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English project

“BEYOND THE LIMITS OF TIME”

*Robinson Crusoe is a complex character in Defoe’s novel who embodies different values and he has dilemmas to solve that can be there in any era; here is a correspondence between Robinson Crusoe and various people who live in different eras, from ours to those before his.*

LETTER FROM AN INDIAN REDSKIN, LIVING IN SIXTEENTH CENTURY

North-west coast (today California),

February 20, 1519.

Dear Robinson Crusoe,

I am writing this letter to you so that the evil that my people and I are living do not remain without a voice; yesterday the Europeans arrived and began to exterminate us without asking any questions and without trying to establish a dialogue with us. They didn't shake our hand, they came and treated us like slaves. They feel superior to us and do not think at all about our humanity, they forgot that we are brothers.

They didn't wonder who we are, and what our intentions are. I'm really sick of seeing a human being want to spill his brother's blood like this. We have always been used to live in peace, to love and we know no hatred , we do not get to the point of killing mothers and children without a reason simply because we are in conflict with another tribe, we have never pushed ourselves to this. I continue to have confidence in man, despite the fact that I have to see these things, despite the fact that I want to lose my sight. I believe that the eyes of a human being have not been made to see so much pain and violence; Why are they doing this to us? why don't they let our children keep them down? our children, after all, I don't think they're different from those waiting for them at home. How can a person feel so superior and get to make such gestures? where has the dignity of man gone? I have children, a wife, and a very old mother, and they ask me questions that I can't answer, I wish I could delude them not to make them feel too bad because of the badness of the man. I feel helpless, with no one who can do anything for me and my family.

I understand that they're imposing their customs on us, these white men, pointing their finger at us holding a bible, without first explaining what it is and taking an interest in what we believe instead.

They require us to work with them when we could have welcomed them in a human way and welcomed them to our lands. They have powerful weapons in their hands, but I prefer to remain weak in the name of morality and love for the human being, in the name of hope. What would all this power lead me to? are these weapons in your hands really a symbol of power? or perhaps they are the beginning of a slow and progressive self-destruction of the human being? There are many questions in this letter, this miserable piece of paper with which I am writing to you is a witness to us, witness to a voice that was never wanted to be heard; You robinson, you will fall into this error, you will feel superior and you will not try to understand who you have in front of you; Friday will become like your little dog, but why won't you treat him like your countrymen? what drives you to do this? I honestly don't see any law and no right that can push you to do that. Instead of pushing him to become a Christian and to know the Bible, you should first understand what he believes, do not use violence, do not impose. I know, you could answer me by saying that language is a big obstacle after all and that you can’t understand everything that we colonized indigenous people say, if you had a good heart to listen to us; but I could tell you that language yes, it is an obstacle that creates insurmountable walls and creates so many unjust misunderstandings in the world, but kindness and goodness remains still the key to the world, which gives you access to establish a relationship with anyone.You could not tell us peace formulas and we could not likewise tell you our formulas of peace and welcome, but you could give us your hand, a branch of flowers or something to communicate with us, and we would have been less afraid of you, we would not hold the arrows, we would not have felt threatened.

in the name of the pain we're feeling, Robinson, I ask you to think about these words, not to take them for granted and not to pretend to be deaf in the face of these testimonies. I'm seeing things that should never happen and most importantly they should never happen again.

I bet on you.

Nahuel(“Jaguar” translated in English”)

ROBINSON CRUSOE’S ANSWER

York, England,

April 15,1652 .

Dear Nahuel,

Your words scare me, and so many times I don't know what you're talking about. Your letter looks like a distorted view of the future, why do you say these things about us "white men"? it is not true that we are all like this. We represent civilization and we are not savages like you, surely it was you who led us to violence. We have read and we know the Bible, we don’t act without thinking and we don’t eat raw human flesh.

I'm sorry about you and your family, but you're the ones who need to be colonized, and we're the colonizers. If you adapt to our customs you will be better off and do not have to live in degradation as you usually do.

I never mistreated Friday and he was the first to submit to me without even asking him. Do not hate European men in this way, otherwise speaking in this way will lead me to despise my own homeland. Maybe you're right, but that's always been like this, and I can't help it.

R.C.

*Robinson's dry response fully represents the mentality of the time that Europeans had towards the new, and the different customs of other peoples, especially those colonized. These ideas and points of view will lead to wars and many other events linked to racism. The idea of the superiority of certain populations over others unfortunately still exists today.*

LETTER FROM ANNA FRANK

Amsterdam,

December 3, 1943

Dear Robinson,

I'm living a horrible life, and I'm surprised that I'm still alive and here. I live in terror and I feel like I'm crazy to continue to cultivate the slightest hope for humanity. How did you continue to believe in God and have hope when you were alone on that island? What gave you strength? I have tried so many times to force myself and give strength to my family, but I feel too weak and I struggle to put up with all this.

I always have to be careful of all the movements I make and keep my voice too loud, otherwise I risk being caught; why would a god, if he exists, allow these things to happen?

I do not think it is right that innocent victims like me should suffer because of the hatred of these 'greats' who want to rule the world and are unscrupulous, insensitive to others, and do not look around, but only think about what they want to achieve.

At school we are taught poetry, fine arts and all these things, but as soon as we go out and find ourselves in the real world we find only manifestations of hatred, man just wants to feel superior to his brother and has no scruples.

I know so many Jews who are innocent and honest people, and they have nothing to do with the stereotypes that the Germans have created and want to impose on everyone. In this period paradoxically I just realized that these Germans are heartless and do not look like the perfect breed at all. And then who decides who's better than others? There is no canon and no law that requires you to be and behave in a certain way, there is no law that leads you to destruction and to disavow your identity and religion. This thing is really inhumane and makes me feel a terrible weight in my heart.

There are so many parents of my friends who have been abused for no reason in front of them, there are many people I know who once they went there they never came back. We know what's going on, but we don't want to believe it. The reality is so terrible that it leads us to delude ourselves.

Help me

Anna

ROBINSON CRUSOE’S ANSWER

York, England,

April 15,1652 .

Dear Anna,

It breaks my heart to read these words of yours, and knowing that humanity will go against these misfortunes leads me to escape and move away from these monsters, called human beings. I would very much like that all this evil not to exist on earth and also that certain ideas don’t come into mind, such as those you have exposed to me.

While I am reading this letter I think of my actions and I reflect. I feel guilty that I have always had this certainty that I am the one who colonises and wants at all costs to convert the colonised, such as Friday; this certainty that European colonizers had was just a small taste of what would happen next in the history of humanity, which has little to do with human beings.

I'm sorry if I do a lot of digressions and I don't answer all your noble questions, asked by a pure girl who has nothing to do with hate. You ask me how I continued to cultivate hope and believe in God, well I will answer you. The Bible gave me comfort and guided me down the right path. My experience, like that of all human beings, has had to do with good and evil, in constant conflict.

I wrote in my diary every event and in everything I saw god's will and felt his presence, I did not feel abandoned. If I was on that island there was a precise reason, God wanted me to make a spiritual journey to achieve good and purify me. Far from all the comforts that there are in society and from any economic interest I felt free from everything; I felt as if I had been chosen to embark on this journey. All the evil that had happened to me was not in vain, if I continued to believe in God.

Every single thing that surrounded me on that island was a divine sign. If I walked through the forest and came across an animal to kill in order to feed myself, that was a gift from God and I didn't feel abandoned. Every single day, despite all the misfortunes that have happened to me, I felt compelled to thank God, and to appreciate everything he offered me. He offered me the fruits, the vegetables I could grow, the sun that warmed me and the earth on which to rest and lay the tired body.

Anna, don't stop believing and don't let the evil around you change and turn you into what you're not. it is better to die for values than to betray ourselves, they are very strong words and not easy to put into practice. All the pain you're feeling isn't because God has abandoned you and wants you to suffer. God is always with you and you will never be alone.

R.C.

*Robinson is beginning to rethink what he's done, his attitudes toward indigenous people. He is realizing that "certainty”of being superior makes no sense, and that unfortunately humanity is so weak that it falls into error and continues to drag a mistake over the centuries, and that so often it can get worse and create catastrophes.*

LETTER FROM ANTHONY, A BOY LIVING IN TWENTY FIRST CENTURY

Milan, Italy

May 6, 2021.

Dear Robinson,

Unfortunately, at a time when I live there are still racisms and there are so many injustices. Man makes many discoveries in the technological field, but at the same time he does not realize that he neglects the most important values.

We have many tools to connect all over the world but we are increasingly distant. Not so long ago in America a policeman killed a black man for no reason. This and many other examples of problems like these might make us reflect on how unfortunately humanity continues to drag them.

The man thinks he has come to a high knowledge, but he has nothing in his hands other than the power to hurt others. Around 1945, the man managed to create the atomic bomb, and this discovery, for example, turned on itself, began to use it in military contexts, and made massacres of innocents. if I look up I see so many empty people, victims of technology and with their eyes always glued to the phone. This possibility of always being able to feel through messages and social media has pushed us to take the value of the dialogue away and take it for granted. I admire you ,Robinson, because you've only been to an island and you've been away from society and its respective vices. I think that some of us in his life must make a spiritual journey like yours to find himself.

I would like to ask you what message you would like to leave to us today's teenagers; is it still worth it to continue to have confidence in the goodness of man and believe in God?

Write me soon,

Anthony

ROBINSON CRUSOE’S ANSWER

York, England.

June 20, 1652.

Dear Anthony,

Knowing that the world has become so makes me feel almost lucky not to have been born in such an era. Yes, I admit, I would have really liked to see all the new discoveries and how far science would have gone, but I honestly prefer to live backwardness, but aware that I take nothing for granted and have values and principles to pursue. what is the atomic bomb? only the name scares me, and reading that he has done massacres of innocents really scares me. cops shooting for no reason? that? what do they have to gain?I just don't understand. Dear boys and girls of future times, do not let yourself be taken by despair, you will see that the world is full of injustice and evil, and that almost no one is pure and sincere anymore; after having these correspondences I feel guilty for being partly racist and allow me to feel superior to the natives, like my dear friend Friday. Even today I do not know how to explain certain behaviors to me, I only know that we should have more regard for others and really get in our head that we are all brothers. civilization is not always synonymous with peace and love, perhaps those indigenous people knew more about it than we did about it and did not think only about making money like us and the didn’t deal with wordly matters incompatible with religious faith and spiritual welfare.

despite all this, you continue to believe and understand that everything happens for a reason, even evil, and do not hate only because it is the easiest way to take, think before you act, study history and past mistakes, pass it on to your children and do not repeat the same mistakes. God will always be with you and his will will be everywhere, I will give you a hug and I hope that you find your goal in life, I will not stop believing in the goodness hidden in the human being. I have confidence in you.

Good luck

R.C.

*Robinson has since changed, explicitly admits his guilt and feels guilty about Friday, which in spite of everything had always remained close to him. During correspondence, Robinson's maturation process is very evident. The words written in the first letter of reply to the Indian red skin no longer reflect it. He is concerned about humanity and its excessive knowledge which leads it to self-destruction, but on the other hand he continues to be confident and believe in God, just as when he was alone on that island, the representation of his spiritual journey, in which he understood at his own expense that God and hope will never abandon him unlike society and all the injustices that isolate him and make him feel misunderstood.*