

DePauw University

## Scholarly and Creative Work from DePauw University

---

English Faculty publications

English

---

2018

### Daniel Defoe's Protestant Roman Catholics. Global Religion, Colonialism, and the Limits of Toleration in *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*

David Alvarez

DePauw University, davidalvarez@depauw.edu

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarship.depauw.edu/eng\\_facpubs](https://scholarship.depauw.edu/eng_facpubs)



Part of the [Literature in English, British Isles Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Originally published under a Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 (CC-BY) in: Alvarez, David, "Daniel Defoe's Protestant Roman Catholics. Global Religion, Colonialism, and the Limits of Toleration in *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*." *I castelli di Yale online* (2018) vol. VI, no. 2, pp. 1-28. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15160/2282-5460/1955>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the English at Scholarly and Creative Work from DePauw University. It has been accepted for inclusion in English Faculty publications by an authorized administrator of Scholarly and Creative Work from DePauw University.

DAVID ALVAREZ

DANIEL DEFOE'S PROTESTANT  
ROMAN CATHOLICS.  
GLOBAL RELIGION, COLONIALISM, AND THE LIMITS  
OF TOLERATION IN *THE FARTHER ADVENTURES*  
*OF ROBINSON CRUSOE*

**Abstract.** In Daniel Defoe's *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (1719), the Protestant protagonist treats Roman Catholics with a friendly tolerance, which seems at odds with his violence towards idolaters. Placing the novel within the history of secularity reveals that Crusoe can tolerate Roman Catholics because their religion is represented in Protestant terms. In his global travels, an implicit Protestantism shapes his understanding of "religion", which cannot accommodate idolaters. To promote a proper form of religion that he can tolerate, Crusoe turns to violence.

**Keywords.** Religious Toleration, Enlightenment, Globalization, Secularity, Colonialism.

Just how Roman Catholic is Robinson Crusoe? In the first volume of Daniel Defoe's Crusoe trilogy, *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (1719), the answer to this question would seem to be an unambiguous negative. Alone on his island, Crusoe discovers God in an archetypal Protestant fashion through

the strong promptings of conscience and reading the bible. Some have argued, however, that in Defoe's sequel, *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (1719), the protagonist grows more sympathetic to Roman Catholicism and, as one critic contends, «comes to criticize his own sense of denominational superiority»<sup>1</sup>. Yet although Crusoe embraces religious toleration, he does not loosen his attachment to Protestantism. This attachment is evident in the first volume, in which Crusoe embraces religious toleration as part of his governance: his island nation «had but three Subjects, and they were of three different Religions. My Man *Friday* was a Protestant, his Father was a *Pagan* and a *Cannibal*, and the *Spaniard* was a Papist: However, I allow'd Liberty of Conscience throughout my Dominions»<sup>2</sup>. This passage from *Robinson Crusoe* is useful for thinking about religious toleration in the *Farther Adventures* because it implicitly frames toleration in Protestant terms. Designating the religion of everyone except himself, Crusoe oddly omits his own religious identity. He is Protestant, and it is from this religious identity that he offers the tolerant norm, «Liberty of conscience». This norm, however, relies on a Protestant definition of religion that, like the narrator, resides in the background. It provides the lens through which religion and religious difference appear and are managed. Because this implicit Protestant norm also enables religious toleration in *The Farther Adventures*, it seems that despite its more sympathetic treatment of Roman Catholics, the answer to the question, «Just how Roman Catholic is Robinson Crusoe?» remains a firm negative.

\* I would like to thank Anthony Pollock, Alison Conway, and Angela Flury for their helpful comments on previous drafts of this essay.

<sup>1</sup> J.C. TRAVER, *Defoe, Unigenitus, and the «Catholic» Crusoe*, «SEL. Studies in English Literature 1500-1900», 3, 2011, pp. 545-563: p. 545; cfr. M.E. NOVAK, *Daniel Defoe. Master of Fictions. His Life and Ideas*, New York, Oxford Univ. Pr., 2001: «For the most part, Defoe's anti-Catholic attitudes remained a consistent element in his thinking throughout his life, but during the brief interval during which the Crusoe volumes were written, Defoe seemed to favour even the hated Catholic Church as an antidote to atheism and paganism». In *The Farther Adventures*, Crusoe «is more tolerant and accepting» than in the first volume and is «for the most part a wise and moderate figure» (pp. 561-562); Ingrid CREPPEL, *Toleration and Identity. Foundations in Early Modern Thought*, New York, Routledge, 2003, p. 150, argues similarly that Crusoe's «openness to Catholics as human beings [...] is striking».

<sup>2</sup> D. DEFOE, *Robinson Crusoe. An Authoritative Text, Contexts, Criticism*, ed. by M. Shinagel (2nd edition), New York, Norton, 1994, p. 89.

Yet arguing whether Crusoe is or is not a Roman Catholic – as scintillatingly provocative as that question might be – seems less important than understanding how *The Farther Adventures* relies on and constructs a Protestant understanding of religion as a global concept. This background conception of religion is the condition of possibility both for Defoe's ability to imagine religious toleration and for the justification of religious violence. Such a combination might strike one as unexpected. Today, religious toleration is usually considered a mark of mental progress – a view shared by and partly owed to Defoe – while religious intolerance is viewed as one of the worst causes of violence. Crusoe's religiously motivated attacks in *The Farther Adventures*, however, follow from the construction of the global category of "religion" along Protestant lines that this novel depends on and contributes to in its effort to promote religious toleration. Moreover, Defoe's text extends this mutually constitutive relationship between a tacit Protestant understanding of religion and universal religious toleration to other forms of global order and domination. As Colin Jager observes, «like secularism, tolerance is about many things other than religion». As a form of governmentality, it involves «the creation of a certain kind of citizen-subject, and a particular articulation of justice, peace, and civility»<sup>3</sup>. By imagining the mutual interdependence of global religion with an international order, Defoe connects a generalized Protestantism to colonial secular governance and a providential, emancipatory order of international trade.

The novel's reliance on Protestantism to imagine the practice of religious toleration has recently been analyzed by Andrew Williams, who argues that *The Farther Adventures* makes «the theological concept of charity [...] the key resource in Defoe's representation of

<sup>3</sup> C. JAGER, *Common Quiet: Tolerance Around 1688*, «ELH», 79, 2012, 3, pp. 569-596: p. 590. Cfr. Talal Asad's observation that «in this movement [of religion becoming abstracted and universalized] we have not merely an increase in religious toleration, certainly not merely a new scientific discovery, but the mutation of a concept and a range of social practices which is itself part of a wider change in the modern landscape of power and knowledge» (*Genealogies of Religion. Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Univ. Pr., 1993, p. 43).

tolerance»<sup>4</sup>. By positing this «theological virtue» as the solution to religious sectarianism, the «supposedly neutral formalism on Crusoe's island [...] is characterized by a Protestant hegemony»<sup>5</sup>. I argue similarly that religious toleration relies on an implicit Protestant understanding of religion. Charity, however, has its limits in *The Farther Adventures*. Although Defoe can imagine tolerating Roman Catholics, idolaters are beyond the pale. In their case, Crusoe's charity takes the form of violence. Moreover, the Christian virtue of charity was also invoked to justify theories of religious intolerance: endlessly repeated by Anglican divines to support arguments against religious toleration, Augustine's defense of the imperative, *compelle intrare*, compel them to enter, was rooted in the claim that «coercive discipline is a charity»<sup>6</sup>. Defoe's understanding of charity is clearly different, and his novel participates in redefining the felt meaning of this theological virtue. In *The Farther Adventures*, Defoe's ideal of a «communion of charity and civility» is made possible by the practice of conversation, which structures the form of charity (i.e., engaging in discussions of religious opinions out of a concern for the salvation of others) and identifies its objects (those who understand religion as a set of beliefs that can be freely chosen)<sup>7</sup>. Such charity and the «epistemological humility» towards other religions that, observes Williams, marks its practice, can only find expression if religion is defined within an epistemological framework as essentially a matter of deciding about doctrines<sup>8</sup>. Accordingly, for Defoe, «true religion is naturally communicative», both in the sense that the proper medium for religious conversion is conversation and in the sense that conversation is inspired by a contagious spiritual

<sup>4</sup> A. WILLIAMS, «Differ with Charity»: *Religious Tolerance and Secularization in the Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, «Religion and Literature», 48, 2016, 1, pp. 27-49.

<sup>5</sup> *Ivi*, p. 28.

<sup>6</sup> M. GOLDIE, *The Theory of Religious Intolerance in Restoration England*, in *From Persecution to Toleration: the Glorious Revolution and Religion in England*, ed. by O.P. Grell et al., Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1991, pp. 331-368: p. 337. Cfr. p. 348.

<sup>7</sup> D. DEFOE, *The Shortest Way to Peace and Union*, in *Political and Economic Writings of Daniel Defoe*, ed. by W.R. Owens, P.N. Furbank, London, Pickering and Chatto, 2000, vol. 3, pp. 137-158: p. 153. Quoted in WILLIAMS, «Differ with Charity», cit., p. 29.

<sup>8</sup> WILLIAMS, «Differ with Charity», cit., p. 35.

love<sup>9</sup>. Defoe does not simply preach charity as a Christian virtue of tolerant self-restraint but instead motivates and channels its practice. Charity finds expression within the limits of engaged but civil and tolerant conversation about religious opinions, a disciplinary practice that both seeks to manage religious strife and makes religion more amenable to Crusoe's sovereign power.

### I. Defoe's Protestant Roman Catholics.

Although he dreams of it, finds his «imagination ran upon it all day», and «could talk of nothing else» but the prospect of seeing his «new plantation in the island, and the colony» he left – where, as his nephew reminds him, he «once reigned with more felicity than most of your brother monarchs in the world» – Crusoe's return to his island in *The Farther Adventures* is not triumphant<sup>10</sup>. In his absence, the English settlers whom Crusoe left behind have degenerated into «the most impudent, hardened, ungoverned, disagreeable villains»<sup>11</sup>. «Mischievous to the highest degree», they have reduced the island to Hobbesian nature, and life is nasty, brutish, and for some, short<sup>12</sup>. To help restore order, Crusoe surprisingly turns to the Catholic Spaniards on the island and to a French Catholic priest whom he had befriended during his return journey, even though «*first*, that he was a Papist; *secondly* a Popish Priest, and *thirdly*, a French Popish Priest». Despite this trifecta of utter non-Englishness, Crusoe «wonderfully liked the man», and he becomes a trusted counselor and religious guide<sup>13</sup>.

While Crusoe's friendship and reliance on the priest have suggested to some that Defoe takes a Roman Catholic turn in *The Farther Adventures*, the priest is a curious kind of «Papist». He has little truck with sacraments and instead is much given to friendly discussions of religious doctrine and morality. Conversation is key. «The

<sup>9</sup> D. DEFOE, *The Life and Strange Adventures of Robinson Crusoe. Complete in Three Parts, Part II*, in *The Works of Daniel Defoe*, ed. by G.H. Maynadier, Cambridge, Univ. Pr. John Wilson and Son, 1903, vol. 2, p. 147.

<sup>10</sup> Ivi, pp. 2, 10.

<sup>11</sup> Ivi, p. 40.

<sup>12</sup> Ivi, p. 64.

<sup>13</sup> Ivi, p. 121.

first hour that I began to converse» with the priest, Crusoe explains, «I found reason to delight exceedingly in his conversation»; indeed, «he first began with me about religion in the most obliging manner imaginable»<sup>14</sup>. The priest likewise exults in the «opportunity of free conversation» occasioned by Crusoe's «obliging civility»<sup>15</sup>. Communication and true religion naturally go together for the Catholic priest because he understands religion as a matter of opinion. As he explains, his religious mission is to use his «utmost endeavors, on all occasions, to bring all the souls I can to the knowledge of the truth, and to embrace the Catholic doctrine»<sup>16</sup>. Although not a Catholic, Crusoe shares this understanding of religion: he assures the priest that he «should not find himself the worse used for being of a different opinion»<sup>17</sup>. In fact, the priest was «not the first Catholic» with whom Crusoe «had conversed without falling into any inconveniences»<sup>18</sup>. Holding himself up as a model, he explains that «if we did not converse without any dislike [...] it should be his fault, not ours»<sup>19</sup>. Crusoe can converse «without any dislike» with the Roman Catholic priest because the practice of polite conversation enables him to distinguish between persons and their religion as defined in terms of belief in propositions and opinions. Defoe's text thus takes part in what J.G.A. Pocock describes as an effort by «nonconformists and their conformist allies» to reduce «faith to opinion and communion to association»<sup>20</sup>. The novel imagines religious toleration understood as «liberty of conscience» by furthering this program of Protestant reform.

Conversation and true religion go together not only because – for both the “Papist” priest and for Crusoe – religion is fundamentally about opinions but also because discussing religion prevents it from becoming inappropriately passionate. Crusoe declares to the priest that they will converse about religion without rancor or «carrying the questions to any height in debate», and the priest obliging-

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ivi*, p. 122.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>20</sup> J.G.A. Pocock, *Within the Margins: The Definitions of Orthodoxy*, in *The Margins of Orthodoxy: Heterodox Writing and Cultural Response 1660-1750*, ed. by R.D. Lund, Cambridge, Cambridge Univ. Pr., 1995, pp. 33-53; pp. 34, 49.

ly agrees that religious discussions are not about «cap[ping] principles with every man he conversed with»; instead, he hopes that Crusoe will talk to him more «as a gentleman than as a *religieuse*»<sup>21</sup>. Likewise, in his encounter with «Father Simon», a French Roman Catholic priest whom he befriends while journeying to China, Crusoe's concern that because «we are heretics» the priest cannot «love us, nor keep us company with any pleasure» is dismissed by the priest, who explains that «our religion does not divest us of good manners»<sup>22</sup>. Observing that in a land of pagans even a Huguenot and a Catholic «may all be Christians at last», Father Simon adds, «we are all gentlemen, and we may converse so without being uneasy to one another»<sup>23</sup>. In these statements and Defoe's representation of their practice, the novel contains religious difference through conversations about doctrines kept within the bounds of «decency and good manners» and «easily separated from disputes»<sup>24</sup>. Such «obliging, gentlemen-like behavior» is represented as both an external check on religion and as itself a result of religion: true religion is civilized and civilizing<sup>25</sup>. As Crusoe remarks, «the Christian religion always civilizes the people and reforms their manners, where it is received, whether it works saving effects upon them or no»<sup>26</sup>. Religion and civility are cause and effect of one another; civility structures the form of religion and religion produces forms of civility<sup>27</sup>.

If the practice of «free conversation» both consolidates the meaning of religion as private belief – instead of as a ritual or institutional practice – and promotes the ethical capacity to hold opinions about religion at a critical distance, it is also the medium through which religion finds public expression and is the only acceptable instrument of conversion. As the “Papist” priest explains, «we that are Christ's servants [...] can go no further than to exhort

<sup>21</sup> DEFOE, *The Life and Strange Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, cit., p. 122.

<sup>22</sup> *Ivi*, p. 251.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>24</sup> *Ivi*, p. 122.

<sup>25</sup> *Ivi*, p. 123.

<sup>26</sup> *Ivi*, p. 236.

<sup>27</sup> These forms include not only being «very courteous and civil in their manners» but also good trading practices: Crusoe notes that due to the evangelical efforts of Jesuit priests, the inhabitants of Formosa «dealt very fairly and punctually with us in all their agreements and bargains» (*ibidem*).

and instruct»<sup>28</sup>. Notably, when one of the reformed Englishmen seeks to convert his «savage wife», Defoe presents their conversation in the form of a dialogue<sup>29</sup>. Yet even though conversation is a disciplinary practice for regulating religious passions, Crusoe does not endorse a lukewarm Christianity. Conversions in the novel are marked by tears, «great earnestness», prostration, and passionate embraces<sup>30</sup>. Crusoe describes one such scene as «the most affecting, and yet the most agreeable, that ever I saw in my whole life»<sup>31</sup>. As we have seen, Crusoe is also eager to discuss religion with the priest, from whose zeal he embraces more fully the «maxim» that «the Christian knowledge ought to be propagated by all possible means, and on all possible occasions»<sup>32</sup>. Far from shutting down discussion about religion, Defoe's conception of religion requires it.

If zeal for the salvation of others inspires earnest communication, the risk of religious strife such efforts might create is managed by the transformation of religion into opinions and through the discipline of civil conversation. In addition, religion conceptualized as belief creates affective bonds between believers based on their mutual respect for sincere beliefs. Crusoe's tolerant charity, for example, is inspired by the zeal of Roman Catholics who «have a firm belief» that the uncivilized heathens they seek to convert «shall be saved, and that they are the instruments of it»<sup>33</sup>. Crusoe declares that «it would be a great want of Charity, if we should not have a good opinion of their zeal», who «undergo not only the fatigue of the voyage, and hazards of living in such places, but oftentimes death itself, with the most violent tortures, for the sake of this work»<sup>34</sup>. The Roman Catholic priests' zealous efforts to reach and convert heathens merit the charity of Protestants because, as the result of «a firm belief», it is sincere. Likewise, the «Papist» priest is moved by the zeal of an English Protestant to convert his wife, who is a «poor ignorant savage»; indeed, the priest would «rejoice if all the savages of America were brought [...] to pray to God, though

<sup>28</sup> Ivi, p. 144.

<sup>29</sup> Ivi, p. 145; cfr. pp. 152-159.

<sup>30</sup> Ivi, p. 143.

<sup>31</sup> Ivi, p. 146.

<sup>32</sup> Ivi, p. 131.

<sup>33</sup> Ivi, pp. 249-250.

<sup>34</sup> Ivi, p. 250.

they were all to be Protestants»<sup>35</sup>. The priest trusts God «to further illuminate them [...] and bring them into the pale of His Church, when He should see good»<sup>36</sup>. Crusoe understands the priest's openness to Protestantism as a sign of the universality of the priest's religion: «Astonished at the sincerity and temper of this truly pious priest», Crusoe thinks that «if such a temper was universal, we might be all Catholic Christians, whatever church or particular profession we joined to, or joined in...»<sup>37</sup>. He adds, however, that while the priest «thought that the like charity would make us all Catholics», he believed «they would all soon be Protestants»<sup>38</sup>.

One might argue that the basis for this «universal temper» is the priest's insistence on distinguishing «far between a Protestant and a pagan», a distinction Crusoe also emphatically shares<sup>39</sup>. They forge their shared Christian identity in opposition to pagan religion: both see themselves as closer to true religion than pagans, and both are pleased to see heathens converted to some form of Christianity, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant. Crusoe and the priest share a religious sincerity that inspires their mutual charitable tolerance. And yet for these two «Catholic Christians», religion has a Protestant form. Crusoe warns the priest that «if you should preach such doctrine in Spain or Italy, they would put you into the Inquisition»<sup>40</sup>. Unlike Defoe's "Papist" priest, in Spain and Italy the Roman Catholic Church defines religion not in terms of individuals holding immaterial beliefs but in more corporeal, institutional forms that countenance bodily torture. The priest rejects such «severity,» which he states does not make them «the better Christians», since «there is no heresy in too much charity»<sup>41</sup>. For the "Papist" priest, zeal should not take the form of torture or forced conversion but of respectful conversation animated by charity. There can be no heresy in such charity because it respects an individual's sincere religious beliefs, as well as their autonomy and capacity to choose those beliefs. This argument is much the same as that found in John Locke's *A Letter Concerning Toleration* (1689): the recognition of religious sincerity in others is

<sup>35</sup> Ivi, p. 149.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>39</sup> Ivi, p. 148.

<sup>40</sup> Ivi, p. 150.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*.

the basis for a bond of mutual charity, which binds believers together despite differences in religious opinion; moreover, in the form of a charitable zeal for the salvation of others, such sincerity also motivates civilized evangelical conversations<sup>42</sup>. Defoe, however, does not simply repeat Locke since his novel globally extends this form of religious toleration and the Protestant conceptualization of religion that enables it.

One could also argue that Defoe's toleration goes beyond Locke's because he can imagine tolerating Roman Catholics<sup>43</sup>. As we have seen, however, the priests in *The Farther Adventures* are not very Roman Catholic. Crusoe sums up his admiration for the "Papist" priest by declaring that he has «all the zeal, all the knowledge, all the sincerity of a Christian, without the error of a Roman Catholic,» imagining him to be «such a clergyman as the Roman bishops were before the Church of Rome assumed spiritual sovereignty over the consciences of men»<sup>44</sup>. Condemning Catholicism in Protestant terms as «spiritual sovereignty over the consciences of men», Defoe insists on religious freedom as «liberty of conscience». As a reformed Roman Catholic (i.e., Protestant), the priest shares this understanding of religion. Indeed, while the novel identifies the priest as Roman Catholic, it represents his religion in Protestant terms: he believes in doctrines, considers himself a «private Christian», and charitably respects and seeks the salvation of others through civil conversation<sup>45</sup>. Whatever might be distinctively Roman Catholic about his religion – sacraments, ritual, collective worship – is erased. Crusoe, for example, praises him for not offensively calling on «the Blessed Virgin, or mention[ing] St. Jago, or his guardian angel»<sup>46</sup>. When the "Papist" priest baptizes one of the native women,

<sup>42</sup>My summary of Locke's argument is influenced by Teresa Bejan's interpretation of his *Letter in Mere Civility: Disagreement and the Limits of Toleration*, Cambridge, Harvard Univ. Pr., 2017, pp. 112-143; my focus on Locke's commitment to religion publicly circulating in forms that allow for emotional distance follows E.A. PRITCHARD, *Religion in Public: Locke's Political Theology*, Palo Alto, Stanford Univ. Pr., 2013.

<sup>43</sup>For Locke, Roman Catholics could not be tolerated. Vd. J. LOCKE, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, in *John Locke: A Letter Concerning Toleration and Other Writings*, ed. by M. Goldie, Indianapolis, Liberty Fund, 2010, pp. 1-67: pp. 50-51.

<sup>44</sup>DEFOE, *The Life and Strange Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, cit., pp. 160-161.

<sup>45</sup>Ivi, p. 122.

<sup>46</sup>Ivi, p. 136.

it is not represented as a sacrament but as a joyful celebration of her free choice based on «a surprising degree of understanding»<sup>47</sup>. She is converted by entering into «discourse» with Crusoe, who acts as an interpreter for the priest – a fine reminder of how the novel is translating Roman Catholicism into a more modern, Protestant form of religion – who gave her «such a sermon as was never preached by a Popish priest»<sup>48</sup>. Moreover, the priest promises to Crusoe to perform the baptism «in a manner that I [Crusoe] should not know by it that he was a Roman Catholic myself if I had not known it before»<sup>49</sup>. When the priest appears for the baptism, his vestments are generically clerical: «a black vest, something like a cassock, with a sash round it», which made him «not look very unlike a minister»<sup>50</sup>. Far from undermining «the habitual identification of Crusoe's religious experience with Protestant spirituality», *The Farther Adventures* reshapes all forms of legitimate religion in a Protestant mold<sup>51</sup>.

## II. *Constructing Secularity: Imagining a Global Order.*

Recent revisionist scholarship on secularism has argued, in Michael Warner's words, that «the consolidation of "religion" as a special form of belief and experience» is a constitutive element of «modern secularity in the Euro-American North Atlantic and in [...] colonial contexts»<sup>52</sup>. «Secularity» differs from «secularism» in that the former refers to the historical conditions of possibility, the background under-

<sup>47</sup> Ivi, p. 161.

<sup>48</sup> Ivi, p. 160.

<sup>49</sup> Ivi, p. 161.

<sup>50</sup> Ivi, pp. 138-139.

<sup>51</sup> TRAVER, *Defoe, Unigenitus, and the «Catholic» Crusoe*, cit., p. 545. Williams also argues that the novel points to the «lingering hegemony of Protestant thought» behind the ostensible neutrality of liberal religious toleration, but this matters for him because it makes Christianity tepid and abstract (WILLIAMS, «*Differ with Charity*», cit., pp. 42-44). I examine instead how this hegemony structures globalization and justifies violence.

<sup>52</sup> M. WARNER, *Was antebellum America secular?* in <http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/2012/10/02/was-antebellum-america-secular/>. On the historical construction of secularity, vd. T. ASAD, *Formations of the Secular*, Palo Alto, Stanford Univ. Pr., 2003; C. TAYLOR, *A Secular Age*, Cambridge, The Belknap Pr. of Harvard Univ. Pr., 2007.

standing, that enables the distinction between the religious and the secular. For the purposes of this essay, two elements of Charles Taylor's analysis of the historical construction of secularity through Christianity are especially useful for understanding Defoe's global deployment of «religion» in *The Farther Adventures*. First, the formation of secularity is partly the result of the long history of reform in Latin Christendom, one effect of which is the development of the modern «buffered self»<sup>53</sup>. These reform efforts generated a growing confidence in the self's power to order the world and itself as a disciplined, instrumental agent. With a stronger sense of self-possession and of a sharper divide between mind and body, the buffered subjectivity of the disciplined individual can take a distance from its feelings and disengage from outside forces. Instead of a «porous self» vulnerable to external forces that can invade or possess it, the buffered self is «invulnerable, as master of the meanings of things for it»<sup>54</sup>. Accordingly, for the buffered self, any religion – and eventually religiosity itself – is a choice. Such a self can distance itself from «religion», which poses no threat to self-possession and is instead, in Locke's words, «the voluntary and secret choice of the mind»<sup>55</sup>. The generalized Protestant understanding of religion in *The Farther Adventures* largely accords with and reinscribes such a buffered self<sup>56</sup>.

In its efforts to imagine successful colonization, the novel deploys this conception of the self globally. If a successful plantation colony requires religious toleration to keep the peace and to present a united Christian front for converting pagans, it also needs self-controlled, disciplined colonists. Perhaps predictably, these colonists are exemplified by Roman Catholic Spaniards, one of whom governs the island, as well as two former English «rogues» who have been reformed by plantation life. As ideal «sober and religious peo-

<sup>53</sup> TAYLOR, *A Secular Age*, cit., p. 26, cfr. pp. 29-41, 131-142, 300-307.

<sup>54</sup> Ivi, p. 38.

<sup>55</sup> J. LOCKE, *Essay Concerning Toleration*, in *Essay Concerning Toleration and Other Writings on Law and Politics 1667-1683*, ed. by J.R. Milton, Oxford, Oxford Univ. Pr., 2010, p. 34.

<sup>56</sup> B.C. Cooney identifies this same self – which C. Taylor designates the «punctual self» in his earlier *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*, Cambridge, Harvard Univ. Pr., 1989, p. 160 – as a precondition for religious toleration in the first volume of the Crusoe Trilogy in *Considering Robinson Crusoe's "Liberty of Conscience" in an Age of Terror*, «College English», 69, 2007, 3, pp. 197-215: pp. 199-200.

ple,» they have been living on the island in Crusoe's absence along with three «brutish and barbarous» English «reprobates»<sup>57</sup>. Unlike these lazy Englishmen, «who could not work, and would not work,» the Spaniards and reformed English model their planning and labor on Crusoe's original colonization of the island<sup>58</sup>. Testifying for Crusoe to the general maxim that «the diligent lived well and comfortably, and the slothful hard and beggarly; and so, I believe, generally speaking, it is all over the world», the Catholic Spaniards and their disciplined English partners are poster-boys for Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*<sup>59</sup>. And unlike the tumultuous Englishmen, who are «so furious, so desperate, and so idle», the Spaniards are praised for their compassion, «temper and calmness»<sup>60</sup>. They are constantly mending relations between the feuding Englishmen, and show more compassion than the English to the «savages». Their behavior prompts Crusoe to remark,

let the accounts of Spanish cruelty in Mexico and Peru be what they will, I never met with [...] men of any nation whatsoever, in any foreign country, who were so universally modest, temperate, virtuous, so very good-humored, and so courteous, as these Spaniards [...] no inhumanity, no barbarity, no outrageous passions, and yet all of them men of great courage and spirit<sup>61</sup>.

With their calm, temperate demeanor, Crusoe's Spaniards have the discipline and emotional constitution required for a successful planter colony. Moreover, plantation life – as the reformed English rogues also demonstrate – promotes a prudent, temperate character. If the Spaniards had pursued colonization as modeled by Crusoe, then they would not be known for violent butchery but for exceptional prudence, gentlemanly behavior, and compassion. Like Cortez in John Dryden's *The Indian Emperor* (1665), the Spaniards in Defoe's text are models for English colonialism.

As this example also shows, Defoe links the buffered, disciplined self to a providential, beneficent moral order. The second element of Taylor's conception of secularity that *The Farther Adventures* contributes to and builds upon, this order manifests God's design for

<sup>57</sup> DEFOE, *The Life and Strange Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, cit., pp. 176, 73, 79.

<sup>58</sup> Ivi, p. 70.

<sup>59</sup> Ivi, p. 81.

<sup>60</sup> Ivi, pp. 64, 83.

<sup>61</sup> Ivi, pp. 82-83.

human flourishing in this world. As sermons like John Tillotson's *The Precepts of Christianity Not Grievous* and *The Wisdom of Religion* declared, «Religion and Happiness, our Duty and our Interest, are really but one and the same thing considered under several notions»<sup>62</sup>. Christianity is increasingly understood in terms of discerning the rules for this divine plan and fulfilling them<sup>63</sup>. For Taylor, the development within Christianity of this impersonal, immanent moral order contributes to creating the possibility for our modern, secular age. I am less concerned, however, with this admittedly epic and ironic historical change than with how Defoe's contribution to the formation of secularity is linked to his imagination of a global order. His vision of colonies and commerce in *The Farther Adventures* requires disciplining Christians and pagans into proper religious subjects who can be plugged into a providentially designed global order that includes religious toleration, plantation colonies, and international trade.

Highlighting how *The Farther Adventures* imagines this global order through the formation of secularity complicates what John Richetti calls its «secular cosmopolitanism», since this cosmopolitanism is structured, enabled, and limited by a particular understanding of religion<sup>64</sup>. Indeed, the global order and religion in Defoe's text are represented as mutually reinforcing. The novel not only participates in the long history of Christian reform through its transformation of religion into a generic Protestantism but also portrays this conception of religion as strengthened by the particular forms of governance and social order that are made possible by religion so conceived. As Saba Mahmood observes, «the religious and the secular are not opposed ideologies [...] but interdependent and

<sup>62</sup> J. TILLOTSON, *Preface* to J. WILKINS, *Of the Principles and Duties of Natural Religion. Two Books*, London, Printed for R. Chiswell [etc.], 1710<sup>6</sup>, sig A6 r. Similarly, in conversing with his savage domestic partner about Christianity, one of the Englishmen explains that God «teaches and commands nothing but what is good, righteous, and holy, and tends to make us perfectly good, as well as perfectly happy» (DEFOE, *The Life and Strange Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, cit., p. 115).

<sup>63</sup> For Taylor's analysis of how the Christian development of «providential deism» made possible an impersonal moral order that could allow for a secular perspective, vd. TAYLOR, *A Secular Age*, cit., pp. 221-295.

<sup>64</sup> «Cosmopolitanism» also seems a problematic term given Crusoe's frequent violent interactions with non-Europeans. J. RICHETTI, *The Life of Daniel Defoe: A Critical Biography*, Malden, Blackwell Publishing, 2005, p. 217.

necessarily linked in their mutual transformation and historical emergence»<sup>65</sup>. Mahmood's claim here about how forms of secular governance seek «not so much to banish religion from the public domain but to reshape the form it takes, the subjectivities it endorses, and the epistemological claims it can make» marks an intersection between Taylor's analysis of secularity and work by Talal Asad and others that examines how modern forms of political secularism are solidified and maintained through the conception of religion that enables secularity<sup>66</sup>. Bedeviled by the difficulty of articulating the religious and secular in Defoe's texts, scholarship might benefit from considering how the concept of religion intersects both with the formation of secularity and with forms of political and ethical secularism in ways that are mutually reinforcing<sup>67</sup>.

For example, as we have already seen, religious toleration as a form of governance is made possible by the representation of religion in Protestant terms. Crusoe's authority as a tolerant «governor» is also enabled by and reinforces this understanding of religion. By defining it in terms of acceptable conversation and zeal, the disciplinary discourse of civil discussion makes religion easier for Crusoe to control. Indeed, should this disciplinary practice fail to ward off the danger of religious strife, Crusoe retains the power to restrict religious expression. As the "Papist" priest explains, he is happy to «discourse upon religious subjects» and «defend his own opinions» but only with Crusoe's leave, since he is «here under [Crusoe's] permission» and is «bound [...] to be under your government»<sup>68</sup>. Accordingly, religious toleration depends not only on the background understanding of religion in *The Farther Adventures* but also on the forms of governance and order that can be imagined in relationship to this definition of religion, a definition that these forms of governance also reinforce.

The confluence of the aims of «religion» and of a universalized moral and legal order can also be seen in the novel's transformation

<sup>65</sup> S. MAHMOOD, *Religious Reason and Secular Affect: An Incommensurable Divide?*, in *Is Critique Secular? Blasphemy, Injury, and Free Speech*, ed. by T. Asad et al., Berkeley, Univ. of California Pr., 2009, pp. 64-100: p. 64.

<sup>66</sup> S. MAHMOOD, *Secularism, Hermeneutics, and Empire: The Politics of Islamic Reformation*, «Public Culture», 18, 2006, 2, pp. 323-347: p. 326.

<sup>67</sup> For an overview of this bedeviling, vd. W. SCHMIDGEN, *The Metaphysics of Robinson Crusoe*, «ELH», 83, 2016, 1, pp. 101-126: pp. 101-102.

<sup>68</sup> DEFOE, *The Life and Strange Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, cit., p. 122.

of the Roman Catholic sacrament of marriage into a legal contract that supports a benevolent providential order. While yet again conversing, the priest admonishes Crusoe for neglecting something crucial to «the prosperity of [his] new colony»<sup>69</sup>. He explains that though they differ in «doctrinal articles», he believes there are a «few propositions» and «general principles» that he and Crusoe can agree on: God exists and he has given some «stated general rules for our service and obedience»<sup>70</sup>. In particular, the priest declares, «let our different religions be what they will, this general principle is readily owned by us all, that the blessing of God does not ordinarily follow presumptuous sinning against his command»<sup>71</sup>. The priest points out, however, that the Englishmen on the island are cohabitating and having children with «savage» women, «and yet are not married to them after any stated legal matter, as the laws of God and man require»<sup>72</sup>. He declares – in very un-Roman Catholic terms – that the «sacrament of matrimony [...] consists not only in the mutual consent of the parties to take one another as man and wife, but in the formal and legal obligation [...] the contract» between them<sup>73</sup>. Having reduced the sacrament of marriage to mutual consent and contract, the priest urges Crusoe to let him marry the Englishmen and the native women.

Influenced less by the Pope than by Tillotson's theology, the priest's general religious principle that «the blessing of God does not ordinarily follow presumptuous sinning against his command» is universalized through marriage as a «written contract signed by both men and woman, and by all the witnesses present, which all the laws of Europe would decree to be valid»<sup>74</sup>. But if religion is shaping the law – it is a religious norm that that the priest invokes – the law is also shaping religion insofar as it defines marriage as a contract that God is predisposed to bless through a natural, providential moral order. The blessing marriage provides in the novel is that it civilizes and leads to prosperity. Without marriage, «neither families [would] be

<sup>69</sup> Ivi, p. 124.

<sup>70</sup> Ivi, pp. 125-126.

<sup>71</sup> Ivi, p. 126.

<sup>72</sup> Ivi, p. 127.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>74</sup> Ivi, p. 129.

kept entire, or inheritances be settled by legal descent»<sup>75</sup>. Because marriage is thus part of God's general moral order, all governments have an interest in promoting it and universally recognizing it, and all priests are religiously motivated to do the same. Through the category of "religion," Defoe takes the legal meaning of European marriage – and a providential moral order – global.

### III. *Global Religion and Providential Passions: Colonialism and Trade.*

Like the Spaniards on his island, Crusoe values the calm temper of a «buffered self». He is deeply suspicious of strong passions, whether fearful or joyful. For example, two weeks into his return voyage, he encounters survivors in the open ocean who had fled from a ship that had caught fire and exploded. Having had no hope of deliverance, those rescued are overwhelmed by «inexpressible joy». Crusoe recounts:

It is impossible for me to express the several gestures, the strange ecstasies, the variety of postures which these poor delivered people ran into to express the joy of their souls at so unexpected a deliverance. Grief and fear are easily described: sighs, tears, groans, and a very few motions of the head and hands, make up the sum of its variety; but an excess of joy, a surprise of joy, has a thousand extravagancies in it. There were some in tears; some raging and tearing themselves, as if they had been in the greatest agonies of sorrow; some stark raving and downright lunatic; some ran about the ship stamping with their feet, others wringing their hands; some were dancing, some singing, some laughing, more crying, many quite dumb, not able to speak a word; others sick and vomiting; several swooning and ready to faint; and a few were crossing themselves and giving God thanks<sup>76</sup>.

Crusoe contrasts the «several gestures» and «variety of postures» that an «excess of joy» produces with the «very few motions» of the body that mark «grief and fear». With a «thousand extravagancies in it», joy manifests itself in extremes and cannot always be distinguished from «the greatest agonies of sorrow». With

<sup>75</sup> Ivi, p. 153. Disputes about the transfer of property spark the feud between the colonists on Defoe's island (vd. pp. 44-57; cfr. p. 165).

<sup>76</sup> Ivi, pp. 17-18.

«some singing, some laughing», others «tearing at themselves» and «downright lunatic», the passion takes possession of people and is expressed through wild, uncontrollable behaviors. Crusoe compounds the diversity of gestures and postures by noting that they appeared «in one and the same person»:

These extravagances did not show themselves in that different manner I have mentioned, in different persons only; but all the variety would appear, in a short succession of moments, in one and the same person. A man that we saw this minute dumb, and, as it were, stupid and confounded, would the next minute be dancing and hallooing like an antic; and the next moment be tearing his hair, or pulling his clothes to pieces, and stamping them under his feet like a madman; in a few moments after that we would have him all in tears, then sick, swooning, and, had not immediate help been had, he would in a few moments have been dead<sup>77</sup>.

Highlighting the «variety» of forms that joy takes in these passages, Wolfram Schmidgen has recently suggested that they reveal Defoe's basic sense of the world, which he describes as a metaphysics of «infinite variety» that «unsettles the determinate structures of being to foster an enlarged sense of possibility and transformation»<sup>78</sup>. Schmidgen finds in Defoe's style a way of «unsettling established assumptions» and «the narrowness of our conceptions». Yet if these passages attempt to expand our understanding of the passion of joy, they do not seem to celebrate the survivors' «antic» and «stark raving» behavior or their possession by a passion «they were not able to master»<sup>79</sup>. Instead, Crusoe keeps his distance, praising the self-control of those «very few» who crossed themselves, gave thanks to God, and «were composed and serious in their joy»<sup>80</sup>.

Based on this encounter, Crusoe warns his readers of the «extravagancies of the passions»: for «if an excess of joy can carry men out to such a length beyond the reach of their reason, what will not the extravagances of anger, rage, and a provoked mind carry us to?»

<sup>77</sup> Ivi, pp. 18-19.

<sup>78</sup> SCHMIDGEN, *The Metaphysics of Robinson Crusoe*, cit., p. 104. SCHMIDGEN connected this metaphysics to religious toleration in *The Ontology of Tolerance*, plenary lecture, The Fifth Biennial Meeting of the Defoe Society, Tolerance and Intolerance in the Age of Defoe, New Haven, September 9, 2017.

<sup>79</sup> DEFOE, *The Life and Strange Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, cit., p. 18.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibidem*.

And, indeed, here I saw reason for keeping an exceeding watch over our passions of every kind, as well those of joy and satisfaction as those of sorrow and anger»<sup>81</sup>. The dangers posed by the passions appear in several passages throughout the novel, prompting Crusoe at one point to translate a Spanish proverb about the debilitating power of grief. Perhaps no great poet, Crusoe writes in lines that one may still find inescapably memorable that, «In trouble to be troubled, | Is to have your trouble doubled»<sup>82</sup>. Not surprisingly, another reason Crusoe admires the French, “Papist” priest, who comes from a nation «allowed to be more volatile [and] more passionate» than others, is for his «great command of his emotions»<sup>83</sup>. A transnational ideal, Defoe’s version of a buffered self provides a model integral, religious subjectivity that is also the proper self for temperate, productive colonial planters.

Crusoe’s investment in this ideal, however, is qualified by key moments in which he appears overtaken by his passions. For example, after leaving his island to embark on a commercial adventure to the east that takes him to Madagascar, Bengal, China, and Russia, among other places, Crusoe meets a Russian prince banished to Siberia. Recounting his life, Crusoe mentions that on his island he was a «more powerful prince» than the «Czar of Muscovy»<sup>84</sup>. The prince marvels that Crusoe would ever leave his island. «With a sigh», he explains that «the true greatness of life was to be master of ourselves... he would not have exchanged such a life as [Crusoe’s] to have been Czar of Muscovy»<sup>85</sup>. Comparing Crusoe’s former life on the island to his own banishment from court, the prince enlightens his guest: «the height of human wisdom was to bring our tempers down to our circumstances, and to make a calm within, under the weight of the greatest storm without»<sup>86</sup>. Expanding on these stoic admonitions, the prince decries the venality of worldly desires and praises the mind’s self-sufficiency, which is «perfectly capable of making a felicity for itself, fully satisfying to itself»<sup>87</sup>. In response, Crusoe declares that he admires this «truly great man [...] so sup-

<sup>81</sup> Ivi, p. 21.

<sup>82</sup> Ivi, p. 110.

<sup>83</sup> Ivi, p. 20.

<sup>84</sup> Ivi, p. 303.

<sup>85</sup> Ivi, p. 304.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibidem*.

ported by religion» and extols him as a «great conqueror; for that he that has got a victory over his own exorbitant desires, and has the absolute dominion over himself, whose reason entirely governs his will, is certainly greater than he that conquers a city»<sup>88</sup>. And yet despite his admiration for this model of perfect self-control and felicity, Crusoe does not remain with the prince; instead, he follows his desire to trade in Archangel. He offers the prince a chance to escape with him, but although strongly tempted the prince decides to stay and enjoy his «absolute dominion» and «fully-satisfying» felicity in exile.

It never occurs to Crusoe to give up his life as a merchant and practice the prince's Christian stoicism. Pursuing his «impetuous desire» for wandering and wealth, he is open to being guided by the «secret ends of Divine Power in thus permitting us to be hurried down the stream of our own desires»<sup>89</sup>. Crusoe's impulses to go abroad are providential prompts that work to align him with an order of global trade. As an English merchant explains in urging Crusoe to join him, «for what should we stand still for? The whole world is in motion, rolling round and round, all the creatures of God, heavenly bodies and earthly, are busy and diligent; why should we be idle?»<sup>90</sup>. For Defoe's «buffered self» to discern and plug into the world's beneficent, providential order as manifested in global commerce, it must remain open to the promptings of desire, if not possession by the passions.

Just as he had linked colonial planters to a providential order, Defoe now connects this order to merchants. But how to understand the apparent contradiction between these two providential visions of order? Between the more buffered self of the former and the more porous self of the latter? Contextualizing these questions in relation to the formation of secularity makes it possible to analyze the buffered self and the global order of mutual benefit in the process of their construction. In *The Farther Adventures*, for example, the beneficent providential order of the world can be discerned not only through careful attention to its workings but also through the intimations of this order provided by the passions. Because his

<sup>88</sup> Ivi, pp. 307, 306.

<sup>89</sup> Ivi, pp. 187-188.

<sup>90</sup> Ivi, p. 214; cfr. p. 11; Crusoe's wife also explains his wanderlust in providential terms (p. 4).

world is not yet immanent, Crusoe can align himself with this order through the providential prompts of desire. More generally, approaching Enlightenment texts through secularity allows us to sidestep questions about whether works such as *Robinson Crusoe* are really “religious” or “secular” – not because religion was an inescapable part of eighteenth-century life but because such texts are working to make this distinction possible. In the process of doing so, moreover, the transformation of religion that is part of the construction of secularity can be deployed by such texts to conceive of variable forms of governance and conceptions of social order (i.e., different versions of political and ethical secularism). *The Farther Adventures*, for example, imagines religious toleration, colonialism, and global trade through the formation of secularity, particularly its generalized Protestant conception of global religion. It is through this category that the world is apprehended. It also enables the dramatic shift in the novel from the practice of colonialism on the island to Crusoe's pursuit of adventure and international trade.

This turn in the narrative is another version of the shift in England from landed to mobile property, from an aristocratic to a commercial society<sup>91</sup>. The comparison the prince makes between his banishment in Siberia and Crusoe's life on his island recalls and contrasts with Crusoe's inability to remain «a mere country gentleman» on his «little farm» in England or even a «monarch» on his island plantation<sup>92</sup>. While Crusoe admires the self-sufficiency of the stoic aristocrat or colonial planter, global mercantilism is a superior ethical order because of its religious cosmopolitanism (i.e., universal religious toleration, world evangelization, enrichment through trade, production of knowledge, and freedom). The transformation of the global providential order in *The Farther Adventures* is made possible by different religious narratives. Religious people can include sober and self-controlled clerics, planters, and aristocrats, but also a character like Crusoe, whose desires plunge him providentially into a «fortunate fall» that eventually leaves him spiritually redeemed,

<sup>91</sup> On this shift, vd. J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*, Princeton, Princeton Univ. Pr., 1975, pp. 423-505; on Defoe's privileging of «the overseas and the urban» at the expense of the rural, vd. S. ARAVAMUDAN, *Defoe, Commerce, and Empire*, in *The Cambridge Companion to Daniel Defoe*, ed. by J. Richetti, Cambridge, Cambridge Univ. Pr., 2009, pp. 45-63: p. 60.

<sup>92</sup> DEFOE, *The Life and Strange Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, cit., pp. 5-6.

emancipated from an older social order, and rich<sup>93</sup>. Religion is a capacious enough category in *The Farther Adventures* to structure Crusoe's spiritual and social transgression and redemption, as well as his shift from a colonist to a merchant.

The Russian prince himself seems to view his religious stoicism as an anachronistic, aristocratic virtue. Although he decides to stay in exile, he does not wish this for his son, and so he asks Crusoe to aid his son's escape. Crusoe agrees, and when he departs from the city, «so far out of the road of commerce», he brings the prince's son with him. The son's apprenticeship as a merchant, however, goes poorly. His aristocratic sensibility gets in the way. For example, when attacked by a large band of thieves, Crusoe urged an escape from their attackers during the night, but «the young lord, as gallant as ever fleshed showed itself, was for fighting to the last»<sup>94</sup>. The aristocratic young lord is eventually persuaded by Crusoe to give up an unrealistic sense of honor and – as «he was too wise a man to love fighting for the sake of it» – they eventually sneak to safety<sup>95</sup>. Nonetheless, in the end, the young man gives up on trade and settles at the court of Vienna. Defoe's world of merchants leaves aristocrats, stoic or otherwise, on the sidelines.

#### IV. *Global Religion, Freedom, and Violence.*

Crusoe gives himself over to his passions more fully when he destroys the idol Cham-Chi-Thaungu. If Crusoe's mercantilist desires can be incorporated and justified within a generalized Protestantism, in this instance his rage marks the boundary of that order. En route from China, Crusoe arrives in the «Muscovites dominions» to discover that, although the inhabitants are under Christian control, they were «mere pagans, sacrificing to idols, and worshiping the sun, moon, and stars...»<sup>96</sup>. When he sees them worshipping an idol, he «was moved more at their stupidity and brutish worship of a hob-

<sup>93</sup> On Defoe's fiction and the «fortunate fall», vd. G. STARR, *Defoe and Casuistry*, Princeton, Princeton Univ. Pr., 1973, p. 93.

<sup>94</sup> DEFOE, *The Life and Strange Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, cit., p. 320.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>96</sup> *Ivi*, p. 284.

goblin, than ever I was at anything in my life»<sup>97</sup>. He is astonished to see the Tartars abandoning their «reasonable soul» to worship an idol<sup>98</sup>. In their ignorance, moreover, they have surrendered their agency to what they themselves have made. Crusoe finds this sight «impossible», and immediately acts to make it so by attacking the idol: «All my admiration turned to rage; and I rode up to the image [...] and with my sword cut the bonnet that was on its head»<sup>99</sup>. By first destroying the idol's «Great Tartar bonnet», Crusoe acts to separate the Tartars from their identification with it<sup>100</sup>. The result, however, is «a most hideous outcry and howling» from «two or three hundred people», and so Crusoe retreats<sup>101</sup>. But he immediately begins plotting a way to destroy the «monstrous idol», and returns with two Scots a few nights later to stuff its «eyes, ears, and mouth full of gunpowder». Crusoe then sets fire to the idol and blows up it up in front of some of its worshipers, «till we saw it burn into a mere block or log of wood»<sup>102</sup>.

This episode suggests limits to Crusoe's religious tolerance and charity and seems to contradict his earlier practice. Scholars have found it difficult to account for this abrupt change. Contextualizing Crusoe in relation to China's economic dominance during this period, Robert Markley argues that after leaving his island Crusoe is immersed in Asian «networks of communication and credit» that threaten his national and religious identity. The destruction of the idol enables Defoe to double-down on this identity through the «Protestant revenge fantasy» of destroying an Asian idol<sup>103</sup>. Leah Orr has argued similarly that *The Farther Adventures* tracks Crusoe's difficulty with «maintaining the position of absolute faith when confronted with real-world problems»<sup>104</sup>. Crusoe thus acts violently towards pagans because of his growing uncertainty about his Christian faith.

<sup>97</sup> Ivi, p. 285.

<sup>98</sup> Ivi, p. 286.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>100</sup> Ivi, p. 285.

<sup>101</sup> Ivi, p. 286.

<sup>102</sup> Ivi, p. 292.

<sup>103</sup> R. MARKLEY, *The Far East and the English Imagination 1600-1720*, Cambridge, Cambridge Univ. Pr., 2006, pp. 179, 204.

<sup>104</sup> L. ORR, *Providence and Religion in the Crusoe Trilogy*, «Eighteenth-Century Life», 38, 2014, 2, pp. 1-27: p. 22. Hans Turley argues the opposite: Crusoe becomes a religious fanatic to gain «a sense of identity» because he «has no island, no fami-

But Crusoe's rage seems less inspired by anxieties about his religious identity than by the desire to emancipate pagans from their radical ignorance about true religion. Moreover, the pagan ritualists do not fit within the novel's Protestant background understanding of religion as doctrine and opinion. Since this conception of religion enables the practice of toleration, their idolatry is not amenable to tolerance achieved through religion as belief. The pagan Tartars, therefore, cannot be tolerated<sup>105</sup>. In other words, unlike the "Papist" priest and the colonial Spaniards, the idol-worshippers are too Catholic to be Protestant. The Crusoe who proclaimed on his island that «I allow'd Liberty of Conscience throughout my Dominions» does not differ from the Crusoe who violently attacks the idol. Rebuking the pagan idolaters through Protestant criticisms of Roman Catholicism, Crusoe views them as improper and anachronistic religious subjects<sup>106</sup>.

Crusoe is willing to die as a martyr to emancipate these pagans from their thrall to fetishism and to bring them into a modern understanding of religion<sup>107</sup>. His ability to evangelize, however, is limited. Significantly, if «true religion is naturally communicative», Crusoe has difficulties conversing with the Tartars about it or anything else. For example, he proposes to leave a note explaining the «reasons and causes in writing, in their own language» for the destruction of the idol, but he learns that they are illiterate: «there is not a man in five nations of them that know anything of a letter, or how to read a word in any language, or in their own». This augurs poorly for their eventual Protestantism. In the end, Crusoe hopes that his violence will reveal to them their inhuman brutishness: «Nature may draw inferences from [the act of destroying the idol] to them, to let them see how brutish they are to worship such horrid

ly, no friends, no Friday». Vd. H. TURLEY, *The Sublimation of Desire to Apocalyptic Passion in Defoe's Crusoe Trilogy*, in *Imperial Desire: Dissident Sexualities and Colonial Literature*, ed. by P. Holden and R. Ruppel, Minneapolis, Univ. of Minnesota Pr., pp. 3-20: p. 15.

<sup>105</sup> Cooney notes the «Protestant bias of [Crusoe's] neutrality towards religions» in the first volume when Crusoe decides to kill the cannibals (Robinson Crusoe's "*Liberty of Conscience*", cit., p. 207.

<sup>106</sup> On the connection between modernity and Protestant criticisms of fetishism, vd. J.W. KEANE, *Christian Moderns: Freedom and Fetish in the Mission Encounter*, Berkeley, Univ. of California Pr., 2007: pp. 6-7, 37-51.

<sup>107</sup> DEFOE, *The Life and Strange Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, cit., p. 288.

things»<sup>108</sup>. Unlike Crusoe's near preternatural language abilities in his first encounter with Friday, his communication with the pagans is restricted to their howls and his violence. Represented as unable to converse about their religion in terms of opinion, the pagan idolaters are placed outside the bounds of tolerance and the universal religion that supports cosmopolitanism in Defoe's text. Nonetheless, although he cannot communicate with them through words, he seeks to converse through an explosion.

Indeed, Crusoe sees his violence as a promise of their freedom. Since idol worship is dehumanizing, he understands his destruction of Cham-Chi-Thaungu as an act of emancipation. Prostrating themselves to «a mere imaginary object dressed up by themselves, and made terrible to themselves by their own contrivance», they have displaced their agency to a «frightful nothing». The idol is described as having

a head certainly not so much resembling any creature that the world ever saw; ears as big as goat's horns, and as high; eyes as big as a crown-piece; a nose like a crooked ram's horn; and a mouth extended four-cornered, like that of a lion, with horrible teeth, hooked like a parrots underbill... [I]t's upper garment was of sheepskins, with the wool outward; a great Tartar bonnet on the head, with two horns growing through it; it was about eight feet high, yet had not feet or legs, or any other proportion of parts<sup>109</sup>.

This description of the idol as an incoherent image made up primarily of beasts reflects the dehumanization of its worshippers. In addition, they become what they worship, appearing to Crusoe as «all logs of wood, like their idol, and at first [I] really thought they had been so»<sup>110</sup>. The idol and its worship thus signify and produce the pagans' loss of agency and humanity. Crusoe's rage can be understood as an urgent attempt to liberate them from their self-oppression, to emancipate them through a violence that is justified by the need to jumpstart their religious enlightenment: destroying «that senseless log of an idol» is an effort on Crusoe's part to awaken these pagans' to their freedom and humanity as proper religious subjects<sup>111</sup>. Accordingly, his violence is a gift to the villagers, since it

<sup>108</sup> Ivi, p. 287.

<sup>109</sup> Ivi, pp. 284-285.

<sup>110</sup> Ivi, p. 285.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibidem*.

opens up the possibility of their treating religion in Protestant terms as personal belief and choice.

If Crusoe elsewhere in this novel is opposed to rage and strong passions in general, here he gives full voice to murderous rage. After hearing that a «poor Russian» who had similarly attacked the idol was placed on top of it, stripped naked, «shot with as many arrows [...] as would stick over his whole body», and was then burnt «as a sacrifice to the idol», Crusoe cites an earlier episode of a rage-driven massacre of natives in Madagascar in which «man, woman, and child» were killed for «their murdering one of our men». He urges, «we ought to do so to this village»<sup>112</sup>. Crusoe had earlier strongly denounced this slaughter as madness, and after one of the Scots explains that the Tartars who had killed the Russian were not the same as those whom he had just encountered, Crusoe decides instead to punish the idol as the cause of the Russian's death. The justification for incommensurable vengeance upon the Tartars due to the death of a Christian European (compare Crusoe's decision to kill the cannibals in the first volume when «an *European* is threatened») is redirected to the symbolic destruction of the religion that motivated the Tartars' violence<sup>113</sup>.

It is not only violence, however, that links Crusoe to the pagans – despite his more modern religiosity. In Defoe's description of the idol, all the similes compare its appearance to various animals, but one of these similes is not like the other, one of them just doesn't belong. In describing the idol's eyes as «big as a crown-piece», Crusoe links pagan fetishism to modern commodity fetishism, to money. In the eyes of the idol, Crusoe sees some of the idol in himself. The novel recognizes Crusoe's own fetishism, his own impulsive and uncontrollable pursuit of trade and crown-pieces. The shared fetishism and propensity to violence that Crusoe shares with the Tartars undercuts the novel's efforts to construct a progressive narrative of modernity in which a global Protestant form of religion enables religious toleration, self-control, and a beneficent global order; it undercuts Defoe's particular political configuration of secularity. Analyzing Defoe's text through the formation of secularity and the development of a modern, global definition of religion highlights how religion is not modernity's "other" but a constitutive element of it.

<sup>112</sup> Ivi, pp. 288-289.

<sup>113</sup> DEFOE, *Robinson Crusoe. An Authoritative Text, Contexts, Criticism*, cit., p. 168.

## V. *Global Enlightenment Religion: Modernity and Violence.*

Instead of considering Crusoe's violent destruction of the pagan idol as religiously motivated by «residual notions of holy war and the extermination of Islam and the heathen», it is better understood as an example of a modern effort to promote a universal understanding of religion that valorizes autonomy and a providential order of globalization<sup>114</sup>. Defoe is not looking back but looking forward. The violence against the pagan Tartars that Defoe imagines as justified should not be seen as the result of a vestigial religion that an enlightened, tolerant modernity has moved past. Rather, such violence should be analyzed as part of the development of a normative secular religiosity, a particular political permutation of the formation of Enlightenment secularity. Defoe's *Farther Adventures* thus anticipates Mahmood's suggestion that

one might go as far as to say that the political solution secularism offers consists not so much in "avoiding religious strife" but in making sure those religious life-forms that are deemed incompatible with a secular-political ethos are made provisional, if not extinct. Such a strategy may well lead to more, rather than less, religious strife<sup>115</sup>.

In foregrounding the interconnectedness between the secular and the religious, this essay follows Jürgen Habermas' «problematizing intention of enlightening secular thought concerning the Enlightenment's blinkered secularistic self-understanding»<sup>116</sup>. This goal of a more self-reflexive awareness of the historical contributions of "religion" to the formation of the secular, moreover, should also heighten our awareness of the dangers of globalizing a normative secular religiosity<sup>117</sup>. Defoe's effort to imagine Lockean toleration globally, for example, reveals its limits because its practice depends on understanding religion in terms of belief and autonomy. Since it relies on a Protestant background understanding of religion to work, Lockean toleration necessarily draws a line between proper religious subjects that can be tolerated and those that cannot be. One may

<sup>114</sup> ARAVAMUDAN, *Defoe, Commerce, and Empire*, cit., p. 62.

<sup>115</sup> MAHMOOD, *Secularism, Hermeneutics, and Empire*, cit., p. 328.

<sup>116</sup> J. HABERMAS, *Reply to my Critics*, in *Habermas and Religion*, ed. by C. Calhoun, E. Mendieta, J. VanAntwerpen, Cambridge, Polity Pr., 2013, pp. 347-390: p. 363.

<sup>117</sup> It is worth remembering that revisionist scholarship on secularism began in India as a postcolonial pushback against its assumed universality. Vd. *Secularism and Its Critics*, ed. by R. Bhargava, New Delhi, Oxford Univ. Pr., 1998.

wonder whether the limits of toleration today can be explained on the same basis. In our contemporary secular age, is Islam today's Roman Catholicism? What is the difference between Defoe's animosity to the idol and contemporary calls for Muslims not to venerate depictions of Mohammed? Such questions suggest that the Enlightenment may not have solved the problem of religious violence for everyone forever. They also suggest that insofar as it is justified by perennial calls for the Muslim world to have its own Enlightenment, the war on terror should be understood as an effort to produce modern religious subjects<sup>118</sup>. In *The Farther Adventures*, Defoe has already imagined the possible violence of such an effort.

© 2018 The Author. Open Access published under the terms of the [CC-BY-4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

<sup>118</sup> Mahmood makes this argument in *Secularism, Hermeneutics, and Empire*.