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**INTIMATIONS OF MORTALITY IN THE FICTION
OF DANIEL DEFOE: A DESCRIPTION OF THE MARGINAL**

An attempt to see the rise of the English novel in the context of the literary representation of death would place it somewhere in between the great traditions of death exploitation. It is preceded by Elizabethan and Stuart tragedies full of death, which becomes their "chief dramatic resource"¹ and the presentation of which may, in some cases, be seen as an echo, a reworking of a very potent medieval concept of the Dance of Death². The seventeenth century metaphysical poetry continues to resort to the *Dance Macabre* motifs, evident especially in the concentration on the carnal side of life, the role of which was to stress the evanescence of human existence.

The middle of the eighteenth century saw the rise of the tendencies which resulted in the emergence of the graveyard poetry saturated with themes of human mortality and cemetery images. Before the coming of the next great death-relishing epoch – the Victorian period with its notorious indulgence in death-bed scenes and its painful spiritual anxieties – the emergence of the novel in the beginning of the eighteenth century brings with it a markedly subdued treatment of the motif of death.

For Daniel Defoe (1660–1731) – a writer credited with being the father of the English novel – death is a very common and a very frequent phenomenon inseparably connected with the vicissitudes of his characters' lives. Yet, paradoxically enough, commenting upon Defoe's presentation of eschatological problems, Virginia Woolf will say: "Death does not exist"³.

The present paper is an attempt to discuss the treatment of death and its function in Defoe's three most important novels – *The Life and Strange*

¹ Th. Spencer, *Death and Elizabethan Tragedy*, Cambridge 1936, Harvard University Press, p. 65.

² I. Janicka-Świdorska, *Dance in Drama. Studies in English Renaissance and Modern Theatre*, Łódź 1992, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego.

³ V. Woolf, *The Common Reader. Second Series*, The Hogarth Press, London 1945, p. 55.

and *Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (1719), *The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders* (1722), *Roxana, or the Fortunate Mistress* (1724), and in the unique *Journal of the Plague Year* (1722) – “perhaps the most convincing re-creation of an historical event ever written”⁴.

Benjamin Boyce in his article on “The Question of Emotion in Defoe” concentrates on fear as the main driving force in Defoe’s novels. *Robinson Crusoe*, he says, “is loaded with fear”⁵, the power of *Roxana* “derives from the emotion of fear”⁶, *Moll Flanders* interests us by its “evocation of some sort of fear”⁷. Among the variety of dangers with which the characters are threatened Boyce does not mention death. However, on detailed analysis, death seems to be one of the principle sources of the fear which seizes the characters. Death terrifies Defoe’s protagonists not as the end of life, but as the beginning of afterlife. To understand why this sort of fear could be so unsettling and strong it is vital to stress that, while the Puritan rejection of the *contemptus mundi* tradition resulted in a concentration on the perfection of the earthly phase of existence, in relation to death this attitude could be boiled down to the statement: “The godly are truly happy both in life and death: the wicked in neither”⁸. Additionally, the Reformation brought in its train the removal of the doctrine of Purgatory which imposed additional strains on the dying sinner. Those who at their demise had reasons to deplore their former conduct and hideous sins, realized that they deserved punishment and eternal damnation at the hands of a wrathful God.

Garrett Stewart has remarked that “before Dickens the psychology of death as an introspective moment ... was simply not crucial to the delineation of the fictional character”⁹ but actually there are several examples in Defoe’s novels where the fear of the afterlife is so powerful that it exerts changes on the reprobates. The power of fear is derived from the fact that whenever death approaches Defoe’s characters, they are never prepared for it from the religious point of view. The self-examination which results from the fearful prospects of the afterlife can be brought about when the character is either placed himself in the imminence of death or witnesses the death of another.

⁴ W. Allen, *The English Novel. A Short Critical History*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth 1976, p. 41.

⁵ B. Boyce, “The Question of Emotion in Defoe”, [in:] *Daniel Defoe. A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. M. Byrd, New Jersey 1976, Prentice-Hall, Inc., p. 47.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 48.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 50.

⁸ D. E. Stannard, *The Puritan Way of Death*, New York 1977, Oxford University Press, p. 26.

⁹ G. Stewart, *Death sentences: Styles of Dying in British Fiction*, Cambridge, Mass. 1984, Harvard University Press, p. 9.

The very first experience Robinson Crusoe undergoes after leaving his safe middle-class environment without his father's consent or blessing is a storm during which he nearly gets drowned. Fearing the approaching "bitterness of death", he reflects upon his disobedience and sees in the storm "the judgement of heaven"¹⁰ for the breach of duty to God and to his father. The abating of the sea, however, allows him to forget all his apprehensions and break the solemn promises he had made. This storm is followed by another one during which the fear of punishment becomes even stronger: "I was in tenfold more horror of mind upon account of my former convictions [...] than I was at death itself" (*R. C.*, p. 12). Again an oath to reform his life is sworn at the moment of experiencing the deadly terror; however, as soon as the danger is over, the ensuing sense of security, the dread of being ridiculed at home and, above all, a strong call for the sea, make Robinson forget all his former apprehensions and return to his former ways. Yet, although this experience does not leave a permanent mark on his personality or future conduct, it does present Robinson as a person full of doubts.

Similarly to Robinson, Roxana and her maid Amy meditate for the first time upon their sinful, illicit life, when physically confronted with death during a storm at sea. And again, they do not so much actually regret parting with life, or fear the very moment of death as a physiological process of dying, but experience agonies of fear when confronted with the Great Unknown.

I go to HEAVEN! No, no, If I am drown'd, I am damn'd! Don't you know what a wicked Creature I have been? ... and God knows it; and now I am to die; to be drown'd; O! what will become of me? I am undone for Ever! ay, Madam, for Ever! to all Eternity! O I am lost! ... If I am drown'd, I am lost for Ever!¹¹

Roxana feels guilty not only for her own evil but additionally for having been "the Devil's instrument", the direct cause of Amy's erring: "I had been her wicked example; and I had led her into all" (*R.*, p. 126). It is interesting to note that Roxana's attitude is not characterised by resignation; she does not beg God to forgive her the sins she has committed, but prays to be given a chance to repent.

Upon these serious Considerations, I was very Penitent... for my former Sins, and cry'd out, tho' softly..., Lord have Mercy upon me; to this I added abundance of Resolutions, of what a Life I wou'd live, if it should please God but to spare my Life but this time; how I would live a single and virtuous Life, and spend a great deal of what I have thus wickedly got, in Acts of Charity, and doing Good. (*R.*, p. 126).

¹⁰ D. Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, London 1963, Oxford University Press, p. 7. All subsequent quotations refer to this edition.

¹¹ D. Defoe, *Roxana, the Fortunate Mistress*, London 1964, Oxford University Press, p. 125. All subsequent quotations refer to this edition.

Later, however, Roxana admits that although she looked back upon her "Wickedness with Abhorrence", she had

no Sense of Repentance, from the true Motive of Repentance; I saw nothing of the Corruption of Nature, the Sin of my Life as an Offence against God; as a thing odious to the Holiness of his Being. (*R.*, p. 129).

This is why the storm being over, she returns to her previous way of life – this dramatic experience does not change her morals; the fear of death and a will to reform vanish with the storm. Roxana treats death as a punishment for sins, but because she does not really understand the nature of her sins, she

had only such a Repentance as a Criminal has at the Place of Execution, who is sorry, not that he has committed the Crime, as it is a Crime, but sorry that he is to be Hang'd for it. (*R.*, p. 129).

For Defoe's characters the fear can arise not only from the actual physical standing in the face of death caused by external danger. The anxiety the character experiences is taken to the extreme in *Roxana*, when, at the end of the heroine's life, it becomes an irrational figment of her tormented mind. Roxana's feeling of guilt is so aggressive that it makes her experience "a secret Hell within, even all the while when our joy was at the highest". It is the pangs of a tortured conscience that breeds the fear of death. Every lightning and every thunder are potential dangers bringing her closer to eternal damnation.

I had such a constant Terror upon my Mind, as gave me every now and then very terrible Shocks, and which made me expect something very frightful upon every Accident of Life. (*R.*, p. 129).

The most natural reason for the character being placed in imminence of death is a terminal illness. This usually prolonged state familiarizes the character with death and provokes him to reevaluate his whole life. This is the case with Robinson Crusoe who, despite having gone through many near-death experiences, is able to find the sense of life only when "under dreadful apprehensions of sickness". His fear is aggravated by the disturbing dream he has in which he sees the figure of a heavenly Messenger of an unmerciful God, who says: "seeing all these things haven't brought thee to repentance, now thou shalt die". (*R. C.*, p. 110). Then he lifts up his spear ready to kill Robinson. The illness accompanied by "a leisurely view of the miseries of death" (*R. C.*, p. 114) and the ensuing vision of an Angel are in themselves signs obvious and ominous enough to make one realize that the end is close. No wonder, then, that seeing God's envoy who is ready to put him to death with his own hands, Robinson undergoes a deep religious conversion.

Another such example is in *Moll Flanders*. One of her lovers goes through a serious illness and it is this approach to the gates of death and "the very brink of Eternity"¹² that makes him look with abhorrence on his years of adultery. The sense of ending makes him feel repentant and helps him to gain a new perspective on his life so far. He realizes that the "unhappy correspondence" with Moll is a burden that weighs too heavily on his conscience. His repentance is so sincere that when "by the unexpected and undeserved mercy of Heaven" (*M. F.*, p. 105) he is delivered from death he decides to lead a reformed life breaking all contacts with Moll.

The fear of an uncertain future state can arise not only from the character's own spiritual dilemmas in the face of death but also from similar dilemmas faced by others in an encounter with the infinite. The Prince, Roxana's lover of many years, is conscience stricken; in his case, however, it is not facing his own death that is the direct cause of such changes but his attendance at the death-bed of his wife. Roxana's account of her rival's last moments is actually one of the few death-bed scenes in Defoe's fiction. The Princess laments the fact that she is passing away without leaving any children and declares that one of the few things that would give her "satisfaction in Death" is that "she would leave him room to have Heirs to his Family, by some Princess that should supply her place". Neglected for so many years, pushed aside by her husband's numerous mistresses, the dying woman implores him with "a Christian Earnestness" to "do Justice to such a Princess, whoever it should be, [...]; that is to say, to keep her singly, according to the solemnest Part of the Marriage-Covenant". (*R.*, p. 109). The Princess who is tied to the Prince by the marriage vows feels it necessary to make a final confession of her exemplary conduct to him. She pleads forgiveness from her husband in case she has offended him and, "appealing to heaven, before whose Tribunal she was to appear", she declares that she never blotted her honour or neglected her duties towards him. Realizing the irony of the situation, the Prince looks back at his life with detestation. His dying wife's words carry a profound meaning and they exert on the witness of her death an impression as strong as it would be in the case of his own approaching end. The Prince "resolv'd on a Life regulated most strictly by the Rules of Virtue, and Piety; and in a word, was quite another Man". (*R.*, p. 109)

This near minuteness of detail in the description of the last confession of a person Roxana did not even know is surprising if compared to the brevity and economy of other accounts of death in Defoe's fiction. Robinson Crusoe informs the reader of his marriage and the death of his wife in

¹² D. Defoe, *Moll Flanders*, London 1977, J. M. Dent & Sons, p. 105. All subsequent quotations refer to this edition.

one sentence, devoting to this fact fewer words than to the account of the profits he makes from his plantation. Similarly, Moll Flanders devotes more than fifty pages to the description of the amorous advances of her lover Robert, and when she gets married to his brother Robin, cuts short the report of this part of her life saying tersely that "It concerns the story in hand very little to enter into the further particulars of the family ... only to observe that I had two children by him, and at the end of the five years he died". (*M. F.*, p. 50) Moll is very honest and devoid of any pretence in her attitude towards the death of her husband. She never truly loved him and while married to him frequently dreamt of committing adultery and incest with his elder brother Robert. This is why she openly confesses that she is not "suitably affected" by his loss.

Also the accounts of the deaths of Moll's and Roxana's numerous legitimate and illegitimate children are sparse. Children are born, someone is paid to take care of them, and the protagonists rarely bother to mention their further fate. Sometimes the child's death is welcomed with relief for purely practical reasons. Roxana, for example, during her Grand Tour in Italy does not ponder over the death of her child "the necessary Difficulties attending it in our travelling, being consider'd". (*R.*, p. 104) Besides, children are very often living memories of the past, which the characters are so willing to erase. When Roxana's daughter turns out to have been a witness to her frivolous life in Pall Mall she says:

It is true, I wanted as much to be deliver'd from her, as ever a Sick-Man did from a Third-Day Ague; and had she dropp'd into the Grave by any fair Way, as I may call it; I mean had she died by any ordinary Distemper, I shou'd have shed but very few Tears for her". (*R.*, p. 302)

Eventually it is Amy who decides to act her own way and to "dispatch" the inconvenient witness.

Death in Defoe's novels is seen as just another event in life; births, marriages and deaths, however, do not seem important in themselves, but are significant only in relation to the economic results they bring about. The beginning of the eighteenth century is the time of a growing concentration on the Self, and, especially, a growing sense of economic individualism. According to Philippe Aries, there is a relationship between man's awareness of himself and his attitude towards death¹³. Later, this individual self-consciousness was extended to a new sense of uniqueness of the other person but at this early stage, as illustrated in Defoe's novels, it is the source of a lack of expression of grief and longing after the deceased. Partners, when alive, are assessed on the basis of the contents of their

¹³ Ph. Aries, *Western Attitudes Toward Death: From the Middle Ages to the Present*, Baltimore, London 1974, The Johns Hopkins University Press.

purse, because the only role men play in Defoe's female world seems to be purely economic. The death of a husband or a lover is not presented as a traumatic experience but rather as a cause that produces a definite change in the character's economic situation; it is the economic effect of death on their lives that Defoe's characters concentrate on. Thus, while the death of a relative, husband or lover is often mentioned only in one sentence, it is the legacy that is discussed in detail.

This should not be surprising if the general tenor of the epoch and the frame of mind of its people are taken into consideration. At the time when Defoe wrote his novels life was precarious, the death rate high, life expectancy short and expectations from doctors modest. Within this context death was considered a most natural event, which, combined with Puritan thrift and economic drive, seems to account fully for the primary concern with will-making and legacies in Defoe's fiction.

Thus, the possibility of death is presented not only as horror for the sinner but also as an occasion to think about to whom one should bequeath one's wealth and only either of these two considerations is mentioned with reference to death in Defoe's novels.

Before Robinson Crusoe sets out on his journey to Guinea, he makes a will in case of death to dispose of his plantation in the Brasils, making the captain who saved his life the heir to half of his possessions. The other half he orders to be sent to England. Robinson later admits that instead of being preoccupied with his earthly possessions he should have used "half as much prudence" to reconsider his situation. Had he done so, he would never have put to hazard "all the probable views of a thriving circumstance". (*R. C.*, p. 50)

In *Roxana* there are several examples of will-making. Roxana makes her first will while pregnant in case she dies during child-birth, a fact which underlines the seriousness of the danger of childbirth in Defoe's times¹⁴. Roxana decides to make the Prince, her lover and benefactor, the only heir to her property, in short, she benevolently bequeaths to him all that she had previously acquired from him. In a light-hearted conversation she expresses her hope that if her child survives he should take care of it.

A discussion of the presentation of death in Defoe's fiction would be incomplete without *A Journal of the Plague Year*, which, because it "describes an historical event, and ... does not create a social world like that of Defoe's other novels" is often not included in "an inventory of his

¹⁴ According to L. McCay Beier child-bearing women and infants "inhabited a no-man's land between life and death". L. McCay Beier, "The Good Death in Seventeenth-Century England", [in:] *Death, Ritual, and Bereavement*, ed. R. Houlbrooke, London-New York 1989, Routledge, p. 44.

novels"¹⁵. Death, seen again as a mere fact of life, is here additionally framed within tabulated casualty lists and statistical charts. The minute documentary accounts, detailed lists of registers of the increasing bills of mortality from different parishes in London in the successive weeks of the affliction, have an accuracy which leaves the impression of an inventory ledger written in a business-like and disinterested tone.

H.F., the narrator of the story faltering between a decision of whether to flee the pestilential city or to face the plague, tries at first to look for some religious, spiritual purpose behind the plague and to ascribe to it some metaphysical significance. On the one hand he tries to interpret obstacles, such as the fact that he cannot hire a horse, as signs of Providence, "the will of Heaven" telling him that he should not leave the city. On the other hand his brother, "a very religious Man", urges him to flee and, as an argument against his excessive trust in Predestination, quotes the fatalism of the Mahommedans who believed that since every man's life is predetermined there is nothing an individual can do to protect himself and thus went unconcerned to infected places as a result of which they died at a high rate. This argument leaves H.F. at an even greater loss but his doubts are finally resolved when he resorts to bibliomancy, choosing at random a passage from the Bible whose promises of deliverance convince him to stay in the city.

For H.F. the plague is a spiritual experience, for Defoe the novel becomes a means of expressing his well-grounded concern about a mortal danger really threatening London at the time of its publication¹⁶. Defoe's aim seems to be to present the plague, being the reason of inevitable death for the infected, as a corporate tragedy, a calamity befalling not individuals but hundreds of thousands of people. London at the time of the plague is decimated, the numberless dead become nameless. Death becomes too omnipresent and too manifold not to be stripped of this due respect and sense of uniqueness.

Again, anxiety becomes the central feeling explored by Defoe. Fear can even become the direct cause of death; H.F. quotes several cases from the Bills of Mortality

put in *frighted*, that is that may be well called, *frighted to Death*: But besides those, who were so *frighted* to die upon the Spot there were great Numbers *frighted* to other Extreems, some *frighted* out of their Senses, some out of their Memory and some out of their Understanding. (*J.P.Y.*, pp. 56-57)

¹⁵ E. Zimmerman, *Defoe and the Novel*, Berkeley-Los Angeles 1975, University of California Press, p. 107.

¹⁶ L. Landa, *Introduction*, [in:] D. Defoe, *A Journal of the Plague Year*, London 1969, Oxford University Press, pp. x-xiv. All subsequent quotations refer to this edition.

When the plague is at its peak, the fact the people die at the rate of a thousand a day makes the rest more humble. The intensity of prolonged danger, however, is in the long run the cause of the decline in morals; the imminence of death generates theft and barbarity. Death in *A Journal of the Plague Year* becomes the reason for the revelation of different aspects of human personality provoking very often instinctive and otherwise abnormal reactions. H.F. presents bestial behaviour generated by stress: again "self-preservation" appears to be "the first Law" – "this was a Time when every one's private Safety lay so near them, that they had no Room to pity the Distresses of others". (*J.P.Y.*, p. 115) The danger of immediate and premature death deprives the Londoners of any concern or compassion even for their close relatives or friends. H.F. quotes an example of a man driven to such despair on noticing the first signs of disease that he deliberately infected a woman passing by saying that "he had the Plague, and why shouldn't she have it as well as he". (*J.P.Y.*, p. 160) The abating of the plague is even more destructive,

harden'd by the Danger they had been in, like Sea-men when the Storm is over, [the people] were more wicked and more stupid, more bold and hardened in their Vices and Immoralities than they were before. (*J.P.Y.*, p. 229)

Despite the plague's indiscriminate attack on all levels of society and despite the view of open grave pits in which the rich and the poor are levelled forever, the poor remain the poor, and class distinctions are as clear as ever. It is the poor who in many cases suffer "not by the infection it self, but by the Consequence of it, [...] being without Lodging without Money, without Friends, without Means to get their Bread" they are driven out of the city until "Death overtook them on the Road, and they serv'd for no better than the Messengers of Death". (*J.P.Y.*, p. 96) Defoe actually says that the fact that so many poor people died in the plague was "a Deliverance in its Kind" because had they been left they would "certainly have been an unsufferable Burden, by their poverty". (*J.P.Y.*, p. 98)

Although death does not cause reconciliation here, H.F. expresses hope that it will do so hereafter, "on the other side of the Grave we shall be Brethren again". (*J.P.Y.*, p. 176)

Another aspect of the consequences of death on such a large scale is economic instability. As becomes a typical representative of the middle class, H.F. does not fail to notice and devote a great part of his account of the plague to the connections between the gradual paralysis of the city and trade.

It is not the accuracy in the presentation of historical facts or the minuteness of specification that make Defoe's account readable today. It is the few examples of personal tragedy that stick in the reader's memory.

H.F. recounts the desperation of a man who witnesses the burial of his wife and children. The man's grief becomes even more overwhelming when he sees that the bodies are not laid but "shot into the Pit promiscuously". (*J.P.Y.*, p. 62) Defoe's knife-edge precision in description does not falter at such moments in the story but helps him to present an almost naturalistic picture of human carcasses not only in the open grave-pits but also lying in the streets, or in the households where there was not a sufficient number of living to bury the dead whose "Bodies were so much corrupted, and so rotten, that it was with Difficulty they were carry'd". (*J.P.Y.*, p. 174)

Defoe fails to explore the full literary potential of death as a dramatic strategy; death is present in his fiction but it is not given primary importance or emphasis; it is relegated to a marginal position by the writer's concentration on the causes and consequences accompanying mortality. The reason for this may be the fact that Defoe was too much of a Protestant and a capitalist concentrated on the "here and now" to bother to portray death as something more than a biological event of serious economic consequences.

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W OBliczu KRESU – MOTYW ŚMIERCI W POWIEŚCIACH DANIELA DEFOE

Chcąc umieścić narodziny powieści angielskiej w kontekście postawy wobec spraw ostatecznych i literackich konwencji przedstawiania śmierci należy zauważyć, że powstaje ona pomiędzy dwiema tradycjami przesyconymi motywami śmierci i zadumą eschatologiczną. Powieść angielska powstaje po dramacie doby Elżbietańskiej i okresu Restauracji oraz poezji metafizycznej, w których bardzo silne są echa średniowiecznych motywów *Dance Macabre*, memento śmierci i przeświadczenia o marności ludzkiej egzystencji. Wkrótce po narodzinach powieści angielskiej, w drugiej połowie XVIII w. obserwujemy powstanie tendencji literackich prowadzących do rozpowszechnienia się w Anglii tzw. poezji cmentarnej, przesyconej utrzymanymi w elegijnym tonie rozważaniami o śmierci; natomiast dalszy etap rozwoju powieści, epoka wiktoriańska, wyróżnia się nadmiernym wręcz zamiłowaniem do przedstawiania scen śmierci.

W twórczości ojca powieści angielskiej, Daniela Defoe, która przypada na okres pomiędzy tymi tradycjami, rozważań nad śmiercią w znaczeniu eschatologicznym prawie nie ma. Bohaterzy jego utworów nie boją się śmierci, rozumianej jako fizjologiczny proces umierania. Ponieważ jednak prowadzą oni występny tryb życia, i są świadomi popełnionych grzechów, stają w obliczu ogromnego lęku przed śmiercią oznaczającą początek życia pozagrobowego. Lęk przed kresem jest lękiem grzeszników, uświadamiających sobie skutki nieuporządkowania życia wewnętrznego. Śmierć wspomniana jest więc jedynie w kontekście strachu jaki wywołuje. Świadomość końca, zagrożenia jakie przynosi ze sobą śmierć, powstaje u bohatera najczęściej gdy sam staje w jej obliczu. Najbardziej trwałe ślad, często prowadzący do odnowy moralnej bohatera, wywołuje bliskość śmierci spowodowana ciężką chorobą; tak dzieje się w przypadku Robinsona Crusoe.

Śmierć bliskiej osoby, męża lub kochanka, przedstawiona jest głównie w kontekście zmian sytuacji materialnej jakie ze sobą przynosi: sam fakt śmierci jest więc wspomniany zaledwie w kilku słowach – dokładniejszej analizie poddany jest testament.

Również w *Dzienniku roku zarazy* autor koncentruje się głównie na ekonomicznych skutkach jakie niesie ze sobą dziesiątkowanie ludności Londynu. Brak jest medytacji o śmierci, śmierć jest przedstawiona w sposób czysto techniczny – jako przyczyna określonej reakcji osób zagrożonych i dezorganizacji życia społeczeństwa.

W świetle przedstawionych rozważań nie można się więc zgodzić ze stwierdzeniem V. Woolf, że śmierć w powieściach Defoe nie istnieje; śmierć w jego utworach jest obecna jako fakt i jego konsekwencje; nie jest natomiast opisana jako sam proces umierania. Moment śmierci jest zjawiskiem marginalnym wskutek nadmiernej koncentracji autora głównie nad jego finansowymi następstwami. Będąc przede wszystkim typowym *homo oeconomicus*, Defoe traktował śmierć jako fakt naturalny, zgodny z prawami życia biologicznego – fakt, którego główne konsekwencje miały charakter ekonomiczny.