

# The Rise of the Novel in England

Augustan Age

The Great Augustans



## Daniel Defoe 1660-1731

- **HISTORICAL SETTING**
- **LIFE**
- **STYLE:** The Realistic Novel
- **WORKS**

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1

# Historical Setting

## STUART

- Charles II (1660-1685) → Restoration
- James II (1685-1688)
- William (1689-1702) and Mary (1689-1694)
- Anne (1702-1714)

## HANOVER

- George I (1714-1727)
- George II (1727-1760)

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2

# Life

- Born in London (the son of a candle merchant) - **1660**
- Religious upbringing (Opponent of the Roman Catholic Church Dissenter Nonconformist = Puritan) -----> **c)**
- Merchant -----> travelled a lot -----> **d)**
- Interested in politics (spy)
- Journalist (The Review) -----> **a)**
- Started writing prose fiction at the age of 60
- Wrote more than 500 works (books, pamphlets and booklets)
- Died in London - **1731**

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3

# Style: REALISTIC NOVEL

- **a) REALISM** (Plots and subjects taken from everyday life, from contemporary wellknown incidents)
- **b) DIARY-LIKE SEQUENCE** (first person narrator)
- **c) RELIGIOUS ALLEGORY** -----> The Importance of LABOUR and SELF-RELIANCE
- **d) ECONOMIC ALLEGORY**
  - merchant capitalism
  - property
  - self-made man
- **e) IMPERIAL ALLEGORY**
  - inherent superiority
  - master/slave relationship

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4

# Target Reader

- **TRADERS/MERCHANTS**
- **ARTISANS /PROFESSIONAL MEN**

That is:

- The new middle class which demanded original stories relating ordinary experiences and told in a language not too different from the one used by the average man.

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5

# Works

- **ROBINSON CRUSOE (1719).**  
The tale of a shipwrecked sailor. Full of details about Crusoe's ingenious attempts to overcome the hardship of the island.
- **MOLL FLANDERS (1722):**  
an abandoned child quickly grows to realise that her main chance of making her way lies in her ability to exploit her personal charm. After much cheating, theft and occasional prostitution, Molly finally becomes a rich and respectable woman.
- **A JOURNAL OF THE PLAGUE YEAR (1722)**

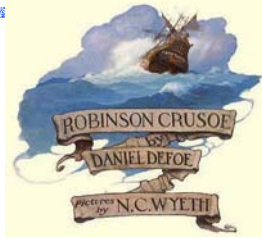
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6

# ROBINSON CRUSOE

- Robinson Crusoe (1719) is based on the story of the mariner Alexander Selkirk. He went to sea in 1704 under William Dampier and was put ashore at his own request on the island of Juan Fernandez in the Pacific. The island was an uninhabited island, and he survived there until his rescue in 1709 by Woodes Rogers. Selkirk claimed that he had become a "better Christian" and it was a positive experience. As a journalist Defoe must have heard his story and possibly interviewed him.



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7

# The ISLAND

- Robinson Crusoe is a mariner - actually an arrogant slave trader - who runs away to the sea at the age of 19 despite parental warnings. He suffers a number of misfortunes at the hands of Barbary (delle Barbados) pirates and the elements. Finally Crusoe is shipwrecked off South America.



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8

# Robinson and Friday

- CRUSOE seems to think that Friday is so uncivilized that he has to be taught how to eat and drink. He names him and he teaches him to call him **master**.
- FRIDAY's actions show the humble, submissive attitude of the savage who seems to consider Crusoe a man worth the greatest respect and submission.
- Although the savage's skin is dark, the narrator considers him a handsome fellow because his are the features of a European.



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9