⁸ in which he refuses nationalism and intolerance.⁶⁹ Defoe’s *Robinson* expresses his belief that the savages cannot be blamed for being what they are on the basis of theological and philosophical reasons. However, relativism, in the text, has its limitations: “The other” does not reach the same status as the “European” colonizers and is still considered inferior. Nevertheless, the novel includes the idea of tolerance. The question is whether this does also apply to “the other” or not.

Is *Robinson Crusoe* in part racist? Or is it only racist from a modern point of view? Here, literary studies invite linguistics for cooperation. Fictional texts, admittedly, do not represent natural nor experimentally elicited language, but some fictional texts nevertheless have had an enormous impact on the thoughts of masses of readers all over Europe and have thus contributed to these readers’ further use of words. Therefore, such texts might be worth being reflected on by both linguists and scholars from the field of literary studies.

Bea Klüsener
Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt
Department of English Literature and European Studies
Bea.Kluesener@ku.de

References

- Anderson, Benedict (1991), *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso.
- Ashcroft, Bill / Griffiths, Gareth / Tiffin, Helen (2000), *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, London: Routledge.
- Clinton Hutchins, Henry (1925), *Robinson Crusoe and its Printing*, New York: Columbia University Press.
- Defoe, Daniel (1701), “The True-Born Englishman”,
<<https://archive.org/details/truebornenglish00defogooq>> (19-08-2014).
- Defoe, Daniel (2010 [1719]), *Robinson Crusoe*,
<<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/521/521-h/521-h.htm>> (19-08-2014).
- Hague, Euan (2004), “Benedict Anderson”, in: Hubbard, Phil / Kitchin, Rob / Valentine, Gill (eds.), *Key Thinkers on Space and Place*, 16-21, London: Sage Publications.
- Henke, Christoph (2005), “Common Sense und Englishness in der englischen Literatur des 18. Jahrhunderts“, in: Nünning, Vera (ed.), *Kulturgeschichte der englischen Literatur*, 113-124, Tübingen: A. Francke.
- Horatschek, Annegreth (2005a), “Kulturelle Alterität“, in: Nünning, Ansgar (ed.), *Grundbegriffe der Kulturtheorie und Kulturwissenschaften*, 1-2, Stuttgart: Metzler.
- Horatschek, Annegreth (2005b), “Kollektive Identität“, in: Nünning, Ansgar (ed.), *Grundbegriffe der Kulturtheorie und Kulturwissenschaften*, 71-72, Stuttgart: Metzler.
- Locke, John (1963 [1689]), *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, ed. Mario Montuori, Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff.
- Locke, John (1974 [1689]), *Über die Regierung (The Second Treatise of Government)*, Stuttgart: Reclam.
- Morrissey, Lee (2008), “The Restoration and Eighteenth Century, 1660-1780”, in: Poplawski, Paul (ed.), *English Literature in Context*, 211-305, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nowak, Helge (2010), *Literature in Britain and Ireland: A History*, Tübingen: Narr Francke Attempto.
- Petzold, Dieter (1982), *Daniel Defoe: Robinson Crusoe*, München: Fink.
- Reckwitz, Erhard (1976), *Die Robinsonade: Themen und Formen einer literarischen Gattung*, Amsterdam: Grüner.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques (1762), *Émile*,
<<http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/5427/pg5427.html>> (04-08-2014).

⁶⁸ Defoe (1701: n.p.).

⁶⁹ Cf. also Watt (1968: 62ff.).

- The Bible: Authorized King James Version with Apocrypha* (1997), ed. by Robert Carroll and Stephen Prickett, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Watt, Ian (1968), *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding*, Harmondsworth: Penguin in assoc. with Chatto & Windus.
- Zupancic, Peter (1976), *Die Robinsonade in der Jugendliteratur*, Ph.D. thesis Bochum.