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**The Spiritual Quest in Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* (1169-1182) and Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719)**

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## Table of Contents

Dedication .....	Erreur ! Signet non défini.
Acknowledgements .....	Erreur ! Signet non défini.
Abstract .....	VI
<b>I-General Introduction</b> .....	1
Review of The Literature .....	3
Issue and Working Hypotheses .....	5
Methodological Outline.....	6
<b>II-Methods and Materials</b> .....	8
1-Theoretical Framework .....	8
-Harold Bloom’s “The Anxiety of Influence” (1973).....	8
- Joseph Campbell’s “The Hero With a Thousand Faces” (1949).....	10
2-Materials .....	12
A- The Authors Biographies.....	12
-Ibn Tufayl .....	12
-Daniel Defoe.....	14
B- The Historical Background of The Two Novels .....	15
-Hayy Ibn Yaqzan.....	15
-Robinson Crusoe .....	16
C- The Summaries of the Two Novels.....	17
-Hayy Ibn Yaqzan.....	17
-Robinson Crusoe .....	18
<b>III-Results</b> .....	21
<b>Chapter I: The Physical Journey of the Main Characters: Ibn Tufayl’s Hayy Ibn Yaqzan and Daniel Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe</b> .....	23
Introduction: .....	24
a-Hayy Ibn Yaqzan’s Journey .....	24
b-Robinson Crusoe’s Journey .....	31
c-The Island: The Place of Self Discovery.....	35

d-The anxiety of influence Between Ibn Tufayl’s Hayy Ibn Yaqzan and Daniel Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe .....	39
Conclusion.....	41
End Notes .....	43
<b>Chapter II: The Spiritual Journey of the Main Characters: Ibn Tufayl’s Hayy Ibn Yaqzan and Daniel Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe .....</b>	<b>45</b>
Introduction .....	46
From Isolation to Self Discovery .....	46
a- Hayy Ibn Yaqzan Spiritual Journey .....	46
b- Robinson Crusoe’s Philosophical and Religious Quest .....	49
Conclusion.....	55
End Notes .....	56
<b>General Conclusion .....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Selected Bibliography .....</b>	<b>60</b>

## **Dedication**

We dedicate this work to our families and friends.

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## **Abstract**

This work is a comparative study between Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* written approximately in 1169-1182 and Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* published in 1719. It has attempted to explore the journeys of the main characters and their spiritual quests. The discovery of their spirituality makes them aware of the superficial side of the material world and the importance of the individual relationship with the Divine. Both Crusoe and Hayy discovered happiness through loneliness. To explore the journeys of the two heroes, we have relied on the theory of Joseph Campbell *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* 1949 and explored the different steps that the characters have undergone all along their voyages; from their departure act to their initiation and finally to their return act. We have also used Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence* 1973 to show Tufayl's possible influence on Defoe's novel. This dissertation consists of two chapters. The first one explored the physical Journey of Crusoe and Hayy and their self-discovery. The second chapter explored the inner journey of both main characters that resulted from their self-discovery. Both narratives highlight the importance of spirituality for the individual. Both heroes have undergone a journey and take almost a similar approach to challenge themselves in a quest to discover the self and God.

## **Key words**

Ibn Tufayl, Daniel Defoe, Journey, Spiritual Quest, Influence.

## **I-General Introduction**

Spirituality involves in having a sense of belief that there is something greater than the self. There is more to being a human rather than being limited by the sensory experience and the world we are living in is in fact a part of a cosmic and divine nature.<sup>1</sup>

The meaning of spirituality expands in knowing the significance of life and to look further beyond the everyday mundane existence. It means to leave the physical world and seek spiritual comfort by undergoing a spiritual journey. By exploring some universal themes such as: life, death, love, truth, knowledge, a person becomes abundantly self-disciplined to undergo a contemplative process by which self growth and spiritual fulfilment are attained.

In literature, the spiritual quest is widely used touching upon spiritual themes. It is not necessarily related to religion, but it studies the history of human reasoning and the quest for a purpose in this world. Spiritual literature is a whole genre on its own; it includes the personal spiritual experience of an author in forms of poems, autobiography, self dialogue, etc. The term spirituality has been used in various ways; it can be associated in both religious and non religious ways. When associated with religion, the term cannot be separated from 'God'; it further refers to beliefs in higher power that guides and rewards an individual for their faith and following the religious principles. When we associate spirituality with non religious aspects or secular; it is linked to the ability of using the mind, the senses, and the materials that surround us, and in some cases even with the incorporeal world.<sup>2</sup>

The American transcendentalists used spirituality as a sign given to intellectuals who are able to think beyond what is real. It is a world of spirit which is not dependent on what is perceived in order to interpret the perceptions of life.<sup>3</sup> Romantics in Europe have rejected everything related to materials and physical world and have started to embrace feelings and desires. They have refused ideologies such as cold logic, and they have searched for spiritual

awakening through practising their art. They have believed that the purpose of life was to discover the hidden potential of an individual.<sup>4</sup> The main concern of spiritual life is with the human mind and its divine essence as well as concepts such as: the divine, bliss, suffering, human selfishness are interrelated in multiple ways to the understanding and practise of spirituality.<sup>5</sup>

In this dissertation we will tackle the theme of spiritual quest in literature. We intend to show the importance of rationality and logical thinking. An individual is able to achieve his spiritual fulfilment, either in terms of religion, or in terms of the individual himself, and his capacity to use the mind as well as the physical world to think beyond reality in search of higher power. The Andalusian writer Ibn Tufayl and the English writer Daniel Defoe are both good examples when it comes to the embodiment of the spiritual quest through their works. In fact, *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* 1169-1182 and *Robinson Crusoe* 1719 are works that target the theme of spiritual quest through the journeys of their main characters; how they start thinking beyond their reason, and how feelings such as suffering, solitude, and loneliness contribute to reach their goals to spiritual fulfilment both religiously and non religiously.

Despite the huge gap in time between the two novels, Defoe's work appears some five centuries later, however the similarities in the two novels suggests *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*'s influence over Defoe. Scholars believe that the English author took inspiration from Tufayl's book when writing his novel *Robinson Crusoe*. *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* is an allegory built on rational, empirical approach to the understanding of the universe. The same formula that resonates with *Robinson Crusoe*, as well as with many thinkers of the European Enlightenment such as: Bacon, Milton and John Locke who put a lot of interest into the Arabic literature during that time.<sup>6</sup>



The two narratives revolve around two stranded men on their deserted islands. Away from any social contact, they must overcome their solitude and the difficulties that the islands have in store for them. Both heroes undergo a journey and take almost a similar approach to challenge themselves in a quest to discover the self and God. Furthermore, thinking beyond reality is a mean of using reasoning with logic to overcome the islands obstacles. Our aim in this research is to explore the spiritual quest of both works; *Robinson Crusoe* and *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*. We also intend to highlight at what extent Daniel Defoe was influenced by the work of the Andalusian philosopher.

## **Review of the Literature**

Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* are a subject of different comparative studies. In a comparative study from the University of Arizona that combines both works, Lamia Mohamed Saleh in her research *Robinson Crusoe* and *Hayy bin Yaqzan*, tries to analyze the approach of both books to the relationship between man and nature in the process of mastering their environments. She highlights how both novels share some narrative concerns such as plot and identical settings, and how both authors whether Defoe or Ibn Tufayl are deeply religious and mature to the point they see nature and mankind in a theological perspective. This is the reason which motivates them to write their works and to transmit their visions and ideologies of logic and rationality. Despite both Defoe and Ibn Tufayl being different from the time period and worlds, Mohamed Saleh points to how these two authors succeed in creating characters that reflect the world and the time they lived in, and how both books show the practises of their time without confusing the reader on the different periods the novels were written at.

This study proceeds to analyze the approach of each book to the relationship between man and Nature. In the process of mastering their environments, Hayy and Crusoe awaken to the providential presence behind natural forces and learn to

regulate themselves within the divine scheme and to form strong relations with God.<sup>7</sup>

The above quote shows Lamia Mohamed Saleh putting focus on the main characters. The process at which they learn from their environments, in order to master them, as well as grow a sense of psychological growth towards discovering the self and the theological perspective.

Malik Bennabi in his book *The Question of Ideas in the Muslim World* he compares the way of thinking in both the eastern and the western civilizations. He bases his comparison on Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe and Ibn Tufayl's Hayy Ibn Yaqzan as a result he deduces that the western mind gives importance and focuses on the value of time in relation to work and the material world, while the Eastern one focuses on ideas and the inner world. How slowly thinking progresses from mere simple thoughts about the physical world to thinking of what is beyond reality and search for the divine.<sup>8</sup>

In an another comparative study between the two works Madhi Rabia in her dissertation *The Writer's Journey into Solitude: Self-discovery in Hayy ibn Yaqzan and Robinson Crusoe and Friday*, points at how solitude is an essential requirement for the self-discovery, and also how it manifests as a constant theme and reminder to the characters and eventually the self emerging through this experience of solitude.

The idea of physical solitude often implies metaphysical solitude, and it is this spiritual state of detachment or self-enclosure that usually arouses the widest range of moral responses. Physical solitude is a metaphorical focus for an altitude that relates to self and society.<sup>9</sup>

Madhi interests in the concept of solitude as a drive that facilitates a journey towards self exploration and as a tool to search for the truth. Solitude is this condition that enables high level of awareness to achieve spiritual insight.

Taneli Kukkonen in his critical study *Ibn Tufayl Living the Life of Reason* highlights that Ibn Tufayl's purpose in releasing Hayy Ibn yaqzan was mainly to bring the reader up to a

point where he would accept the reality of the ineffable visions claimed by both Ibn Sina and the Sufis. Another goal is to make the reader accept that this “Eastern Wisdom” is superior to the more down to earth variations on the Greek philosophical tradition purveyed by other reputable philosophers.<sup>10</sup>

As for Robinson Crusoe Macy Alexandra G in her critical study discusses how Crusoe is a reflection of the prodigal son and how he grows to forget about God, but ultimately returns to him and being saved both spiritually and literally. She also points at how Defoe uses the novel as a way to project his ideas, she writes:

Defoe uses the message of this parable as an overriding message for the novel as a whole. Crusoe exhibits the characteristics of the prodigal son as he grows to forget about god on the island, yet ultimately returns to Him and is saved, both spiritually and literally.<sup>11</sup>

The above quote shows Defoe’s ideas being projected by the character that he creates in *Robinson Crusoe*. The idea of the prodigal son is prominently raised in the novel: Crusoe being forsaken by God in order to repent for his sins and find spiritual ease.

## **Issue and Working Hypothesis**

The above review of the literature on Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* and Ibn Tufayl’s *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* reveals the differences between the eastern and the western cultural way of thinking, and the relationship between man and nature during the process of mastering both Hayy’s and Crusoe’s environments. They also reveal the theme of solitude as an essential requirement for self examining on their unknown self. Critics point mainly at the dominant theme of each novel and how both writers try to convey and transmit their ideas. As far as we know no study has dealt with the spiritual quest between both works and at what extent Defoe was influenced by *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*. Although there is no definite evidence which states that Defoe really took influence from *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, however, the translation

of *Tufayl's book* into English by Simon Ockley in 1708 suggests the highly possible influence, as a result just eleven years later Defoe has published his work *Robinson Crusoe* in 1719, which is very similar to *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*.

To achieve our aim, we intend to rely on Harold Bloom's theory *The Anxiety of Influence* 1973 to discuss Defoe's influence from *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*. We will also discuss the concept of the hero and the mythical quest in the two novels as developed by Joseph Campbell in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 1949. The latter will help us to explore the quests and the journeys of the main characters in both works in order to show how they progress to attain their spiritual fulfilment.

## **Methodological Outline**

In this research work, we have followed the IMRAD outline format. We have divided the dissertation into four parts. The first one will consist of an introduction to our theme of spiritual quest and mentioning the two literary works we are studying. In the review of the literature, we have cited some previous comparative studies and critics that we have found about the two novels. It includes our issue of spiritual quest and the issue of influence which is the gap that we want to fill. The second part will include methods and materials; it will contain Harold Bloom's theory of *Anxiety of Influence* and Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with Thousands Faces* on which our work is relying. It includes also the summaries of our primary sources. The third part will consist of results or the findings of our research paper. The last part includes the discussion and the analysis of our findings of the study of Defoe's and Tufayl's works. It will be divided into two chapters. The first chapter deals with the physical journeys of both main characters. The second chapter discusses the spiritual journeys of the main characters in order to attain their spiritual fulfilment. A general conclusion will be a restatement of our findings.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Spencer, Maya. *What is Spirituality? A Personal Exploration* 01.

<sup>2</sup> Bookworm, *Themes in Literature: Literary Spirituality*, <https://www.google.com/amp/s/literacle.com/literary-spirituality/amp/>

<sup>3</sup>ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Mamun, “*The Spirit of Romanticism: A glimpse*”. <https://dailyasianage.com/news/38859/the-spirit-of-romanticism-a-glimpse>

<sup>5</sup> Bookworm, *Themes in Literature, Literary Spirituality*, <https://www.google.com/amp/s/literacle.com/literary-spirituality/amp/>

<sup>6</sup> Verde, *Hayy Was Here, Robinson Crusoe*, 2

<sup>7</sup> Lamia Mohamed Saleh, *Robinson Crusoe and "Hayy Bin Yaqzan": A Comparative Study (Tufail, Defoe)*. VI.

<sup>8</sup> Mostafa Mahaoui, “مالك بن نبي: اكتشاف الفرق بين حي بن يقظان الشرقي و روبنسون كروسو الغربي” September 14, 2019, YouTube video, 02:00. <https://youtu.be/Tnb77lSTGsY>

<sup>9</sup> Rabia, *The Writer's Journey into Solitude: Self-discovery in Hayy Ibn Yaqzan, Robinson Crusoe and Friday*, 01.

<sup>10</sup>Kukkonen, *Living The Life of Reason*, 60.

<sup>11</sup>Macy, *The Socio-economic and Religious Aspects in Robison Crusoe*, 13.

## **II-Methods and Materials**

### **1-Theoretical Framework**

In order to analyze our theme of spiritual quest in Ibn Tufayl's Hayy Ibn Yaqzan and Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, we are going to rely on the theory of Joseph Campbell *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949) to study the two heroes and their journeys towards self discovery and spiritual fulfilment. We will also use Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence* (1973) to discuss Defoe's influence from Hayy Ibn Yaqzan.

#### **Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence* 1973**

Bloom's book *The Anxiety of Influence* (1973) puts focus on the history that is made between poets by the misreading that happens between them. This process happens due to the fact that one poet tries to create an imaginative space for himself; in other words, to separate himself from the precursor poet. This theory has two corrective aspects: one is to offer a more fitting poetics that favours practical criticism, another is to break the illusion that one poet helps in the making of another poet.<sup>1</sup>

The idea of poetic influence is not that recent. In fact, Bloom refers to the idea of "influence" which originates as divine afflatus (the influence of the stars), its transformation on moral effects all the way to the more contemporary idea that poets are influenced decisively by former poets whose ideas can often be found in the works of later poets.<sup>2</sup> However, Bloom offers a deep meaning of what he calls "source-study", or "the history of ideas", the struggle between the new poet or "The Ephebe" and the precursor poets is more than psychological pain, where the ephebe's only way to create separation for himself. A misreading of past works contributes to the ephebe's voice to be heard.<sup>3</sup>

Harold Bloom published many books such as: *The Map of Misreading* (1975), *The Western Canon* (1994), *The Anatomy of Influence* (2011), and *The Anxiety of Influence* (1973)

a theory of poetry, in which he argues that new poems are inspired from the old ones. The new poet must create a space for himself through misinterpreting the poem of the precursor, an interpretation he calls “Poetic Misprision”. Bloom develops six revisionary ratios to assert his theory; he also suggests that younger ephebes tend to use the new strategies of these six ratios.

### **1. Clinamen or Poetic Misprision**

Bloom explains that this concept is taken from Lucretius which means ‘swerve’ of the atoms in order to make change in the world. A poet swerves or deviates from his precursor by reading the latter’s poem as to accomplish a ‘clinamen’, or to produce a corrective movement. In other words, the precursor poem arrives to a point which should swerve in the direction of the new poem.<sup>4</sup>

### **2. Tessera**

Bloom defines this concept as a “completion and antithesis”. In other words, a poet completes his precursor work by reading the parent poem keeping the latter’s own words and concepts, but gives them a new sense. The words “Tessera” refers to fragments reconstitute a whole with other fragments.<sup>5</sup>

### **3. Kenosis**

Bloom defines this concept as a device similar in a way to defence mechanisms our psyches use against repetition compulsions. In other words the poet is emptying himself of his imagination, as a result this leads to a separation with the precursor’s poem. The word “Kenosis” is taken by Bloom from St. Paul who uses it in reference to Jesus.<sup>6</sup>

### **4. Daemonization**

By ‘**Daemonization or the counter Sublime**’, Bloom defines this concept as a kind of repression. The author suggests that the precursor’s ideas derive from something beyond his poem, the poet does this in order to separate the uniqueness of the earlier work. The term

daemonization was taken by Bloom from Neo-Platonism in which it refers to being helped by another intermediary.<sup>7</sup>

## **5. Askesis**

Bloom defines this concept as a movement to self purgation in order to attain a state of solitude. The author curtails his imaginative endowment to stress his individuality. The author does this in the same way as the precursor whose ideas are also emphasized.<sup>8</sup>

## **6. Apophrades**

Or the '**Return of the Dead**', Bloom takes the word from the Athenian dismal or unlucky days in which the dead returned to inhabit the houses which they once lived in. The poet opens his poem towards the end deliberately to the precursor's influence.<sup>9</sup>

In our research we are going to use Askesis to show how Daniel Defoe uses ideas that he further emphasizes in his novel such as: British Supremacy and Otherness. The similarity of the two narratives is almost identical in terms of plot, characters, setting, and themes. Defoe tries to stress his thoughts as a way to separate himself from Ibn Tufayl whose ideas such as: reasoning, self reliance and the importance of spiritual comfort in relation to the divine are also obviously conveyed in *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*.

## **1-b Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949)**

*The Hero with a Thousand Faces* was published in (1949). It is a work of comparative mythology by Joseph Campbell in which he discusses the theory of structure of the hero's journey within a world of myths. Campbell explores in his theory the methodological narratives that share an essential structure. These similarities of myths urged Campbell to write his book, in which he details the structure of the Monomyth. Campbell defines the Monomyth as:



A hero ventures forth the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from the mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man<sup>10</sup>

In the above quote, Campbell layers the heroic narrative in which the hero starts his transformative journey. This journey reveals many things about this heroic figure through trials and challenges, where a person expands his view of the world, as well as the spiritual side.

Furthermore, Campbell layers the many steps that the hero follows to progress through his journey. Starting from the very beginning on which Campbell refers to as the departure from the ordinary world where the hero will face trials after receiving advice from mentors, and the hero will be tested along the way. Upon facing the biggest challenge, he will eventually receive his reward at the end.

In 1949 Campbell has coined three stages that shape the hero during his journey:

- The departure act: the hero must leave his ordinary world.
- The initiation act: basically the hero enters the special world or the unknown territory where he must overcome the drawbacks he faces.
- The return act: the hero returns in the end in triumph.

In 2007, the screenwriter Christopher Vogler, in his book entitled *The Writers' Journey*. He has redefined Campbell's structure and further expanded them. He has created twelve steps that make a hero. These steps must not be necessarily followed, as it is only a map that guides a narrative while suggesting what the next stage of a story must be.<sup>11</sup> These twelve steps are:

1. The ordinary world
2. The call to adventure
3. Refusal of the call
4. Meeting the mentor

5. Crossing the first threshold
6. Test, allies, enemies
7. Approach to the innermost cave
8. The ordeal
9. Reward(seizing the sword)
10. The road back
11. Resurrection
12. Return with the elixir

This is a story structure that is conceived in a way to better understand and outline a novel, and to further dissect the plot. In fact, many stories seem to share this pattern as it is old and can be found in Theseus and the Minotaur, or the famous story of The Lion King, despite the cultural differences.

## **2-Materials**

### **A- The Authors Biographies**

This part is dedicated to the biography of the two authors Ibn Tufayl and Daniel Defoe as well as the background of their works. It is important to explore Defoe's and Tufayl's biographies because they reveal the authors ideologies that are present in the two works. Both authors seem to be inclined towards solitude in exploring the divine. The religious aspect of both of them is also further present in their narratives.

#### **-Ibn Tufayl**

Abu Bakr Muhammed Ibn Abd al-Malik Ibn Muhammed Ibn Tufayl Al Qaisi Al Andalusí (1105-1158) is an Arab Andalusian Muslim polymath, a theologian, physician, astronomer, vizier, and court official. Additionally, he is a philosopher and a novelist. *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* is his most famous philosophical novel. He was born in Wadi Ash, the modern Guadix between 1100 and 1110 A.D near Grenada, he came from a family of Arab Qays tribe.

He received his education from Ibn Bajjah Avempace,<sup>12</sup> as well as he practised Medicine at Granada and further became its governor. He then became a secretary in around 1154 for the Ruler of Granada precisely the Caliph Abd al- Mumin. From that point nothing is known of his fortunes until he appeared at the Court of the Caliph Abu Ya‘qub, elevated to the high offices of Wazir and chief royal physician, a combination of functions not unusual in Muhammadian states. Then later as a vizier and also physician for Abu Yaqub Yusuf, an Almohad Caliph, to whom he is recommended to Ibn Rushd Averroes as his successor. Even Ibn Rushd points later at how Ibn Tufayl inspires him to write his famous Aristotelian commentaries.

Alongside the affairs of state, medicine, astronomy, philosophy and poetry makes the whole of his activities. However, he wrote very little, and all that survives now is a few fragments of verses, and his allegory of *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*, which is probably his one and only philosophical work. It is a tale about an infant child who grows alone in a deserted island. This child develops by degrees to eventually reach a new stage of self awareness and discover the divine despite his solitude. Eventually, he has left one of the best short stories in Arabic. The natural development of its theme and the relevance of its details would be difficult to match in the literature of Islam. Furthermore, it offers a survey of Arabic philosophy and its conflict or compromise with the demands of Muhammadian theology. Ibn tufayl’s *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* is a derivative work: It is set on the foundation of Avicenna or “Ibn Sina” that carries the same title and characters. *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* was the title of the story by Avicenna, and the characters Absal and Salamn are also found in Ibn Tufayl’s work. Ibn Tufayl carries on the work of Ibn Sina, however Tufayl offers another view of the tale. Eventually, Ibn Rushd became Ibn Tufayl’s successor, after his retirement in 1182. Ibn Tufayl was buried in Morocco in 1185.<sup>13</sup>

## **-Daniel Defoe**

Daniel Defoe (1660-1731) is one of the first English novelists. He works as a journalist and a spy before writing his first fiction work which is *Robinson Crusoe* in (1719). He was born in London in 1660. When he was young, he witnesses both the Plague and The Great Fire of 1666. Defoe was educated in his homeland England at Dorking in 1671 and then at Morton's Academy for Dissenters in Newington Green. He wants to become a Presbyterian minister. However, he becomes a hosiery merchant who travels a lot, particularly to France and Spain where he stayed two years due to the political issues in England as well as the Low Countries and beyond in 1682. Daniel Defoe wrote many books during his travel in England such as: *The Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain 1724-1727* which is an account of his travels where he describes the places he visits during his journey around Great Britain.<sup>14</sup>

In 1684 he marries Mary Tuffely and he received a dowry. However, this did not keep him away from bankruptcy, and finally he was jailed for debt. Defoe was very fond of policy, he fought in the Duke of Monmouth's rebellion of 1685 and he was a huge supporter of William of Orange in the Glorious Revolution in 1687. Defoe wrote more than three hundred works, such as books, pamphlets, and journals about many topics for instance: crime, religion, marriage, psychology, Supernatural, and politics. In 1687 he was a strong supporter of William the Orange in The Glorious Revolution and he started to write political essays like his important work *An Essay upon Projects* written in 1697 and his famous pamphlets *The Shortest Way with Dissenters* appearing in 1702, which led him to get arrested. In 1719 Defoe published his famous first novel *Robinson Crusoe*, which he wrote in his age of sixty. *Robinson Crusoe* become a very successful novel, which captured the imagination of several writers who came after. He wrote many other works such as: *Moll Flander*, *A Journal of the*

*Plague Year and Roxana*. Defoe died in 1731, and was buried in his hometown London at Bunshill Fields.<sup>15</sup>

## **B-The Historical Background of the Two Novels**

### **-Hayy Ibn Yaqzan**

Ibn Tufayl was born in Andalusia (Islamic Spain) and wrote his novel Hayy Ibn Yaqzan there approximately in (1169-1182). The Islamic civilization preceded him by four centuries on the Iberian peninsula. In 711 Tariq Ibn Ziyad, a Berber governor and general who conquered the Moroccan city of Tangiers, thus his name is bestowed on the Rock of Gibraltar (Jabal Tariq from the Arabic or Tariq's mountain). He launches the Muslim conquest on Spain and the Muslims advanced to Europe; however, they stopped in 732 after crossing the Pyrenees Mountains to southern France. Six years later, an Umayyad prince by the name of Abd al-Rahman founded the emirate of Cordoba. During his reign, Muslims assert their dominance over Spain and declare himself an independent caliphate. However, by the beginning of the eleventh century this Caliphate dissolved to numerous regional kingdoms, so a quest to dominance between these Muslims starts emerging. The local governments allied with their Christian neighbours, they formed alliances with Muslims against other Muslims. However, by the late of the eleventh century most of these Muslim kingdoms are outmanoeuvred by the Christians who fired back.<sup>16</sup>

North Africa and the Andalusian Empire are deeply connected in spite of both being autonomous. They are connected in intellectual level alongside the rest of the Islamic world because they share the same language. This facilitated the exchange of ideas between scholars, as a result many Muslims travelled to other regions in order to study. Ibn Tumart a Berber who travelled to Islamic Spain seeking knowledge. His doctrine of Unitarianism or Almohads is based on the teaching of Al Ghazali upon he received teachings from. Ibn

Tumart and his successors invested a great interest in learning philosophy and the religious ideology. The Almohad Caliphs viewed themselves as a unifying scripture in rational philosophy and Sufism. It is in this respect that the Almohad Caliphs gave patronage to Ibn Tufayl to write his work Hayy Ibn Yaqzan.<sup>17</sup> Ibn Tufayl was popular outside the Muhammadian world, particularly in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, this can be said from the following list of the texts, translations, and adaptations of his story which appears in Europe and becomes a best seller at the time further influencing many thinkers. Ibn Tufayl's philosophical ideas strongly contributed to the European Enlightenment such as the ideas of self reliance and using the power of reasoning.<sup>18</sup> The Arabic text was first published together with a literal Latin translation under the title *Philosophus Autodidactus*, by Edward Pocock junior at Oxford in 1671 and reprinted there in 1700. Pocock's Latin translation is then translated anonymously into Dutch in 1672. In 1708 Simon Ockley's version, made directly from the Arabic was published in London and reprinted there in 1711, and again in Dublin in 1731.<sup>19</sup>

### **-Daniel Defoe**

Before the late of the seventeenth century, the idea of writing a novel in England did not exist till Daniel Defoe has written his first novel Robison Crusoe in 1719. He portrays the life of a shipwrecked man who is stranded alone in an isolated island. When reading the novel, we discover several historical aspects beyond its lines. The Age of Enlightenment, which is according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary the period of the eighteenth century in Europe when many writers and scientists began to argue that science and reason were more important than religion and tradition.<sup>20</sup> Many thinkers in Europe during this period such as: René Descartes, John Locke, David Hume, Voltaire and Jean Jacques Rousseau wrangle the traditional authority and claim that humanity can be

developed through reason and rationality. The Age of Enlightenment influenced many revolutions such as: The French Revolution 1789 led by Voltaire, Montesquieu, and Rousseau who call for democracy in France, which was ruled by Louis XVI. The founders of the United States such as Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, James Madison and others are influenced by Enlightenment values of liberty, equality, and justice.<sup>21</sup> In 1685 James Scott the first Duke of Monmouth who is living in Holland persuaded by the protestant revolution in England; as a result, he led the Monmouth rebellion against his catholic uncle James II.<sup>22</sup> During 1688, England witnessed the Glorious Revolution of 1688 also called The Bloodless Revolution, which has started from 1688 to 1689. The protestant Mary and her Dutch husband William of Orange revolted against her father the catholic king James II. This event shifts the English Policy through giving parliament more power over the monarchy.

## **C-The Summaries of the Novels**

### **-Hayy Ibn Yaqzan**

The story revolves around Hayy Ibn Yaqzan, an infant who grows up within an island in the Indies under the equator. Completely isolated from society, he is raised by a doe who feeds him with her milk, unfortunately his mother doe dies leaving Hayy alone. After experiencing grief and feeling sad for his mother, Hayy sets in a journey within the island to discover himself as he is constantly curious about his surroundings. Hayy spends much of his time contemplating, and teaches himself basic life survival tips like how to walk on his two feet. He realizes that he is different from the other animals; he starts imitating the sounds of animals around him from birds, to antelopes, etc. Hayy learns the language of the animals that surround him; and further guide himself to the actions of animals by mainly mimicking their instincts.

*Hayy* lives a simple life and was never a carnivore; he sustains himself by eating meat. He makes his own clothes from skinning animals; he stargazes and contemplates to the point where he reaches a superior level of knowledge. His nonstop explorations and observations of animals in his environment led him to gain more knowledge in natural science, philosophy and religion. He comes to the conclusion that this universe must come from a creator. He is lonely, but his solitude serves as a drive for him to achieve a state of ecstasy, and he learns the truth: that there is a God. Eventually, this solitude state becomes no more as he discovers a man named Absal who teaches him the human language, as well as he enriches his knowledge about the divine within the island. Furthermore, both Absal and Hayy decide to enter the social world; however, they soon refute it as the societal contact does not help them when it comes to their view of religion and spiritual comfort. They eventually return to the island and they live the rest of their lives there in contemplation.

### **-Robinson Crusoe**

Robinson Crusoe goes on a journey from his hometown York in 1651 after a long struggle with his father, who wants him to be a lawyer. After his departure, he is shipwrecked in a strong storm, but this has not changed his passion to travel. He decides to go on a journey again. Unfortunately, his ship is taken by Salè Pirates and he is enslaved by the Moors. Two years later after his capture, he has escaped with a boy named Xury and he has been rescued by a Portuguese captain. In their way to Brazil, Crusoe decides to sell Xury to the captain, and in his turn he helps him to become a Brazilian planter.

Years later, Crusoe joins an expedition which brings slaves from Africa; however, he is shipwrecked in a strong storm that has cast him away to an isolated island near the Venezuelan coast. After surviving from the storm, he realizes that he



is the only survival from the wreck, so he decides to find how to furnish himself with food and to build a shelter to protect himself from wild beasts as well as from cold and heat. During his isolation in the island, Crusoe develops his own talents that he has never used when he used to live in society in order to furnish himself with necessities of life such as: food, shelter, etc. Furthermore, Robinson Crusoe has not only developed his skills and capacities to survive, but he learns to communicate with God, thus he becomes a good Christian through contemplation. To keep himself away from sins and mistakes, he begins a journal where he writes every task he does every day. After fifty years in the island, Crusoe discovers a man's naked foot print which has kept him anxious and awake for many days. Later a victim who is afraid to be killed escapes from the cannibals as a result Crusoe saves his life, names him Friday, and teaches him English. Friday has been converted into Christianity as well as becoming Crusoe's faithful and obedient slave. Days later, Crusoe and Friday rescues an English ship captain, and two other men. After the survival and the help of the captain he rewards them with many gifts and takes both of them back to England on 19 December 1686, and they arrive to England on 11 June 1687. After Crusoe's arrival, he learns that his family thinks of him as a dead person, as a result, he has departed to Lisbon to reclaim the profits of his work in Brazil which has made him wealthy.

## Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup>Bloom, Harold. *The Anxiety of Influence*. 5. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

<sup>2</sup>Geddes, Harold Bloom's anxiety of Influence, [https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.thesatirist.com/books/anxiety\\_of\\_influence.html/amp](https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.thesatirist.com/books/anxiety_of_influence.html/amp)

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, 19.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid, 49.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid, 77.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid, 99.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid, 115.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid, 139.

<sup>10</sup>Estés P. Clarissa. introduction to *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*, by Joseph Campbell, 28.

<sup>11</sup>Jones, Christopher Vogler and The Hero's Journey...*The Outline, Archetypes and Mythical Memo*, <https://chrisjonesblog.com/2017/05/christopher-vogler-and-the-heros-journey-the-outline-archetypes-and-mythical-memo.html>

<sup>12</sup>Fulton, *The History of Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, 10.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid

<sup>14</sup>Wikipedia. 2021. "A Tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain". Last modified July 14, 2020. <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/A-tour-thro'-the-Whole-Island-of-Great-Britain>

<sup>15</sup>Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 1.

<sup>16</sup>Ansari, *Historical Context of Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Verde, *Hayy Was Here, Robinson Crusoe*, 2

<sup>19</sup>Fulton, *The History of Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, 35.

<sup>20</sup>Oxford Learner's Dictionary, s.v. "Enlightenment", accessed December 1, 2020, [https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/american\\_english/enlightenment#:~:text=enlightenment-,noun,the%20cause%20of%20the%20accident](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/american_english/enlightenment#:~:text=enlightenment-,noun,the%20cause%20of%20the%20accident)

<sup>21</sup>Unknown, *Foundations of American Government*, <https://www.ushistory.org/gov/2.asp>

<sup>22</sup>Sailus, *Monmouth Rebellion: Facts and History*, <https://study.com/academy/lesson/monmouth-rebellion-facts-history.html#>

### III-Results

After introducing our theme in general, presenting some of the related studies in the review of the literature, and mentioning the problematic turning around the extent of Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* (1169-1182) influence over Daniel Defoe's work *Robinson Crusoe* (1719). The study of the author's biographies and the historical backgrounds of their novels show the highly potential influence between the two novels. After the translation of Tufayl's Work in 1708, the novel quickly catches massive interest from many European thinkers, making it one of the best sellers of that period. When reading both *Robinson Crusoe* and *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, we deduce that they specifically share the same theme that revolves around the journey of the main characters towards spiritual fulfillment.

In this dissertation, we have tried to show that the two writers share almost an identical theme, which is the spiritual quest, despite the huge gap in time between them. In the first chapter entitled **"The Physical Journey of the Main Characters Hayy Ibn Yaqzan and Robinson Crusoe"**, we have presented the physical journeys of both main characters in the novels focusing on the characterization and the setting. In *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* the analysis deals with the physical journey of the main character Hayy and the conditions that brought him to the island and how he grows a conscious self reliance there. In *Robinson Crusoe* the same pattern is analyzed to how Crusoe finds himself in the island and the conditions that forces him to adapt and to survive. Using Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand faces* (1949) and the concept of the hero that reveal the steps the main characters go through. Furthermore, we will deal the influence relying on Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of influence* (1973) to show the influence between the two works, as Daniel Defoe reuses some ideas of Tufayl such as: self reliance, reasoning, and spiritual

comfort, while he adds new ones such as: British Supremacy as well as Otherness in order to separate himself and give a particularity to his work.

In the second chapter, “**The Spiritual Journey of the Main Characters Hayy Ibn Yaqzan and Robinson Crusoe**” has discussed the spiritual journey of the main characters and explored their process of transformation towards self discovery. *Robinson Crusoe* and *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* share the same setting, the desolated island, which is a great factor in the journey of these two character’s quest. In *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, the main character transitions to the spiritual realm and ecstasy to search for the divine, relying on the requirements of Solitude and deep contemplation as a practice that reflect the Sufi traditions. In *Robinson Crusoe*, the inner journey of the main character is divided into two parts. The first part is his non religious quest as he learns to rely on himself and to use his reason to survive. The second part is his religious quest as he repents and returns to God.

Our conclusion from the analysis of these two works highlights how important is logical thinking and using rationality as a tool to develop the mind. In addition to the importance of the spiritual quest within an individual in future search for a purpose and meaning in life.

## **Chapter I**

**The Physical Journey of the Main Characters**

**Hayy Ibn Yaqzan and Robinson Crusoe**

## **Introduction:**

This chapter studies the physical journey in both Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Ibn Tufayl *Hayy ibn yaqzan*. It relies on Joseph Campbell's theory *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* to analyze the hero's journey of the characters in both novels. In *Hayy ibn yaqzan*, the journey that Hayy undergoes is sudden and spontaneous due to the fact that he was still an infant. It is filled with obstacles and challenges as Hayy grows from infancy to his adulthood in the desolated island all alone. The novel highlights the use of reasoning and rational thinking to discover the self and attain spiritual fulfillment. *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe follows the same premise as Ibn Tufayl in highlighting the utility of reason and self discovery and development to reach spiritual bliss. We will use Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* to show the crucial steps that the two heroes go through in their process of self discovery, along with other theoretical concepts to emphasize the importance of the journey to self discovery, we will also shed light on Ibn Tufayl's influence over Defoe using Harold Bloom's *the Anxiety of Influence*. The quest is important in both narratives as it is a way the authors use to comment on their societies.

### **a-Hayy Ibn Yaqzan's Journey**

The journey revolves around the act of travelling from one place to another, especially if they are far apart. It involves the process of personal development and change. Usually a quest triggers this kind of journey: as it is a long search for something that is whether happiness, truth, or knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

*Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* is a tale of a lonely man who grows up in an inhabited island. The infant child Hayy is discovered and nurtured by a doe, "she stay'd by him and never left him"<sup>2</sup>, Hayy feeds on the doe's milk and grows under the protection of the doe that serves as a mother figure to him.

Hayy is unaware of his journey until he grows much older. He is sent to the deserted island by his mother's blessings, due to the fact that she gives birth to him secretly, and afraid for his safety. Ibn Tufayl demonstrates the patriarchal society and the male domination in that era:

(...) which was then govern'd by a Prince of a Proud and Jealous Disposition: he had a Sister of exquisite Beauty, which he confin'd and restrain'd from Marriage, because he could not match her to one suitable to her quality?<sup>3</sup>

In the above quote, Hayy's mother is bound to her brother's will. Her brother was the prince that rules the kingdom, so she cannot act against his will, however she rejects her duty as an obedient woman to her jealous brother, therefore she decides to marry a relative of hers in secret, then gives birth to Hayy. Afraid of her brother's cruelty, she casts her son as a helpless infant in the hopes that he can survive.<sup>4</sup> Ibn Tufayl is influenced by the Quran, particularly the story of Moses. When Hayy's mother casts him to the shore in order to save her baby from her brother's cruelty, in the Quran there is a verse that describes a story like this one:

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ ۖ فَإِذَا خِفْتِ عَلَيْهِ فَأَلْقِيهِ فِي الْيَمِّ وَلَا تَخَافِي وَلَا تَحْزَنِي ۗ إِنَّا رَادُّوهُ إِلَيْكِ وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

And we revealed to Musa's mothers, saying: Give him suck, then when you fear for him, cast him into the river and do not fear nor grieve; surely we will bring him back to you and make him one of the messengers.<sup>5</sup>

In Campbell's steps of a hero's journey, *The Call to Adventure* marks the beginning of a hero's long journey that is most likely filled with challenges to overcome. According to Merriam Webster Dictionary, the word "Hero" is a mythological or legendary figure of divine descent endowed with great strength or ability.<sup>6</sup>

This is an example of one of the ways in which the adventure can begin. A blunder—apparently the merest chance—reveals an unsuspected world, and the individual is drawn into a relationship with forces that are not rightly understood.<sup>7</sup>

In the above quote, Campbell explains how the main character starts his journey. He sets the factors that draw the hero towards leaving his ordinary world. For Hayy, this

was his call, but what makes things difficult for him in the very beginning, is the fact that he is still just an infant.

Ibn Tufayl, however, provides another story asserting Hayy's origin using mythical aspects:

(...) that the Hot was so equally mix'd with the Cold, and the Moist with the dry, that none of 'em prevail'd over the other; and that this Mass was of a very great Bulk, in which, some parts were better and more equally Temper'd than others, and fitter to form the seminal Humours; the middle part especially, which came nearest to the Temper of Man's Body.<sup>8</sup>

In the above quote, Tufayl provides supernatural forces and powers that contributed to Hayy's birth. This mysterious force that shapes Hayy's body from the clay, as well as the perfect environmental conditions that contributes to the process. In Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, it is referred to as a supernatural aid:

Protective and dangerous, motherly and fatherly at the same time, this supernatural principle of guardianship and direction unities in its self all the ambiguities of the unconscious, thus signifying the support of our conscious personality by that order, larger system, but also the inscrutability of the guide that we are following to the peril of all our rational ends.<sup>9</sup>

The above quote shows the helpful figure that the hero encounters in his journey; someone to give him advantages to help him to survive, and this marks a new period for the hero revealing the way to the end. These supernatural forces help the hero in his quest. Tufayl seems to be inclined to the mythical aspect in order to provide a meaning to the human existence and from Campbell's view; it is the push that the hero needs to reach his goal.

Tufayl builds his character through different stages: from Hayy's early ages with his mother doe, to his late fifties when he finally meets other characters that contribute to sharpen his knowledge about self discovery and the existence of the divine.

The first stage has been already discussed, his encounter with his mother doe that suckles him and takes care of him. Hayy becomes aware with other feelings such as:



affection, warmth, as well as unhappiness. Furthermore, he learns basic skills that guarantee his survival in the wilderness up until he reaches age seven. The second and third phase of Hayy is in his twenties as he realizes his nakedness and being defenseless, he begins covering himself in leaves and feathers, as a result he learns to make good use of his physical body, such as the ability to walk upright. Hayy also shows signs of consciousness as he starts using his mind through observation and contemplation:

Contemplating the various kinds of animals and plants, and walking about the coasts of the island, to see if he could find any being like himself...and when he perceived that his island was encompass'd by the sea, he thought that there was no other Land in the World but only that island<sup>10</sup>

In the above quote, we see Hayy's transition to the contemplating thought. As he roams the island discovering whatever it had to offer, he comes to the realization that the land where he resides is surrounded by the sea, so he becomes aware that he is alone in the island. Hayy considerably increases his knowledge of the world he lives in, he knows now that he can make certain things he finds in nature work and adapt for his own benefit.

In order for Hayy to develop a sort of new thinking and awareness, at some time of his life in the island, he must go through events that change him especially when it comes to the thinking side. One of those events is when his beloved "mother" dies; Hayy is filled with pain and grief, so in an attempt to understand why she ceased movement Hayy decides to cut the doe open:

He processed in his search, till at last he found the Heart, which when he saw closed with a very strong Cover, and fasten'd with stout Ligaments, and cover'd by the lungs on that side which he had open'd<sup>11</sup>

The above quote demonstrates when Hayy arrives at the heart of the doe, as he believes that whatever left her body must have been in the centre. He proceeds to open the heart and finds two cavities; one is filled with blood and the other is empty, this is a moment when Hayy concludes that whatever was giving her life it must have been here, the soul. Even though

Hayy was no way near to understand what a soul is or even to know that it exists, therefore this event is a turning point. Hayy goes from being dependent on his mother to the self dependent one, he starts looking at things differently and inspecting the world around him trying to understand what awaits for him, because his mother is no longer with him.

Ibn Tufayl has a vast knowledge when it comes to the medical field. After all, he is acquainted with Ibn Sina during his life, from whom he gets his knowledge about the medical field, especially when it comes to dissection. Tufayl describes Hayy's dissection of his mother step by step: from the lungs, to the ribs, and finally to the heart that revealed the secret to life according to Hayy's understanding.

The next stage of Hayy's development up to the age of twenty eight: Hayy becomes more aware of the world around him. He realizes that everything must have a purpose; every creation has a role to accomplish:

Now he knew that every, thing that was produc'd anew must needs have some Producer. And from this contemplation, there arose in his Mind a sort of Impression of the Maker of that Form, tho' his Notion of him as yet was general and indistinct<sup>12</sup>

Hayy's evolution of contemplation takes a step further as he begins to seek for the spiritual forms. He puts the soul as an impulse on why certain things are created in such way: from different animals, to different plants, and even to the different elements from heat to cold to water and stone. He concludes that there must be a higher power behind all what he has seen so far, an originator of origins that should exist somewhere beyond time and space.

Continuing with Hayy's stages, the next one takes a step further up to the skies, he contemplates and observes the universe:

(...) and he observ'd it of all the Stars, and at all times. From whence - he concluded that the Heaven was of a Spherical Figure ; in which Opinion he was confirm'd, by observing the Return of the Sun, Moon and Stars to the East, after their Setting; and also, because they always appear'd to him of the same bigness.<sup>13</sup>

In the above quote, Hayy's devotion to the sky with its stars, moon, sun, and his contemplation of the structure of the universe, as well as astronomical questions which takes him to metaphysical dimensions. Hayy circles the island following the motion of the heavenly bodies that he sees in the sky. It is evident that Ibn Tufayl is referring to the practice of circling the Ka'ba. Furthermore, he concludes that this universe must have a creator. Ibn Tufayl was an astronomer, no wonder why such affiliations with the universe and its structure come to have an impact on Hayy's development.

The last stage of Hayy's life on the island happens approximately at his fifties. Hayy is described by Tufayl as he experiences his religious awakening. It is divided into three steps: the first step concerns his survival or simply his first years on the island, how he manages to adapt to the environment, as well as craft and use whatever he has in his disposal to secure his life. The second step involves the awareness that he develops in relation to other beings that surround him, but also even the objects and plants. This process makes Hayy not only to think that every single creation has a specific purpose to accomplish, but also the origins of these creations. A creator must have some sort of role to what Hayy is seeing; everything is created and animated by a higher and divine force. The third and last step relates to his meditative approach inside a cave and his mystical immersion that Ibn Tufayl describes:

Seventy thousand faces, and every face seventy thousand mouths, and every mouth seventy thousand tongues, which it praised, sanctified and glorified incessantly the essence of that one, true being.<sup>14</sup>

In the above quote, Ibn Tufayl describes this mystical experience and highlights Hayy's highest point, when it comes to contemplation and connecting with God through the spirit. Eventually, through these experiences, Hayy dedicates himself fully to God.

At this point of the tale, Ibn Tufayl seems to produce a character that has gone from a simple thought to thinking of what is beyond: about the self, the divine, how a character grows, but most importantly how to connect with God through self discipline and experience. Ibn Tufayl, however, introduces another character that plays a major role in Hayy's development: Absal, who is at disagreements with his friend Salaman on a nearby kingdom, decides to leave in search of solitude to meditate, and relate with the divine. He ventures to this island with no hope of finding anyone, because the island is remote, however, one day he encounters Hayy:

At last it happen'd, one time Hayy Ibn Yaqzan coming out to look for provision in the same place whither Asal was retired, they spy'd one another. Asal, for his part, did not question but that it was some religious person, who for the sake of solitary life had retir'd to that island, as he had done himself (...) <sup>15</sup>

The above quote shows the moment Hayy and Absal encounter each other for the first time. Hayy was surprised, but Absal runs away, as for him he did not want to disturb this man's meditations. Hayy pursue Absal not to hunt him down, but rather in a curious way to discover this man as he realizes that he has the same physical aspects as him, and it is the first time he sees such man that looks like him. The two further try to make contact, Absal was a man of knowledge, he tries different languages on Hayy but none of them seem to come with any result. The kind man Absal is, he decides to teach Hayy his language, tell him about the world he comes from, and how they all follow one religion which is Islam along with the religious teachings. Absal is amazed how a lonely almost savage man like Hayy knows so much about the divine, or simply God. Therefore, Absal contributes in enriching that knowledge about the divine, he starts giving Hayy accounts on what is given in the description of the divine world, the difference between paradise and hell, and the significance of the Judgment Day. All of these new teachings Hayy welcomes them in great attention and full acceptance, as well as the

fact that the lord sent a messenger whom Hayy believes in and affirms veracity in the divine mission.

## **b- Robinson Crusoe's Journey**

Defoe's Robinson Crusoe relates the physical journey of an English man named Robinson Crusoe. According to The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, physical journey is an act of travelling from one place to another<sup>16</sup>, especially when they are far apart. The main character has the passion of travelling in search of a different life and purpose.

(...) I consulted neither father or mother any more, nor so much as sent them word for it ; but leaving them to hear of it as they might, without asking God's blessing or my father's, without any consideration of circumstances or consequences, (...) <sup>17</sup>

In the above excerpt, Crusoe decides to go on a voyage all by himself without asking both God's and his parent's blessings. He decides to leave his country or his homeland in order to start a new life. Daniel Defoe is inspired by the mythical story of Jonah cited in the Bible: "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before me."<sup>18</sup> Robinson Crusoe's voluntarily defiance against his father is Just as Jonah when he defies God. Jonah is supposed to travel to Nineveh in order to prophesize the destruction of the city, but instead he takes the sea and faces disasters. In *Robinson Crusoe*, rather than remaining at home to study business, he decides to travel in the sea and faces disasters as well.

Although his family have strong faith in God and even the English society is dominated by religion or in general by the power of the church during his time, he has a lack of faith and he endeavours to change and to live his life away from all the social and religious restrictions.

Until the seventeenth century the individual was not conceived as wholly autonomous, but as an element in a picture which depends on divine persons, as well as on traditional institutions such as church and kingship for its secular patterns.<sup>19</sup>

We agree that during the seventeenth century, the English citizen or in general the European citizen is dominated and controlled by the supreme power of the Church. Daniel Defoe as a writer and a rebellious man, he revolted against the eighteenth century English society, which was restricted by the religious thinking, or more clearly, it was under the rule of the clergy. Defoe projects this idea through the main character he created. Crusoe's behaviour reflects Defoe's thoughts and opinions, not only Defoe, but many scholars and thinkers during the enlightenment period. According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, the "enlightenment" period in the eighteenth century was an important era in which many writers and scientists began to argue that science and reason were more important than religion and tradition.<sup>20</sup>

Many thinkers and philosophers during this period called for the freedom of speech, religious practices, as well as the importance of the individual, who has the right to think freely and to be independent from social restrictions. For instance, John Lock, Isaac Newton, and Voltaire questioned the traditional knowledge such as: the religious thinking and the dominance of the church. They also called for openness, investigation, and religious tolerance, which means the freedom of practicing other religions and beliefs in a country.<sup>21</sup> Behind the production of *Robinson Crusoe*, Defoe uses the main character and other characters such as his family to demonstrate some Enlightenment ideas, for instance, Crusoe's refusal of his society and the traditional life of his family, which is based upon religious thinking and traditions. *Robinson Crusoe* is a glance of Daniel Defoe's life, as they

both revolted against their family's pressures and restrictions to start their new life in search for their physical and spiritual comfort.

According to the theory of Joseph Campbell *The Hero with a thousand faces*, the restrictions and the pressure of family and society are introduced as *The Call to Adventure* in this novel, which means that the hero Crusoe starts his journey to complete his quest:

(...) I had for leaving my father's house and my native country, where I might be well introduced, and had prospect of raising my fortune by application and industry, with a life of ease and pleasure. He told me it was for men of desperate fortunes on one hand, or for aspiring, superior fortunes on the other, who went abroad upon adventures, (...) <sup>22</sup>

In the above quote, Crusoe is motivated to start his physical journey due to the pressure of his father who stands against his will, as well as the restrictions of society. It is limited by religion and oppresses the individual, particularly during the conflict of Puritanism which means according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, a member of a group of English Protestants of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries who regarded the reformation of the Church under Elizabeth I as incomplete, and sought to simplify and regulate forms of worship. <sup>23</sup>

Defoe himself had been born at a time when the Puritan Commonwealth had just collapsed at the Restoration, while Robinson Crusoe was written in the year of Salter's' Hall controversy, when, after the last hopes of Dissent in a compromise with the Anglican Church. <sup>24</sup>

We agree that *Robinson Crusoe* is written after the period of Puritanism in England, which endeavoured during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries to purify the Church of England. Furthermore, Puritans during this period have a desire to forbid and restrict society from some daily activities such as: dancing, theatres, etc.

Crusoe is motivated by his friend's words in the ship during his journey. He advises him to go back home and to abandon the idea of going to sea: "(...) he afterwards talked very gravely to me, exhorted me to go back to my father and to attempt providence to my ruin; told me I might see a visible and of heaven against me (...)"<sup>25</sup> In the previous quote, we see that Crusoe's friend advises him to go back home and to ask for his father's forgiveness and to continue his life in peace as he used to live. In Joseph Campbell's theory *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, it is interpreted as the hero is encouraged by the Wise Man:

For those who have not refused the call, the first encounter of the hero-journey is with a protective figure (often a little old crone or old man) who provides the adventurer with amulets against the dragon forces he is about to pass.<sup>26</sup>

In the above quote, the main character or the hero is motivated by another character who is considered as being wiser than him. The man advises him to go back home, Crusoe becomes more motivated to continue his journey: "As to going home, shame opposed the best notions that offered to my thoughts; and it immediately occurred to me how I should be laughed at among the neighbours."<sup>27</sup> In the previous quote, we see that Crusoe is reluctant to work with the advice of his fellow man and to go back home. He is afraid of facing society and even his family who will shame him. Diving deeper in the story we spot that Friday is one of the most important characters of Daniel Defoe's work, due to his impact on Crusoe's spiritual quest. According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, "spiritual" means relating to or affecting the human spirit or soul as opposed to material or physical things<sup>28</sup>, while "Quest" means a long or arduous search for something.<sup>29</sup>

This was the pleasantest year of all the life I led in this place; Friday began to talk pretty well, and understand the names of almost everything I had occasion to call for, and of every place I had to send him to, and talk a great deal to me; so that, in short, I began now to have some use for my tongue again, which indeed I had very occasion for before; that is to say, about speech.<sup>30</sup>



In the above quote, Crusoe seems more satisfied as he finds a friend with whom he can talk and share his life. Crusoe is suffering from loneliness and isolation; however, after the discovery of Friday in the island, he learns the importance of living in society and the importance of having a presence in life:

Robinson Crusoe is in one sense praise of the bourgeois virtues of individualism and private enterprise. But, more important, it celebrates the necessity of social living and the struggle of mankind through work to master nature.<sup>31</sup>

We concur that Defoe's use of Friday as a minor character that is discovered by Crusoe in the island, is important to show that human beings are not islands, they are created with the necessity to share their lives and to help each other in life in order to overcome their challenges and their sufferings. Crusoe, during his isolation in the island realizes how it is necessary to live in a society, so his encounter and experience with Friday teaches him how to feel happy and comfortable in the social life.

### **c- The Island: the Place of Self Discovery**

The setting in *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* plays a major role in Hayy's journey to discover himself. The island where Hayy was raised is the perfect place for life to prosper, but also it is not really that lifeless place. In fact, it provides conditions in which even a lonely inexperienced being such as Hayy can find the best formula to exploit his acquired knowledge throughout his life and reach a full potential. Still, Hayy's weakness and parentless birth makes him completely hopeless for a future in the island. He definitely needs someone there to care for him and raise him; his loneliness almost made him like the rest of the animals in the island; condemned to die.

“For this Island enjoys the most equable and perfect Temperature of all Places on the Earth, because it receives its Light from the highest possible Point in the Heavens

(...)”<sup>32</sup> In the previous quote, Ibn Tufayl provides a description of the island where Hayy spends his life. A place somewhere in the Indian equinoctial rich with life and remote no one inhabits in that island. Ibn Tufayl points at how this place has one of the best climates on earth. Later on, this description of perfect climate fits with the second story Tufayl provides in relation to Hayy’s birth: the perfect balance of this climate indicates that this island is a special place. In Joseph Campbell’s theory *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*: the hero passes the first threshold indicates the hero’s arrival at the special place where his adventure goes on:

With the personifications of his destiny to guide and aid him, the hero goes forward in his adventure until he comes to the "threshold guardian" at the entrance to the zone of magnified power.<sup>33</sup>

In the previous quote, Campbell reports the moment both the adventure and the story of the hero. He is now committed to his journey and there is no turning back. In Tufayl’s narrative, Hayy’s arrival or birth according to the second version of Hayy’s origins, signals the beginning of his adventure and quest towards the self discovery and spiritual fulfilment.

Ibn Tufayl’s use of such setting, a desolated remote island, emphasizes his ideas of solitude as a requisite for self development. Ibn Tufayl’s purpose is to offer the right way to thinking giving the absence of any social contact, he also points at how knowledge grows in an individual who is in harmony with nature.

The setting has also an important role in Crusoe’s physical journey. Crusoe begins realizing his religious sins. According to The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, a “Sin” is an immoral act considered to be against the divine law.<sup>34</sup> When Crusoe is stranded in the island, he thinks that God punishes him due to his disobedience of his parents and leaving them without asking neither their blessing nor God’s blessing. “I have already described my habitation, which was a tent under the side of a rock surrounded with a strong pale of posts and cables, but I might now rather call

it a wall.”<sup>35</sup> In the previous extract, Crusoe relies on himself and his abilities to challenge and to face the dangerous situations in which he finds himself within his isolation. First, he builds a habitation or a shelter which protects him from cold, heat, and wild beasts. In Joseph Campbell’s theory *The Hero with a Thousands Faces*, it is introduced as The Hero Passes the First Threshold, the hero enters his special world and starts his adventure. As we see, Crusoe come to realize that he is stranded in the island, for the first time he feels away from any human contact, and this pushes him immediately think about the necessities of survival such as: finding a shelter, or provide the necessary food.

We assume that Defoe uses the main character to show the interaction between nature and Crusoe. Robinson begins to interact with the island immediately when he realizes that he is isolated and cast away. The island teaches him to be independent through discovering himself and relying on his skills and abilities to face the hostile environment. Daniel Defoe transmits Enlightenment ideas through using the main character such as individualism. According to The Oxford Advanced Learner’s dictionary, “Individualism” is the belief that individual people in society have the right to make their own decisions, rather than be controlled by someone else.<sup>36</sup> Crusoe is an individual who finds himself free and away from any supreme forces which can control him and impose on him to act in a certain manner, this is the process by which he learns more about individual freedom and self discovery.

The island does not stop teaching Crusoe about interacting with nature. When Crusoe has spent days in the island, he comes to realize that he is obliged to learn how to adapt and use his reasoning to overcome his issues within the island.

And now I began to apply myself to make such necessary things as I found I most wanted, particularly a chair and a table; for without these I was not able to enjoy the few comforts I had in the world; I could not write or eat, or do several things, with so much pleasure without a table.<sup>37</sup>

In the above quote, Crusoe relies upon his reason and own determination to furnish his daily necessities. As we see, he is using observation and mathematics in order to face the hostile island and to overcome his difficulties.

The story shows how an ordinary, quite alone, is able to subdue nature to his own material purposes, and eventually to triumph over his physical environment. In the context of Crusoe's life on the island, rational and economic labour can be seen as the moral premise which underlines his character.<sup>38</sup>

We concur that behind the production of *Robinson Crusoe*, Defoe transmits the idea of self reliance. Crusoe is a character who gains his knowledge through the experience of reason, the role of experience and evidence especially mind perception, plays a major role in order to build a complex set of knowledge.

Robinson Crusoe's Journey from his hometown until he finds himself stranded in the island is a physical journey. It puts him in some difficulties and makes his path easier to embark on his inner journey to achieve both philosophical and religious quests.

The setting in both works is identical; Defoe seems to use a similar formula of unknown uninhabited island which is the same as Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*. However, the only contrast here is that Crusoe is an experienced adult in life, he lived enough to know the outside world, whereas Hayy is just a child and clueless about the world around him. He is brought to life and found himself right after in an unknown desolate island. It is clear that Crusoe has an advantage; his only task is to survive on his own, based on what knowledge he owns, but Hayy was lucky enough to be raised by a doe that fed him and took care of him.

Both Ibn Tufayl and Daniel Defoe emphasize the struggle for survival as a basic fact of life. Hayy and Crusoe find themselves in situations that overwhelm even the most capable men with resources and experience. But their logical resolutions keep them from falling into the trap of hopelessness and complete despair, which may resolve in unexpected fate for both of them which is death. Both Crusoe and Hayy are in despair; especially Crusoe who has no clue on what to do next. Even Hayy as a child, he is constantly overwhelmed by the world around him. However, this situation never means the end for the two.

Guided by their reason, Hayy and Crusoe demonstrate what two isolated men with no exterior help at all can do. Crusoe comes back to his reason and decides to do everything in order to survive. He starts searching the island and finds fresh water and an inexhaustible supply of food and he further builds a home in the island. Hayy is able to harness his environment, based on his experiences throughout his early years of life in it and what he learned by his own mind. He was forced to the path of creativeness as he learns from his small interactions with the world; he is able to build tools to hunt and construct a shelter; therefore, assuring his survival all within an island filled with so much obstacles.

#### **d- The Anxiety of Influence**

In Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* (1169-1182) the influence is apparent upon reading specifically Defoe's work. Among the six revisionary ratios that Bloom suggested is **Askesis**; Bloom defines this concept as a movement of self-purgation which intends the attainment of a state of solitude, the writer tries to ensure his individuality by adding and stressing his own ideas, trying to separate himself from the latter writer.

In our case, both works share common aspects such as: the two protagonists and their quests for spiritual comfort in terms of both religious and non religious sides, the setting which are the two isolated islands that function as an antagonists full of drawbacks in both works, and the overall theme of spirituality. The precursor Ibn Tufayl transmits the ideas of self discovery, reliance, as well as reasoning. The latter poet Daniel Defoe is influenced by the precursor author as he reuses his ideas, however, he appends and envelopes his own new ideas such as: British Supremacy as Crusoe represents Great Britain by his need for material goods and his usage of religion as a tool for his own benefit. Defoe lives in a time when materialism was at its peak and still raising. Crusoe symbolizes Great Britain when he tries to build the perfect place in the island, and the way he does that is on the British ways and their constant greed. An example of such greedy qualities is seen when Crusoe shipwrecks at the island: “upon second thought, I took it away, and wrapping all this in a piece of canvas”<sup>39</sup> this quote shows Crusoe’s greed in an attempt to gather all the money from the shipwreck, despite knowing that it will be of no use in such an isolated island:

The use of money on the island is absolutely non-existent, yet Crusoe cannot simply walk away from such a great treasure he has grown accustomed to taking advantage of every situation he is in.<sup>40</sup>

In the previous quote, Crusoe is submerged by his natural habits of accumulating money and power; it also demonstrates how Crusoe is such an addict for money. Despite the situation or the circumstances Crusoe is in, he cannot resist his temptation for gathering such treasures.

Another idea that manifests in Defoe’s work is the idea of otherness, it is apparent when Crusoe makes an acquaintance with Friday:

(...) I understood him in many things and let him know I was very well pleased with him; in a little time I began to speak and teach him to speak to me; and first, I made him know his name should be Friday, which was the day I saved his life; I taught him to say “Master”.<sup>41</sup>

In the above quote, we see that Crusoe gradually teaches Friday a lot of things, however there is this idea of “Otherness”. To assist our claim; Crusoe took Friday as an inferior person, taught him to dress, to cook, to eat food, and to drink goats’ milk. He made him forget and abandon his traditions and civilized him. In addition, Crusoe converts him into Christianity. It is evident what Crusoe did is a good thing considering that Friday was nowhere a civilized person that lives up to the modern man, however, Crusoe quickly asserts his superiority by telling Friday to call him Master.

## **Conclusion**

Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* and Ibn Tufayl’s *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* explores the spiritual quest through the journey of their main characters. Crusoe and Hayy go on a physical journey that contributed to the achievement of their major quest. Both Daniel Defoe and Ibn Tufayl inspire their ideas from religious books. Defoe inspires from the mythical stories of the Bible in portraying the journey of Robinson Crusoe in the deserted island, while Ibn Tufayl takes inspiration from the mythical stories of the prophets cited in the Quran. Daniel Defoe uses the main character of his novel *Robinson Crusoe* to transmit his voice and to criticize the English as well as the European society and the traditional knowledge which limits the minds. Through his novel, Defoe creates a character who goes against the social and the religious system to achieve his quest, while Ibn Tufayl uses also the main character of his novel to challenge the traditional way of thinking in the Islamic world during the twelfth century to show that everything is based upon reason even religion is based upon rationality. People should not imitate and follow the same religion as their parents and ancestors; however, they should use their minds to understand its deep message. Even if Ibn Tufayl died in 1185 his ideas of self reliance and reasoning never died,

he influences generations of European Writers especially during the Enlightenment period, due to massive impact of Tufayl's work in that era. In addition, this era is known for the practice of reasoning by many thinkers such as Daniel Defoe who reappropriates Tufayl's ideas to write his first novel Robinson Crusoe.



## End Notes

<sup>1</sup>Oxford Learner's Dictionary, s.v. "Quest", "Journey", accessed December 2, 2020, <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/journey/quest>

<sup>2</sup>Fulton, *The History of Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, 51.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 43

<sup>4</sup>Lamia Mohamed Saleh, *Robinson Crusoe and "Hayy Bin Yaqzan": A Comparative Study (Tufail, Defoe)*, 80.

<sup>5</sup>Shakir, (translation version of) AL Quran Surah I-Qasas Verse 28:7.

<sup>6</sup>Merriam-Webster, s.v. "Hero", accessed December 2, 2020. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hero>

<sup>7</sup>Estés P. Clarissa., introduction to *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*, by Joseph Campbell, 46.

<sup>8</sup>Fulton, *The History of Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, 45.

<sup>9</sup>Clarissa, introduction, 67.

<sup>10</sup>Fulton, *The History of Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, 66

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 61.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 92.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 98.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 149.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 160.

<sup>16</sup>Oxford Learner's Dictionary, s.v, "Journey". Accessed December 2, 2020, [https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/journey\\_1](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/journey_1)

<sup>17</sup>Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 12

<sup>18</sup>Jonah 3:2.

<sup>19</sup>Watt, *The Rise of The Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding*, 87.

<sup>20</sup>Oxford Learner's Dictionary, s.v, "Enlightenment", accessed December 2, 2020. [https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/american\\_english/enlightenment#:~:text=enlightenment-,noun,the%20cause%20of%20the%20accident.](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/american_english/enlightenment#:~:text=enlightenment-,noun,the%20cause%20of%20the%20accident.)

<sup>21</sup>Wikipedia. 2020. "Religious Tolerance". Last Modified February 6, 2021. [https://simple.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious\\_tolerant](https://simple.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_tolerant)

<sup>22</sup>Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 09.

- <sup>23</sup>Oxford Learner's Dictionary, s.v, "*Puritanism*", accessed December 2, 2020. <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/puritanism#:~:text=%E2%80%8B-,Puritanism,%E2%80%8Bvery%20strict%20moral%20attitudes>
- <sup>24</sup>Watt, *The Rise of The Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding*, 85.
- <sup>25</sup>Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 19.
- <sup>26</sup>Clarissa, introduction, 63.
- <sup>27</sup> Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 20.
- <sup>28</sup>Oxford Learner's Dictionary, s.v, "*Spiritual*", accessed December3, 2020. [https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/spiritual\\_1](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/spiritual_1)
- <sup>29</sup>Oxford Learner's Dictionary, s.v, "*Quest*", accessed December 3, 2020. [https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/quest\\_1#:~:text=%2Fkwest%2F-,%2Fkwest%2F,off%20in%20quest%20of%20adventure](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/quest_1#:~:text=%2Fkwest%2F-,%2Fkwest%2F,off%20in%20quest%20of%20adventure).
- <sup>30</sup>Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 210.
- <sup>31</sup>Kettle, *Critics on Defoe and Robinson Crusoe*, 2.
- <sup>32</sup>Fulton, *The History of Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, 39.
- <sup>33</sup>Clarissa, introduction, 71.
- <sup>34</sup>Oxford Learner's Dictionary, s.v, "*Sin*", accessed December 3, 2020. [https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/sin\\_1#:~:text=%5Bcountable%5D%20an%20offence%20against%20God,a%20religious%20or%20moral%20law](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/sin_1#:~:text=%5Bcountable%5D%20an%20offence%20against%20God,a%20religious%20or%20moral%20law)
- <sup>35</sup>Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 70.
- <sup>36</sup>Oxford Learner's Dictionary, s.v, "*Individualism*", accessed December 3, 2020. <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/individualism#:~:text=%E2%80%8Bthe%20belief%20that%20individual,be%20controlled%20by%20the%20government>
- <sup>37</sup>Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 70.
- <sup>38</sup>Watt, *Myths of Modern Individualism: Faust, Don Quixote, Don Juan, Robinson Crusoe*, 151.
- <sup>39</sup>Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 60.
- <sup>40</sup>Rabia, *The Writer's Journey into Solitude: Self-discovery in Hayy Ibn Yaqzan, Robinson Crusoe and Friday*, 7.
- <sup>41</sup>Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 203.

## **Chapter II**

# **The Spiritual Journey of the Main Characters Hayy Ibn Yaqzan and Robinson Crusoe**

## **Introduction**

In this chapter, we will explore the spiritual dimension of both main characters. We will also provide how Ibn Tufayl and Daniel Defoe take their characters through the process of transformation, or in other words, the character growth. This chapter relies on Joseph Campbell's theory *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, both Crusoe and Hayy are massively present in both works, despite the fact that they are isolated and alone from any societal contact. Loneliness is a common theme used in both Tufayl's and Defoe's narratives to show the importance of isolation in discovering the divine, and that an individual does not really need people to connect with God, or simply to practise his religious principles.

## **From Isolation to Self Discovery**

### **a- Hayy Ibn Yaqzan Spiritual Journey**

In *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, Hayy's self discipline unfolds self discovery; he is now able to distinguish between what makes a soul distracted, and what worsens it. He limits himself to actions that provide him food and safety; he eats only the sufficient amount he needs in order to survive, and he gives himself the choice of never hurting an animal or a plant, as he believes that everything that is created has a purpose. "Then he paus'd on the examining of these Forms which he knew before, one by one, and found that they were produc'd a new, and that they must of necessity be beholden to some efficient Cause."<sup>1</sup> In this quote, Hayy successfully attains the knowledge about the physical world through numerous observations and reflections about his surroundings. Therefore, he now switches to the realm of the spiritual mastery, and seeks proof of the existence of God. Hayy starts to practise discipline of mind and body in which he eventually reaches a state of ecstasy where his intellect merges with the divine, and finally be able to perceive things that he has never seen before.

(...) the eponymous Hayy Ibn Yaqzan reasons from the diversity of the world to its wholeness and from the particular objects of sensory perception to an abstract epistemology of universal forms. He infers the existence of God as both the necessary, primary and non-corporeal cause of the universe and its prime mover.<sup>2</sup>

We agree that Hayy's development starts experiencing a shift towards the sensory world rather than the physical one. Ibn Tufayl unfolds around the idea of gradual awakening, or in other words; how a mind that grows in uncertainty is able to achieve such philosophical insight about the soul and the connection to the divine.

Hayy concludes that being clean matters, as he decides to imitate the existent necessities by approximating the behavior of the celestial beings that rotate in the night sky in complete solitude and silence. The requirement of solitude in this process is a direct influence of the Islamic thinkers on Tufayl, the Sufi tradition that emphasizes reasoning along with nature leading to the culmination of the individual purpose, or the Mystical union. Sufism or "Tasawwuf" in Arabic is related to the "Islamic Mysticism". According to the Oxford Learner's Dictionary, "Sufism" is the beliefs and the practices of a Muslim group who try to become united with God through prayer and meditation by living a very simple life. Those who practise Sufism are regarded as "Sufis". It has an impact on the west mainly influencing various forms of spirituality.<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, the Sufi tradition is shown when Hayy decides to separate himself from the sensory world and pursue the mystic ecstasy. He does so by making circular motions until he loses the sense of imagination, a reference to one of the practices of Sufi dervishes that according to Ibn Tufayl is an obligation, if anyone should fulfill his duties to God, as it is a necessary step if an individual should perfect his soul.<sup>4</sup> In the cave that relates to Hayy's supreme Ordeal based on Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*: "When he arrives at the nadir of the mythological round, he undergoes a supreme ordeal and gains his reward".<sup>5</sup> in this quote, the supreme ordeal represents the most difficult challenge that the hero faces in

his journey; however, it is also the key to the long awaited reward the hero searches for. In the cave, Hayy experiences the highest amount of spiritual awakening, but also almost loses hope and gets even depressed that he might never find what this divine power is. This cave gives the perfect image of inner exploration.

(...) this he could reach by shutting himself off completely from all objects of the senses including his own self, and concentrating his thought and devotion, alone and without interference or rivalry, on the Being whose Existence is Necessary. In doing so Hayy suspended his disembodied powers, merged with the divine essence, and could finally achieve lasting intimacy and intense joy.<sup>6</sup>

In the above quote, Hayy is overwhelmed by his experience in the cave; Hayy decides to dedicate himself entirely to God by separating himself from all what is physical and fully devotes to the Divine. He comes to this understanding without any relation to a specific religion or act of worshiping. It is a state of full awareness that he decides to never leave again.

Hayy is now reborn as a man with deep insights about the world and its connections to God. However, Hayy's previous encounter with Absal is crucial in many ways: Absal teaches him a language that enables the two of them to communicate. The exchange of ideas between the two reveals that they agree on important questions that occupy both of them such as: the deeper meaning of religion, and the need to a comprehensive understanding of God.<sup>7</sup>

So Hayy Ibn Yaqzan began to teach them, and explain the mysteries of wisdom to them, but so soon as e'er he began to raise his discourse above external things a little, and to incalculates that the contrary whereof had been settled in their minds; they began to withdraw themselves from him, and their minds had an abhorrence for what he spake.<sup>8</sup>

The above quote relates to Hayy and Absal returning to the Island where Absal comes from. Upon landing from the ship, they enter the Kingdom's city and Absal starts giving account on the mysterious man Hayy, and how he is able to connect with God and explore religion in total seclusion. Hayy proceeds to explain to the people his experiences and how he achieves

his awareness of God through contemplation in his world. However, they immediately reject his ideas, mostly because they cannot understand his complex imagery, or its deeper meanings; therefore, they considered Hayy as a heretic. According to Campbell's theory, this return is considered as the Hero's return with the elixir:

The full round, the norm of the monomyth, requires that the hero shall now begin the labor of bringing the runes of wisdom, the Golden Fleece, or his sleeping princess, back into the kingdom of humanity, where the boon may redound to the renewing of the community, the nation, the planet, or the ten thousand worlds.<sup>9</sup>

In the above quote, Campbell highlights the return of the hero towards a specific place, bringing with him all kinds of trophies such as: knowledge, wisdom, and even riches. The hero then may face rejections, or may not get his message delivered.

Eventually, Hayy concludes that those people seek the everyday material riches and never try to approach the understanding of God in a rational thought. Hayy therefore abandons the hope of changing people and decides to return with Absal to his original deserted island where they spend the rest of their lives in seclusion and contemplation of God.

## **b- Robinson Crusoe's Philosophical and Religious Quest**

When it comes to Robinson Crusoe's philosophical Quest, it is divided into two words: "philosophy" which means according to The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, the study of the nature and meaning of the universe and the human life.<sup>10</sup> The "Quest" is a long search for something, especially for some quality such as happiness.<sup>11</sup> Defoe summarizes the philosophical quest of Robinson Crusoe in his isolation:

My thoughts were now wholly employed about securing myself against either savages if any should appear, or wild beasts, if any were in the island; and I had many thoughts of the method how to do this, and what kind of dwelling to make; (...)<sup>12</sup>

In the previous quote, Crusoe is isolated in the island away from any human being, there is no one that can help him, and therefore his loneliness awakens his sense of complete solitude, which eventually forces him to act accordingly in order to survive in this unknown world:

(...) As well as individualism, because until the end of the seventeenth century the individual was not conceived as wholly autonomous, but as an element in a picture which depended on divine persons for its meaning, as well as on traditional institutions such as Church and kingship.<sup>13</sup>

We argue that Defoe portrays the individuality of Crusoe over his family when he goes to the sea. Isolation and loneliness pushes him to be self reliant and to struggle against the hostile environment to survive. He learns how to make things and tools, such as: making a table, building a shelter, and proper hunting gear to hunt in the island. His loneliness helps him to discover things about himself he did not know when he used to live in society.

So I went to work; and here I must needs observe that as reason is the substance and original of the mathematics, so by stating and squaring everything by reason, and by making the most rational judgment of things, every man may be in time master of every mechanic art.<sup>14</sup>

In the above quote, we see that Crusoe reaches his philosophical quest through using his reason to face his own drawbacks during his isolation. He becomes a man of reason who relies on both his mind and senses to survive and to adapt with the difficulties he meets in the remote island. “(...) for as to reason or sense, inasmuch as it alone makes us men and distinguishes us from the beasts, I prefer to believe that it exists whole and entire in each of us.”<sup>15</sup> We deduce that Defoe transmits some ideas of the Enlightenment thinkers such as the ideas of the French philosopher René Descartes, who believes that knowledge comes from Reason and doubt. For him, the senses are mistaken when evaluating the outside world rather than the mind that cannot be wrong. Daniel Defoe projects the ideas of René Descartes through portraying Crusoe in the island as a man who is free and independent from any other human being. Furthermore, he is away from any supreme power which supports him to survive while facing the harshness of nature such as: finding a shelter and food or in general the necessities of life



which are easily accessible for him when he used to live in a society. In the island, Crusoe finds himself alone in nature where he acts according to his own decisions to build a shelter and to guarantee his own food to keep himself alive. He does all this through relying on his own reason and his physical skills. Defoe transmits the philosophical quest of Crusoe through portraying him first in the society. He shows that living in a group or being surrounded by people makes a person rarely self reliant and rational to stand against difficulties and drawbacks. In contrast, being away from any human contact or any civilization, loneliness and isolation makes a person self reliant and rational. As we see exactly in Crusoe's situation, loneliness and solitude help him to achieve his philosophical quest through making him a self reliant and rational person. He relies on his own reason and skills to learn new things, as well as to face the hostile environment which threatens his own survival.

In *Robison Crusoe*, this inner exploration is referred to as the religious quest. It is the orientation of the whole person, "mind, heart, and body" to what is ultimately real.<sup>16</sup> Crusoe's religious quest is achieved in the island while he is isolated. Crusoe does not have really strong faith in God when he used to live in society and even during his first days in the island.

Daniel Defoe believes in the Noble savage, which is according to Oxford Learner's Dictionary, a word used in the past to refer in a positive way to a single person or a group of people who did not live in an advanced human society.<sup>17</sup> Thomas Hobbs and his followers believe that man is at base good, however civilization corrupts him.

(...) began to awake, and I began to reproach myself with my past life, in which I had so evidently, by uncommon wickedness, provoked the justice of God to lay me under uncommon strokes, and to deal with me in so vindictive a manner.<sup>18</sup>

In the above quote, we see that Crusoe is realizing that he is a sinner. He commits his first sin when he has disobeyed his parents and refuses to follow and to listen to the advice of his father who endeavours to convince him to stay at home and to not travel across the sea.

During his isolation, his sinful soul rises to the surface and begins judging himself as well as trying to correct his life and to atone for his own mistakes. “If man is left...to his own notions and conducts, he would certainly turn out the most preposterous of human being. The influence of prejudice, authority...would stifle nature in him and substitute nothing.”<sup>19</sup> We see that Defoe uses the remote isolated island to show how society corrupts human beings and makes them greedy, as well as prevents them to feel the greatness of God through living their lives in an erroneous way. He shows that Crusoe is born with the potential for goodness; however, society as well as civilization makes him sinful in a sense that he disobeys his parents and even God. When Crusoe finds himself mourned and alone in the island, his good part begins to rise particularly when he starts revisiting his past life and he comes to realize that he is a sinner and God has delivered, forsake, and guided him to this isolated island in order to change his life and repent for his previous sins.

(...) I have difficulties to struggle with, too great for even nature itself to support, and no assistance, no help, no comfort, no advice. Then I cried “Lord be my help for I am in great distress.” This was the first prayer if I may call it so, that I had made for many years.<sup>20</sup>

In the above quote, we see that Crusoe’s realization of his sins reaches its peak when he is fevered and dreams of angels asking him to repent or he will die. He feels alone and away from any humans who can help him, thus he comes to realize that only God can help him in his isolation.

According to Joseph Campbell’s theory, this is introduced as *The Hero endures the supreme Ordeal* which means that the hero is facing a dangerous situation and potentially even death. As we see in *Robinson Crusoe*, the main character is in an intense situation facing death as is sick and fevered and his only salvation is his repentance. “Robinson Crusoe is a great religious poem, showing that God is found where men are absent.”<sup>21</sup> In this quote, Defoe’s

use of isolated and Remote Island is to portray how Crusoe's repentance and achievement of his religious quest.

It is hard to feel the power of God over people when living in society. People tend to run after the physical world rather than searching to understand the spiritual world. When Crusoe used to live in society even if he was a Christian, however, he did not use to be a good religious person full of faith. Defoe shows that society corrupts people and it is not important to oblige people to believe in a certain religion, because religion is not a matter of imitation and obligation, but it is a matter of contemplation. Crusoe in the island achieves his religious quest and he becomes a practicing Christian particularly after his dream as he turns his intention to reading verses of the Bible which speaks about repentance:

(...) The first words that occurred to me were these, "Call on me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver, and thou shalt glorify me." The words were very apt to my case, and made some impressions upon my thoughts at the time of reading them.<sup>22</sup>

In the above quote, we see that Robinson Crusoe after revising his life he realizes that he is a sinner who is in the obligation to repent as soon as possible. He starts reading the Bible after his dream and feels comfortable and guided. He comes to realize that the spiritual deliverance is more important than physical rescution from the island, because it is due to his isolation and loneliness that he achieves his spiritual quest and he repents from all his mistakes.

(...) and sat down upon the ground, looking out upon the sea, which was just before me, and very calm and smooth. As I sat here, some such thoughts as these occurred to me: what is this earth and sea, of which I have seen so much? Whence is it produced, and what am I, and all the other creatures, wild and tame, human and brutal, whence are we? <sup>23</sup>

In the above quote, we see Robinson Crusoe after his contemplation in the island; he realizes that God is really the only creator and the only ruler of this mysterious world. During his stay in the island until his return to England he changes his way of thinking and his inner soul

from being bad and selfish into being a person of good will, as well as a good Christian full of faith and spiritual comfort. In Campbell's theory it is introduced as *The Return with the Elixir*, which means that the hero returns back to his ordinary world with all what he learns from his journey. As we see in *Robinson Crusoe*, the main character returns to his ordinary world as a new person full of faith and wisdom.

Daniel Defoe's work shares some similarities with Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*. The main character Hayy is abandoned by his mother due to the harsh conditions that pushes her to throw her son into the river. Both heroes in Defoe's and Tufayl's work are stimulated to leave their original settings because of whether the limitations or the fetters of both family and society. Both protagonists in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* are stranded in an isolated island where they face the difficult conditions of the hostile environment such as: searching for food and shelter to protect themselves from wild beasts as well as from heat and cold. Both Hayy and Crusoe reach their religious quest in the island while they were isolated. As we see, both Ibn Tufayl and Daniel Defoe try to explain that loneliness and isolation are important factors that helps their protagonists to achieve their religious quest through stimulating their brains to think and to contemplate in the island. Furthermore, a general likeness can be seen in both *Robinson Crusoe* and *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*. For instance, *Robinson Crusoe*'s book reflects in some parts of the story the life and the ideas of Daniel Defoe as Crusoe rebels against his father who wants him to be a lawyer and he chooses a special path for him to be a merchant. In *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*'s story we also see that it reflects the conceptions of Ibn Tufayl who uses Hayy as an isolated and lonely character to show that religion is not a matter of imitation, however it is a matter of thinking and understanding through contemplation. In both works the main characters meet with another character in the island, for instance, in Daniel Defoe's work Crusoe meets Friday and in Ibn

Tufayl's story Hayy meets with Absal, thus both Absal and Friday help the heroes to face not even their loneliness and isolation, but also to leave the island and to return to their homeland.

## **Conclusion**

*Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* and *Robinson Crusoe* experience their character growth as well as their religious awakening individually. Ibn Tufayl relies on the Sufi teachings such as the "Tassawuf" or "Islamic mysticism" to demonstrate the transition that happens to Hayy from the physical world that is the island, towards the sensory world such as: his spiritual experience and ecstasy relying on the element of solitude. He achieves that by circular motions following the celestial brings in the sky, and experiencing ecstasy in the cave further sharpening his knowledge about the divine. This ecstasy translates to the deepest spiritual connections to God, furthermore, Hayy devotes himself fully to the divine. In *Robinson Crusoe*, the same thing is apparent as Crusoe unfolds his way towards his inner transformation: both philosophically in terms of using his mind and reason to overcome obstacles and provide himself whatever is necessary to survive in an unknown hostile environment. Furthermore, he repents when he restores his faith after realizing that he was a sinner by reflecting in the island as he convinces himself that he must be rescued spiritually. Eventually, he devotes himself to Christianity and worshipping God. Solitude is the common element that is emphasized and shared by both authors to show their heroes' state of mind.

## End Notes

<sup>1</sup>Fulton, *The History of Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, 93.

<sup>2</sup>Rabia, *The Writer's Journey into Solitude: Self-discovery in Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, Robinson Crusoe and Friday, 11.

<sup>3</sup>Oxford Learner's Dictionary, s.v, "Sufism", accessed December 6, 2020.  
<https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/sufism#:~:text=%5Bunco%20untable%5D,Topics%20Religion%20and%20festivalsc2>

<sup>4</sup>Hawi, *Islamic Naturalism and Mysticism*, 239.

<sup>5</sup>Clarissa, introduction, 227.

<sup>6</sup>Hawi, *Islamic Naturalism and Mysticism*, 239.

<sup>7</sup>Guenther, *Ibn Tufayl on Learning and Spirituality without Prophets and Scriptures*

<sup>8</sup>Fulton, *The History of Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, 172.

<sup>9</sup>clarissa, introduction, 179.

<sup>10</sup>Oxford Learner's Dictionary, s.v, "Philosophy", accessed December 6, 2020.  
[https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/american\\_english/philosophy#:~:text=philosophy-,noun,philosophy%20a%20degree%20in%20philosophy](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/american_english/philosophy#:~:text=philosophy-,noun,philosophy%20a%20degree%20in%20philosophy)

<sup>11</sup>Oxford Learner's Dictionary, s.v, "Quest", accessed December 6, 2020.  
[https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/quest\\_1?q=Quest](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/quest_1?q=Quest)

<sup>12</sup>Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 61.

<sup>13</sup>Watt, *The Rise of The Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding*, 87.

<sup>14</sup>Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 70.

<sup>15</sup>Descartes, *Discourse On The Method Conducting One's Reason well And For Seeking The Truth In The Sciences*, 2.

<sup>16</sup>Thatamanil as cited McEntee, *The Religious Quest As Transformative Journey: Interspiritual Religious Belonging And The Problem Of Religious Depth*, 617.

<sup>17</sup>Oxford Learner's Dictionary, s.v, "Noble Savage", accessed December 6, 2020.  
<https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/noble-savage#:~:text=noble%20savage-,noun,in%20an%20advanced%20human%20society>

<sup>18</sup>Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 92.

<sup>19</sup>Rousseau as cited in Cameron, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau – We are Good by Nature but Corrupted by Society*.

<sup>20</sup>Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 93.

<sup>21</sup>Dublin University Magazine, *Critics on Defoe and Robinson Crusoe*, 2.

<sup>22</sup>Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 95.

<sup>23</sup>Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 93.

## General Conclusion

This dissertation explored the spiritual quest in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* (1169-1182). Relying on the theory of Joseph Campbell *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (1949), we have investigated the main characters' journey whether physically or spiritually that eventually transformed them. Furthermore, we have relied on the theory of Harold Bloom *The Anxiety of Influence* (1973) to highlight the influence of Ibn Tufayl's work over Daniel Defoe, and how Defoe attempts to separate himself from Tufayl.

In the first chapter, we have discussed the issue of the two different journeys of the main characters that forced them to leave their original homelands. We have relied on Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, to explore the different steps that metamorphosed each one of them to achieve his quest. In *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, despite the fact that the main character Hayy is just an infant, he undergoes an unexpected journey to an unknown island where he is raised by a doe that nurtured him. Hayy grows a consciousness that enabled him to seek answers for the origin of the world he is living in; his constant contemplation transitioned him to the spiritual journey.

In *Robinson Crusoe*, the main character Crusoe starts his journey from his hometown until he finds himself stranded in an isolated island. We have highlighted the starting point of each character's journey, and how they eventually find themselves stranded in their own respective islands. We explored the process through which they developed from loneliness and confusion to the self relying men they are. Both Robinson and Hayy challenged the difficulties of the islands that functioned as their antagonist in the two narratives. We have deduced that Ibn



Tufayl and Daniel Defoe project the issues of their societies, this is apparent in their novels as these issues pushed the main characters into their quests. In addition, we relied on Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence* to show how Defoe tries to distinct himself from Tufayl's work by including ideas such as British Supremacy and otherness.

In the second chapter, we have explored the spiritual dimension of both characters. We also explored how Defoe and Tufayl take them through a process of growth. Tufayl relied on the teachings of the Sufi traditions such as solitude and Islamic mysticism in general, which are necessary to explore the divine. Daniel Defoe portrays the philosophical quest of Crusoe: individualism and reasoning are features that Robinson uses to survive and reflect in the island, realizing how important a spiritual salvation is before an actual one from the real world that shapes Crusoe's inner transformation.

Throughout this dissertation, we have reflected on how both Daniel Defoe and Ibn Tufayl use their characters to project their own ideas. Both authors seem to reject society when it comes to discovering the self, and isolation serves as a better method or drive to attain spiritual fulfillment.

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