

THE RHETORIC OF VOICE CHANGE IN
DANIEL DEFOE'S MINOR NOVELS

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty of the Department of English
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Lap Sun Lee
August, 1974

FOREWORD

This thesis is inspired by a course on the Eighteenth Century English Novel taught by Dr. Irving N. Rothman. I would like to express my appreciation for Dr. Rothman's constant encouragement, guidance, and criticism which have enabled me to finish my project. The assistance of the other members of my thesis committee is also gratefully acknowledged.

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In Daniel Defoe's minor novels, despite the autobiographical pretense, the narrator's voice contains an unreconciled plurality. The pronominal subject in Captain Singleton and Colonel Jack frequently represents more than one person. Instead, it can be resolved as a dual personality, into the author's and the created character's voice. These, in turn, can be further sub-divided in the former as "the true author's voice," "the implied author's voice," and, in the latter, as "the characteristic voice " and "the autobiographical voice." The first three voices contain elements of the author's intrusion in varying degrees. Though they provide the reader with advice on eighteenth century moral, economical or social topics, such expressions of the author's personal point of view damage the structural unity of his novels and weaken the portrayal of fictitious characters. There is, however, an evolutionary movement toward a more independent autobiographical voice. Defoe gradually withdraws his intrusions until the narrator's voice in Roxana has adequate characteristic traits and mannerisms to render it fully independent. With its credibility and sustained personality, Roxana's voice is in many ways superior to the

earlier narrators with mixed voices. Such an independent autobiographical voice represents the most mature state in Defoe's handling of the narrator.

CONTENTS

	Page
FOREWORD	iii
I. INTRODUCTION.	1
A REVIEW OF PREVIOUS RELEVANT CRITICISM .	8
THE RHETORIC OF DEFOE	25
II. <u>CAPTAIN SINGLETON</u>	41
III. <u>COLONEL JACK</u>	77
IV. <u>ROXANA</u>	112
V. CONCLUSION.	139
BIBLIOGRAPHY	144

I. INTRODUCTION

Until recent criticism altered the trend, Daniel Defoe's importance as an "early master" of English novels was often treated as a literary phenomenon, and little attention had been paid to his art as a writer of novels. Literary critics tended to focus their attention on certain crudities found in his works. Because of his productivity, they "forgave" Defoe's loose ends and promises of episodes that never materialize, writing them off as inevitable errors committed in rushing to meet the demand of the printing press. His habit of listing articles, events and even people has been interpreted as a natural product from a mercantile mentality, an observation that seems to be firmly supported by biographical facts and Defoe's apparent interest in trade and commerce. Furthermore, he is also remarkable in graphic detail and in his careful depiction of objects or projects. These characteristics contribute to a belief that his outlook is basically materialistic, his writing sub-literary,¹ and his status that of a mere "trader-writer."

¹Alan McKillop, The Early Masters of English Fiction (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1956), p. 5.

Such views are, however, gradually being rectified by critics such as Alan McKillop, Maximillian Novak, Ian Watt, Dorothy Van Ghent, James Sutherland, and others.² Defoe has slowly emerged as a master of the knowledge of human nature; his morality, philosophy of life, and religious attitudes are extensively examined and found to be firmly embedded and well represented in his fictional narratives. The rediscovery of Defoe's merit has prompted other studies. One of the most recent is that of Professor E. Anthony James, whose approach is distinctively different from that of his predecessors. Instead of discussing Defoe's philosophies, he concentrates on the art of the novelist and, more precisely, on the prose style and rhetoric of his works.

Professor James examines three generic categories of Defoe's writing: (1) non-fictional works whose authorship Defoe usually acknowledged (pamphlets such as Giving Alms no Charity, Appeal to Honour and Justice, Plan of the English

² Maximillian E. Novak, Defoe and the Nature of Man (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963); "Colonel Jack's 'Thieving Roguing' Trade to Mexico and Defoe's Attack on Economic Individualism," HLQ, 24 (Aug. 1961), 349-53; "The Problem of Necessity in Defoe's Fiction," PQ, 40 (Oct. 1961), 513-24; Economic and the Fiction of Daniel Defoe (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1962); "Defoe's Theory of Fiction," SP, 41 (July 1964), 650-68; "The Recent Critical Fortunes of Moll Flanders," Eighteenth-Century Studies, 1 (Fall 1967), 109-26. Dorothy Van Ghent, The English Novel: Form and Function (New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1953). James Sutherland, Defoe (New York: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1938).

Commerce), (2) short, often ironic works of mimicry, purportedly written by someone other than Defoe (The Poor Man's Plea, The Shortest Way with the Dissenters, and two pamphlets written in favor of the Hanoverian succession), (3) long purportedly autobiographical works of fiction written from the first person point of view of narrators like Robinson Crusoe, Moll Flanders, and Roxana.³ He concludes that Defoe the writer has three main voices: a "natural" one, a journalistic one, and an "autobiographical" contrivance. The voice in non-fictional writings is the least disguised. It "adheres to the authorial values he enunciated and reveals much evidence of his Puritan literary heritage"; at the same time there are notable departures from this undisguised voice through irony and deliberate vulgarization.⁴ A second voice, the journalistic voice, is predominant in longer narratives; the objective is to provide verisimilitude. The third voice allows Defoe to create different voices for different characters, firmly buttressed by unique patterns of diction and imagery and a variety of revealing eccentricities of style.

³E. Anthony James, Daniel Defoe's Many Voices: A Rhetorical Study of Prose and Literary Method (Rodopi NV: Amsterdam, 1972), pp. 1-31.

⁴James, p. 256.

Anthony James persuades us that Defoe is a conscious craftsman, an observation which dismisses much of the disparagement formerly directed at his compositions. Defoe was "pre-eminently a conscious, if not always a careful literary artist."⁵ Such a finding is based upon sufficient uniformity of literary practice in each of the three generic classification discussed, as well as positive evidence that points to premeditated designs in these writings.⁶ This is the prevailing attitude present in those critics carefully studying Roxana.

Professor James's observation on the rhetoric of Defoe is valid, but he did not choose to treat the minor novels in the same perspective, nor did he elaborate on the transitional process which exists between the journalistic and didactic Defoe and that creator of "different voices for different characters" whose skill is most apparent in Roxana. If he had examined the minor novels, he would have seen that Defoe's own voice still occupies a substantial part of the narrative, at the expense of the narrator's voice.

The voice of the narrator in these minor novels is hardly a pure one. In spite of occasional attempts to

⁵James, pp. 256-58.

⁶James, p. 32.

characterize the person who is relating the "autobiographies," the voice at times sounds like Mr. Review or Daniel Defoe. Defoe is fully conscious of such impurity. When he takes over the narrative with his transparent intrusions, the reader is expected to recognize him and believe that his presence is critical to the verisimilitude of that which is being described. His comment on the abundance of elephants in Africa in Captain Singleton is of this nature;⁷ so is his insistence that the actions and ambitions of the characters in the novels have to be checked by the writer himself, as in the case of his appearing to sermonize on the Captain's sinfulness.⁸

Thus Defoe's adventurous narrators in these novels are sometimes handicapped by their creator's control and unwillingness to let them roam free in both action and spirit. The true Defoe still speaks with influence behind the masks of such contrived voices. This may account for the masculinity in women's voices and enthusiasm, pride, and confidence found in every narrator's voice.

On the other hand, the contrived autobiographical voice provides a useful cover when Defoe needs one. Hidden

⁷Daniel Defoe, Captain Singleton (1720; rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 86-89.

⁸Captain Singleton, pp. 11-12.

behind his narrators (who, with the exception of Roxana, eventually repent of their evil deeds) he can freely indulge in the momentarily roaming of the newly-liberated spirit of the middle-class, which acquires wealth and imposes a new sense of political power while testing its potential by engaging in "illicit" practices such as whoring, pirating, hoarding riches, or murder, which formerly gave licence only to the wealthy. He can afford to ignore the censure of society and openly advance up the social ladder to a higher position than the one into which he is born. All these endeavors can be achieved with impunity as long as the narrative voice "appears" occasionally as the writer to condemn and label them as "undesirable."

The presence of a plurality of voices in Defoe's minor novels is the subject of this thesis. Such a study has generally been neglected by critics, and the different voices in the narrator have never been discussed separately. The object here is to explore the origin, function, and changes of different voices in Captain Singleton and Colonel Jack. In addition, I hope to demonstrate how Defoe gradually realizes that, despite certain advantages, expressing himself through the narrator's voice seriously damages the autobiographical pretense. I shall also discuss how he seeks to avoid this rhetorical dilemma by expressing himself through other means, some few of which grant fuller independence to

the narrator. For this purpose, besides devoting a chapter to each of the two minor novels, I have provided a chapter on Roxana to show the logical evolution of rhetorical style. This, hopefully, will illustrate that the voice in Roxana, highly praised by James, is the product of a complicated evolutionary process and is superior to the mixed voices of Defoe's earlier narrators.

The main emphasis of the study will, however, be on the "mixed voices" found in the minor novels. I shall prove that there is a juxtaposition of voices in Captain Singleton. After a brief attempt, the characterization of the narrator's voice is abandoned and Defoe freely expresses his opinions on subjects which have been his life-long interest; later, when he chooses to discourse on spiritual conversion, he finds the Captain's voice inadequate and promptly creates the independent voice of a Quaker to help prove his point.

Colonel Jack, on the other hand, will be seen as representing the period when Defoe explores the usefulness of a contrived voice for the purpose of speaking out his mind. It will be demonstrated how this is done at the expense of the central character.

In the past, both novels had received relatively little attention from critics. Captain Singleton was seen mostly as a travelogue, with the journey across the African continent

as the main attraction.⁹ Charles Lamb and others who followed him praised Colonel Jack for its early part, when the impoverished young Jack struggles to survive in the hostile streets of London. By pointing out the presence of different narrative voices in these "autobiographies" I expect to prove that these minor novels are important links in the study of Defoe's art, especially his control as a writer of fiction.

A Review of Previous Relevant Criticism

A study of Defoe's rhetoric ought to be prefaced with a survey to show the manner in which his fictional "autobiographical voice" has been viewed in the past. Although few critics have cared to elaborate on Defoe's voices, his handling of the "autobiographical voice" has not been totally neglected. The two-and-a-half centuries of Defoe criticism contain observations that are relevant and illuminating. Some eighteenth century critics, for instance, had already pointed out the didactic nature of the narrator's voice, while their nineteenth century counterparts had begun to associate it with the author. In the nineteenth century, Defoe's minor

⁹Geographical interpretation of the novel can be found in at least two places: A.W. Secord, Studies in the Narrative Method of Defoe (1924; rpt. New York: Russell & Russell, Inc., 1963) and Gary J. Scrimgeour, "The Problem of Realism in Defoe's Captain Singleton," HLQ, 27 (Nov. 1963), 21-37.

novels began to gain serious consideration alongside Robinson Crusoe and Moll Flanders, and the similarity found in all the narrators' voices had led critics to further ponder the scope of Defoe's intrusion. Studies in the early twentieth century had made some contribution toward the understanding of the author's didactic purpose, although his ideas and philosophies had been separated from his narrative techniques and discussed on their own merit. The past decade has witnessed a revival in the appreciation of Defoe's artistry and, consequently, the "autobiographical voice" is receiving more critical attention.

Daniel Defoe's literary merit was not always recognized. His contemporaries paid relatively little attention to his novels; instead, they directed most of their comments on his polemics and his highly controversial life. The prevalent mood was one of general disapprobation, with many of his flaws discovered, in the first place, because of political spite.¹⁰ Alexander Pope, one of the few early critics of Defoe's artistry, later modified his original view of the author's narrative skill¹¹ to say that "The first part of Robinson Crusoe,

¹⁰Pat Rogers, ed., Defoe: The Critical Heritage (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), p. 11.

¹¹In The Dunciad Variorum (1729) Pope called him "unabash'd" and aligned his name with recognized dunces of the period. See Alexander Pope, The Dunciad, ed. James Sutherland (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1943), p. 117.

(was) good. Defoe wrote ^{a vast} many things, and none bad, though none excellent. There's something good in all he has writ."¹² Pope did not, however, discuss in detail what he considered as good.

Robinson Crusoe continued to be the novel that received most of the critics' attention, and by mid-century there appeared a more concrete comment on the novel's form. In The Life of the Poet (1753), "Mr. Cibber" devoted twelve pages to the merits of Defoe, calling him a man with fertile, strong and lively imagination, and he observed that Robinson Crusoe, with its "natural manner," was "written upon a model entirely new."¹³ But it was not until the latter part of the century that Defoe's didacticism received direct comment. James Beattie's Dissertations Moral and Critical (1783) and Hugh Blair's Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Letters (1783) were perhaps pioneers in such discussion. In their treatment of Defoe's first novel, both critics found him entertaining but also didactic. Beattie observed that it might be read, "not only with pleasure, but also with profit"; while Blair remarked that the novel, besides taking a strong hold of the imagination of all readers, suggests at the same time, "very

¹² Joseph Spence, Anecdotes, Observations, and Characters of Books and Men, ed. J.M. Osborn (1820; rpt. Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1964), I, 213.

¹³ Theophilus Cibber, The Lives of the Poets (1753), IV, 322-25; quoted by Rogers in Defoe: The Critical Heritage, pp. 49-50.

useful instructions."¹⁴ However, like most critics of the eighteenth century, they failed to note this perspective in Defoe's other novels.

The year 1785 marked the beginning of serious study of Defoe's life and works. George Chalmers (1742-1825) compiled the Life of Daniel Defoe which listed eighty "canonical" works and twenty suppositious items. This supplied the essential foundation for nineteenth-century reappraisals of Defoe.¹⁵ Apart from listing his works, Chalmers' study was remarkable in its comments on Defoe's "secondary" novels. He took into consideration Moll Flanders, Colonel Jack, Roxana, and Memoirs of a Cavalier. Suspicious of Defoe's sincerity in making the moral more fabulous than the fable, he finally declared that he was not convinced "that the world has been made wiser or better, by the persual of these lives. . . (for) they do not exhibit many scenes which are welcome to cultivated minds."¹⁶ Thus it seems that Defoe's moral lessons did not impress this particular critic.

The first thirty years of the nineteenth century saw a sudden flourish in the study of Defoe's works. Amongst the

¹⁴James Beattie, Dissertations Moral and Critical (1783; rpt. New York: Garland Publications, 1971), pp. 566-67; Hugh Blair, Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Letters, ed. Harold F. Harding (1783; rpt. Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965), II, 290.

¹⁵George Chalmers, The Life of Daniel Defoe (1790; rpt. New York: Garland Publications, 1970).

¹⁶Chalmers, II, 429.

most illustrious figures was Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) who commented on Defoe's narrative voice. As Professor Rogers has pointed out, "Scott was the first critic to consider the nature of Defoe's literary impersonations, as opposed to the mere identity assumed."¹⁷ Although Scott admired much of the novelist's skill, he stated that Defoe's assumption of characters was not always successful. This was mainly due to the "simple style" he adopted, as well as "the shadow of his own personality":

. . . Besides this peculiar style of writing requires that the author possesses King Fadrallah's secret of transmigrating from one body to another, and possessing him of all the qualities which he finds in the assumed character, retaining his own taste and judgment to direct them.

Sometimes this is done, by the author avowedly taking upon himself an imaginary personage, and writing according to his supposed feelings and prejudices. (Here Scott cited as example the narrator in Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield and Thady in Castle Rackrent.)

These are, however, all characters of masquerade: We believe that of Defoe was entirely natural to him. The high-born Cavalier, for instance, speaks nearly the same species of language, and shows scarce a greater knowledge of society than Robinson Crusoe. . . .

It is greatly to be doubted whether De Foe could have changed his colloquial, circuitous, and periphrastic style for any other, whether more coarse or more elegant. We have little doubt it was connected with his nature, and the particular turn of his thoughts and ordinary expressions, and that he did not succeed so much by writing in an assumed manner, as by giving full scope to his own.¹⁸

¹⁷Rogers, p. 17.

¹⁸Walter Scott, The Miscellaneous Works of Sir Walter Scott, Bart (Edinburgh, 1834), IV, 248-81.

The influence of Defoe's own personality on his fictional writing had never been so clearly spelled out, but Scott's accusation of Defoe's failure to create a fully independent "autobiographical voice" still verged on generalization.

Such a voice may lack independence, but it still manages to convey a sense of intimacy that results in a close relationship between the author and his readers. This was one of the major observations made by Charles Lamb,¹⁹ who stated that "it is impossible to believe, while you are reading (the novels) that a real person is not narrating to you every where nothing but what really happened to himself." It is such "homeliness" that binds the reader to the narrator.²⁰

The didacticism in Defoe's writings nevertheless continued to attract critics' attention. They were now prepared to examine why as well as how he conveys his messages. The year 1830 saw the publication of yet another major study on Defoe, Walter Wilson's three-volume Memoirs of the Life and Times of Daniel Defoe. Wilson laid great emphasis on Defoe's ability and zeal to instruct through examples. Apart from manuals such as The Family Instructor and Religious Courtships "which have for their specific object the awakening mankind to serious reflections" his other writings "abound

¹⁹Charles Lamb highly praised the portrayal of young Jack. He also pointed out that the loneliness of Jack's heart was indeed similar to the solitude faced by Crusoe on the island. See The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb, ed. E.V. Lucas (1903-5), I, 325-27.

²⁰The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb, I, 327.

in prudential maxims, enforcing some sentiment of practical importance. Such was his anxiety for reformation, that he never slips an opportunity of introducing some hint of caution, or of suggesting some remark in the way of admonition or satire, with a view to the correction of vice, and the inculcation of moral principles."²¹ In consideration of the various narrators in Defoe's novels and stories, Wilson found the one in A Journal of the Plague Year most successful, for "no one can take up the book without believing that it is the saddler of Whitechapel who is telling his own story."²²

That the other "autobiographical narrators" are not so successful is the point taken up by William Hazlitt when he reviewed Wilson's Life in the Edinburgh Review. He based his objections on the fact that most of Defoe's narrators sound alike, regardless of sex. But worst of all, there is a moral disparity in all of them: they have a tendency to move from extremes. At times they speak in a saintly, spotlessly pure manner, but at others they seem depraved and lack redemptive qualities. Worse still, the enthusiasm in their voice suggests that they seem to enjoy their sinister adventures; thus, the remorse that they express

²¹Walter Wilson, Memoirs of The Life and Times of Daniel De Foe (1830; rpt. New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1973), III, 624-36.

²²Memoirs of The Life and Times of Daniel De Foe, III, 636.

at the end of the novel appears hypocritical.²³ With Hazlitt's penetrating remarks it is clear that under more critical study the autobiographical voice shows some strain in its assumption of homogeneity.

Some of the impurities were traced back to the author; in 1856 there appeared in the National Review an article by an anonymous reviewer who discussed at length Defoe's influence in his novels. After a careful examination, the anonymous critic concluded that "All these people are modelled on himself, and differ but slightly, except in their circumstances, from one another. . . . This unconscious self-revelation is remarkably full and explicit in De Foe, because, not penetrating into the interior of other men, he was thrown very much on the resources within himself. All his characters are woven out of the same thread; they may differ in many ways, but in certain characteristics, and those the most deep-seated, they are like one another and like the author. It is the innermost part of his nature which a man can least shake off in his writings."²⁴ This also explains why Defoe is so enthusiastic in the depictions of the gathering of wealth, for "in his heart he must have had an intense love of property; in his novels he let his passion for it run free.

²³William Hazlitt, The Collect Works of William Hazlitt, ed. A.R. Waller and A. Glover (London: J.M. Dent & Co., 1904), X, 355-85.

²⁴National Review, 3 (Oct. 1856), 380-410.

He delights in putting the values down in separate lines, and totting up the columns." Thus, "in the substance of their constitution, still more than in special traits, do De Foe's fictitious personages echo back their creator."²⁵

The religious background of Defoe explained these later echoes; a writer for the British Quarterly Review commented on Robinson Crusoe: "the biblical and literary allusions . . . clearly betray the pen of the author who sent such moral effusions as the Family Instructor and the Religious Courtship into the closets of kings. The conversation with Friday on the existence of evil in the world might have been held by De Foe any Sabbath from the pulpit in Surrey Chapel."²⁶ The same critic also cited the presence of staunch nationalism in the "narrator's" voice, a feature not earlier identified. It was observed that besides having an eye on the national interest of England, Defoe portrayed most of his characters as typical English citizens.²⁷

The next criticism on Defoe's narrative voice came from Leslie Stephen, who published one of the most famous and influential articles on the author in 1868. Apart from other observations,²⁸ he saw Defoe as deficient in characterization

²⁵National Review, 3 (Oct. 1856), 380-410.

²⁶British Quarterly Review, 27 (Jan. 1858), 100-5.

²⁷British Quarterly Review, 27 (Jan. 1858), 100-5.

²⁸Leslie Stephen placed great emphasis on the structure of the novels and accredited most of their success to the unique and attractive plots. See Hours in a Library (1874; rpt. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1904), pp. 20-22.

and portrayal of psychological subtleties; he is never able to paint the "thoughts and emotions which inhabit the twilight of the mind" ²⁹ The voice that narrates the story was partly responsible, and Roxana, Moll Flanders, Colonel Jack, and Captain Singleton were little more than police reports, while Robinson Crusoe was for boys rather than for men. Like earlier critics, Stephen saw that Defoe "could not, indeed, help introducing a little moralizing" in his novels, "for he was a typical English middle-class dissenter." But such intrusion may in a way be beneficial, and Robinson Crusoe was superior to other novels because "the story has in it the autobiographical element which makes a man speak from greater depths of feeling than in a purely imaginary story." ³⁰ Thus, at least one critic saw the intrusion of Defoe's identity as harmless.

A year after Stephen's essay William Lee published his Life and Recently Discovered Writings of Daniel Defoe. Lee also speculated on Defoe's motive for moralizing. He maintained that in the novels dealing with "criminal lives" Defoe was not writing for money, as some critics believed, but instead, "he wrote them under circumstances not heretofore known, voluntarily, and from motives justified by his own

²⁹ Hours in a Library, p. 22.

³⁰ Hours in a Library, pp. 36-40.

enlightened conscience." Lee here suggested that the tales might have been written for the benefit of criminals who found themselves in the same situation as Moll or Jack.³¹ Defoe's benevolence, however, relies on the credibility of his contrived narrators, but Lee did not elaborate on how successful Defoe is in making them sound like the ordinary petty criminals.

In the years that followed, Defoe's skill in handling the narrative voice continued to receive divided criticism. The Edinburgh Review, for instance, highly praised Defoe's power of "putting himself thoroughly in the place of the fictitious personages whom he invented, as to make fiction look more like truth. . . ." ³² But the Cornhill Magazine found the likeness disturbing: "In all his fictions, indeed, he identifies himself with his characters; and even his villains--women as well as men--bear a family likeness to their literary father. It seems hard to say this of such characters as Moll Flanders, Roxana, and Colonel Jack; but while committing hateful sins and crimes, and relating what they have done, they moralize upon their evil deeds with the seriousness and sobriety of a sedate old gentleman whose one object in life is the benefit of his fellow-creatures." ³³ Such an observation was by no means new, for Scott and others had already expounded on

³¹William Lee, Daniel Defoe: His Life and Recently Discovered Writings (1869; rpt. Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1968), I, 338-44.

³²Edinburgh Review, 135 (Oct. 1870), 548-50.

³³Cornhill Magazine, 23 (March, 1871), 310-20.

these problems; critics simply continued to find it difficult to disassociate Defoe from the characters he portrays.

The major essay on Defoe before the end of the nineteenth century was written by William Minto. In his Daniel Defoe, a volume in the important "English Men of Letters" series, the intrusion of the author's voice into the narrator's was once again discussed. Minto acknowledged Defoe as a literary artist, but he was critical of the "literary trader" who sometimes intrudes into his works. There might be a slight difference in the ambition of a criminal and that of a complete English tradesman; but it was obvious that Defoe "(took) much delight in tracing (the former's) bold expedients, their dexterous intriguing and maneuvering," and "he seldom allow(ed) us to think of anything but the success or failure of their enterprises. Our attention is concentrated on the game, and we pay no heed for the moment to the players, or the stakes."³⁴ When "the game" is more attractive than "the players" there is a possibility that poor characterization is involved. But Minto did not seek to examine along this line.

One of the earliest articles on Defoe written in the twentieth century is W.P. Trent's evaluation in The Cambridge History of English Literature in 1913. Adopting a more perspicacious viewpoint, Trent pointed out that the evolution

³⁴William Minto, Daniel Defoe, ed. John Morley (1895), pp. 140-57.

from Defoe , journalist and miscellaneous writer, to Defoe . the novelist was not accidental. Some of the novelistic traits were traceable in earlier pamphlets and manuals. Trent had also noted Defoe's didactic aspect, saying that "Defoe wrote (Robinson Crusoe) primarily for the edification, rather than for the delectation of his readers, although he did not evade giving them pleasure and although, assuredly, he took pleasure himself in his own creation. It is equally clear that, in many of its pages, Defoe the writer of pious manuals is to be discovered. . . ."35 Trent had nevertheless followed the tradition of criticizing the major novels alone and had failed to prove the truth of this criticism in the minor ones. His later book, Daniel Defoe: How To Know Him (1916), has not expanded on this subject either.

In the early years of the twentieth century Virginia Woolf's essay on Defoe in The Common Reader (1925) expressed interest in the novelist's portrayal of his heroines; and she credited them with a certain amount of independence, saying that they "take shape and substance of their own accord, as if in spite of the author," but "Defoe seems to have taken his characters so deeply into his mind that he lived there without exactly knowing how. . . ." However, "Defoe is the last writer to be guilty of bald preaching. Roxana keeps our

³⁵W.P. Trent, "Defoe--The Newspaper and the Novel," The Cambridge History of English Literature, ed. A.W. Ward and A. R. Waller, 9 (1913), p. 22.

attention because she is blessedly unconscious that she is in any good sense an example to her sex. . . ."36 Since Woolf's comments are directed toward two of Defoe's better novels, novels in which "bald preaching" plays a relatively insignificant part, her observation is valid. Even so, her comments have pointed out Defoe's inclination to exemplify through his characters.

From the twenties and thirties onward , a deluge of criticism on Defoe has been published. This includes extensive studies by Paul Dottin, James Sutherland, A.W. Secord, A.D. McKillop, Ian Watt, Maximillian E. Novak, John Moore, G.A. Starr, Michael Shinagel, Dorothy Van Ghent, and others. Apart from several critical biographies, such as Professor Dottin's Daniel Defoe et ses romans (1924), B. Fitzgerald's Daniel Defoe: A Study in Conflict (1954) and J. Sutherland's Defoe (1938), most of the studies are devoted to the discussion of Defoe's ideas, especially his social and economic philosophies. In many cases, the critics do not discern between the author's voice and the autobiographical voice. The "narrator's" utterances are generally treated as representing Defoe's view. Even if a disparity of voices is noted, it is mentioned in passing and seldom becomes the object of any full-scale investigation.

³⁶ Virginia Woolf, The Common Reader (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1925), pp. 132-33.

However, the subject is not totally neglected, and a gathering of these "passing remarks" will reveal observations that are both relevant and stimulating to the present study.

Maximillian E. Novak, for instance, notices in his Defoe and the Nature of Man (1963) that Defoe generally speaks through his narrators, but advises of the hazard in identifying them too closely with him. Sincere and open as these narrators are, there are certain moralistic "blind spots" that limit their vision. Certain knowledge is shared only between the author and his reader; and "once we understand what Defoe meant by natural law and natural morality, we can evaluate the morality of a given action far better than the narrators themselves."³⁷ This is the hypothesis on which Novak built his study.

Meanwhile, the existence of different levels of understanding between the narrators and the author leads critics to speculate upon the irony in Moll Flanders. Whether or not Moll's voice represents the author's view becomes a key to such an issue. Critics are currently divided into two camps. Ian Watt argues that "Moll's values were identical with Defoe's and that Defoe lacked both artistic and moral discrimination."³⁸ His view is restated in "The Critical Fortunes of Moll Flanders"

³⁷ Novak, Defoe and the Nature of Man, pp. 2-3.

³⁸ M.E. Novak, "Defoe," in The English Novel: Select Bibliographical Guides, ed. A. E. Dyson (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 23.

(1967) after having been treated in some length in The Rise of the Novel (1961).³⁹ Dorothy Van Ghent, on the other hand, argues in The English Novel (1953) that Defoe operates on a basis of morality above the heroine's; because of this independent position, there is a "complex system of ironies" which becomes the main structural device in the novel.⁴⁰ Novak and Robert Columbus side with Van Ghent; strong support also comes from Howard L. Koonce's "Moll's Muddle: Defoe's Use of Irony in Moll Flanders" (1963). The nature of Moll's voice is certainly open to question and the evidence put forward by the various critics has sufficiently proved its complexity.

Other critics take a more historical approach when they examine Defoe's artistry in creating "voices." G.A. Starr's Defoe and Spiritual Autobiography (1965) sets out to explore Defoe's debt to published autobiographies, especially those the author might have read. Starr's study determines the extent to which Defoe is the spokesman of his age and those particular religious traditions to which he adheres. The discrepancy of the narrator's voice may create some problems, but it also helps him prove that "the leading religious ideas in Defoe's fiction were in fact commonplaces of the English Protestant tradition, not merely crotchets of his much-discussed Dissenting milieu."⁴¹ Starr's study is, however, restricted

³⁹Eighteenth-Century Studies, 1 (Fall 1967), 109-26.

⁴⁰Van Ghent, pp. 33-34.

⁴¹G.A. Starr, Defoe and Spiritual Autobiography (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. xi.

to the religious attitudes of Crusoe, Moll, and Roxana.

Equally historical is the approach of A. W. Secord, whose Studies in the Narrative Methods of Defoe (1924) thoroughly examines the sources of Defoe's inspiration and materials. The main object of the study is "to know something of the frequency of (Defoe's) false statements."⁴² The book also offers insights into the way Defoe recorded the accounts of others to suit the autobiographical voices he had created.

Other studies, such as Michael Shinagel's Defoe and Middle-Class Gentility (1968) and Novak's Economics and the Fiction of Daniel Defoe (1962) tend to explore the novels through a sociological or economic point of view. But in the process they still pay some attention to the manner in which Defoe consistently gave expression to his various subjects, sometimes incidentally but often prominently and personally.⁴³

Although it usually occupies a secondary position in Defoe scholarship, the importance of the different narrative voices is indispensable to the criticism on the novels. Moreover, Defoe's artistry is currently receiving more attention than his ideas, and, as Professor Novak has pointed out, "modern discussions of Defoe have to be read in terms of a debate over certain key issues: was Defoe a skilled artist capable of writing great fiction, or was he merely a somewhat obtuse

⁴²Secord, p. 10.

⁴³Michael Shinagel, Daniel Defoe and Middle-Class Gentility (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. vii.

journalist, unconcerned with technique but occasionally creating a stroke of art unconsciously or accidentally?"⁴⁴

The understanding of Defoe's handling of his narrative "voices" will help in answering such questions.

The Rhetoric of Defoe

The survey of criticism in Defoe's novels has shown us how divided the critics are in their opinion of the author's ability to create independent characters. "All characters speak alike" and "there is too much Defoe in the characters" are familiar statements of disaffection, but it would be oversimplifying Defoe's narrative technique to consider these statements as applicable to all narrative speeches. Although Defoe at times speaks behind an assumed character, he nevertheless allows his narrators a certain degree of independence. What irritated earlier critics (especially those in the eighteenth and nineteenth century) no longer poses a problem if we recognize the plurality of voice within the narrator, a plurality that is not necessarily reconciled. A careful analysis of the "I" in these novels will reveal that it frequently represents more than one person; the pronominal subject can be resolved as a dual personality into the author's and the created character's voice. These, in turn, can be further sub-divided in the former as "the true author's voice" and "the implied author's

⁴⁴Novak, "Defoe," p. 21.

voice," and, in the latter, as "the characteristic voice" and the "autobiographical voice." All labeled under the "I," the different voices exist in unequal proportion. Because of their complexity, a definition of these different voices is necessary before their functions can be examined.

The division of the author's voice has been clarified by Wayne Booth in The Rhetoric of Fiction (1961). Booth makes a careful distinction between the true author and the implied author, the former being the person as he is while the latter represents the way he wishes the reader to see him as a writer. The implied author is in a way another character in the novel. He is not an impersonal "man in general" because he differs from other implied authors. He is the "official scribe" of the story and the reader learns to "get of his presence" through the values he implicitly exhibits and through the technique he chooses for the presentation of his materials.⁴⁵ Such an "implied author" is very much in evidence in Defoe's novels; for the values and convictions of the author are always known to the reader. But as Booth's "true author" tends to remain outside the scope of the narration, Defoe the true author has greater compulsion to reveal himself. The person who writes polemics, edits the Review, and engages in active business may sometimes be heard in the "I." The

⁴⁵ Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), pp. 71-76, 211-21.

views expressed are consistent with what biographies have informed us of his person; thus it can be believed that the voice belongs to the true author himself. A fuller discussion of this point will be found in the chapter on Colonel Jack.

The character's voice can be similarly sub-divided. The "characteristic voice" is a created voice which shares some of the enthusiasm and values of the true author. The line between the two is a thin one and, at times, it is difficult to draw. But it distinguishes itself from the true "autobiographical voice" in the lack of total independence. While the latter represents the ultimate success of a created voice, the "characteristic voice" sounds like a pirate or petty criminal at times but shares the author's enthusiasm in discussing topics such as commerce or trade. Such a voice is the result of the author's unsuccessful struggle with his disguise.

The characteristic voice fluctuates between "the implied author's voice" and "the autobiographical voice." In this thesis it is treated as a separate voice since it differs in subtle and obvious ways from the others. It can be viewed as a transitional device between the two, a testing ground whereby the author struggles to achieve the ultimate autobiographical voice. The Quaker's voice in Captain Singleton is the best example of this sort. It has too many of the characteristic traits to be identified as the implied author's

voice, but, when compared with the autobiographical voice of Roxana, it bears faint echo of the author's values; its didactic tendency renders it less independent than the heroine's voice.⁴⁶

The completely independent autobiographical voice is that which Defoe sets out to create in the first place. The "I" comes alive with beliefs and values that are perhaps different (or even contrary) to the true or implied author. The successful portrayal of this eluded Defoe until Roxana. The voices of Robinson Crusoe and Moll Flanders tend to remind one of the author; Colonel Jack's is furnished with personality traits only at the juvenile stage; Captain Singleton's voice fails to be truly characteristic after early parts of that novel. By contrast, Roxana's voice has distinctive mannerisms and poise, and she is consequently able

⁴⁶In citing the Quaker as an example of the characteristic voice, we uncover a problematic distinction between the narrator and a character given a speaking part in the novel. Although he represents some of the author's values and ideas, Quaker Williams is not the narrator in Captain Singleton. The same can be said of the Master of the Glass House in Colonel Jack and Sir Robert Clayton in Roxana, since both of them speak with the "characteristic voice" in their various "instructions." However, at such moments they completely dominate the scene, forcing the autobiographical narrator to retreat to the background. Thus it is possible to view them as "temporary narrators," speakers who have momentarily exchanged roles with the narrator. And once their "discourse" is exhausted, they relinquish the narrative role to the autobiographical narrator. As will be explained later, such an exchange of roles damages the structural unity in both Captain Singleton and Colonel Jack, but is less harmful to Roxana because it less frequently occurs in that novel. The characters thus given a speaking role may momentarily assume one or more of the four voices defined here.

to maintain a fully conceived and uninterrupted independent voice of her own. Such an independence causes Roxana (1724) to be considered one of Defoe's most artistically mature products.

Each of the different voices incorporated into the narrator's will be treated in greater detail in the following chapters. But it is worthwhile to point out that, in general, the proportion of the author's intrusion gradually diminishes as the autobiographical voice gains more independence until it almost disappears in the voice of Roxana.

Of the four voices described, three are linked to the author in one way or another. Moreover, each of these three voices provides varying degrees of didacticism. They are heavily influenced by Defoe's non-fictional writings. It is understandable why he fails to discard a style cultivated throughout the decades prior to his writing novels. To further apprehend how he still retains such earlier rhetoric in the novels, a brief comparative review is essential.

A compulsive urge to moralize and expound his views characterizes most of Defoe's earlier writings. A man of seemingly unlimited ideas, Defoe published some of them in An Essay Upon Projects (1697). Apart from being one of the earliest extant works by the author, the treatise contains a sampling of Defoe's literary style. Though changes took place through the years, this early style nevertheless

contains much that is essential to his way of writing. At least three characteristics of that narrative style are outstanding: its simplicity, its directness, and its confident tone, all three of which can be found in later fictional writings.

Simplicity is regarded in Defoe as "the perfect stile." Defoe himself defines this perfect style in a piece of later writing. Urging tradesmen to write in this plain and homely style he declares that:

. . . easy, plain, and familiar language is the beauty of speech in general, and is the excellency of all writing, on whatever subject, or to whatever persons they are we write or speak. The end of speech is that men might understand one another's meaning; certainly that speech, or that way of speaking which is most easily understood, is the best way of speaking. If any man was to ask me, which would be supposed to be a perfect stile, or language, I would answer, that in which a man speaking to five hundred people, of all common and various capacities, idiots or lunaticks excepted, should be understood by them all in the same manner with one another, and in the same sense which the speaker intended to be understood, this would certainly be a most perfect stile.⁴⁷

Such a style denotes honesty on the part of the speaker and is most suitable for mass communication. But the same style also entertains no room for rhetorical adornments such as metaphor, simile, allegory, or elaborate allusiveness.⁴⁸ Without such devices subtleties are difficult to convey. Defoe

⁴⁷Daniel Defoe, The Complete English Tradesman (1725; rpt. New York: The B. Earl Puckett Fund for Retail Education, Inc., 1967), I, 19.

⁴⁸James, p. 9.

understood the nature of this difficulty when ironies in The Shortest Way with the Dissenter (1702) were unrecognized for a while. Speaking in his "perfect stile" and relying on historical facts which might be interpreted either way, he was momentarily mistaken for a "High Flyer" (a Tory extremist). Without the assistance of exaggerated but vivid imagery, such as Swift's "child-eating" in A Modest Proposal (1729), Defoe's irony is difficult to perceive, especially when the reader has no outside knowledge of the writer's political position.

The directness of Defoe's prose style is the result of his mastery in short and well-balanced sentences, as well as an appropriate usage of aphorisms or pungent compressions,⁴⁹ as the following paragraph on the education of women illustrates:

A Woman well Bred and well Taught, furnished with the additional Accomplishments of Knowledge and Behaviour, is a Creature without comparison; her Society is the Emblem of sublimer Enjoyments; her Person is Angelick, and her Conversation heavenly; she is all Softness and Sweetness, Peace, Love, Wit and Delight; She is every way suitable to the sublimest Wish; and the man that has such a one to his Portion, has nothing to do but to rejoice in her, and be thankful.⁵⁰

Apart from its directness, the passage also shows Defoe's confidence in expressing subjective observations, hardly pausing to doubt that his values and sentiment may not be so readily

⁴⁹James T. Boulton, "Introduction," Daniel Defoe (London: B.T. Batsford, 1965), p. 8.

⁵⁰Daniel Defoe, An Essay Upon Projects (1697; rpt. Menston, England: The Scholar Press Ltd., 1969), pp. 294-95.

accepted by others. The same confidence in tone prevails in most of his writings. When characters in his novels take the stand to moralize, the voice is sure and unwavering, suggesting that the issue under discussion has long been resolved in the writer's mind, and that which is now presented is the end product of some long reckoning. It is interesting to note that in Roxana, a similar voice is used to state explicitly the position of a woman after her marriage. In this case, however, the observation is more emotionally expressed as befitting the personality of the heroine, and only the systematic and logical supports are retained.

In most of the expository writing of Defoe, when the writer finds it necessary to describe objects or ideas in greater detail, he does so by itemization--listing the particulars one by one and discussing them in turn. In An Essay Upon Projects, the same technique is used in topics varying from the effects of bankruptcy to the proposal of an academy for women.⁵¹ Later in the fictional writings when Captain Singleton describes how fresh water is distilled in the African desert, or when Colonel Jack presents some "short lessons" on transportation, detailed itemization is also used.⁵² Such similarity leads one to suspect that Defoe has not shaken off

⁵¹An Essay Upon Projects, pp. 191-226, 282-304.

⁵²Captain Singleton, p. 111; Colonel Jack (1722; rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 173-74.

some of his old writing habits even when he tries to speak behind an assumed character.

In his early writings, Defoe has also realized that direct exposition might gain in force with dramatization. Foreshadowing the dialogues that later appear in the novels, short discourses between characters on the pros and cons of new "projects" appeared as early as 1697.⁵³ Defoe must have found such a technique effective, and he later employs it to write The Family Instructor (1715). Containing prudential treatises on parent-children relationship, the family manual is in the form of a series of dialogues. A brief summary of the situation precedes the main discourse in which various characters speak in the form of dramatis personae. Their arguments are made to represent different aspects of the issue. In the Fourth Dialogue, for instance, brothers and sisters are divided into two camps and argue heatedly on "the looseness of life" and one's duty to parents. The verbal interchanges are mostly short and vivid, resembling common daily conversations. Only the side representing the "wiser" point of view appears at times slightly didactic. In the discourse, one can easily detect an attempt of characterization through voices. The dialogue is between four children in their early youth. Apart from the second sister, who tends to speak like Defoe, the others demonstrate traits suggesting the permissiveness of the

⁵³An Essay Upon Projects, pp. 126-27.

parents; they seem to have been spoiled at an early age. Moreover, since the "sinful party" remains unconvinced throughout the discourse, the polarity of different characteristic traits is sustained until the end. Thus as early as 1705, Defoe achieved certain success in projecting dramatic voices that exist concurrently with that of the implied author's.

In addition to direct exposition and dramatic dialogues, Defoe also experimented with another literary device--the creation of an assumed narrator's voice which he later used extensively in the novels. In A True Relation of the Apparition of Mrs. Veal (1706) Defoe exhibited his skill in re-organizing extant materials, but the piece is also remarkable for the strength of the narrator's voice. It is a voice which commits itself to uphold the credibility of the story: "Mrs. Bargrave is the Person to whom Mrs. Veal Appeared after her Death, she is my Intimate Friend, and I can avouch for her Reputation, for these last fifteen or sixteen years, on my own Knowledge; and I can confirm the Good Character she had from her youth to the time of my Acquaintance."⁵⁴ The voice is well-sustained and there are few traces of the author's intrusion. In addition to this, the conversation between Mrs. Bargrave and the Apparition is also vividly reproduced.

⁵⁴Daniel Defoe, A True Relation of the Apparition of One Mrs. Veal, rpt. in Daniel Defoe, ed. James T. Boulton (London: B.T. Batsford, 1965), pp. 134-35.

The tone and mannerism of the discourse between the religious women are carefully worked into the narrative.

It is now known that at least three "Canterburians"--E. B., L. Lyhyn, and Stephen Gray--had also recorded the story of Mrs. Veal, but Defoe's version is the best, for "working from sources and with a situation which could not be tampered with to any great extent, (he) nevertheless found means to reorder and refashion Mrs. Bargrave's artless story."⁵⁵ The narrator's voice and the reported dialogues are two of the most vital means.

Between 1704 and 1713, Defoe was writing the Review in a more "natural" voice. For nearly a decade he wrote with sustained interest in the periodical, consolidating and improving on the style he adopted in An Essay Upon Projects. The first person singular became the chief vehicle of expression. It is the voice of an "implied author," freely allowing his readers to learn of his own bias and beliefs. Always confident of his own views, he again assumes the role of a teacher, lecturing first on political issues⁵⁶ and later on all aspects of political, social, and economical life. His chief purpose is to "inform and direct the world."⁵⁷

⁵⁵Manuel Schonhorn, "Introduction," Daniel Defoe and Other Accounts of the Apparition of Mrs. Veal (Los Angeles, Calif.: Augustan Reprint Society, 1965), p. ii.

⁵⁶The original title of the Review was A Review of the Affairs of France and of all Europe, As Influenced by that Nation.

⁵⁷Daniel Defoe, Defoe's Review, ed. A.W. Secord (1704-1713; rpt. New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), sig. A2.

Speaking on the reception he received from some of his critics, he makes a defiant statement as he reiterates his purpose: "I have done making apologies; I shall trouble myself no more who like or dislike, who approve or who reproach. I shall endeavour to speak truth and reason, and with the utmost impartiality, and neither give myself or the reader any more trouble about the rage or disquiet of the enemies of this paper."⁵⁸ Still avoiding the use of elaborate rhetorical aids he resorts to using imagery only in extreme cases. But even then the figurative illustrations are crude and "earthy," as in the case of taunting one of his literary enemies:

As to his ill language, his professed resolution to expose me, his abusive treatment of me with his tongue, for he dare not do it with his hands--I'll finish all my replies of this sort with telling him a story; and if this won't do, I'll tell him another. Two dogs lived near one another, a black and a brown. Black, that was more addicted to bark than to bite, would always run baying and barking after Brown whenever he went by. Brown took no notice of him a long time, but being once more than usually teased and provoked, he gravely turned about, smells at Black, and, finding him a currish, cowardly breed and not worth his notice, very soberly and unconcerned he holds up one leg, pisses upon him, and so goes on about his business. And so do I. . . .⁵⁹

Such language is not usually found in his later fictional writings, for his characters speak more like the complete English gentleman than the injured person. But the passage illustrates the length to which Defoe will go when he is

⁵⁸Review, 1 (9), No. 1, Saturday, Aug. 2, 1712.

⁵⁹Review, 2, No. 38, Thursday, May 31, 1705.

seeking to express himself in the simplest way. Nevertheless, the Review contains some rhetorical techniques that are closely akin to techniques in the novel. For instance, in 1711, Defoe devoted one issue of his journal to expound on the so-called "wise-man's prayer": "Give me not Poverty, Lest I Steal."⁶⁰ The identical topic is raised again in Colonel Jack when the relationship between necessity and crime is discussed.⁶¹ The same argument is used to prove that the "prayer" is indeed "wise," and one should be more tolerant in treating offenders. In the same issue of the Review Defoe pointed out that "Men rob for bread, women whore for bread, necessity is the parent of crime."⁶² This statement later becomes the theme of the three novels discussed in this thesis. The very statement itself echoes the utterance of one of the heroes: ". . . to be reduc'd to Necessity is to be wicked; for Necessity is not only the Temptation, but is such a Temptation as human Nature is not empower'd to resist."⁶³

Several months later, Defoe discussed in the Review the profanity of swearing in public.⁶⁴ To make the issue more vivid, he dramatized an occasion on which "two beaux" are

⁶⁰Review, 8, No. 71, Saturday, Sept. 15, 1711.

⁶¹Colonel Jack, pp. 161-65.

⁶²Review, 8, No. 71, Saturday, Sept. 15, 1711.

⁶³Colonel Jack, p. 161.

⁶⁴Review, 8, No. 61, Tuesday, Aug. 14, 1711.

found swearing in a coffee house. Then, the author's voice intrudes into the narration to expose such "nonsense." In Colonel Jack, swearing is similarly denounced. This time, however, the scene has been changed to "the Glass-house Yard, between Rosemary-lane and Ratcliff high-way." The evil of swearing is explained as the Master of the Glass severely reprimands the offending gentleman.⁶⁵ In both instances, the underlying principle is identical: it is beneath the dignity of a gentleman to swear, particularly in public. The Glass-House master in the novel is at least as didactic as Mr. Review in the discourse.

Apart from profanity and temptations, most of the political, social, economical, or moral topics found in the novels have also been discussed in the Review. From private banking to national colonizing, hot-blooded duelling to piety of the Quakers, Mr. Review never fails to illuminate his readers. However, when the same zeal is carried to the novels, it causes the narrator to sound like the knowledgeable person in the journal and the omniscience of the pirate or the transportee seems out of character.

In summary, in the two decades that preceded the publication of the novels Defoe had been writing mainly in the personal and simple style of the Review, as well as experimenting

⁶⁵Colonel Jack, pp. 60-61.

with other rhetorical techniques. His experimentation had received a mixed reception from the readers. The incomplete disguise of The Shortest Way sent him to prison and the pillory while The Family Instructor, The Apparition of Mrs. Veal, and other writings brought him fame and high acclaim. Later, when he wrote his novels he brought together all that he had taught himself. In early novels such as Captain Singleton and Colonel Jack, he had difficulty in reconciling the different rhetorics, creating different voices with the narrator and causing abrupt changes when one voice shifts to another. To express ideas on paper had become Defoe's second nature,⁶⁶ and didacticism was unavoidable in these early novels; for some time ideas rather than characters or plot actions become the main attraction of his books. Defoe is conscious of this fact, but as he states in his prefaces, didacticism may be beneficial to the readers: "Every wicked Reader will here be encouraged to a Change, and it will appear that the best and only good end of a wicked mispent Life is Repentance."⁶⁷ There is justification for him to speak out in the novels--he might at least silence the censure of social critics by his avowed disapproval of the lives he has chosen to characterize in the novels with their emphasis on criminal activity and aberrant behavior. But as his last heroine moves toward an irreversibly

⁶⁶ Sutherland, Defoe, p. 191.

⁶⁷ Colonel Jack, p. 2.

immoral course, he prudently detaches himself from her and shifts the didactic voice to a character such as Sir Robert Clayton in Roxana. This results in the shedding of the plurality in the narrator's voice for a belated independence.

Having pointed out the plurality of voices in Defoe's minor novels and having briefly traced their origin and discussed their constituents, we can now examine the different voices as they function in the three novels.

II. CAPTAIN SINGLETON

Most critics treat Captain Singleton as a book of adventure instead of a novel. Defoe's merit lies in his ability to set his adventures in areas of the world that are still relatively unexplored and mysterious. Though Captain Singleton contains much more than that, the critics' emphasis is still justifiable. For the book fails in many aspects which we now regard as criteria of a good novel. The plot is loose, the portrayal of major and minor characters are crude and uneven. But most damaging of all, the book contains a juxtaposition of voices representing different people and points of view unsuccessfully posing as the main narrator's.

The title page of Captain Singleton suggests that it is an autobiography that relates the eventful life of a reformed pirate. The voice of Singleton, therefore, should be the unifying factor in the book. Besides coming away with a good knowledge of all the adventures, the reader should be expected to know more about the narrator, if not ^{achieving} an intimate knowledge of his personality. But this is not the case. Instead, the adventures themselves become the main attraction of the book, as illustrated by the focus adopted by the critics.¹ The

¹Gary J. Scrimgeour, "The Problem of Realism in Defoe's Captain Singleton," HLQ, 27 (1963), 21-37.

main reason for the lack of control on the narrator's part is the frequent intrusion of Daniel Defoe. His shadow creeps into Singleton, making him speak like the author; his points of view frequently become Defoe's, and the wisdom he exhibits is often above the piratical mind of Singleton as portrayed. If Defoe's voice resides permanently in Singleton, the novel can still achieve a certain unity, with the reader realizing that it is Defoe and not Singleton who is reminiscing. But again, this is not the case. Singleton's "adopted" wisdom and mature views are no longer apparent after his African adventures. He looks more and more like a fool as William the Quaker enters the scene. However, William does not succeed Singleton as the spokesman for Defoe. Instead, the narrative voice has detached itself from all the characters, though it still remains in control of actions. In the second half of the book it tells Singleton as well as the reader that William embodies the author's ideals. The voice approvingly describes his action and contrasts him with the people around him. Near the end of the book Singleton is made to embrace all these ideals and become a better man in the process. The shifting of Defoe's voice from partial residency in Singleton to a more detached and independent position is quite abrupt. Moreover, throughout the book the voice is elusive, though not completely disguised. It is less definite and perceptible than that in Colonel Jack, and it fails to become a fully

independent autobiographical voice like that in Roxana. Its transitory appearance in Captain Singleton has a damaging effect on the book.

The juxtaposition of voices in the novel bears deeper study which I shall provide after an account of the divisions in the book. A number of critics see the book as divided in two separate parts: the first portion dominated by Singleton and the second by William the Quaker. Professor A. W. Secord draws the line at the conclusion of the trip across Africa, upon Singleton's return to England and his quick decision to venture out again.² Both Secord's chapter and Scrimgeour's article deal solely with "part I" of the novel, and their criticism has contributed to an appreciation of Defoe's possible sources.³ The evidence suggests that Defoe had indeed taken some pain to read background materials before sending his hero on his journeys and voyages. "Part II" of the book deals with Singleton's piracies and trades amongst the Spice Islands. Professor George Aitken points out the

²Arthur W. Secord, Studies in the Narrative Method of Defoe (1924; rpt. New York: Russell & Russell, Inc., 1963), p.112.

³The more prominent are Mandelslo's Voyages and Travels of J. Albert de Mandelslo (1662), Maximillian Mission's New Voyage of Francois Leguat (1707), William Dampier's A New Voyage round the World (1697-1709), William Minto's Through the Dark Continent in 1720 (1721). The above are cited by Professor Secord, pp. 119-26. Professor Scrimgeour has suggested Filippo Rigafetta's A Report of the Kingdom of Congo and six other publications as Defoe's sources of possible references. See Secord, pp. 21-22.

importance of Singleton's reform in the second part of the novel,⁴ but there is no mentioning of Defoe's "behind the scene" manipulation.

Looking at the adventures in "part I" it is probable that Defoe's original design is a picaresque tale of piracies in exotic places. Professor Secord even suggests that Defoe is making Singleton sail the voyages mentioned but unfulfilled in his earlier novel Robinson Crusoe.⁵ It is true that Singleton possesses (at least temporarily) some characteristics of the later "picaro." But the characteristics are not sustained and when Singleton reaches the African continent, Defoe sees a new direction of development: "the sensational scheme of traversing the unexplored regions of Africa lured him away from what thus appears to have been his original plan, and itself became the center of interest."⁶ The temptation is difficult to resist, since Defoe is to send his hero into "the Continent of Africa, the most desolate, desart, and unhospitable Country in the World, even Greenland and Nova Zembla it self not excepted."⁷ This is bound to capture the reader's attention. Moreover, the adventure is across "a Continent of Land of at least 1800 Miles; in which Journey

⁴George A. Aitken, "Introduction," Captain Singleton (London: J.M. Dent & Co., 1905), p. xiii.

⁵Secord, pp. 147-48.

⁶Secord, p. 163.

⁷Daniel Defoe, Captain Singleton, ed. Shiv K. Kumar (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 47. Other page references to the novel are from the same edition.

(they) had excess Heats to support, unpassable Desarts to go over, no Carriages, Camels or Beasts of any kind to carry (their) Baggage, innumerable Numbers of wild and ravenous Beasts to encounter with. . . the Equinoctial Line to pass under, . . . Nations of Savages to encounter with. . . Hunger and Thirst to struggle with; and, in one Word, Terrors enough to have daunted the stoutest Hearts that ever were placed in Cases of Flesh and Blood" (pp. 47-48). The eagerness to stress the distance and hazards of the journey, together with the deliberate mentioning of "well-known" desolate places such as Greenland and Nova Zembla, make it clear that this is written by someone who is well aware of the reading public's wanderlust and its interest in exotic and unexplored places.

What Professor Secord has not mentioned in his study is that Defoe changes direction once again when he has his hero deep in the Dark Continent. This time, the writer is lured by two issues which have been his life-long interest--trade and commerce, and the exploitation of the continent. To make the events more interesting than the people on the trip, Defoe successfully "de-personalizes" the individuals involved, making them part of a collective group instead of people with personalities, a point which I will discuss in greater detail later in this study. As the "important issues" arise, the voice of the author creeps into the narrative, championing

for these two causes by offering his personal point of view. Singleton is not Defoe's sole spokesman, since the author's view is expressed in the collective "we"s and "they"s, as well as the narrator's autobiographical "I"s.

As Defoe strives to prove his points, the tale of adventure suffers. Repetitions become quite common, characters become more and more "faceless." Once the issues are expounded, the adventures come to an abrupt end. Trade and exploitation have so occupied Defoe's mind that he is negligent to the point of ridicule when presenting a version of the African continent. Critics poke fun at the absence of swamps, jungles, certain well-known animals (such as monkeys and apes), insects, diseases and fatalities--all made well-known by travelogues published at Defoe's time.⁸

In "part II" of the book Defoe returns to the original scheme of piracies. But once again more important subjects take over, and William, instead of Singleton, receives the greater share of the author's attention. Professor Scrimgeour sums up the entire situation when he points out that "Captain Singleton is as uneven a book as Bob is a character, and it is Defoe's preoccupation with certain attitudes unrelated to literature which contribute to the patchiness of both."⁹

⁸Scrimgeour, pp. 25-28.

⁹Scrimgeour, p. 37.

That a juxtaposition of voices in the book is possible is mainly due to the failure of the narrator's voice in maintaining a controlling position. The "I" lacks a distinctive personality in relating the incidents. But before events in the book offer an opportunity for other voices to intrude, there is at least an attempt to endow the narrator's voice with certain personality traits. Singleton exhibits the capability of being ironic when he depicts one of his early guardians: "My good Gypsey Mother, for some of her worthy Actions no doubt, happened in Process of Time to be hang'd; and as this fell out something too soon for me to be perfected in the Strolling Trade, the Parish where I was left . . . took some care of me to be sure" (p.2). There is also a slight sense of pathos when the narrator describes his relationship with the numerous guardians: "this Woman . . . I called her Mother, tho' she told me at last, she was not my Mother, but that she bought me for Twelve Shillings of another Woman" (p. 2). And later: "I lived well enough, and pleased my Master so well, that he called me his own Boy; and I would have called him Father, but he would not allow it, for he had children of his own" (p.3). Such a self-pitying tone develops, however, into a sly and somewhat cynical disposition as he grows older. This is most noticeable when he describes his apprenticeship aboard the Portuguese vessel: "I was reputed as a mighty diligent Servant to my Master, and

very faithful (I was diligent indeed, but I was very far from honest; however, they thought me honest, which by the way, was their very great Mistake) upon this very Mistake, the Captain took a particular liking to me, and employ'd me frequently on his own Occasion" (p. 5). There also emerges a sense a superiority, as he finds out that the crew is composed of "the most compleat Cowards that (he) ever met with; and the consequence of their Cowardice was evident upon many Occasions" (p. 6).

With the sense of superiority there is now even a flash of rugged humor--something which is very rare in the novel. Before his being expelled from the vessel, he reacts to the information that there are cannibals on the island, in an off-hand manner: "I told him I was not so afraid of that, as I was of starving for want of Victuals; and as for the Inhabitants being Cannibals, I believed we should be more likely to eat them, than they us, if we could but get at them" (p. 13).

It appears that Defoe is well on his way to create an autobiographical voice which has distinctive characteristic traits. But this soon proves to be too wishful an observation. For Defoe does not develop any further such a "growth" in character. Once Singleton sets foot on Madagascar the narrator's voice becomes impersonalized. The signal for such a change is when Singleton becomes the spokesman for the entire group

of marooned sailors. The first person plural pronoun "we," together with the objective case "us" begin to take the place of "I." A group mentality gradually develops, overruling the partially created personality of the Captain. Even Singleton's emotion is now representative: "At our first coming into the Island, we were terrified exceedingly with the Sight of the barbarous People . . . but when we came to converse with them a while, we found they were not Cannibals, as was reported, or such as would fall immediately upon us and eat us up; but they came and sat down by us . . . " (pp. 13-14). From this moment onwards, the narration concentrates on the events themselves rather than on the people involved in them. The narrative voice now represents the feelings felt by the entire group, with awe and wonder as the most common features.

Another factor which makes the "group voice" conspicuous is the lack of characterization of the other people undertaking the journey. Singleton's initial group of five exiles (later, four; one swims back to the ship) is joined by twenty-seven others. However, all these individuals remain nameless. They are known only by the roles they play--appearing in the novel as Gunners, Carpenters, and Cutlers. With the possible exception of the Gunner (who, on at least two occasions, opposes vehemently Singleton's proposal to turn pirate [pp. 25 and 29]), the other characters are mentioned only when an occasion arises that requires their service. Thus it is the

carpenters who construct the canoes when the group needs them (p. 30), the "ingenious Cutler, whom ever after (they) called Silver-Smith who turns cheap metals into profitable commodities" (p. 29). It is the "assistant to the Cook" who teaches the group the correct way to preserve their venison (pp. 29-30); while it is the surgeon who takes care of the wounded and supplies the group with water by filtration when the situation is desperate (p. 111). Those who have no particular function to perform remain unmentioned. Even those who are called up to perform a specific role disappear as soon as the task is accomplished.

There are times when individuals can be made more distinctive, such as when personality clashes seem imminent. But instead of allowing such clashes to develop Defoe resorts to "councils" and "debates" in dealing with controversial or potentially dangerous issues. The difference in opinion is not described with any elaboration; consequently no individual stands out amongst the "group." The narrator merely informs the reader that "their Debates were too tedious to take Notice of" (p. 35) and proceeds immediately to carry out the general decision. Even human selfishness fails to incite any personality clashes, as the group is bound under a "Common Law" of their own creation. Thus, the temptation of gold is resolved when the group decides to adhere to the Common Law and make the prospecting a joint venture. In this

way they are able to "preserve the good Harmony and Friendship that had been always kept among (them) . . . " (pp. 94-95). Throughout all these experiences, the collective "we" and "us" are used to describe events and attitudes as the group moves on its journey.

However, the autobiographical narrator has not been totally obliterated. Besides being part of the "group voice" he appears infrequently in his original first person singular form. Mostly in the early part of the journey, the "I" emerges occasionally to represent a view different from that maintained by the group. An example is Singleton's suggestion to the group that they turn pirates (p. 25). But apart from representing a different view, the "I" is never fully developed as a character, since Singleton capitulates too quickly to the view of the majority. The "inexperienced" Singleton is never any match for the collective wisdom of the group. The voice is unsure of itself, and succumbs easily, as illustrated in this early encounter with some natives: "I was but a young Fellow, but I was for falling upon them with our Fire Arms; and taking all the Cattel from them, and send them to the Devil to stop their Hunger, rather than be starved ourselves" (p.27). The shrewd but naive opinion is quickly substituted with a more mature view of the group: "but I did not consider that this might have brought Ten Thousand of them down upon us the next Day; and tho' we might have killed a vast

Number of them, and perhaps have frightened the rest, yet their own Desperation, and our small Number, would have animated them so, that one time or other they would have destroy'd us all" (p. 27). Individual sentiment thus succumbs to mass prudence and from then onwards group sentiment determines the course of action. The autobiographical voice now represents the feeling of the group instead of an individual, as in this typical description: "In this Condition, we lived upwards of a Year, but all of us began to be very much tir'd of it, and whatever come of it, resolv'd to attempt to Escape" (p. 28). Joy, sorrow, anticipation, disappointment are emotions depicted in the first part of the book. But they reflect what the group feels at the time instead of what Singleton feels. The earlier sly, cynical and bitter tone has disappeared in the narrator's voice.

We have seen how Defoe sets out to create a living narrator but abandons him after a brief effort and allows a more impersonal group voice to carry on the narration of the African adventures. Such a sudden shift of emphasis from the narrator to the events indicates that the author has discovered a new focus of interest as he progresses in his composition. But the description of such adventures is marred by far too many repetitions until the events seem to follow a set pattern. For instance, as the group moves on,

it always encounters tribes of natives who may either be friendly (offering them food and setting up long poles as signs of peace) or hostile (fighting the white men with all kinds of primitive weapons). In the latter case firearms are brought out to impress them and the natives are often subdued. The group then passes on until it encounters another tribe of natives and the same events recur. In many aspects, the savages in the novel are less attractive than those depicted in Robinson Crusoe. For despite their reputation, no cannibalism is ever practised.

With the exception of the maid-seducing incident in Roxana, Defoe has generally avoided using sex as an attraction. In Captain Singleton, however, there are frequent mentionings of the nakedness of the natives. But the attraction quickly subsides as the "stark naked" natives are mentioned too often and the image becomes a monotonous one (pp. 46, 75, 78, 107, 118, 121). Such repetitions are for other purposes than merely attracting the eighteenth century mind. They buttress the author's emphasis on trade and exploitation in Africa. Professor Scrimgeour is one of several critics who see the group's eventful journey as more than merely "attractive" in itself. He points out that "Singleton's Africa adventures support the ideas that Defoe's major fictional preoccupation was the illustration (in both practical and philosophical

way) of man's mastery over the material world."¹⁰ This theory, however, can still be advanced by saying that Defoe is actually interested in the kind of "mastery" manifested in the ability to turn a hostile environment into a profitable one. Events in the novel take on new significance when viewed in such light. The nakedness of the natives emphasizes their primitiveness instead of arousing the sexual curiosity of the reader, a primitiveness that is extremely profitable to the Europeans. Time and again Defoe has mentioned that the natives have no necessity for clothes, and they "neither knew the Value of the Use of (Money), nor could they justly rate the Gold in Proportion with the Silver" (p. 23). Very frequently it is shown how a piece of metal beaten out into shapes of animals can go a long way in acquiring provisions, and how some "Toys and Trinckets, Brass Chains, Baubles, Glass Beads, or in a Word, the veriest Trifles that a Ship Loading would not have been worth the Freight . . ." may have brought "Cattel and Provisions enough for an Army, or to Victual a Fleet of Men of War" (p. 27).

It is in such descriptions that the second person pronoun acquires new significance. For by using "we" instead of "I" the voice is more formal and suitable for the discussion of general issues, without the least personal prejudice involved.

¹⁰ Scrimgeour, p. 37.

It is rather the author's voice than the pirate Singleton's; it is the voice of one who knows and understands the value of such a primitive bartering system and who can view it in the perspective of foreign trade. The advantage of such bartering is further manifested in the enthusiasm incorporated in the voice: "For a little Bit of Silver Cut out in the Shape of a Bird, we had two Cows . . ." (p. 28), "for a Dram, the King or Captain" of the tribe sends them "seven Head of Cattle" (p. 38), and "for Ten or Twelve Pound Weight of smoked dry'd Beef, they would give (us) a whole Bullock, or Cow, or any thing else (we) could desire" (p. 39).

It is clear that such episodes are stressed repeatedly for their illustrative value--to show how rich and exploitable the continent of Africa is. The subject is one closely related with national interest, and Defoe takes over the narration under the thin veil of Singleton to expound his views. The takeover is not readily perceptible since the voice of the Captain is never well developed in the first place. But at such moments the voice is still too business-like and observant to be that of an uneducated pirate. Such a quality is even more apparent when the narration deals with the known treasures of Africa--gold and ivory.

Captain Singleton has mentioned earlier that for the marooned group money is practically useless (p. 23). But as soon as gold is discovered in some of the African rivers, its

"uselessness" is rapidly forgotten. The author takes over the narration and the description of prospecting is marked with great enthusiasm on the part of the speaker: "At night we came all together to see what we had got, and it appeared we had found in that Day's Heap of Earth, about Seven and Fifty Pound Weight of Gold Dust, and about Thirty Four Pound more in the rest of our Work in the River" (p. 96). The actual process of gathering the gold is described by Professor Scrimgeour as naive and unlikely.¹¹ But the real emphasis in these depictions is the easy accessibility of the precious metal. The group finds gold not once, but twice. The second time is much more profitable than the first because they meet an Englishman who has been living with the natives. The detailed and vivid description of the gold found is meant to be tempting to the reader: ". . . one of our men washed out of the Sand a Piece of Gold as big as a small Nut, which weighed . . . almost an Ounce and a half" (pp. 135-136).

The discovery of gold is the climax of the first part of the book; for soon after that event the party returns to civilization and disperses. The voice of Singleton resumes control of the narration and the "I"s gradually replace the collective "we"s. The focus is similarly shifted back to his person, relating what happens to him at that phase of his

¹¹ Scrimgeour, p. 33.

life:

I with two Negroes which I kept with me, went away to Cape Coast Castle, where I got Passage for England, and arrived there in September; . . . I had neither Friend, Relation, nor Acquaintance in England, tho' it was my Native Country, I had consequently no Person to trust with what I had, or to counsel me to secure or save it; but falling into ill Company, and trusting the Keeper of a Publick House in Rotherhith with a great Part of my Money, and hastily squandering away the rest, all that great Sum . . . was gone in little more than two Years Time

(p. 137)

The voice which describes the acquisition of wealth in Africa is one filled with zeal and delight. But the voice that describes the spending of such gathered wealth is filled with distaste and hastiness. In one single paragraph most of the wealth is dispatched and in the next the Captain sets out on a new journey of adventure (p. 138). Such unbalanced treatment reveals to us Defoe's intention in writing the first half of the novel. The richness of the African continent is known to his readers, but most of them only had a vague idea. It is thus his responsibility to supply the public with more concrete and elaborate illustrations, all aimed at convincing them that it is relatively easy to gather up the riches. As to the spending of such "gathered wealth" Defoe can leave it to his compatriots' own imagination. Between 1707 and 1712, Defoe had written treatise after treatise in support of the Royal African Company;¹² thus the subject

¹²Scrimgeour, p. 34.

was not a novel one. Captain Singleton's adventures offer excellent grounds for the dramatization of his ideas.

Besides gold, the vast amount of ivory in Africa is also used to illustrate the validity of Defoe's theory of exploitation. In the journey across Africa, the narrator remarks time and again on the abundance of "Elephant Teeth" lying around. Three factors are given special emphasis: the ivory's easy accessibility, its uselessness to the natives, and the impossibility of its being exhausted. Events are carefully chosen to support these views.

The abundance of abandoned ivory is described with great enthusiasm, as the following paragraph indicates:

For a Day's Journey before we came to this Lake, and all the three Days we were passing by it, and for six or seven Days March after it, the Ground was scattered with Elephants Teeth, in such a Number, as is incredible; and as some of them may have lain there for Hundreds of Years, so seeing the Substance of them scarce ever decays, they may lye there for ought I know to the End of Time. The Size of some of them is, it seems, to those to whom I have reported it, as incredible as the Number, and I can assure you, there were several so heavy, as the strongest Man among us could not Lift. As to Number, I question not but there are enough to load a thousand Sail of the biggest Ships in the World
(pp.86-87)

The frequent comparison to scales well-known to the reader, the repeated use of the term "incredible," and the employment of outside evidence--"people to whom I have reported it"--all show that the author is aware of the reader's skepticism, but he tries to use overwhelming details to convince

them: it is not immoral to gather up the ivory, since pieces have been lying around for centuries without any attempt by anyone to make use of them, and "they may lye there for ought I know to the End of Time" (p. 86). Besides, the elephants face no danger of extinction, and the supply of ivory will be almost inexhaustible. To prove this point the narrator becomes an expert on animal life. Confidently, he informs the reader that he bases his assumption on the fact that "they are not Beat (sic) of Prey, but live upon the Herbage of the Field, as an Ox does, and, it is said, that tho' they are so great a Creature, yet that a smaller Quantity of Forage supplies one of them, than will suffice a Horse" (p. 89).

The gathering of ivory may pose a problem to the European speculators, but Defoe shows how this can be solved. The party comes across plains spread with elephant teeth (pp. 86-87, pp. 89-90, pp. 128-129); they are forced to leave the pieces as they are because of a transportation problem. However, the ivory hunters become wiser the third time and come away with tons of precious tusks. The solution is to use the natives as porters: "we always gave the Savages some Reward for their Labour, the very Women would bring us Teeth upon every Opportunity, and sometimes a great Tooth carried between two; so that our Quantity was encreased to about two and twenty Ton of Teeth" (pp. 134-135). This is

an exposition of Defoe's understanding of the various merits of capital and labor, but this is also an understanding beyond the capability of Singleton the pirate.

Apart from these incidents directly related to Defoe's economic ideas, the presence of the author in the narrative voice can be detected in other events. This is especially true when the "Cross-continent" party comes across phenomena that are more appealing to a writer than to a pirate. An example of this is the situation in which a white man is discovered dwelling amongst the natives in the heart of Africa. For a while at least Singleton takes on the curiosity and eagerness of a journalist:

This Account of his would indeed be in itself the subject of an agreeable History, and would be as long and diverting as our own, having in it many strange and extraordinary Incidents, but we cannot have Room here to launch out into so long a Digression; the Sum of his History was this.

He had been a Factor for the English Guiney Company at Siera Leon, or some other of their Settlements which had been taken by the French, where he had been plundered of all his own Effects, as well as of what was intrusted to him by the Company. . . .

(p. 123)

The statement "we cannot have Room here to launch out into so long a Digression" shows that Defoe is aware of an interruption in the narration due to Singleton's shift of role. However, the temptation is difficult to resist and he compromises by including a "Sum of History." The account is brief and concise; but the voice is a journalist's, eager to inform his reader how a white man can still survive in spite

of all kinds of overwhelming dangers.

Thus, we have seen that whatever characterization Defoe sets out to achieve, it is abandoned as more important issues arise. The author's voice gradually creeps into the narrative, giving the reader his values and points of view. The collective "we" which prevails over the greater part of the narrative not only depersonalizes the characters, but it creates a medium in which the author's voice is less obtrusive. Eventually, the adventures become a framework for the expression of the author's ideas. Defoe tells as well as shows by his choice of detail and constant repetitions. When the issues are thoroughly exhausted, the African journey comes to a rapid conclusion, thus ending the first part of the novel.

The autobiographical voice of Singleton is in no better control of the narration in part II. After a brief account of how Singleton fares when he returns to England, the first person plural form is used again to describe the numerous episodes that follow. Until the last few pages of the book, this voice fails to further develop the character of the Captain.

However, the narrator's voice does manage to depict the character of Quaker William. In fact, the character of the latter is so well done that it has evoked high praise from the critics. Professor William Trent cites the portrayal as "evidence that the novelist's powers of characterization

were slowly developing through practice."¹³ Professor Kumar calls William "a highly individualized character," one who gives the novel sharp coherence and meaning.¹⁴ George A. Aitken, an earlier critic, calls him "among the best that Defoe created"; it is William "who lends the chief interest to the second half of Singleton's adventures."¹⁵

However, there is at least one critic who offers an opposing view. Professor Maynadier calls William "a wooden character," though he concedes that William has indeed received plenty of attention from the author.¹⁶ Maynadier's statement is provocative not only in its disparity from other judgments but also in its insightful comment on Singleton's characterization. Therefore, his statement is worth quoting in full:

Singleton's William is quite as lifeless as any of the lot. He shows he is brave, to be sure, by never shrinking from inevitable danger; but he manifests his "very good solid sense" only by opposing reason to the patent unreason of Singleton, who, apparently to let William shine the more brightly, loses in his later adventures much of the common-sense which made

¹³William P. Trent, Daniel Defoe: How To Know Him (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company Publishers, 1916), p.214.

¹⁴Shiv K. Kumar, "Introduction," Captain Singleton (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. xiv.

¹⁵Aitken, pp. viii-xvi.

¹⁶G. H. Maynadier, "Introduction," Captain Singleton (New York: George D. Sproul, 1903), p. xiv.

him the leader of his fellows through Africa; and he shows his dry facetiousness chiefly by that smile [which] . . . Defoe thought so eloquent for revealing the natures of his characters.¹⁷

Whether or not William is a well-developed character will be discussed later. But at this stage it should be pointed out that Singleton has indeed lost whatever "characteristics" he has owned in part I. He is once again the spokesman of a group (this time, the ship's crew); and since Defoe no longer uses him to express his views, most of that which Maynadier calls "common-sense" is inevitably lost. Moreover, his insensitivity contrasts with William's wisdom and his skill in managing affairs. As in part I, the "I" appears occasionally to voice an opinion different from that of William's; but the latter's view on almost everything (movement of ships, p. 148; preparation for battle, p. 150; boarding a vessel, p. 156; treatment of slaves, p. 157) always turns out to be more sensible than that of the obtrusive narrator. The phrase "William is right" appears so often that the repetition becomes quite conspicuous. Defoe is here sacrificing artistry to the establishment of William's wisdom. With the least possible strokes, William is to become the most admirable character in the book.

Admiration is what dominates the tone of Singleton's voice at this stage. The praise is lavish, as in this description of Quaker William's character: "He was a comick Fellow indeed,

¹⁷Maynadier, p. xiii.

a Man of very good solid Sense, and an excellent Surgeon; but what was worth all, very good humour'd and pleasant in his Conversation, and a bold, stout, brave Fellow too . . ." (p. 143). William possesses most of the qualities found so lacking in Singleton. With prudential foresight, he persuades Singleton to draw up a Certificate asserting that the Quaker has been "captured by force" and coerced into joining the pirates. This document may serve to guarantee his personal safety in the event of being "rescued." Such a precautionary action contrasts greatly with the Captain's rush into becoming a pirate. Singleton is not blind to the wisdom of William, and the tone of his voice shows that he is willing to acknowledge him as a superior being: "In that, William was a most agreeable companion, but he had the better of us in this Part, that, if we were taken, we were sure to be hang'd, and he was sure to escape; and he knew it well enough. But in short he was a sprightly Fellow, and fitter to be Captain than any of us . . ." (p. 144). Such humility is in direct contrast to the arrogance of the narrator in part I, when he regards most of the people on board the Portuguese vessel as cowards (p. 6).

The making of William into an important character is vital to Defoe's purpose in this part of the novel. The book is meant to do more than provide another account of adventures in exotic places. It differs from ordinary travelogues in two

aspects. Firstly, it aims at further expounding Defoe's concept of foreign trade; but more important, it portrays the spiritual conversion of Captain Singleton. Professor Trent has observed that "In part (Captain Singleton) is a religious story."¹⁸ Professor Kumar has also remarked that the novel is, in fact, a narrative statement of Defoe's basic ideas about sin, repentance, enlightenment, and grace.¹⁹ Kumar goes on to say that Defoe displays in it "what may be called democratic intuition, in his appreciation of the capability latent in man of humble origin."²⁰

The character William is created to fulfill these goals. He is not the spokesman for Defoe, though most of his ideas coincide with the author's. Besides being a shrewd trader, he is Defoe's illustration of an ideal Christian--an exemplary figure for a misguided person such as Singleton to admire. As the agent of Singleton's final conversion, his importance increases gradually until it completely dominates the action at the end of the book.

At first, Quaker William has to speak through the narration of Singleton, but he gradually gains certain independence in being quoted directly. The transitions are, in most cases, smoothly executed. On one occasion, coming upon another

¹⁸Trent, p. 214.

¹⁹Kumar, p. ix.

²⁰Kumar, p. x.

ship, Singleton's men prepare to board it forcefully. But "Friend William set (them) to Rights again here . . . Friends, says he, I am of Opinion thou art wrong in this matter, and thy Men have been wrong also in their Conduct: I'll tell thee how thou shalt take this ship, without making use of those things call'd Guns" (p. 156). William begins to speak more and more through the mouth of Singleton as the story progresses. Until finally, he has his speech reported in an early version of dialogue, as in the case of his conversation with the marooned Dutchman (pp. 231-234 and pp. 225-229) and his "serious talk" with Singleton (pp. 254-260). The technique of representing these conversations is crude and unpolished when compared with later novels. But at such moments, the book gains an additional voice--one which is totally independent of the autobiographical narrator.

To give William's voice its characteristics, Defoe has him speak like a true Quaker, using "thee" and "thou" frequently. Moreover, his expressions are always short, crisp, and straight to the point. Never hedging for an answer, his words allow little room for equivocation. This is especially apparent in the dialogue with the crafty Dutchman:

Will. Thou art a Dutchman, and a Christian, thou sayest; pray, art thou a Freeman or a servant!

Dutchm. I am a Servant to the King here, and in his Army.

Will. But art thou a Voluntier, or a Prisoner?

Dutchm. Indeed I was a Prisoner at first, but am at Liberty now, and so am a Voluntier.
(p. 226)

In direct contrast, the Dutchman's reply is sly and equivocal, almost to the point of being deceitful. By referring only to facts and definitions William successfully avoids all the traps and sums up the situation:

Will. Thou art a deceitful Rogue thy self; for 'tis plain thou knowest these People would only perswade us on Shore, to entrap and surprize us; and yet thou that art a Christian, as thou callest thy self, would have us come on Shore, and put our Lives into their Hands who know nothing that belongs to Compassion, good Usage, or good Manners: How canst thou be such a Villain!

(p.233)

The voice is harsh, and it entertains no illusion. It resembles that heard in the sermons of Puritans--strong, fierce, but not without room for mercy. In answer to the Dutchman's inquiry of safty^e William commits himself in saying: "I will be thy Surety Body for Body, that thou shalt be a Freeman, and go whither thou wilt, tho' I own to thee thou dost not deserve it" (p. 234).

Then, to prove that William's caution in dealing with the savages is well-grounded, Defoe interrupts the narration to introduce the tragic episode concerning Robert Knox. But to make the account more objective and credible, he finds it necessary to have it narrated in yet another independent voice--one that is twice removed from the Captain's:

This Passage, when I related it to a Friend of mine, . . . agreed so well with his Relation of what happened to one Mr. Knox, an English Captain, who some time ago was decoyed on Shore by those People, that it could not but be very much to my Satisfaction to think what Mischief we had all escaped; . . . The Relation is as follows.

The Island of Ceylon being inhabited for the greatest Part by Barbarians, which will not allow any Trade or Commerce with any European Nation, and inaccessible by any Travellers, it will be convenient to relate the Occasion how the Author of this Story happen'd to go into this Island, . . . His Words are as follows.

In the Year 1657, the Anne Fregat, of London, Captain Robert Knox Commander, on the 21st of January, set sail out of the Downes, in the Service of the Honourable the East India Company of England, bound for Port St. George upon the Coast of Coromandel, to trade for one Year from Port to Port in India (p. 238)

The voice which finally narrates the story is as objective as it might possibly be. The narration is straight-forward and unadorned with any personality traits. Great care has been taken to confirm the authenticity. Exact dates and places give it the appearance of a published report. Hardly a day passed without being accounted for. Even the death of the Captain is described meticulously: "he languish'd more than three Months, and then died, February the 9th 1660" (p. 241). But what distinguishes it from an official report and reminds us of Defoe, instead, is the religious overtone most apparently experienced in the incident relating to the obtaining of a Bible and in the final deliverance. As to the former, the younger Knox regards as "a great Miracle, that God should bestow upon him such an extraordinary Blessing, and bring him

a Bible in his own native Language, in such a remote Part of the World, where his Name was not known, and where it was never heard of, that an Englishman had ever been before" (p. 243). Then, the conclusion of the episode is marked with religious gratitude: ". . . they found Guides to conduct them from Town to Town, till they came to the Fort called Arepa, where they arrived Saturday, October 18, 1679, and there thankfully ador'd God's wonderful Providence, in thus compleating their Deliverance from a long Captivity of Nineteen Years and six Months" (pp. 248-249).

The diction, tone, and choice of authentic-looking details in the adventure of Robert Knox reminds one strongly of Defoe's earlier A True Relation of the Apparition of Mrs. Veal (1706), a piece of popular writing regarded by one critic as "a germinal work in view of Defoe's narrative art."²¹ In this earlier work, Defoe has also given special emphasis to circumstantial evidence that maintains the verisimilitude of the account. Details such as the exact time of the apparition's appearance and the duration of its conversation with Mrs. Veal are carefully recorded. Furthermore, pious words and phrases are used throughout the account to create a grave and sincere tone for the narrator. The similarity in narrative approach leads one to believe that Defoe is reverting to one of his

²¹E. Anthony James, Daniel Defoe's Many Voices: A Rhetorical Study of Prose Style and Literary Method (Rodopi NV: Amsterdam, 1972), p. 129.

most successful techniques in order to make Robert Knox's account convincing. The reader can, however, be sure that the voice that narrates the episode is not that of Singleton the pirate.

The immediate effect of this episode is a further rise in Singleton's esteem for William. But as far as the novel form is concerned, the sudden intrusion of yet another independent voice damages further the already patchy autobiographical style, forcing the narrator to rely on statements such as that which focuses again on the original tale: "I come back now to my own History . . ." (p. 289) to join the episode to the main narration. Yet, the independence of the narrative voice is unavoidable since there is no other voice available for such narration. Singleton is no longer the rational and trustworthy person he used to be; while on the other hand, William, too, is becoming another independent voice in the novel.

William's actions are given more and more emphasis as the story progresses toward the conclusion. He slowly guides Singleton away from violence and bloodshed, pointing out to him that it is better to "have Money without Fighting" than "Fighting without Money" (p. 153). His best way to take a ship is "without making use of those things call'd Guns" (p. 154). His voice at times becomes highly authoritative. He teaches the ship's crew a lesson of humanity by explaining

to them why their captives should be treated with tolerance; "the Negroes had really the highest Injustice done them, to be sold for Slaves without their consent; and that the Law of Nature dictated it to them; that they ought not to kill them, and that it would be wilful murder to do it" (p.157). His actions continue to impress Singleton and his crew, especially his miraculous surgery on a dying man (p. 159) and his remarkable instinct in following his dream (pp. 177-181). The note of admiration in Singleton's voice continues to rise, until the narrator declares him as his "Privy-Counsellour and Companion upon all Occasions" (p. 168).

With William guiding him, Singleton begins to move away from piracy into open trade. The South Sea trading adventures are similar to those found in Colonel Jack; the only difference is that Defoe's ideas are expressed more through William's action than through the narrator's mouth. There are no formal treatises by an implied author as to the correct way of conducting foreign trade, and only William's actions demonstrate how it should be done.

After dealing with the Chinese merchants off the coast of Formosa, Singleton makes a critical decision; he "resolved now that (they) would leave off being Pyrates and turn Merchants" (p. 263). In this new role they continue their success, and, finally, Singleton and William detach themselves from the rest of the crew, bringing a sizable portion of the wealth

with them. The circumstances have been established leading to the final episode--the spiritual conversion of Singleton. In a series of reported dialogues William discusses with his friend all aspects of spiritual reformation. William's "thee's" and "thou's" return in the speeches, but the overall tone is softer than that used on the Dutchman. There is a "brotherly affection" that can excite the reader's sympathy.²² However, William's voice retains the characteristics of its own, at times breaking into generalizations that apply not only to Singleton but to all men: "Why truly, says William, thou hast said it, and so I hope thou dost too; it is natural for most Men that are abroad to desire to come Home again at last, especially when they are . . . rich enough, and so rich, as they know not what to do with more if they had it" (p. 256). The voice easily becomes sermonic, as when the Quaker discusses death: "Men live as if they were never to dye, that so many dye before they know how to live; but it was not Death that I meant, when I said, That there was something to be thought of beyond this Way of Living" (p. 258). Humbled, Singleton pledges to William that "you shall command me from this Hour; and everything you direct me, I'll do" (p. 259). The narrator's voice is now more introspective but not yet penitent. The worldly possessions have first to be disposed

²²Maynadier, p. xiii.

of. There is a relapse into the businesslike tone as Singleton relates how he and William finally rid themselves of the ship's crew and land at the city of Balsara. The same tone follows in the later narration of how the two make use of their wealth.

Firmly established as a merchant, Singleton finds time for repentance. The process of spiritual reform is dramatically laid out and it becomes the climax of the novel. To this moment, Singleton has been shown as slowly embracing the values of William--Defoe's ideal Christian. The tone of his voice has become more humble and "tame," very much unlike that of a fierce pirate. The introspective mood intensifies until Singleton finds himself in a moral crisis. He talks in his sleep and experiences a series of frightful nightmares. Once, he even seriously contemplates the possibility of committing suicide. At this critical moment William comes to the rescue. Acting the role of a moral teacher, he manages to quiet Singleton's deprecation (p. 270). After lengthy discourses, Singleton emerges as purged of all remorse and self-depreciation. But there is still the lesson of mercy to be learned. William's sister is introduced as a sort of deus ex machina to render this final lesson. Her kindness to her brother brings tears to all eyes (p. 273). But true cleansing of the mind takes time, and Defoe stalls his heroes for two years before they finally return to England. There Singleton, in a final symbolic gesture in which he embraces William's goodness, marries the

Quaker's sister, concluding the novel.

The end of the novel is carefully planned and executed. However, Singleton's penitent voice is not convincing, as it is marred by materialistic preoccupation. At times it even sounds hypocritical. This can best be perceived in the disposal of their material wealth. In a penitent mood Singleton has openly denounced his "ill-gotten Wealth" by declaring that "It will be more to the Purpose to tell you, that I began to be sensible of the crime of getting of it in such a Manner as I had done, that I had very little Satisfaction in the Possession of it, and, as I told William, I had no Expectation of keeping it, nor much Desire" (p. 263). This direct address to the reader is followed by a more vigorous denunciation: "As to the Wealth I had, which was immensely great, it was all like Dirt under my Feet; I had no Value for it, no Peace in the Possession of it, no great concern about me for the leaving of it" (p. 265). The voice here is sincere enough; but this is said at the time when Singleton despairs of ever^{being} able to reach Europe with all this Cargo that (he) has about (him)" (p. 265). The arrangement to transport the wealth home is finally effected and, in spite of what has been said before, he and William

. . . go from Venice to Naples, where (they) verted a large Sum of Money in Bales of Silk, left a large Sum in a Merchant's Hands at Venice, and another considerable Sum at Naples, and took Bills of Exchange for a great deal too; and yet (they) came with such a Cargoe to London, as few American

Merchants had done for some Years; for (they) loaded in two Ships seventy three Bales of thrown Silk, besides thirteen Bales of wrought Silks from the Dutchy of Milan, shipt at Genoa; with all which (they) arrived safely (p. 277)

This is in contrast to Singleton's earlier penitent voice; and where wealth is all "dirt" in the former speeches, here it is depicted with great enthusiasm.

However, Defoe manages to have all these resolved. In fact, he is expounding one of his favorite ideas through the action of Singleton. It has always been his belief that one can be a shrewd and ambitious businessman while being a good Christian at the same time. In the case of Singleton, to abandon the wealth is foolish, for, as William points out:

to quit what (they) have, and do it here, is to throw it away to those who have no Claim to it, and to divest (themselves) of it, but to do no Right with it; whereas (they) ought to keep it carefully together, with a Resolution to do what Right with it (they) are able; and who knows what Opportunity Providence may put into (their) Hands, to do Justice at least to some of those (they) have injured, so (they) ought at least to leave it to him, and go on, as it is, without doubt, (their) present Business to do, to some Place of Safety, where (they) may wait his Will..

(pp. 266-267)

This is one of those rare occasions when William actually becomes Defoe's spokesman; and as far as the author is concerned, the problem is resolved. To most readers, the change from a penitent voice to a materialistic one is too abrupt for Singleton to sound sincere. The sinner is

expressing too much concern for the materialistic acquisitions he detests. Singleton's proclaimed penitence and his obvious delight in his wealth are elements difficult to reconcile in a single voice.

Thus, various voices make their presence known in the autobiography of Captain Singleton. The main narrative voice, that of the Captain's, is either too weak, too depersonalized, or too hypocritical to be impressive. Quaker William speaks through the narrator for a while, but the actions of the novel demand his final independence. As to the implied author's voice, it is never as obvious as in the later novel Colonel Jack. The author's opinions and points of view are mostly expressed through Singleton's "group voice" and later through William's actions. These different voices are embarrassing to the consistency of the autobiographical form to which Defoe has originally committed himself. It is only later that novelists realized the limitation of the autobiographical form, and the plurality of voice becomes better presented through the epistolary form or through the employment of the less personal third person narration.

III. Colonel Jack

If Defoe had his way, there would only be one voice in Colonel Jack--that of the Colonel's. According to the design laid out in the title page, the book is another "mémoire," an account of a "Life of Wonders." Therefore, it is not necessary for a non-autobiographical voice to intrude into the narration to point out the memoir's moral. Such a voice should only be found in the "Preface " where the "editor" can point out to the reader the "Ends and Designs of the whole Book " and then dismiss himself before the main narration commences.¹ From "a safer Distance" the aged and gentlemanly Colonel begins to unfold his "History," (p.3) and for the next three hundred pages the reader is presumed to be under the spell of the sage's autobiographical voice.

However, Defoe's final execution defeats his original purpose. Instead of hearing one voice, the reader perceives a disturbing plurality. In addition to the official narrator, there is the voice of the "writer" (or, in Wayne Booth's term, the "implied author"²) who infrequently suspends the action to deliver a piece of moralizing beyond the capability

¹Daniel Defoe, Colonel Jack, ed. Samuel H. Monk (1722; rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 1. All other page references to this novel are from the same edition.

²Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), pp. 71-76.

of the Colonel; and despite certain characteristics of its own, the first person singular "I," even when it represents the Colonel, is mixed with elements similar to those found in Defoe's other novels, especially on aspects of philosophy, value, and belief.

The validity of this observation is destructive to Defoe's original objective. The presence of a plurality of voice means a failure in unity, a failure which splits the image of the Colonel until it cannot be viewed as an organic and independent whole. Though instructive and fascinating, the memoir fails to bring the reader any closer to the person writing it, the image of the Colonel being elusive and insubstantial.

In order to prove the failure in unity and characterization, each of the voices present in the novel is here examined in turn, with special emphasis on the reason of its presence and its function.

The first voice we should look into is the "autobiographical" voice of the Colonel. Perhaps the first instances to assess the voice of the Colonel are at the first and last few pages of the book, where the narrator of the memoir is not preoccupied with incidents but addresses the reader directly. The very first paragraph should offer us hints as to his personality:

Seeing my Life has been such a Checquer Work of Nature, and that I am able now to look back upon

it from a safer Distance, than is ordinarily the Fate of the Clan to which I once belong'd: I think my History may find a place in the World, as well as some, who I see are every Day read with pleasure, tho' they have in them nothing so Diverting, or Instructing, as I believe mine will appear to be.

(p.3)

This is not the voice of a weary old man; the zeal to instruct indicates an alert and active mind, while the technique used to arouse the reader's curiosity is similar to that found in the Preface.

After this brief introduction, the narrator proceeds directly to the description of his early childhood; and from then onwards, incidents take over and the narrator seldom appears again "in person" to address the reader. But towards the end of the book he appears again to reflect on his own life. From the past he moves to depict the present:

I had here now a most happy, and comfortable Retreat, tho' it was a kind of an Exile; here I enjoy'd every thing I could think of, that was agreeable and pleasant, except only a Liberty of going home, which for that Reason, perhaps was the only thing I desir'd in the World

Here I enjoy'd the Moments which I had never before known how to employ . . . here I learn'd to look back upon a long ill-spent Life, bless'd with infinite Advantage, which I had no Heart given me till now to make use of, and here I found just Reflection were the utmost Felicity of human Life.

Here I wrote these Memoirs having to add, to the Pleasure of looking back with due Reflections, the Benefit of a violent Fit of the Gout

(p.307)

The advertising tone used to attract the reader's attention

is no longer in evidence, although the didactic one remains. The "Reflection" proceeds to illustrate that the most important action in one's life is repentance and the Colonel becomes religious:

I Who had hitherto liv'd, as might be truly said, without God in the World, began now to see farther into all those Things, than I had ever been capable of before, and this brought me at last to look with shame and blushes, upon such a Course of Wickedness, as I had gone through in the World

But here I had, as I said, leisure to reflect, and to repent, to call to mind things pass'd, and with a just Detestation, learn as Job says, to abhor my self in Dust and Ashes.

(p. 308)

The introduction of religious sentiment is abrupt, since the subject has never been treated seriously. But the book does not close on such a religious note. The very last paragraph returns to the paramount theme--trade and financial success, a theme which manages to give some coherence to the novel.

The appearance of the Colonel "in person" tells us little about his character, and even his religious sentiment seems reliable.³ The rest of the narrative does not tell us much either. In trying to isolate the Colonel from his adventures and view him as a flesh-and-blood character, the

³Professor Samuel H. Monk remarks that "Of (Jack's) conversion to Rome we learn nothing. And yet Jack quotes Scripture as readily, though for better purposes, as can the Devil, But when he does so, we hear the voice of Daniel Defoe, not of his creature the Colonel," "Introduction," Colonel Jack, p.xvii.

reader at last realizes how airy and elusive he has been.

Of his physical appearance, little is known. The childhood scenes in London are perhaps the only moments when characters in the book really come alive,⁴ yet there is a remarkable deficiency when it comes to the Colonel's outward appearance. Of Captain Jack the figure is less elusive. A more typical figure, he is the common anti-social and villainous rogue.⁵ The reader is informed that "Capt. Jack, was the eldest of them all, by a whole Year, he was a squat, big, strong made Boy, and promis'd to be stout when grown up to be a Man, but not to be tall . . . he was as to manners a mean Boor, or Clown, of a Carman-like Breed He had much the Nature of a Bull Dog, bold and desperate, but not generous at all . . ."(p. 5). He is also "sly, sullen reserv'd, malicious, revengeful; and withal, . . . brutish, bloody, and cruel in his Disposition He had no Taste of Sense of being Honest . . . to his Brother Rogues" (pp. 5-6). It is not difficult to imagine what he is like, especially for Defoe's contemporaries: the streets of London were infested with quite a number of such characters.

⁴Charles Lamb was highly delighted with the beginning of the novel, calling it "the most affecting, natural picture of a young thief that ever was drawn." However, he seemed to have also taken the activities of the other "young rogues" into account when making the statement and did not elaborate upon the Colonel's character. See Monk's "Introduction."

⁵William H. McBurney, "Colonel Jacque: Defoe's Definition of the Complete Gentleman," SEL, 2 (Summer 1962), 327.

Major Jack, in contrast, is a "merry rogue" of the jest book and picaresque literature tradition.⁶ Though lacking in physical depiction, he is a foil to the Captain and this places him at the other end of the scale. It is thus relatively easy to imagine what he is like. Besides, Defoe informs us that "(he) was a merry, facetious pleasant Boy, had a good share of Wit, especially Off-hand-Wit. . . (He) was full of Jests and Humour . . . and if he had the advantage, was the most generous and most compassionate Creature alive; he had native Principles of Gallantry in him, without any thing of the brutal or terrible Part that the Captain had . . ." (p. 6).

After describing the other two Jacks, the narrator proceeds to describe himself. But sadly enough, physical details are missing: "As for your humble Servant, Colonel Jack, he was a poor unhappy tractable Dog, willing enough, and capable too, to learn any thing He set out into the World so early, that when he began to do Evil, he understood nothing of the Wickedness of it, nor what he had to expect for it . . ." (p.6). So the "description" rambles on, the scattered details tend to depict the Colonel's morality rather than his physique. The reader has to complete the picture with conjecture and imagine him as sharing some of the outward characteristics of his fellow London rogues--dirty in appearance, poor and ragged in attire.

⁶McBurney, 327.

The Colonel's physical image does not improve with age. Instead, without the backdrop of the London streets, the imagination on the part of the reader becomes even more difficult. Sentimental encounters which in other novels usually bring into focus the countenance or physique of the "hero" are lacking in the first three-quarters of the book. When Jack finally comes into contact with the fairer sex, he is portrayed vaguely as a middle-age man. As to marriages he is trapped by ladies who have eyes on his wealth instead of on his appearance. Most probably, he looks like the average middle-aged trader; but as to concrete details such as whether he has a beard, the reader has to rely on his own imagination.

Since the Colonel has a vague physical image, his characterization has to depend on the actions of the novel. One of the common methods in evaluating whether a character is well-drawn is to look for growth within the pages of the novel. This is particularly important to a book that undertakes to depict the greater part of a man's life. A lack in the character's growth may be disastrous to credibility. At first glance the growth is apparently there.⁷ It is true that the uncertain young rogue becomes a steady, poised businessman, secure and gentlemanly. But the older Jack is not

⁷This seems to impress Monk, who declares that as Jack moves through the varied scenes of his adventurous life, he acquires a knowledge of himself and of the world, as well as his relation to it. Monk, p. xvi.

really different from the London lad. On closer examination it appears that Jack has only progressed materialistically and succeeded in attaining a higher social position. From a petty thief he has become a wealthy and well-established merchant with a partner-wife at his side. As a child he is easily flattered by the term "Gentleman" in the victual stall (p. 16); he now assumes the role comfortably, though still conscientiously. In spite of these "improvements" and "acquisitions" the Colonel remains virtually unchanged--a married individual who cares for his wife only in certain aspects and who never becomes a real parent.⁸

In establishing the Colonel's character the younger Jack is more important since there are relatively few changes in his character after his early youth. Born with the notion of being a gentleman, young Jack has always valued himself highly. Bold and resolute in the execution of affairs, he can shift for himself under difficult circumstances. It is this natural instinct for survival that we see exhibited time and again in his life. It not only carries him through the pitfalls of London but saves him from capture in Scotland; it helps him to bear the hardship associated with the life of a transported

⁸This leads a critic to say that "Considering the number and variety of the hero's adventures, the remarkable thing is not how much but how little he learns. His marital imbroglios reveal a curious imperviousness to experience . . . he seems compelled to reenact endlessly certain basic ordeals rather than mastering them." G.A. Starr, Defoe & Casuistry (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971), p. 98.

person and finally makes him a gentleman in every sense of that word.

However, the mentality and the spiritual disposition of the Colonel have remained virtually unchanged throughout his life. Different situations serve to illustrate this claim. First, there is the Colonel's attitude towards wealth. The younger Jack is insecure about his wealth when he has first acquired it. After tasting the bitterness of losing his money temporarily (in the tree-hole), he is constantly worried until he deposits it with a trustworthy agent (p. 39). Supposedly more experienced in life, the older Jack shows little sophistication in this respect. Equally insecure about his cargoes, plantations, and other properties, he is at ease only when they are under the supervision of a reliable agent, whether it be his wife or his tutor. He is never betrayed though, his judgment on the choice of a trustee being always sound.

The issue of courage also substantiates the belief that there has never been any fundamental change with the Colonel. For a moment at least, the Colonel appears a coward. Challenged by an angry agent demanding the payment of a bill, he refuses to take up sword to fight a duel, confessing to the reader that he has forgotten to learn the art of fencing while in France (p. 200). He is genuinely relieved by the timely arrival of the constable whose presence gives Jack the courage to knock

the man down with his fists. But his success does not prevent him from being called "a Coward" and "a Rascal" by his opponent. Less than ten pages later the Colonel is engaged in a military campaign, fighting alongside an Irish Company. Having played his part boldly and resolutely, he is awarded the rank of Colonel. His observation on himself is worth noting:

I Now had the satisfaction of knowing, and that for the first time too, that I was not that cowardly low spirited Wretch, that I was, when the Fellow Bullied me in my Lodgings, about the Bill of 30 l. Had he attack'd me now, tho' in the very same condition, I should naked and unarm'd as I was have flown in the Face of him, and traml'd him under my Feet; but Men never know themselves till they are tried, and Courage is acquir'd by time, and Experience of things.
(p. 208)

But for the reader who has been following his adventures, the Colonel's courage is not a novelty. It has manifested itself in other ways. It is such courage which makes him steal when hard-pressed by necessity; it is courage which makes him return the stolen money to the poor woman after he has realized his mistake. As he is carrying out the latter feat, he is prudent enough to disguise himself as he has done in other instances. It is exactly such prudence which saves his neck on many occasions and which prevents him from fighting the duel. As Professor Maximillian Novak points out, Jack has never been a coward; he is merely "refusing to fight a battle which he has no chance of winning and which, at the

time, he does not perceive as a challenge to his honour."⁹ This "courage of reason" is not acquired; instead, the past activities of Jack have shown that it is inborn, and it contributes greatly to his survival in a hazardous world. Jack always knows instinctively when to act and when to restrain himself.

If the character of the Colonel appears static and inadequately projected, the narrative voice must share at least part of the blame. For it seems unlikely that after listening to it for 300 pages the reader is no more closer to the person who is supposed to be uttering it than *when* the "History" commences.

The failure of true intimacy is understandable only if we recognize that the narrative voice is actually a mixed one. Telling the story is the Colonel's assigned role, but the way he tells it has too much of Defoe in it. Ideas are intermixed with events, the former receiving more emphasis than appropriate in what is intended as a straight-forward adventure story. Professor Novak remarks on the intrusion of one such idea when he says that "Defoe's insistence on drawing a moral from natural law, if it adds depth and seriousness to his fiction, detracts both from his realistic creation of character and the 'formal realism' of his presentation of events."¹⁰ This failure to blend ideas with technique has

⁹ Maximillian E. Novak, Defoe and the Nature of Man (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 143.

¹⁰ Novak, p. 160.

caused the chief character to appear unevenly portrayed. However, laying the "ideas" or "philosophies" aside for a while and concentrating instead on the narrative art itself, it can be observed that the ideas are voiced through two different^e mediums--through a clearly sermonizing Defoe and a Defoe speaking under the cloak of the Colonel. These are the "implied author's voice" and the "true author's voice" defined in the introductory chapter of this thesis. Though interesting in themselves, both voices speak at the expense of the Colonel's characterization.

Both the transparent and cloaked voices of Defoe serve the primary function of instructing the reader. However, they vary in tone, subjects, and general presentation. The transparent one Defoe uses for straight sermonizing on well-known and popular subjects such as children's education, prevention of crime, social misbehavior, precaution while travelling, intemperance, and general politics. At such moments he is not afraid of being recognized. Intrusive, this voice often breaks into the Colonel's narration, making no pretence that it is now the author speaking. After a short discourse which exhausts the subject, the voice makes its exit as abruptly as it enters, leaving the stage once again for the narration of the Colonel's history.

The second author's voice is less righteous and fiery. Going to great length to expound and illustrate a point, the

voice is less definite and more reserved in its judgment of issues. Gone is the authoritative tone when the "implied author" is sermonizing. This is due partly to the issues themselves being less definite than those discussed before. In his book Defoe and Casuistry, Professor G.A. Starr has elaborated on such "indefiniteness." He sees the novel as containing numerous ideas and solutions to ideas, most of which are opposed one to another. Ideas become eventually more important than actions; "the narrative moves forward, but does so partly to permit an essential standing still--that is, to allow paradoxes of all kind to be developed and explored." The hesitation reflects a reservation of moral judgment, with Defoe "refusing to impose uniformities or certainties which he was not convinced."¹¹ Some praised him for this, calling him broad-minded, while others regarded him as confused; yet others accused him of oversimplifying.¹² Nevertheless, Defoe's merit lies in having the courage to raise questions and he does this with great enthusiasm.¹³

¹¹Starr, pp. 100-109.

¹²James Sutherland, Defoe (New York: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1938), p. 16.

¹³Alan McKillop presents a similar view when he comments on Defoe's frequent presentation of "an instance, a circumstance, a situation" to illustrate moral and religious truth. McKillop goes one step further by insisting that Defoe does this to call the reader to appropriate action. The Early Masters of English Fiction (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1965), p. 10.

Among the issues raised are relatively "new" subjects such as "middle-class morality," "gratitude," "thriftiness," "human dignity," and "trade and commerce."¹⁴ The enthusiastic voice is unmistakably Defoe's--not the way he wants his readers to hear him, but the way he is. Since some of the issues raised may be quite controversial to his contemporaries, he finds it necessary to speak under a cloak that can shield him from the yet unknown judgment of the general populace. This voice, instead of the Colonel's, dominates the novel; and this serves to explain the failure in the latter's characterization.

Before proceeding to discuss this more complex voice of Defoe, I should examine the more transparent voice of the "implied author"--the unadorned and clearly sermonizing voice that irritates the average twentieth century reader of the novel. Such a voice first appears in the Preface. Under the thinly veiled guise of an "editor," a didactic message is spelled out:

Here's Room for just and copious Observations, on the Blessing, and Advantages of a sober and well govern'd Education, and the Ruin of so many Thousands of Youths of all Kinds, in this Nation, for want of it; also how much publick Schools, and Charities might be improv'd to prevent the Destruction of so many unhappy Children, as, in this Town

¹⁴In fact, the book is so full of such ideas that W.H. McBurney believes that Colonel Jack has sufficient pervasiveness to become "one of the first extended examples of the Novel of Doctrine which was to become an important type of eighteenth Century fiction with the works of Thomas Day, Elizabeth Inchbold, Robert Boge and others." McBurney, p. 326.

are every Year Bred up for the Gallows.

The miserable Condition of unhappy Children,
many of whose natural Tempers are docible, and
would lead them to learn the best Things rather
than the worst, is truly deplorable . . .
(p. 1)

The treatise on child education continues, but before the Preface is over, the implied author's voice has committed itself in illustrating another subject: "it will appear that the best and only good End of a wicked mispent Life is Repentance; and in this, there is Comfort, Peace, and often times Hope, and that the Penitent shall be return'd like the Prodigal, and his latter End be better than his Beginning" (p. 2). The voice seems to come from a pulpit, the tone authoritative and the messages clear.¹⁵ Perhaps this was what Londoners missed when Defoe turned from the rectory to the trading-house. But in the novel such sermonizing appears somewhat out of place. After the initial debut in the Preface the voice subsides momentarily, only to appear again later to deliver shrewd observations or advice. A score of pages later, on the subject of street crime, an intruding voice informs the reader that in London, "the Opportunities were so many, the Country People

¹⁵Michael Shinagel traces the sermonic tone to Defoe's ministerial background, in Daniel Defoe and Middle-Class Gentility (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 21. And Defoe had formerly expressed similar views on the contemporary Charity School Movement in an article entitled "Charity Still a Christian Virtue" (1715), in Starr, p. 104. W.H. McBurney has pointed out in his article that serious comments on school are included in Essay Upon Projects (1697) as well as in the opening lines of Moll Flanders. (McBurney, p. 325).

that come to London, so foolish, so gaping, and so engag'd in looking about them, that it was a Trade with no great hazard annex'd to it, and might be easily learn'd . . ."(p. 17). A further elaboration on the same theme follows after a description of how a gentleman handles his pocket-book:

This Careless way of Men putting their Pocket-book into a Coat-pocket, which is so easily Div'd into, by the least Boy that has been us'd to the Trade, can never be too much blam'd; the Gentlemen are in great Hurries, their Heads and Thoughts entirely taken up, and it is impossible they should be Guard-ed enough against such little Hawks Eyed Creatures, . . . and therefore, they ought either never to put their Pocket-Books up at all, or to put them up more secure, or to put nothing of Value into them.

(p. 45)

The author's objective is clear: the reader should reflect on his own habit of handling the pocket-book and learn the lesson. For those who do not take the lesson to heart a further episode is there to emphasize it. The author shows how "a Boy (who) never had pick'd a Pocket in his Life before" makes off with a pocket-book under identical circumstances (p. 54).

The sermonizing voice abates for a while as young Jack's apprenticeship in the world of minor crime dominates the narration. But the voice emerges later to deliver a sermon on the misbehavior of swearing. The presentation has its share of drama, since a foul-mouthed Gentleman is first introduced as illustration. The indignant and righteous voice then takes over to expound the moral:

'tis pity . . . a fine Gentleman, well Bred and good Humour'd, should accustom . . . to such an hateful

Practice; why it is not like a Gentleman to swear, 'tis enough for (the) black Wretches that Work there at the Furnace, or for these ragged nak'd black Guard Boys, . . . and some others of the dirty Crew that lay in the Ashes; 'tis bad enough for them, . . . and they ought to be corrected for it too; but for a Man of Breeding, . . . a Gentleman! it ought to be look'd upon as below them; Gentlemen know better, and are taught better; . . . when you are tempted to swear, always ask your self, is this like a Gentleman? does this become me as a Gentleman! do but ask your self that Question, and your Reason will prevail, you will soon leave it off.

(p. 61)

Jack learns the didactic lesson with appreciation; but the lesson is also intended for the reader.

The most didactic moment is yet to come, and this time the voice comments on one of London's most widespread vices--intemperance. First, the reader hears of Colonel Jack's beautiful and well-bred wife ruined by "the Habit of drinking Cordials and hot Liquors," and how "Drink, like the devil, when it gets hold of any one, tho' but a little, it goes on by little and little to their Destruction" (p. 240). Then, the Colonel's voice gives way to the implied author's, and a lesson complete with illustrations follows:

O! The Power of Intemperance! and how it Encroaches on the best Dispositions in the World; how it comes upon us gradually and insensibly, and what dismal Effects it Works upon our Morals, changing the most Virtuous, regular, well instructed, and well inclin'd Tempers, into worse than Brutal. That was a good Story, whether real or invented, of the Devil tempting a young Man to murder his Father. No, he said, that was un-natural. Why, then says the Devil, Go and lye with your Mother: No, says he, That is abominable. Well, Then, says the Devil, If you will do nothing else to oblige me, go and get Drunk; Ay, ay, says the

Fellow, I'll do that, so he went and made himself Drunk as a Swine; and when he was Drunk, he murdered his Father, and lay with his Mother.
(p. 241)

Another occasion in which the didactic voice is employed without disguise is in the discussion of settlement in the New World. The author's view is optimistic, pointing out that "People, who are either Transported, or otherwise Trappan'd into those Places, are generally thought to be rendered miserable, and undone; whereas, on the contrary . . . if their own Diligence in the time of Service, gains them but a good Character, which will certainly do, if they can deserve it, there is not the poorest, and most despicable Felon that ever went over . . . may in time be sure of raising a good Plantation" (p. 152). After this comes a full treatise on Plantations, consisting of five well-elaborated sections complete with examples and calculations. At such moments, the implied author's voice fully dominates the narration and the Colonel is clearly forgotten. Only after the full exposition of the treatise is he referred to again in an apologetic manner: "But I Return to my own Story . . . " (p. 153).

The initial appearance of the didactic voice (in the Preface) is religious and righteous. It has the effect of coming straight from the pulpit. Its last appearance in the last few pages of the novel is also marked with this religious over-tone. Referring to the "over-ruling Power" it states that: ". . . from this Observation it necessarily occur'd to

me, how just it was, that we should pay the homage of all Events to him; that as he guided, and had even made the Chain of Causes, and Consequences, which Nature in general strictly obey'd, so to him should be given the Honour of all Events, the Consequences of those Causes, as the first Mover and Maker of all Things" (p. 308). The voice here is uncharacteristic of the Colonel's, as has been discussed earlier. But these are not the last words of the novel; being transparently didactic is not Defoe's favorite role. The novel is concluded in the other "author's voice" which I shall now proceed to discuss in greater detail.

The "true author's voice," though different from the "implied author's voice" just discussed, also has the tendency to expose, examine, and convey ideas; thus it is in some way also didactic. But most of the subjects discussed by this voice are relatively new ones: they are new in the sense that they either re-examine conventional views and values, or they are topics that have hitherto been ignored. The voice sometimes shows an unwillingness to discuss, but merely serves to raise the issues. To bring the reader to see things from a new angle, illustrations and examples are often used.

Another characteristic which separates this second author's voice from the transparent one is the tendency to linger. Topics are now treated in greater depth, and this voice does not fade away when the topic is expounded; instead,

it overflows into the next phase of the narration. After the first few episodes, when the reader realizes that the novel contains no real plot, this informative voice becomes the chief focus of attention; and soon, the reader detects the true Defoe behind it.

One of the most intriguing ideas in the novel is the discussion of a new concept of morality. The issue is first raised when young Jack's crimes are seriously taken into consideration. Convention denounces all theft and robbery as evil; thus, grounds for severe punishments imposed by law. In a world where the stealing of a handkerchief could provoke capital punishment Defoe interpreted young Jack's crimes in a new light. The question of necessity is introduced. Stealing may not necessarily be immoral, the voice argues, if starvation (or even the genuine fear of starvation) forces the person to steal. It is forgivable if the victim can well afford the loss; but it would be immoral to steal from a more needy person. The entire argument is well summed up in what Defoe terms "the Wise Man's Prayer" (Solomon or Agar's Prayer): "Give me not Poverty, least I Steal" (p. 163). Maximillian E. Novak sees this as adhering to the nature of man and praises Defoe for treating it frankly.¹⁶

In his life of petty crimes, the young Jack is troubled

¹⁶Novak, p. 74. It is interesting to note that throughout his discourse, Novak calls it "Defoe's idea," not the Colonel's. This shows how unconvincing the created character is to this critic.

only on one occasion, when he steals from an old peasant woman and her maid who are in dire need of the few shillings. Otherwise, Jack worries more about keeping the money in a safe hiding place than having stolen it. The narrator whitewashes the actions with two formidable excuses: ignorance and innocence.¹⁷ But the way in which these incidents are discussed reveals Defoe's tacit approval. With the exception of the old woman, Jack and his comrades' victims are depicted as either hopelessly careless or distracted by worthless preoccupations. For example, amongst the stolen articles are "A white Handkerchief from a Country Wench, as she was staring up at a Jackpudding, . . . A colour'd Handkerchief, out of a young Country Fellow's Pocket as he was buying a China Orange . . . A little silver box pull'd out of a Maid's pocket while she is paying to go into the Booth to see a Show" (pp. 13-14). On the other hand, the spending of the stolen money is described with no trace of remorse. The first money Jack acquires from his "trade" is spent in buying necessary clothing, an act which gives them back some of their natural dignity: "We put them (shoes and stockings) on immediately to our great Comfort, for we had neither of us had any Stockings to our

¹⁷However, McBurney finds Jack's naïveté incredible, saying that such was "patently improbable in an intelligent boy of fifteen who had lived a vagabond life for at least five years among a gang of street urchins as 'wicked as the devil could desire to have them be at so early an age'," in McBurney, p. 324.

Legs that had any Feet to them for a long time: I found myself so refresh'd with having a Pair of warm Stockings on, and a Pair of dry Shoes; that I began to call to mind my being a Gentleman . . ." (p. 15). Realizing that they "never had any Money in (their) Lives before, and (they) never had a good Dinner in all (their) Lives" (p. 15), they proceed to a boiling Cook in Rosemary-Lane to eat a full and presumably wholesome meal. The lightness in tone is here contradictory to the tone the Colonel is supposed to adopt, a reminiscent yet penitent voice. As is portrayed, the reader finds it easier to lay aside the "immorality" and shares the delight in such incidents.

Another "delightful" incident in the novel involves the theft of a horse while the Colonel and his brother are on their way to Scotland. Prudence prevents the Captain from stealing a second horse as they enter a town. But somehow the horse "got loose, came Trotting gently on by himself, and no body following him" (p. 93). Once they reach the further end of the town the Captain boldly asks the townspeople to stop the horse for him and rides off as if it belongs to him. This is a blatant act of theft and the Colonel cannot fail to recognize it, for he is no longer an ignorant boy and one of his main purposes of leaving London is to escape a sinful life. If we believe in the Colonel's professed "morality" the following passage seems puzzling:

This was the oddest Adventure that cou'd have happen'd, for the Horse stole the Capt. the Capt. did not steal the Horse; when he came up to me, now Col. Jack, says he, what say you to good luck, would you have had me refus'd the Horse, when he came so Civilly to ask me to Ride? No, no, said I, you have got this Horse by your Wit, not by Design, and you may go on now I think, you are in a safer Condition than I am, if we are taken.
(p. 93)

The matter is quickly dismissed, the next question being the direction of the road they should take. The complete lack of remorse on the part of the Colonel may be perplexing, but the lightness of tone and the tacit approval that accompanies it indicate once again that it is Defoe speaking. The emphasis on wit, instead of on conventional morality, is part of Defoe's tribute to man's ingenuity and thriftiness. He is so delighted with the incident that he adds an "epilogue" to it: on arriving at Edinborough, the Colonel easily gets rid of the horse and actually receives fifteen shillings for riding it (p. 102).¹⁸

A similar morality-related incident occurs later in the novel. Captured by the French in one of his later voyages, the Colonel manages to have "bilk'd the Captain of his Ransom Money" with the assistance of a friend (p. 182). A Gentleman by now and a widely traveled merchant, he should abide by the code that requires him to pay for his release. But he accepts the expeditious route and ignores the honorable part of the code. As it appears that the Colonel enjoys perfect

¹⁸ John Moore has discovered that the incident is similar to one Defoe actually experienced. Only that the ending is less "delightful," since Defoe was accused of "robbery." See "Defoe's Use of Personal Experience in Colonel Jack," MLN, 54 (May 1939), 362-63.

peace of mind in this affair, it seems likely that it is Defoe's rather than his creature's moral that is involved.

In the discussing of gratitude amongst human beings, Defoe once again subtly takes over the narrative to explain his view. The Colonel is made to discuss with his master how gratitude can be exploited to achieve a profitable end. The dialogue between them runs for nearly fifteen pages (pp. 131-146). The zeal and enthusiasm incorporated in the well-argued exposition indicate that the writer is more than interested in this particular issue. Moreover, if the reader remembers that barely a year earlier the Colonel was still a transported rogue, his knowledge and wisdom appear quite out of character, particularly when this event takes place before the Colonel acquires a teacher and before his diligent reading of the "Histories" (p. 157); even the Bible is alien to him at that time. Unless the reader is willing to believe that the Colonel's intelligence undergoes a complete metamorphosis once he becomes an overseer, the wisdom exhibited seems unjustified.

The problem of incongruity in the Colonel's character is solved when we recognize that it is Defoe's wisdom and intelligence that we are exposed to in this section. On another level the Colonel himself is an example of the beneficial effect of gratitude. His rapid ascent in status and his endless acquisition of wealth are testimonies to Defoe's

theory of "virtue rewarded." Thus, Defoe is not only preaching through the mouth of his created character but is also using him as illustration. Gratitude has always been an important issue in Defoe's life. Professor Sutherland has pointed out to us Defoe's unflinching gratitude towards those who had aided or pardoned him,¹⁹ and the Colonel goes through a similar process of being forgiven by the monarch in the novel (p. 276).

The voice of Defoe, however, speaks the loudest when it discusses two of the vital potentials in human nature--the ability to survive in an adverse environment and to strive for spiritual and materialistic improvements. These, in fact, are two of the major themes which dominate the book. The Colonel's role is greatly restricted to that of providing the necessary chain of events through which these and other ideas can be expounded.

The ability to survive in a hostile or alien environment arises time and again in the novel. Colonel Jack demonstrates by surviving the London streets, the journey to Scotland, the harsh life in a plantation, the broken marriages, and the loss of wealth on several occasions. Each time he is able to conquer the overwhelming odds and emerge as a better person. The young thief becomes a gentleman; the rebel, a respectable social figure; the transportee, a plantation owner; and the twice-divorced

¹⁹Sutherland, p. 121.

man ends up with the best wife in the world. The numerous falls and rises resemble Defoe's own tempestuous life; only the ending differs. Perhaps Defoe is writing to encourage himself, but most probably he is impressed by the versatility of the middle-class gentlemen and is writing to glorify them as well.

Defoe sees the acquisition of goods, particularly in trade and commerce, as the demonstration of one of man's greatest potentials. In a more direct treatise on this subject he once declared: "The Tradesman that is a thriving, managing, diligent Man, is full of Vigour, full of Vivacity, always stirring and brustling, never idle, never sottish; his Head and his Heart are employed; he moves with a kind of Velocity, unknown to other Men."²⁰

Trade and commerce indeed have more than a fair share in the book. Defoe has a personal interest in this subject, and he is also confident that his readers share his zeal. In the Review he once stated: "Writing upon trade was the whore I really doated upon," and on another occasion: "English, like the Jews, have a habit of going a whoring after other gods."²¹ Even when Jack "has more than enough to keep him and his family in plenty in Maryland" Defoe sends him on another series of trading adventures. These episodes, some of them dealing

²⁰Complete English Tradesman, II (1727), i, 73, as quoted in McKillop, p. 2.

²¹James Sutherland, Daniel Defoe: A Critical Study (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 4.

with illicit trade,²² appear anti-climatic in the story but were appealing to Defoe's contemporaries.²³ The Colonel is here exhibiting to his best ability the restless psychology of his fellow tradesmen.

Defoe has only praises for thriftiness, and his creature Colonel Jack is a master in acquisition. To the author, this is not avarice, for Jack is only being diligent and is entitled to what he can acquire.²⁴ There is no necessity to apologize for the Colonel's appetite. On the contrary, as Professor Monk has noted, "The reader is made aware of Jack's love of wealth by clever hints, most notably Jack's remembrance of the list of stolen objects at Bartholomew Fair when he was a mere child, his listing of cargoes sent to the London agent etc."²⁵ On the other hand, trade, with its pitfalls, always results in profitable gains in the novel. This passage is typical of the commercial successes found scattered in the book: "However, as it was, I was now a free Man, without

²²According to Alan McKillop, Defoe manages to avoid moral conflicts in such instances. He successfully softens the "paradox of trade and morality" by substituting for it a "paradox of adventure and morality," in McKillop, p. 5.

²³Monk, p. ixix.

²⁴Diligence as essential in man's life is reflected in Defoe's other works. In Robinson Crusoe, for instance, the hero once observed that "The Diligent liv'd well and comfortably, and the Slothful liv'd hard and beggarly; and so I believe, generally speaking, it is all over the World." Robinson Crusoe (II, 193).

²⁵Monk, p. xviii.

Ransom, and my Men were also free, so that all the Money which I had deposited, as above, was return'd me; and thus I took my Leave of the Havana, and made the best of my way for Virginia, where I arriv'd, after a Year and a half Absence, and notwithstanding all my Losses, came Home above 4000 Pieces of Eight richer than I went out" (p. 291).

As to the lists of stolen goods, cargoes or gifts which are likely to offend the modern reader, their presence in the novel is understandable once we take into account these two points: their composition must have delighted Defoe who was interested in articles of trade; the vivid and detail listings were in accordance with the commercial spirit of the age and thus appealing to his contemporary middle-class readers. Defoe is merely sharing his dreamy "Bill of Fares" with those he is addressing.

The acquisition of rank is given less emphasis than the acquisition of wealth. This suggests that status without the support of wealth was no longer attractive in the eighteenth century. The military campaigns which lead to Jack's Colonelship are depicted with little elaboration. When Jack sails on a trading trip, the voyage is eventful, the cargo attractive, and his business associates exotic. But the several military adventures described in the book are quickly dealt with despite their potential for interest. For instance, this is how Jack describes his campaigns after he has joined the Irish regiment:

Our Regiment, after I had been some time in it, was Commanded into Italy, and one of the most considerable Actions that I was in, was the Famous Attack upon Cremaona, in the Millanese, where the Germans being Privately, and by Treachery let into the Town in the Night, thro' a kind of Common-Shoar, surpriz'd the Town, and got possession of the greater Part of it, surprising the Mareschal Duke de Villeroy, and taking him Prisoner as he came out of his Quarters, and beating the few French Troops, which were left, into the Citadel: But were in the middle of their Victory so boldly and resolutely attack'd by two Irish Regiments, who were Quarter'd in the Street leading to the River Po, and who kept Possession of the Water-Gate, or Po Gate of the Town, by which the German Reinforcements should have come in, that after a most desperate Fight, the Germans had their Victory wrung out of their Hands, and not being able to break thro' us to let in their Friends, were oblig'd at length to quit the Town again

(pp. 207-208)

Without elaboration, Defoe compresses an eventful campaign into one paragraph. Even more "economical" is the way he describes the vast distance over land in one sentence: "Our Regiment was sent from France to Italy by Sea, we embark'd at Thoulon, and Landed at Savona in the Territory of Genoa, and march'd from thence to the Dutchy of Millan . . ." (p. 209).

Military campaigns are elaborated upon, however, when an opportunity to acquire wealth arises, as in this instance of "legitimate looting": "Having thus emptyed the House of the Inhabitants, we made no Scruple of filling our Pockets with whatever we could find there, in a Word, we left nothing we could carry away; among which, it came to my Lot to Dip into the Burghers Cabinet, whose House it was where we were; and there I took about the Quantity of 200 Pistols in Money and

Plate, and other things of Value" (p. 209).

Colonel Jack marries four times in the novel. But the emphasis on wealth-hoarding is so overwhelming that it invades even that romantic territory. In courting his first wife, due to inexperience, the Colonel's reason becomes vulnerable to erotic passion; but in his later courtships and marriages, not only that passion is absent, but he shows little affection towards his spouse. There is also a notable absence of sex in all his affairs. In his discussion of Robinson Crusoe, Professor Ian Watt has made an observation that is also applicable to this novel. He states that "sex, being one of the strongest non-rational factors in human life, is one of the strongest potential menaces to the individual's rational pursuit of economic ends, and it has . . . therefore been placed under particularly strong control in the ideology of industrial capitalism."²⁶ The quest for wealth in Jack's life has similarly displaced his interest in sex.

In Colonel Jack, wealth, instead of sex, is always the the best match-making factor as well as the best reason for separation of married couples. In his first marriage, Jack is "snared" because of his wealth (pp. 186-193), but he endures his state of imprisonment willingly because his wife can bring

²⁶ Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel (London: Chatto & Windus, 1957), p. 70.

him 1500 l. a year (p. 194). However, he finds it necessary to divorce her when "She carry'd on (an) Air of Levity to such an Excess, that (he) could not but be dissatisfy'd at the Expense of it, for she kept Company that (he) did not like, liv'd beyond what (he) could support, and sometimes lost at Play more than (he) car'd to pay . . ." (p. 193). He begs her "to consider things for all that, and not drive (him) to Extremities, that (he) married her to love and cherish her, and use her as a good Wife ought to be us'd, but not to be ruin'd and undone by her" (pp. 194-195). He finally decides to dissolve the relationship when the "Lyings-Inn" comes to 136 l. a time (p. 195). After the separation, he remarks to himself sardonically while taking stock of his loss: "the Extravagance of three Years with this Lady, had sunk me most effectually; even far beyond her own Fortune, which was Considerable, tho' not quite 1500 l. as she had call'd it" (p. 199). As a human being, Colonel Jack may appear too mercen^tary in behavior. But his example offers an illustration of the most rational way in dealing with marriage, at least from a merchant's point of view.

Colonel Jack has confessed earlier that he has "a perfect indifferency for the whole Sex . . . they were no more to (him) than a Picture hanging up against the Wall" (p. 188). After marrying his second wife, the notion of treating a wife as an object remains unchanged. Notified by his Regiment to

join up, he "very honestly pack'd up his Baggage, Wife and all, and brought her away thro' Tyrol, into Bavaria, and so thro' Suabia, and the black Forest into Alsatia from thence, (he) came into Lourain, and so to Paris" (p. 222).

The "perfect" relationship comes later, when his wife has repented and gratefully serves him again. The relationship is lasting since she now plays the role of a business partner, keeping his plantation in shape when he is abroad. Defoe's notion of love may be unromantic, but such a relationship is looked on as highly rewarding at least in the novel. The author never objects to its mercenary nature, but his approval or objection is irrelevant, since the main purpose here is to list the pros and cons of a middle-class marriage.

Defoe is not only insightful in his exploration of "modern" marriages, but he has also contributed to a new concept of social dignity. As a spok^seman for the middle-class, he implies that heritage no longer determines a man's position in society. Colonel Jack, like his Great Master in Virginia, achieves respectability through a sustained noble notion, while materialistic acquisitions effectively overrule the hostile opinion of those who are more nobly born. Clothing, for instance, serves as a symbol of respectability which can be "put on." The young Jack finds out that warm stockings and dry shoes make him feel like a gentleman (p. 15), but the most dramatic employment of such

symbolization is when Jack's Great Master decides to make him an overseer. He orders Jack to turn in his hoe, and shed his "ordinary Habit of a poor half naked Slave" for "three good Shirts, two Pairs of Shoes, Stockings and Gloves, a Hat, six Neckclothes" (p. 127). With this change of clothing, the Colonel has discarded his "old self" in exchange for a new one and his past life is not exposed again until he writes his "memoir."

When the Colonel has risen to a respectable station in life, he is able to reciprocate the same for the benefit of others. He discovers that his "House-keeper" is his former wife and she is "still . . . almost naked." Immediately he orders his tutor "to go to the Warehouse, and give her some Linnen; especially Head Cloaths, and all sorts of small things, such as Hoods, Gloves, Stockings, Shoes, Petty-Coats, &c. and to let her chuse for her self; also, a Morning-Gown of Callico, and a Mantua of a better kind of Callico, that is to say, to new Cloath her . . ." (p. 256). "Clothed all over with (the Colonel's) Things . . . she thank'd God, she was now (his) Servant again, and wore (his) Livery, thank'd (him) for the Cloaths (he) had sent her . . ." (p. 257). Once newly clothed, her dismal and sorrowful past is forgiven and forgotten; she regains her "first Station" (p. 250) and dignity, though it is only that of an obedient mistress. Thus sweeping aside birth

and blood,²⁷ Defoe is clearing the way to gentility for almost everybody, particularly the well-educated and well-dressed merchants and tradesmen.

Near the end of the book, when most of Jack's adventures have been exhausted, Defoe describes the situation with these words: "Never did any Vessel on this side the World make a better Voyage in so short a time, than I made in this Sloop, for by the most moderate Computation, I clear'd in these three Months five and Twenty Thousand Pounds Sterling in ready Money, all the Charges of the Voyage to New-England also being reckon'd up" (p. 296). Perhaps we can say with justification that never has a hero in a novel been so successful in the course of his life. Colonel Jack is a tale of success. Profit and acquisitions are piled onto Jack and the prospects seem endless. This shows where the heart of the author lies, and which are his favorite topics or ideas. As he goes along, the Colonel's success becomes Defoe's success, the creator enjoying the process as well as the product of his creation. Perhaps the novel can be better appreciated if we do not insist on the independence of Defoe's autobiographical narrator, at least not with the same criterion we use on modern novels, for Defoe does exploit his chief narrator to present some of his own favorite

²⁷Shinagel, p. 226.

ideas.²⁸

It is also important to observe that there are at least two different voices of Defoe in the novel; one, righteous and indignant, is meant to be recognized immediately, while the other is more tactfully cloaked. As to where the interests of Defoe lie, the ending of the book provides us with the necessary clue.

As mentioned earlier, Defoe's Colonel Jack suddenly becomes religiously repentant in the last few pages. While his religious sentiment is doubtful in sincerity the final paragraph is reserved for a more important topic:

I have only to add to what was then written, that my kind Friends the Spaniards finding no other Method presented for conveying me to my home, that is to say, to Virginia, got a License, for me to come in the next Galeons, as a Spanish Merchant to Cadiz, where I arriv'd safe with all my Treasure, for he suffer'd me to be at no Expences in his House; and from Cadiz, I soon got Passage on Board an English Merchant Ship for London, from whence I sent an Account of my Adventures to my Wife, and where in about five Months more, she came over to me, leaving with full satisfaction the Management of all our Affairs in Virginia, in the same faithful Hands as before.

(p. 309)

It is Defoe's gift to his reader, letting him share in the warmth of knowing everything is well; not only is the soul comforted, but more important, the body is in good health and all his "acquisitions" carefully preserved.

²⁸ Such an interpretation opens up other perspectives in viewing the ideas presented in the novel. For instance, the later trading adventures of Colonel Jack can be linked to contemporary politics and economy. The novel thus contains reflections of Defoe on the Spanish monopoly of Central and South American trade, in Monk, p. xix.

IV. ROXANA

Though less famous than Robinson Crusoe (1719) and Moll Flanders (1722), The Fortunate Mistress; or, Roxana (1724) has been receiving a fair share of critical attention since its publication. Regarded by many to be Defoe's last successful attempt at serious fictional composition, it represents the final phase of his art in many respects.¹ The novel is included in this study for it best illustrates how the narrative voice has fared in that evolutionary process.

Roxana is a more complex creation than most of its predecessors; consequently it is open to varied and deeper interpretations, many of which are paradoxical or even conflicting.

Firstly, critical opinions differ as to the manner of the original composition--some maintain that it was hastily written, while others offer evidence to prove that it was well-planned from the start. Professor Anthony James observes that the former view is based mainly on the numerous minor flaws found in the novel, irritating features such as unexplained events, inconsistencies, chronological errors, and

¹Defoe's last fictional composition--A New Voyage round the World (1724) is generally considered inferior in artistic achievement in comparison to other published novels.

other minor carelessness.² Maximillian E. Novak has gone to great length to show that events in the book have been carefully arranged to lead up to what he sees as the climactic scene--when Roxana dances in the masquerade.³

Secondly, the novel's ending also poses critical questions. Most critics are disturbed by its abruptness. Professor Novak has collected at least five different explanations as to why Defoe suddenly ends the novel with a severe self-admonition on the part of the heroine.⁴ Others try to resolve the problem of the ending by pointing out that there is an extant "continuation" published in 1745, an extended ending which contains an account of Roxana, Amy, and Susan's fate. Though incorporated into several editions⁵ the posthumously published continuation is definitely of inferior quality and generally regarded as written by someone other than Defoe.⁶

Finally, critics differ about Defoe's moral stand in the novel. At least one critic has suspected that the writer is personally involved in the actions and identifies himself

²E. Anthony James, Daniel Defoe's Many Voices: A Rhetorical Study of Prose Style and Literary Method (Rodopi NV: Amsterdam, 1972), p. 129 and p. 232.

³Maximillian E. Novak, "Crime and Punishment in Defoe's *Roxana*," JEGP 65 (July 1966), 460.

⁴Novak, "Crime and Punishment," 465.

⁵Daniel Defoe, Roxana, ed. George A. Aitken (London: J.M. & Co., 1895), and The Fortunate Mistress, ed. G.H. Maynadier (New York: George D. Sproul, 1904).

⁶George A. Aitken, "Introduction," Roxana (London: J.M. Dent & Co., 1895), pp. viii-ix.

with the heroine;⁷ others are convinced that he maintains a cautious distance between himself and his creation.⁸ Yet others are more interested in whether Defoe involves the reader in the making of moral judgment.⁹ It is also common to hear critics speak of a "tension" within the novel, a tension due mostly to Defoe's being sympathetic with Roxana at times while genuinely shocked by what she does at others.¹⁰

But in spite of the diversified views, critics are unanimous in appraising the artistic maturity Defoe demonstrates in this novel. James Sutherland calls it "the most elaborate of all of Defoe's novels";¹¹ Paul Dottin says that it "is really a sketch beside The Fortunes and Misfortunes of Moll Flanders; but it is a sketch which has many marks of genius."¹² Other critics give Roxana its own due and are more specific as to such ingenuity. G.H. Maynadier, in his introduction to the novel, states that "in The Fortunate Mistress Defoe has

⁷ Benjamin Boyce, "The Question of Emotion in Defoe," SP, 50 (Jan. 1953), 57-58.

⁸ G.A. Starr, Defoe & Casuistry (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1971), p. 183.

⁹ Novak, "Crime and Punishment," 447, and Starr, p. 179.

¹⁰ Jane Jack, "Introduction," Roxana (1724; rpt. London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1964), p. x.

¹¹ James Sutherland, Defoe (New York: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1938), p. 205.

¹² Paul Dottin, The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Daniel Defoe, trans. Louise Ragan (New York: Octagon Books, 1971), p. 225.

come nearer than usual to writing what we today call a novel; the reason is that he has had more success than usual in making his characters real."¹³ Professor James goes one step further and explains the realism of the characters: ". . . for all its weakness, Roxana provides unmistakable evidence of seemingly premediated design and conscious stylistic control on the part of Defoe . . . (in) developing his speakers fully as individual characters."¹⁴

The main speaker--Roxana--has a better portrayed autobiographical voice than that found in the other two novels discussed in this study. This is due to two factors: there are fewer occasions when Defoe deems it necessary to take over the narrative voice to express his views; and the autobiographical voice is endowed with well-maintained characteristics of its own which make Roxana a fuller persona. Her voice in most cases reflects her psychology. But instead of believing in whatever it tells him, the reader is now encouraged to form his own opinion as to how reliable the voice is. Formerly, Singleton still appears elusive after several hundred pages of first-person narration, while Colonel Jack's voice only convinces us that he looks and acts like his creator. But here, even without the aid of the frontispiece (Roxana's portrait was printed in the first edition) the

¹³G.H. Maynadier, "Introduction," The Fortunate Mistress; or, Roxana (New York: George D. Sproul, 1904), p. x.

¹⁴James, p. 253.

reader can still have a reasonably vivid picture of the heroine after reading through the book. The impression is not obtained from any third-person description; instead, it is deduced from the voice which describes the actions and frequent "moral reflections."

Roxana's psychological disposition is not a simplistic one. There is continuous interplay between the individual conscience and the laws of God, Nature, and Man. As Professor Novak has observed, "this creates a psychological and moral complexity which is unique in early fiction."¹⁵ To mention only a few examples, the reader is informed of how Roxana sees in Amy's agonies during the stormy voyage the manifestation of her own sin against Heaven,¹⁶ or, the manner in which she refuses to acknowledge her "sin" when she cannot justify her intention of continuing to be a whore (p. 201). The question of necessity, representing the law of nature, is evoked in desperation, suggesting that it is difficult to resist the "dreadful Argument of wanting Bread (pp. 43-44)." Even this becomes an unsatisfactory excuse as she gains in personal wealth. As to the law of Man, Roxana is deeply touched by the inequality that had existed between husband and wife (p. 148); but on the other hand, she is often troubled by the technicality of when a woman can be free

¹⁵ Maximillian E. Novak, Defoe and the Nature of Man (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963), p. 465.

¹⁶ Daniel Defoe, Roxana: The Fortunate Mistress, ed. Jane Jack (1724; rpt. London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1964), pp. 125-126. All other page references of the novel are from the same edition.

to call herself a widow (pp. 37 & 132). All these problems are by no means completely resolved in the novel, neither by Roxana nor by Defoe. Even a careful and conscientious reader will find it difficult to reconcile the conflicts he finds. Though they tend to raise more questions than are answered, the complicated social and moral issues are at least well-presented through the narrative voice. Roxana's own reaction to these problems allows the reader to pry into her psychology. The result may be a rewarding one; as Professor Maynadier has observed, some readers are surprised to learn that "this thick-skinned, mercantile writer, the vulgarest of all our great men of letters in the early eighteenth century, seems to have known a woman's heart better than a man's."¹⁷ To understand how the autobiographical voice manages to illustrate the character uttering it, a detailed discussion is essential. Analytically speaking, Roxana's voice improves on that of Singleton's or Colonel Jack's in at least three aspects: its emotional overtone, its various layers of revelation, and its linguistic mannerism.

Not all critics agree that Roxana's voice contains emotion. However, Benjamin Boyce, in his article "The Question of Emotion in Defoe," has successfully disproved Willa Cather and Leslie Stephen's view that there is a general

¹⁷Maynadier, p. xii.

lack of passion or even erotic interest in the novel: and that Roxana is "as safe as a sterilized gauze."¹⁸ He further points out that the narrative voice has produced "a certain kind of atmosphere of emotional power," an atmosphere that is especially pronounced if "we compare (this novel) with Captain Singleton, with Colonel Jack, and with Memoirs of a Cavalier."¹⁹ Professor Boyce also notes that despite its outward robustness, Roxana's voice contains elements of agony and fear in a way more haunting than Crusoe's terrified thoughts when he discovers the footprints on the sand.²⁰ Professor James concentrates instead on Roxana's moments of *éxtasies*, pointing out that though her attitude toward love and sex is coldly rational and unemotional, "her attitude toward monetary or social advancement is warm and sensual."²¹ On at least two occasions (the Dutch merchant's offer of marriage, pp. 221-226, and the Prince's presentation of a diamond necklace) Roxana is "all on fire" with every ounce of blood "flying up to (her) Face" (p. 73).

The character of Roxana stands out vividly because of the different layers of revelation suggested by the heroine's

¹⁸Boyce, 51-52.

¹⁹Boyce, 47.

²⁰Boyce, 53.

²¹James, p. 234.

voice. Such an autobiographical voice is no longer candid and dependable. Hearing it merely as another character's voice, the reader can at times laugh at it when she tries unsuccessfully to assume an air of sincerity. Such is possible because the reader is no longer subject to any sermonizing; he is no longer required to respect whatever she says. When Roxana, in a moment of anguish, equates "evil" with the "Devil" and tries to blame everything on the latter, the reader immediately perceives that she is fooling herself:

I had strong Natural Aversions to the Crime at first, partly owing to a virtuous Education, and partly to a Sence of Religion; but the Devil, and that greater Devil of Poverty, prevail'd; and the Person who laid Siege to me, did it in such an obliging, and I may almost say, irresistible Manner, all still manag'd by the Evil Spirit; for I must be allow'd to believe, that he has a Share in all such things, if not the whole Management of them: But . . . there was no withstanding it: These Circumstances, I say, the Devil manag'd, not only to bring me to comply, but he continued them as Arguments to fortifie my Mind against all Reflections, and to keep me in that horrid Course I had engag'd as if it were honest and lawful.

(p. 201)

It is obviously too glaring an excuse, and Roxana would be too simple-minded if she fails to modify it. But instead of exposing it fully to herself, she only half-acknowledges the truth and moves on to a new problem:

It had for a-while been a little kind of Excuse to me, that I was engag'd with this wicked old Lord, and that I cou'd not, in Honour, forsake

him; but how foolish and absurd did it look, to repeat the Word Honour on so vile an Occasion? As if a Woman shou'd prostitute her Honour in Point of Honour; horrid Inconsistency; Honour call'd upon me to detest the Crime and the Man too, and to have resisted all the Attacks which from the beginning had been made upon my Virtue; and Honour, had it been consulted, wou'd have preserv'd me honest from the Beginning.

For Honesty and Honour, are the same.
(p. 201)

The constant shifting of guilty sentiment illustrates the complexities of Roxana's mind, while the manner in which this is expressed causes her to look pathetic. Moreover, the inconsistencies in feeling warn the reader to be more careful in dealing with the "information" given him. He should take the prevailing mood into account and not believe without reservation anything passed on to him by the narrator. There are times when the narrator purposely withholds information, as in the case of Roxana's "disappearance": "There is a Scene which came in here, which I must cover from humane Eyes or Ears; for three Years and about a Month, Roxana liv'd retir'd, having been oblig'd to make an Excursion, in a Manner, and with a Person, which Duty, and private Vows, obliges her not to reveal, at least, not yet"(p. 181). But here, no deception is intended. The suggestiveness of the voice (vain and deliberately secretive), together with the careful construction of clues and information that precede this, enables the reader to penetrate the thin veil drawn

by the heroine; readily, he understands that Roxana has become the King's mistress.

The same technique is employed in relating the incident concerning Susan--Roxana's persecuting daughter. The ultimate fate of the maid-daughter is never plainly explained, and the reader has to rely on emotion expressed in the narrator's voice to presume that she is actually murdered. Obviously, it is also legitimate to doubt her sincerity at this stage of the novel, since the book contains too many instances of her not knowing her own disposition and her efforts to disguise true emotion by forgiving herself in the face of adversity. However, her emphasis on self-interest has been a constant and predominant element in the story. With this in mind it is possible to believe that the later Roxana has indeed entertained a growing "secret Horror upon (her) Mind" because of her daughter (p. 277). When her self-interest clashes with that of Susan's, it is conceivable that she can allow the latter to be sacrificed. After receiving the news of Susan's "sudden disappearance" her sorrow seems real enough:

I was struck as with a Blast from Heaven, at the reading her Letter: I fell into a Fit of trembling, from Head to Foot; and I ran raving about the Room like a Mad-Woman; I had nobody to speak a Word to, to give Vent to my Passion; nor did I speak a Word for a good-while, till after it had almost overcome me: I threw myself on the Bed, and cry'd out, Lord be merciful to me, she has murther'd my Child; and with that, a Flood of Tears burst out, and I cry 'd vehemently for above an Hour.

(p. 323)

Her reaction may convince the reader that the girl is actually murdered. But apart from that realization, this remorse does not necessarily mark Roxana as a woman of moral consciousness. As usual, the issue is more complicated, and one has to take into consideration the paragraph which immediately follows her emotional reaction.

My Husband was very happily gone out a-hunting, so that I had the Opportunity of being alone, and to give my Passions some Vent, by which I little recover'd myself: But after my Crying was over, then I fell in a new Rage at Amy; I call'd her a thousand Devils, and Monsters, and hard-hearted Tygers .

Well, after some time my Spouse came in from his Sport, and I put on the best Looks I cou'd to deceive him

(p. 324)

Her shifting of responsibility to Amy, her rapid "recovery" and her "deceiving" the Dutch merchant place in doubt the sincerity of her sorrow. But it is clear that she welcomes such an opportunity for an emotional outburst. Earlier, on more than one occasion, she has informed the reader how she envies the Catholics, who, "under the Pretence of Confession, state the Case exactly" and have the sin "absolve(d) upon the easiest Pennance" (pp. 68-69). Roxana's emotional outburst is not exactly a confession, and there is no absolution afterwards; but it is a welcome outlet for her pent-up feelings, the only alternative for one who who believes that "Secrets shou'd never be open'd, without evident Utility" (p. 326). In this way, she resolves the sense

of guilt by giving vent to emotions but not to ethics or morality.

But such moments are infrequent. In spite of her effort at white-washing, the voice of the narrator is not without guilty sentiment. On the contrary, there is a gradual climax of such as the story progresses. The guilty feeling originates from her first "fall," when she succumbs to the lewd appetite of her landlord. But she intensifies it with her own action. In a desperate bid to "dilute" her guilty feeling she thrusts her maid Amy into the landlord's bed until she, too, becomes "a whore." It is a pitiful effort to prove that other women are also "fallible," but the narrator never admits openly the real incentive behind such an act. Instead, she seems to relish in Amy's fall: ". . . she was ruin'd and undone, and there was no pacifying her; she was a Whore, a Slut, and she was undone! undone! and cry'd almost all Day; I did all I could to pacify her; A Whore! says I, well, and am not I a Whore as well as you?" (p. 47)

Yet when Roxana openly acknowledges guilt, it is likely that she is acting hypocritically. Reluctant to mix her wealth with the Dutch merchant's, she offers a seemingly plausible explanation based on her internal feeling:

Unhappy Wretch, said I to myself, shall my ill-got Wealth, the Product of prosperous Lust, and of a vile and vicious Life of Whoredom and Adultery, be intermingled with the honest well-gotten Estate of this innocent Gentleman, to be a Moth

and a Caterpillar among it, and bring the Judgments of Heaven upon him, and upon what he has, for my sake! Shall my Wickedness blast his Comforts! Shall I be Fire in his Flax! and be a Means to provoke Heaven to curse his Blessings! God Forbid! I'll keep them asunder, if it be possible.

(p. 259)

The tone is strong, perhaps too strong; the imagery, violent but conventional. Knowing the heroine, and having heard her treatise on the inequality of woman rendered by the marriage contract, the reader has every right to suspect that she is hiding her unwillingness to surrender her wealth behind some half-truth. The merchant's reaction--allowing her to keep her wealth--is deferential to her calculating mind. But in spite of this victory of her rationalizing capability, Roxana still refuses to come to terms with herself and continues to shield her real motive behind the guilty sentiment. She is, however, less successful in her next utterance; for her joy candidly exposes her feigned sincerity:

And let no-body conclude from the strange Success I met with in all my wicked Doings, and the vast Estate which I had rais'd by it, that therefore I either was happy or easie: No, no, there was a Dart struck into the Liver; there was a secret Hell within, even all the while, when our Joy was at the highest; but more especially now, after it was all over, and when according to all appearance, I was one of the happiest Women upon Earth

But I shall perhaps, have Occasion to speak of all these things again by-and-by; the Case before us was in a manner settl'd; we had full four thousand Pounds per Annum

(p. 260)

Thus, the reader is constantly required to look beneath the

surface to achieve a better understanding of the voice of the autobiographical narrator. At times the task is not an easy one. The heroine's habit of hiding behind half-truths has prompted Professor Starr to say that "Roxana is 'uncomeatable' (Dr. Johnson's word): Just when we begin to think we have seen through her, and especially when we are about to judge her, she says or does something that puts her out of our grasp, and forces us to qualify or abandon the confident pronouncement we were going to make."²²

The characterization of Roxana is not only done through the sustained process of psychological exploration but also through certain linguistic mannerisms incorporated into the narrator's voice. Professor James has pointed out some typical imagistic effects in Roxana's voice, such as monetary references used in descriptions of events and things, and the imagistic pattern which reveals her aspiration toward aristocratic status and titled position. Even matrimony and pregnancy are considered by their financial value, and her favorite method of solving a problem is to "buy her way out" of the difficulty. Roxana is also fascinated by "aristocratic terms such as "Her Highness," "Domesticks," or "Men of Rank," and she uses them in her speeches with undisguised vanity. All these serve to illustrate Roxana's personality

²²Starr, pp. 172-173.

and values.²³

In the novel, the most elaborate descriptions are those treating the heroine's gifts, such as the detailed description of the Turkish dress she owns (pp. 173-174). At such moments the voice is overwhelmed with emotions, particularly those of zeal and delight. As in Colonel Jack, Roxana's wardrobe takes on a symbolic role, standing for social and material security. The greatest fear of Roxana is her being stripped of those goods she possesses as illustrated in this early passage: "and thus I took my Leave of France, and got clear of an ugly Business, which, had it gone on, might have ruin'd me, and sent me back as Naked to England, as I was a little before I left it" (p. 121). Ironically, it is the dress which she so proudly possesses that exposed her to Susan as well as to the Quaker, the same dress that has highlighted her life in the dance before the King.

Professor James has also noted Roxana's usage of French words and phrases in her speeches.²⁴ This is in line with her early declaration that she has spent a greater part of her youth in France (p. 5). However, to show that she has also benefited from her English education Defoe has her quoting English writers and making allusions to popular Biblical stories. Dryden's lines "Countryman that whistled as

²³James, pp. 232-235.

²⁴James, p. 235.

he went, for want of Thought" (p. 14) are quoted to serve her own ends. But later quotations are mainly of unknown origin, perhaps of Defoe's own composition (pp. 67, 68, 149, 201), thus suggesting that whatever knowledge of poetic works she has, they are mostly of the inferior type, products of fashionable but minor artists. The same observation is applicable to allusions to the Bible; only the most popular stories are quoted--the story of Job is mentioned twice (pp. 17, 39), while "the pitiful Women of Jerusalem" is used in the narrator's "lamentation."

The way Roxana addresses those around her also suggests the state of mind she is in. Amy has been called all kinds of names, ranging from "violently pejorative through fairly neutral to extremely honorific," all depending on the circumstances.²⁵ Whether the maid is called "Jade" or "Devil," the name-calling exposes the narrator's internal disposition. Similarly, Roxana's addressing of her daughter informs the reader her true feeling towards her. When Roxana is relatively safe from her "menacing" she calls her daughter "poor child"; this, however, changes to "young slut" as she becomes a nuisance. Then, it is her employment of terms such as "My Plague" and "this Tormentor" that enables the reader to consolidate his suspicion that Roxana has indeed expressed tacit approval of Susan's murder.

Though the autobiographical voice is well developed

²⁵James, p. 250.

and maintained throughout the narration, it is not the only voice found in the novel. The voice of Amy, a character who shares some of the author's attention, also enjoys some degree of independence. It is true that most of her utterings are reported through the main narrator; but like Roxana's, Amy's speeches exhibit certain linguistic traits that are quite distinctive. Of a lower social order than Roxana, Amy's speeches are less grammatical and more colloquial than those of her mistress's. The point of view adopted is also more clear-sighted and practical. She sees the landlord's "generous offer" and the murdering of Susan as "facts of life" one has to live with (pp. 27-30 & pp. 272-273). The business-like tone in her voice suggests that her mind has little room for the intrusion of morality. Professor James has noticed the independence of her voice, seeing it as "further evidence of the pains Defoe took to ensure consistency of point of view or implied authorship by creating individual voices for his serious fictional speakers."²⁶ The difference in voices and the clash of personalities create mutual contrasts in the two main characters.

However, Defoe's "implied authorship" is evident also in other places; and this brings out the complicated issue of whether the author is involved in the narration, and if so, the degree to which he appears intrusive.

²⁶James, p. 252.

Notwithstanding a general maturity in Defoe's artistry, there are still moments when the author is "carried away" in the discussion of certain subjects until he finally commits another act of authorial intrusion. The sermonizing Defoe is, on the whole, much better disguised than is the one found in other novels; but his presence is still detectable in the discussion of topics such as marriage, the status of women, and the management of acquired wealth.

Twice in the narrative, Roxana stops the action to deliver a sermon against "marrying a fool" (pp. 7-8 & 92-93). The tone of her voice is didactic, and the moral of the speech clear:

If you have any Regard to your future Happiness;
any View of living comfortably with a Husband;
any Hope of preserving your Fortunes, or restoring
them after any Disaster; Never, Ladies, marry a
Fool; any Husband rather than a Fool; with some
Husbands you may be unhappy, but with a Fool you
will be miserable; with another Husband you may,
I say, be unhappy, but with a Fool you must; nay,
if he wou'd, he cannot make you easie; every thing
he does is so awkward, every thing he says is so
empty, a Woman of any Sence cannot but be surfeited,
and sick of him twenty times a-Day
(p. 8)

There is even a humouous classification of fools:

" . . . whether a mad Fool, a wise Fool, or a silly Fool;
take any thing but a Fool; nay, be any thing, be even an
Old Maid, the worst of Nature's Curses, rather than take
up with a Fool" (p. 8).

In the speech mentioned, there are certain traits

characteristic of Roxana (such as the preoccupation with the preserving of fortunes and the fear of being an old maid), but the humor seems out of place here as the reader takes Roxana's present plight into consideration. The authoritative voice also resembles that of a "family instructor" rather than a raging widow. It is evident that Defoe has intruded into the narration here, and Professor Novak has even discovered that an identical "man in the Ditch" imagery is used to depict the fool in both The Complete English Tradedman and Roxana.²⁷

The voice of Defoe is even more apparent in the discussion of the status of women and the issue of concubinage. The advantages and disadvantages of "Wife" and "Whore" (Mistress) are carefully compared and contrasted. Most critics agree that on issues like these Defoe was more conscious of reform proposals and the need for change than others. But most important of all, the arguments are directed against the existing social system rather than toward the personages and events in the novel.²⁸ Professor Starr has noted that in such circumstances Defoe endows his heroine with so much of his own argumentative power that the message comes through strong and clear.²⁹ However, the keen observations and

²⁷Novak, Nature of Man, p. 84.

²⁸Novak, Nature of Man, p. 111.

²⁹Starr, p. 186.

brilliant arguments are beyond Roxana's characteristic capacity and the reader tends to accredit them to the author rather than to her.

Trade and commerce are also among Defoe's favorite subjects, as illustrated by his discussion of such in earlier novels. The topic is usually discussed in the author's own voice instead of the character's. In Roxana trade plays a relatively small part; but when it comes to the management of business, such as the transfer of wealth to Rotterdam, the author's voice still tends to creep into the narrative. Jane Jack has noted that when Roxana becomes involved in the complications of business management, Defoe identifies himself with her again.³⁰ However, he is not persistent on this point in this particular novel. When Roxana finds it necessary to have someone manage her wealth for her, Defoe takes the opportunity of introduce into the story a true personage--one Sir Robert Clayton. The new character quickly takes over the narration and there follows a treatise on finance.

The introduction of Sir Robert Clayton is another intrusion into the story's plot. Action is suspended at midway while he offers expert advice to Roxana on investment. This is a subject Defoe has always been interested in, and the reader is perhaps justified in suspecting that the writer is once again "carried away." However, there is a marked

³⁰Jack, p. xi.

improvement in expository technique over similar subjects in past novels. The voice which gives the advice is still very much like Defoe's, but the personage of Sir Robert Clayton has given him a better excuse for intruding. While in earlier novels a colonel or a pirate is abruptly transformed into an expert businessman, here the narrator retains her role while Defoe speaks freely behind a figure who was already known to the eighteenth century readers. But readers of the Review will immediately recognize that it is Defoe instead of the famed economist who is insisting here that "a true-bred Merchant is the best Gentleman in the Nation, that in Knowledge, in Manners, in Judgment of things, the Merchant out-did many of the Nobility . . ." (p. 170). Such an arrangement allows Roxana to stay in the narrative as Sir Robert's client while dialogues between the two are used to explain the investment of capital, the collection of interest, and the advantage of a mortgage (pp. 167-172). Thus, in spite of the interruption of the plot, the narrator continues to play an active role; and consequently, when the action moves forward again, the transition is more smoothly executed. An apologetic phrase such as "I come now back to my own History" (Captain Singleton, p. 249) is no longer essential. Instead, the discourse gently moves away from its monetary objective to comment on the disadvantages of women in society. The narrator's voice then gradually resumes control to give an

account of her first masked ball.

The unique characteristics of Roxana's voice, the independence of Amy's, and the introduction of a character such as Sir Robert Clayton to illustrate monetary issues all suggest that Defoe's voice is less directly involved in this later novel. In fact, it is generally believed that Defoe's involvement has moved onto a new level. Instead of speaking directly through his main character, he formulates ideas into dramatized actions or dialogues and has them scrutinized from a distance. But there are critics who believe that Defoe fails to maintain a prudential distance in his narrative and often becomes so involved in Roxana's actions that he is genuinely shocked by the evil of human spirit as the story progresses. Professor Shinagel believes that Defoe realizes this and unsuccessfully tries to check himself by maintaining that he is here to relate, not to preach.³¹ The belief that Defoe is involuntarily involved also accounts for several explanations for the novel's abrupt ending. Both Jane Jack and Benjamin Boyce believe that the dilemma between social upgrading and inner morality becomes "too much" for the author and he ends the novel hastily.³² Professor Novak, on the other hand, acknowledges that Defoe is here dealing

³¹Michael Shinagel, Daniel Defoe and Middle-Class Gentility (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 193.

³²Jack, p. xi and Boyce, 53.

with the "indwelling Sin" (result of the 'original depravity' of human nature) and his attitude is one of detached condemnation.³³ Professor Starr takes the "middle-of-the-road" view and says that Defoe "oscillates between extremes of identification and repudiation"; he is involved at one time, detached at another, but never simultaneously.³⁴

Thematically, Roxana does touch on certain aspects that have been Defoe's favorite topics. It is easy to see Roxana as another female version of the ever-aspiring individual who is struggling to reach some higher steps in the social and economic ladder. She starts her "career" as a destitute widow and ends up as the wife of a wealthy merchant and a member of the nobility. In between these altered circumstances she has for several years been the mistress of the King. However, while it is relatively safe to indulge in the success of Captain Singleton or Colonel Jack, it would be dangerous for Defoe to identify openly with Roxana. Unlike the former stories, the heroine's success does not bring along with it the expurgatory repentance. Toward the end of the book, in fact, the life-story gradually develops into a haunting murder tale. Defoe seems to be giving freer rein to his creative imagination, but there is little concrete evidence to show

³³Novak, "Crime and Punishment," 447.

³⁴Starr, p. 166.

that events are beyond his control.

One aspect, however, still remains to be explained before we can safely dismiss the assumption that Defoe is "actively involved." Some critics mention the "manliness" in Roxana's voice, suggesting that it bears a semblance to others of the author's typical central figures, people with whom Defoe sometimes identifies himself. Then, Roxana's spirit is often compared with that of Moll Flanders, another rugged individual. Earlier discussion on the characteristics in the heroine's voice has shown that the first observation is without foundation, since Roxana's voice is far more elaborate than her other "counterparts." As to the second, there is some difference between the two women's masculinity in spirit.

Moll Flanders is a "victim of necessity," and she must rely on her "manly" spirit to survive in an extremely harsh world. Roxana's world is not less austere, but her situation is seldom as demanding. The first "fall" (seduction by the landlord) is caused by a situation similar to that often faced by Moll--one of extreme necessity. But after that, Roxana has deliberately chosen to go on living the life of a whore. At one point of the story Defoe points out that she could have avoided further sinning and settle down with the merchant who proposes marriage and security (pp. 158-159). But she decides to turn down the restive posture and

continues to lead her life with that masculine spirit. Her manly disposition is, however, recognized and explained by the writer. In the discourse with Sir Robert Clayton, Roxana vehemently attacks the prejudice imposed on her sex:

. . . I liv'd a Life of absolute Liberty now; was free as I was born, and having a plentiful Fortune, I did not understand what Coherence the Words Honour and Obey had with the Liberty of a Free Woman; that I knew no Reason the Men had to engross the whole Liberty of the Race, and make the Women, notwithstanding any disparity of Fortune, be subject to the Laws of Marriage, of their own making; that it was my Misfortune to be a Woman, but I was resolv'd it shou'd not be made worse by the Sex; and seeing Liberty seem'd to be the Men's Property, I wou'd be a Man-Woman; for as I was born free, I wou'd die so.

(p. 171)

On hearing such vigorous remarks Sir Robert anticipates the reader's reaction as he comments: " (she) talk'd a kind of Amazonian Language, that he found few Women of [her] Mind, or that if they were, they wanted Resolution to go on with it" (p. 171). Contrary to Professor Dottin's belief that Defoe is hindered by his own social limitations and invariably turns every character (male and female alike) into a Puritan businessman of London,³⁵ the author here scrupulously declares that he is well-aware of his heroine's man-like quality. Roxana's situations seldom demand an Amazonian attitude (for instance, the merchant is willing to love and cherish her), but she is convinced that such a posture is best for her. Whether Defoe approves of her insistence is extremely

³⁵Dottin, p. 226.

doubtful. While her attack on social injustice is valid enough, the things mentioned there hardly apply to her. All her "consorts" adore Roxana and willingly share what they have with her instead of acting like the "Husband" described in her vehement passage.³⁶ Defoe indirectly sanctions Moll's manliness by allowing her a peaceful retirement but Roxana's masculine spirit turns her into a fiend (p. 270). As the pursuit of "unnaturalness" is her own decision, she is responsible for her "dreadful Course of Calamities," "the Misery . . . of (her) Crime" (pp. 329-330). With this in view, it is hardly valid to claim that Roxana's masculinity is an inevitable product of Defoe's art and deserves the same respect as that found in Moll. Instead, her decision to affect a manly disposition is intentional on the part of the author and partially justifies her ultimate fall, for she affects an unnatural claim to strength which is outwardly successful, but which in no way provide her with the moral strength manliness might suppose or the physical endurance it might afford; it is a denial of the principle of plenitude and thus an ominous attribute in the characterization of Roxana. This in itself illustrates a new shift in Defoe's narrative capability, a shift toward higher artistic achievement.

³⁶Both the landlord and the Dutch merchant treat Roxana kindly and satisfy most of her materialistic need (pp. 24-25, 135-160). Later, as a courtesan, Roxana is supported generously by noblemen of the Court (pp. 183-200). King Charles privately patronizes her for three years, after which she emerges as a woman of great wealth (pp. 181-182).

Roxana, written five years after the success of Robinson Crusoe (1719) can be considered as Defoe's most mature contribution to the art of novel. The superior handling of the various voices is a marked improvement over the travel-orientated Captain Singleton and Colonel Jack. Roxana also moves from place to place, scoring most of her "successes" on foreign soil. But it is her character and her psychology that capture the reader's attention. The well-maintained autobiographical voice is able to supply him with what he wishes to know, although sometimes he has to look beneath the surface narration to locate it.

The independence of Roxana's voice has also brought along a change in the author-reader relationship. In the earlier novels, when Defoe chooses to express his own points of view through the main character, the reader is required to judge the author as well. In Roxana, the author is on the whole more detached. Defoe now stands side by side with his reader, and together they survey and discuss the actions or views expressed in the book. Since the characters are no longer looked on as spokesmen of the author, they are at liberty to indulge in more varied and complex points of view. Such a healthy complexity opens up the novel to different interpretations; the numerous reviews it has received from critics are testimonies to its superiority in this important aspect.

V. CONCLUSION

A study of the literary achievements of Daniel Defoe demands consideration of his major novels, such as Robinson Crusoe and Moll Flanders. Readers will continue to be fascinated by the voice of Crusoe, the voice of a human being under stress and in the midst of utter loneliness. On the other hand, Moll Flanders still offers insight into the adaptation to the equivocators of society. Her actions illustrate the ingenuity and imagination of a human being who must sustain herself and assure a secure future, while her utilization of religious belief will continue to be a subject of critical interest.

The minor novels, however, offer insight into the development of Defoe's narrative art. The three novels discussed in this study were published within a span of five years (1720-1724), and they represent three distinctive phases in Defoe's short but productive era of fiction writing. Narrative voices in Captain Singleton, Colonel Jack and Roxana indicate that an evolutionary process was taking place in the novelist's art as the years passed by. Narratives of external successes gradually gave way to introspective psychological exploration. The change was a slow but sure one, showing a gradual maturing of the author's

skill.

The autobiographical voice is never seriously characterized in Captain Singleton. After a weak attempt, characterization proves dispensable as Defoe finds interesting topics on which he is compelled to comment. Heartily, he incorporates into the novel his views on the exploitation of the Dark Continent, on trade and commerce, and on the spiritual conversion of sinners. To comment upon these favorite topics, he has little alternative but to halt the narrative momentarily in offering remarks that at best appear intrusive to the modern sensibility. There is still a half-hearted effort to disguise his own voice, but the enthusiasm betrays him.

Colonel Jack represents the second phase in the evolutionary process, and Defoe's intrusion is much bolder in many respects. Some of the views he expresses are relatively new; at least they have seldom been mentioned in print. This increased involvement prompted the creation of two different "author's voices," the "implied author's voice" and the "true author's voice." The "implied author" openly makes suggestions on social reforms and childhood education. The same voice discusses the rise of the middle-class and takes pride in the opportunities of the commoners. Meanwhile, it vehemently denounces social evils which obstruct the adventurous spirit of the middle-class and elucidates upon

proposals for new social orders. Even the hero's offenses against society are eventually proved to be minor sins, as the laws of nature and necessity are quoted in his defense. A more cautious "author's voice" describes issues that are potentially controversial. More knowledgeable and prudential, this voice is careful to seek protection of certain disguises when it appears that the subject under discussion may incite censure from the public. Such a voice is employed to discuss a new view on morality. In addition, the second "author's voice" is also used to comment on topics that are Defoe's favorites. The views expressed on trade and commerce, for instance, are so close to those listed in Defoe's non-fictional writings that one suspects that they are nearer to the "true author's voice."

In the two earlier novels, the autobiographical voice invariably fails to become characteristic. The "I" in Captain Singleton degenerates into a collective voice while that in Colonel Jack sounds too much like the author. In view of this, the change in Roxana is innovative and marks an advancement in the narrative art of Defoe's fiction. For the first time, Defoe "leaves his character alone" and the result is a uniquely characteristic heroine speaking with the voice of the autobiographical narrator. At times when he finds it necessary to present to the readers his observations and comments on some of his favorite subjects,

Defoe manages to accomplish his task in a sophisticated way-- by presenting them through characters independent of the autobiographical narrator. There is yet an enthusiastic note in the achievements of the heroine, but, on the whole, the author's technique is more refined, according to modern standards of narrative progression.

Throughout the three phases Defoe, the writer, is unchanged. He enjoys expressing his views in his novels. Only the method of presentation gradually changes for the better, until his own voice is no longer viewed as an intrusion into the narrative. But as the novels become better works of art, the limitation upon the direct expression of his opinions increases. For instance, in Roxana, he can expound only briefly in the person of Sir Robert Clayton. Yet, throughout his life he is accustomed to the freedom of speaking his mind openly in pamphlets and other journalistic media. Any biography of Defoe will show that his mind is too vigorous to be confined within the boundaries of novels; thus his reversion to polemical works, rather than continuing with the novel, may be attributed to his interest in social issues and his desire to speak without the constraints implicit in the technique of the novel as a literary genre. Later works such as The Complete English Tradesman (1725 & 1727), A New Family Instructor (1727), A Treatise concerning the Use and Abuse of the Marriage Bed,

primarily titled Conjugal Lewdness (1727), and A Plan of the English Commerce (1728) once again allow him the freedom of referring to himself as "I" and the reader as "you" as he sermonizes openly, while the narrative skill he acquired in the years of novel-writing now contributes to vitalizing the various illustrations in these books.

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