

Analysis of D. Defoe's novel "Robinson Crusoe" Through the Concept of a Natural Man

Karimova Irina Djumayevna

Master's Student 1st course, Bukhara State University

Bakayeva Muhabbat Qayumovna

Phd, Associated Professor of the Bukhara State University

The concept of the natural state occupied the minds of such major philosophers as John Locke, Thomas Hobbes, Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The Age of Enlightenment continued this question in the form of the concept of the natural man. In this article, the author reflects on how Defoe's novel can be analyzed through the philosophical prism of the Enlightenment.

Keywords: natural state, Enlightenment, Robinson Crusoe, novel, concept.

Introduction

After Robinson Crusoe has completed the intensive process of bread production, in the English edition he declares that he is "in a mere state of nature" [1, p. 187], that is, in a "natural state". Exactly the same phrase was used by the English philosophers Hobbes and Locke, when they were working on the phenomenon of "natural co- standing". However, if we turn to the publication in Russian, we will find the phrase "I found myself in primitive living conditions" [4, p. 111]. The difference between the two citations is colossal, and it lies not only in the subtleties of translation. In one case we are dealing with qualitative changes of the person himself, in the other case we are only talking about environmental changes . Questions about whether Robinson Crusoe can be considered a "natural person", how close he came to the "natural state" and whether he came close to it at all are relevant today. To sort them out, we will consistently present the philosophical concepts of the greatest thinkers of Modern Times, namely John Locke, Thomas Hobbes and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and we compare them with the text of the novel. Next we will consider the thought Defoe in the context of the Age of Enlightenment, and finally, we conclude whether Robinson Crusoe can be considered to have been "in a natural state" during his imprisonment on the island.

Thomas Hobbes was one of the first to formulate his definition of the "natural state". In order to comprehend the contemporary political situation in England, condemn the revolution of 1640 and support the protectorate Cromwell, he wrote his most famous utterance " Leviathan". Hobbes' Political Philosophy — this is primarily a mathematical model. He accurately and consistently builds a model of his society, his chains of empirical laws do not allow for bills. Hobbes begins the construction of his model with the characteristic movement of elements. His " natural state" is a world of isolated individuals who will stop at nothing for the sake of profit and fame. Because of this , the famous "war of all against all" arises. Hobbes writes: "There's no room for hard work in this state, right as no one is guaranteed the fruits of his labor, and therefore there is no agriculture, <...> calculation of time, crafts, literature, there is no society, and, worst of all, there is eternal fear and constant danger of violent death, and human life is lonely, poor, hopeless, stupid and short-lived" [3, p. 6]. After Robinson Crusoe discovered the traces of cannibals on the island, he was in a state of this hopeless fear: "Recalling step

by step this whole second period of my life, I compared my first serene years with the state of anxiety, fear and gnawing care in which I lived from the day when discovered the footprint of a human foot in the sand" [4, p. 154]. Major Defoe researcher Maximilian Novak dedicated one of his essays to the feeling of fear experienced by Robinson. Novak notes that this is not a temporary fear, but a long and very consistent state of mind. He focuses not only on, that the hero of the novel no longer perfects his technologies, but also that Robinson rationalizes the murder of savages because of the horror that engulfs him [2, p. 240]. Conveying Robinson's thoughts about savages, Defoe writes: "these are my mortal enemies, that they will not let me down if I find myself in their power, and that an attempt to free myself from a life worse than death would only be an act of self- preservation, self-defense, just as if these people were the first to attack on me" [4, p. 186]. Only the appearance of the Fifth brings Robinson out of this state. However, it should be noted that after that Crusoe is no longer in the "natural state" according to Hobbes, because social relations are established in the format of "master- servant". If we consider the novel from the positions expressed by Hobbes, then Robinson really was in a "natural state", but this period began after the discovery of the trail of savages and ended with a meeting with the Fifth.

The following concept of the "natural state", which we will consider, belongs to a compatriot Hobbes to John Locke. Locke borrows the logical method Hobbes, but criticizes his theory. Inspired by the Glorious Revolution and the "Bill of Rights", Locke interprets the " natural state" much more optimistically than his predecessor. The thinker introduces reason as a natural law, which acts as a mechanism preventing crimes. An individual in a "natural state" according to Locke "has unlimited freedom to dispose of his personality and property", but at the same time he is controlled by reason, which teaches all people should not harm the health, life, freedom or property of others [5, pp. 264-265]. It is also important to note that Locke's concept is not limited to a logical model. It is also present in reality: "In cases where there are any persons who do not have such a body to which they could apply to resolve the differences between them, these individuals are still in a natural state. And in such a state is every absolute sovereign in relation to those who are subject to him" [5, p. 313]. Robinson Crusoe, after meeting Friday, falls under this condition. The analogy between Robinson and the absolute sovereign is obvious - the hero of the novel immediately declares that the island and everything, what is on it belongs to him [4, p. 60], and the Heel is certainly in his power. It is rather curious that when the "natural state" is over according to Hobbes, it begins on the contrary according to Locke. However immediately there is a contradiction. In the "natural state", a person has the right to own only what he earned by honest labor. Robinson seizes the island and enslaves Friday, which fundamentally contradicts Locke's concept. Such a serious discrepancy jeopardizes the initial similarity. The illegitimacy of Robinson's power allows us to conclude that his position does not correlate with the " natural state" according to Locke.

The last philosopher whose ideas we will consider will be Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Unlike Hobbes and Locke, Rousseau had the opportunity to read Defoe's novel. To begin with, let's understand his philosophical concept of "natural man". I would like to note at once that Rousseau's thought is based on the model of a separate individual, which acts as a complex but integral unit. Therefore, the term "state" is replaced by the term "person". Rousseau denies the "natural man" both good desirability and cruelty.

Enlightenment defines the general cultural concept of "natural man" as a carrier of universal properties of human nature. The roots of this interpretation lie in the philosophical teachings described

above, but its essence is different. The "natural man" is identified with freedom, which was irretrievably lost by people. Freedom is one of the central themes of the Enlightenment. It is already clear from Rousseau's concept that the social environment is the vicious person. Culturologist and researcher Dmitry Nalivaiko notes that the image of the "natural man" in the literature of the Enlightenment is inextricably linked with the image of the bourgeois, because the task of the artistic works was to create a new social order and idealize the bourgeoisie. The researcher notes that even the concept of reason, the main tool of cognition, changes in the view of the enlighteners from "the expression of pure rationalism" to "an ideal interpretation of nature as a reasonable and benevolent force, whose laws and dictates lead mankind along the path of happiness and virtue" [6, p. 185]. The harmony of nature and reason puts itself in opposition to the established social structure, culture and civilization in general. In this context, an indissoluble connection appears: the "natural man" is the bourgeoisie. Defoe created a collective image of the bourgeois hero. This image turned out to be so strong and attractive that in the future other Enlightenment thinkers reflected it in the utopian concept of the "natural man".

The comparison of Robinson and Friday will help us to feel more deeply the thought of Enlightenment in the space of the novel. The depth of Defoe's idea comes to the surface when the reader notices the similarities of these seemingly opposite characters. In particular, the researcher of foreign literature of the XVIII century Tatiana Chesnokova writes in one of her articles: "Collision the two variants of the conceptual model of the "natural man" in the structure of the first educational novel are not accidental. "Robinson" and "savage" are two figurative role—playing shells in which the "natural man" of Enlightenment can appear on the pages of literary (and not only elegant) literature. These two types equally "strive" to express the ideal "substratum" of humanity, moving towards each other: from the world of pre-Christian savagery or from the enlightened, but still "fallen" world of civilization" [8, p. 6]. Both characters are purified to the level of universal, natural human needs. The satisfaction of these needs confirms the power of man over the natural world. Chesnokova continues: "It is only on these paths that a person becomes fully "natural" (but not "wild"), fulfilling the purpose given to him from above. That is why in the concept of the book, colored by Protestantism, the action of circumstances is accompanied by the action of religious motives, and the events themselves are thought of as expressing the will of heaven" [8, p. 7]. This is precisely the roots of the enlightenment image of the "natural man". Growing out of the political philosophy of the XVII century, it is being improved and differentiated in order to act for the benefit of the public Enlightenment message outlined above.

However, today's reader does not see this unequal connection between the bourgeois and the "natural state", on the contrary, in the modern understanding these concepts are opposite. We consider the bourgeoisie to be part of civilization, and we oppose civilization to nature. Robinson Crusoe is a representative of the third estate, he remains one before, during, and after his stay on the island. He is aware of himself as a person, spends time thinking, reflects. This has nothing to do with the image a savage who is "far from the level of knowledge necessary to desire to acquire even more" [7, p. 28]. Through continuous work, Robinson suppresses feelings, he seeks support in communion with God, hopes for salvation, repents. The novel vividly embodies Locke's concept of practical experience as the only source of human knowledge. But Robinson is not a "tabula rasa", he already has experience, a rich history that cannot stop him on the island, because it is inextricably linked with him. This very vividly illustrates the attitude of the hero of the novel to money. Crusoe takes the money from the

captain's cabin, although he realizes that he will not need it. Subsequently, he recalls: "This money did not give me any benefits or satisfaction. So they lay in my closet and in rainy weather they turned moldy from the dampness in my cave" [4, p. 122]. When is the second time Robinson finds the money, he takes them away again, although he has already been convinced in practice in their uselessness. The bourgeois essence of the hero here presupposes empirical knowledge. And in the finale of the novel, Robinson returns to his social environment. He is exactly the same bourgeois as we saw him in the beginning. Twenty-eight years spent on the island affected his perception of life, but did not affect his self-identification and place in society.

The question of whether to consider Defoe's hero a "natural person" has acquired new aspects. We found out that the arguments for and against come from the same, namely, from the image of Robinson the bourgeois. To give a confident answer to the question, it is necessary to determine how we look at the immortal novel. If we consider it from a historical perspective, then it is certainly necessary to talk about Robinson Crusoe as a "natural man". This is required by the historical era. If we choose the position of the reader of the XXI century, then it becomes clear to us how far the hero of the novel is from the descriptions from philosophical treatises. However, it is worth paying attention to the interesting parallels that we have noticed. At certain moments, Robinson was really approaching to the "natural state", but he never lost himself as a representative of the third estate.

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