EXPLORING
THE
EIGHTEENTH
CENTURY
JOURNAL

AN EXPLORATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE LITERATURE PRODUCED DURING THIS PROFOUND CENTURY

FROM
Graduates of the University of the West of England, 2011

EDITED BY Amie Hall, Lorna Greville,
Daisy Leigh AND Vicky Payne.
Contents

Introduction  – Daisy Leigh. 3

‘The Imperfect Enjoyment’  - John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester. 6

A Stylised Review of Sir John Wilmot’s ‘The Imperfect Enjoyment’  - Sean Guest. 8

‘Lexicology, Style and Genre: Pastiche and Analysis of Eighteenth Century Styles of Letter Writing’  - Amie Hall. 11

‘The Revelation and Censuring of Vice, in Roxana and The Monk’  - Lorna Greville. 17

PLATE 1- Hogarth, ‘Masquerades and Operas’, 1724. 25

‘A Discussion of the Variety of Moral Arguments made by Eighteenth Century Slave and Anti-Slavery Writers’  - Olivia Bew Miller. 26

PLATE 2 – ‘Am I not a Man and a Brother’ 35

‘The Relationship between Imperial and Domestic Space within Mansfield Park and Castle Rackrent’  - Vicky Payne. 36

PLATE 3- Kedleston Hall. 46

‘Transgression and Subversion: the Process of Property Transmission and the Appropriation of Space in Power Relations in Mansfield Park and Castle Rackrent’  - Daisy Leigh. 47
Introduction

When discussing the eighteenth century in literary terms it is often more useful to think beyond the centenary boundaries of 1700-1800, to the socio-political factors which generated the great texts of the period.

The year 1660 saw the Restoration of the English monarchy under Charles II, and with it a rejuvenation of the arts, including Restoration Literature and a wide variety of texts patronised by the monarch. Arguably the most famous restoration poet is John Wilmot, 2nd Earl of Rochester. His bawdy satirical poetry offers an insightful glimpse into the lifestyle of the ‘libertine’, which in turn highlights topical concerns such as expectations of gender morality.

Other literary forms developed, such as the use of essay into textual criticism, foregathering the literary branch of journalistic social reform through political prose and pamphleteering. This, combined with the ‘Coffee House’ culture of social interaction, saw an explosion of periodicals and social commentary.

Thus, with the industrialisation of the printing press, and the rise of coffee houses in London, literature became a powerful tool in social criticism and reform. Periodicals and journals developed in response to the growing public appetite for literature. These Coffee Houses provided the venues for the Scriblerus Club (1712): a promising group of young writers, including satirists, essayists and political pamphleteers, most notably Jonathan Swift and Alexander Pope. During this period the genre of satire came to the fore. Writers relied on the genre’s various forms, whether bawdy, subtle or scatological, to expose the depravity and vices of contemporary society, which inclined towards hypocrisy in regards to morality.
As the eighteenth century continued, experiences of travel brought new perspectives and comparisons through which to view English Society. The texts that vocalised such social commentary, such as the letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, inevitably informed the different modes of literature developing at the time.

The most radical literary progression within this period, and arguably to date, is the development of the novel. This mode harnessed the first person narrative of letter writing, with fictional characters and its clarity of prose; it became a hybrid genre that scrutinised humanity and morality with a didactic aim. Early examples of the novel, such as that of Daniel Defoe, were superseded by epistolary literature of the 1740’s. The phenomenal success of Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela* (1740) epitomises eighteenth century expectations of sensibility projected onto females, whilst highlighting the contradictory principles of gendered morality. The role of the libertine continues unabated within the patriarchal society, whereas the female becomes increasingly restricted and confined by social expectations of femininity. Such boundaries inevitably lead to transgressions which were explored through female protagonists such as Roxana.

The early thematic focus on sensibility diverged as the century progressed and sub-genres such as Gothicism began to emerge. This genre pushed the boundaries of literature, and responses from audiences varied from pleasurable terror to the abhorrent. Writers utilised the genre’s scope to explore social prohibitions, rebelling against the rationale of Enlightenment culture and embracing the sublimity of nature.

Social preoccupation with morality and humanity generated the emergence of anti-slavery literature, such as the poetry of Ann Yearsley and Phyllis Wheatley. Although they have been criticised retrospectively for being patronising, these writers played a major role in the abolitionist movement and helped expose the rampant
hypocrisies of the era. Slave narratives which detailed the horrors of slavery, such as Oaludah Equiano’s *The Interesting Narrative* (1789), proliferated the support for the abolitionist cause. Such texts became immensely popular as they appealed to the sympathies and rationale of a European audience.

Slavery was not the only form of oppression during the eighteenth century; women also felt subjugated which lead to a great increase in female writers. This took the form of the groundbreaking travel writing of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, especially her *Turkish Embassy Letters* (1763) and later in the work of Maria Edgeworth and Jane Austen. Edgeworth veered away from the discussion of gender in favour of history and satire, whereas Austen subtly satirized the state of domesticity and family relationships, particularly in her novel *Mansfield Park* (1814).

As this journal will show the dynamics of literary production throughout this period changed the face of literature forever. Through a collection of academic and creative writing this journal endeavours to examine and discuss a variety of texts and themes, and aims to provide a useful resource for students of eighteenth-century English literature.
The Imperfect Enjoyment

John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester

Naked she lay, clasped in my longing arms,
I filled with love, and she all over charms;
Both equally inspired with eager fire,
Melting through kindness, flaming in desire.
With arms, legs, lips close clinging to embrace,
She clips me to her breast, and sucks me to her face.
Her nimble tongue, Love's lesser lightening, played
Within my mouth, and to my thoughts conveyed
Swift orders that I should prepare to throw
The all-dissolving thunderbolt below.
My fluttering soul, sprung with the painted kiss,
Hangs hovering o'er her balmy brinks of bliss.
But whilst her busy hand would guide that part
Which should convey my soul up to her heart,
In liquid raptures I dissolve all o'er,
Melt into sperm, and spend at every pore.
A touch from any part of her had done't:  
Her hand, her foot, her very look's a cunt.

Smiling, she chides in a kind murmuring noise,
And from her body wipes the clammy joys,
When, with a thousand kisses wandering o'er
My panting bosom, "Is there then no more?"
She cries. "All this to love and rapture's due;
Must we not pay a debt to pleasure too?"

But I, the most forlorn, lost man alive,
To show my wished obedience vainly strive:
I sigh, alas! and kiss, but cannot swive.
Eager desires confound my first intent,
Succeeding shame does more success prevent,
And rage at last confirms me impotent.
Ev'n her fair hand, which might bid heat return
To frozen age, and make cold hermits burn,
Applied to my dead cinder, warms no more
Than fire to ashes could past flames restore.
Trembling, confused, despairing, limber, dry,
A wishing, weak, unmoving lump I lie.
This dart of love, whose piercing point, oft tried,
With virgin blood ten thousand maids have dyed;
Which nature still directed with such art
That it through every cunt reached every heart —
Stiffly resolved, 'twould carelessly invade
Woman or man, nor aught its fury stayed:
Where'er it pierced, a cunt it found or made —
Now languid lies in this unhappy hour,
Shrunken up and sapless like a withered flower.

Thou treacherous, base deserter of my flame,
False to my passion, fatal to my fame,
Through what mistaken magic dost thou prove
So true to lewdness, so untrue to love?
What oyster-cinder-beggar-common whore
Didst thou e'er fail in all thy life before?
When vice, disease, and scandal lead the way,
With what officious haste dost thou obey!
Like a rude, roaring hector in the streets
Who scuffles, cuffs, and justles all he meets,
But if his king or country claim his aid,
The rakehell villain shrinks and hides his head;
Ev'n so thy brutal valour is displayed,
Breaks every stew, does each small whore invade,
But when great Love the onset does command,
Base recreant to thy prince, thou dar'st not stand.
Worst part of me, and henceforth hated most,
Through all the town a common fucking-post,
On whom each whore relieves her tingling cunt
As hogs do rub themselves on gates and grunt,
May'st thou to ravenous chancre be a prey,
Or in consuming weepings waste away;
May strangury and stone thy days attend;
May'st thou ne'er piss, who did refuse to spend
When all my joys did on false thee depend.

And may ten thousand abler pricks agree
To do the wronged Corinna right for thee.
A Stylised Review of Sir John Wilmot’s ‘The Imperfect Enjoyment’

Sean Guest.

The title of John Wilmot, Second Earl of Rochester’s poem ‘The Imperfect Enjoyment’, summarises most appropriately one’s response to the piece: its lurid subject matter may lack subtlety and turn the stomach, an effect that those familiar with his work will be quite accustomed to I dare say, yet, it is all the while underpinned by a degree of intellect that permits one to draw enjoyment from the crude imperfections of stark reality laid bare on the page.

That Wilmot draws inspiration from the seedier side of life should come as no surprise to readers of this publication, although it should of course be noted that even Ovid explored the murky depths of male impotence in his Amores. What really stands out from the crude references to ‘nimble tongue[s]’ and ‘busy hand[s]’ is the poet’s fascination with the palpable tension that exists between the will and the body, for before us lie two young lovers, irrational creatures who are unable to conquer their lust, both ‘flaming in desire’ and ‘filled with love’. This struggle permeates the grotesquely exaggerated bodily representation, which tends to focus on her ‘all over charms’ and his ‘nobler parts’, in order to satirise a scenario to which many, willing to confess it or not, will be quite familiar with.

Neither the male speaker or his young lover escape the wrath of the writers ridicule, as Rochester contrasts an insatiable female appetite, best epitomised by the question ‘All this to love and rapture’s due; Must we not pay a debt to pleasure too?’, with the ‘most forlorn, lost man alive’, whose ‘dead cinder’ becomes a source of mirth rather than one of sympathy. Rochester, a man once imprisoned in the Tower of London for the abduction of one Elizabeth Malet (whom he later married), then permits his verse to dwell upon the ‘withered’ genitalia of our emasculated subject
and only succeeds in recovering from this distasteful low by drawing a comparison to a ‘rakehall villain’ who ‘shrinks and hides his head’ when ‘his King or country claim his aid’. By interacting with a social theme to which he can relate, Rochester himself knows the significance of serving King and Country as he fought in the naval war against the Dutch, our scribe reappplies a degree of intellect by highlighting an observational quality that restores the poem, which up to this point has descended into unadulterated baseness that might halt even the most determined of readers.

What is perhaps most intriguing, and worthy of condemnation depending on one’s perspective, is the absence of a female perspective. Rochester is interested in only that of the male here and simply portrays a lusty female character that has been masculinised and is consequently interested in only one thing. In fact, the manner in which our speaker represents the fair sex declines rapidly alongside the quality of the verse and it becomes apparent that he holds womankind responsible for the misfortune that has befallen him; not only does he liken them to ‘hogs’ who ‘on gates do rub themselves and grunt’, but he also wishes upon them ‘stangury and stone’, thus ridding the reader of any sympathy he may have accumulated for this horrid little man throughout the course of the poem. Corinna, the speaker’s surprisingly eager beau who remains unsatisfied come the conclusion, seemingly escapes the wrath of our wretched Romeo however, as in the closing lines he asks ‘And may ten thousand abler ----- agree/To do the wronged Corinna right for thee’.

It is perhaps this unsatisfactory conclusion that encouraged the abler and less degenerate Aphra Behn to write a spirited response entitled The Disappointment. Her poem considers the matter chosen by Rochester from a somewhat fairer perspective and seems to draw inspiration from Cantenac’s L’Occasion perdue recouverte. While Cantenac’s piece ends favourably, Behn, like Rochester, is unable to avoid the
disappointment implied by the title. The resemblance between the work of Behn and Rochester extends to the cooperative nature of the former’s female subject, Cloris, who apparently ‘could defend herself no longer’. Unlike Rochester however, Behn delays the disappointing moment, permitting a palpable tension to flood the verse in a manner that far exceeds Rochester’s handling of the situation. Her conclusion also seems more fitting, as the emasculated male is left ‘fainting on the gloomy bed’, fittingly ‘damned...to the Hell of impotence’.
Lexicology, Style and Genre: Pastiche and Analysis of Eighteenth Century Styles of Letter Writing

Amie Hall

Pastiche 1
To Lady Mar,

You will pardon this digression, dear sister, but as you can see, the ladies here are so much without concern for their reputation, that they must be much more free than even us! As we were stood there, what appeared to be the most esteemed of the ladies, immediately greeted us in manner I can only describe as being like a bow and a curtsey, but with wide spread arms, and a gracefulness which was swan-like. Her hair was of jet black, and braided and her eyes having something of the sheen of glass to them, they were so dark. I must declare that her dress was quite unlike that which I have aforementioned, their dress changing according to the occasion. For this, despite being fully covered as before, she wore a habit of a much lighter silk of ruby colour, embroidered with gold and embellished with tiny diamonds, and despite it revealing her shape she was not committing any greater sin or encountering any immodest look than if she were one of Milton's sylphs! You may guess as to my discomfort when returning the gesture, however they act with such grace and propriety that one cannot think of their manners with any of the immodesty that our travel writers would have you believe. 'Tis as much to our own confinements that what I have seen appears so very different, and not the immorality of their race...

... Their adornments behold such beauty, and the manner in decorating these creatures is like nothing I have seen in our great country or beyond, but can only imagine they are like the horses decorated for jousting or the encroachment to battle. The extraordinary sight, dear sister, as I am sure you can imagine, of the adornments of jewels, flowers, silks of every imaginable colour, was as much of a shock to me, as I must have appeared to them in my travelling robes in the bath house!

Pastiche 2
To Alexander Pope

'Twas with much anxiety I awaited your skilful translation of Virgil and I cannot express how infinitely it has encouraged my learning of the classic epic in the orient, and must express my gratitude as to your careful consideration of my translations. I am in agreement that their prose is extremely similar to that of the greatest classical works, although I am not sure that it would be appropriate to grace some of the drawing rooms with my translations at this time. They are a most romantic people, which I gather is part of their custom of faith and love of nature, and which is far more deeply moving than some vain attempts I could mention. However, not being as accomplished to translation as yourself, I am ever taking the pains to develop and encourage my learning. As to this is it with some liberty I have endeavoured to translate the latter verses, of which only one I think I have succeeded in doing justice, and of which I think will satisfy your curiosity as to the latter. In order to provide you with a full and complete translation of the poem previously, I omitted to explain the difficulty of the Oriental verse. Their poetry is written in such a different form, that there are no stanzas, and often the rhyme and metre present in English is so very absent in Turkish, which I am certain you have encountered in your Greek
translations and of which Mr. Mansfield would perhaps take the liberty of considering, their grammar being so very different to our own, and thus the music and melody which is ever present in Turkish, is somewhat lost in translation.

Analysis

I have created two pastiches based on original texts taken from a selection of letters written by Lady Mary Wortley-Montagu and published post-humously in 1763. Montagu was an educated, seventeenth century aristocrat, married to the English Ambassador for Constantinople, and as she states she was on ‘a journey not undertaken by any Christian for some hundred years’ (72). She was friends with, amongst others, the educated literary circle which included Alexander Pope and she was one of the earliest feminists who believed that for women to elevate their position in society they must educate themselves. It was due to her position that Montagu was ‘pretty far gone in oriental learning’ (79) however she is careful to maintain the propriety and humility which is required of her and all women in eighteenth century society.

The letters were intended to be both private and public documents; they are letters to her companions but also provide an antidote to the travel writing of which Montagu is critical and provide a ‘true’ account of her travels. They also, to some extent, perform a moralising function for society. It is this literariness which creates the need to produce a pastiche and analyse the original texts as both discourse and text.

The discursive nature of the letters results in the need to understand the non-linguistic context in order to understand the pragmatic meaning. Although they can be understood semantically, the pragmatic, functional role must be considered to infer the intended meaning, which is frequently to perform a didactic function; to change the perception of the ‘Orient’ as well as to express her attitudes to eighteenth century
society, particularly for women and I have reflected this in the content of pastiche 1. Montagu’s attitudes are most apparent when speaking with her female addressees, particularly in Letter XXX to her sister, Lady Mar. She contrasts subtle comments such as ‘that imagine themselves more polite’ (75) when writing to Pope with more explicit remarks when writing to her sister and other female friends. I have demonstrated this in extract one; ‘they must be much more free than even us’ which corresponds in the original texts to ‘I look upon the Turkish women as the only free people in the empire’ (72) and ‘Turkish ladies don’t commit one sin the less for not being Christians’ (71). I have reproduced the less explicit expression in the pastiche to Pope where the addresser comments ‘more deeply moving than some vain attempts I could mention.’

These were radical ideas, lest written expressions for a woman in her position. Her didactic assertions are supported by her claims that she is portraying the ‘truth’ (72) and it is for this reason that I have replicated Montagu’s infrequent use of modality, and based descriptions upon what she has ‘seen’. In the original letters the writer also invites her addressee to ‘imagine’ and makes assumption of her readers; ‘you may guess’ (71) and ‘you may easily imagine’ (61) which I have also used in my pastiches. As a text these inferences are important rhetorical structures for persuading the reader and creating synthetic personalisation, however if the text is considered as discourse, the nature of these assumptions becomes inferencing based on shared values and understanding.

The assumptions she makes of her reader are foregrounded and the often intimate relationship of her addressee results in a well established code, where there are predications of the subject or reference, which it is assumed the reader will be aware of, for example the references to ‘Milton’s Sylphs’ to her sister and the analysis
of poetry to Pope; ‘written in such a different form, that there are no stanzas, and
often the rhyme and metre ... Mr. Mansfield ...thus the music and melody...is
somewhat lost in translation.’

When the subject or referent is not known, she draws upon metaphors and
similes to convey difference, demonstrated in the description of the dancer as ‘swan
like’ and ‘jet black.’ This is also evident in her apparent propositional attitude and the
inferences she requires the reader to make are specific to her addressee. The informed
reader and the private nature of the documents allow Montagu to make written
comments and observations which she would not be able to do for a public audience.
Under the guise that these are personal letters, she is able to comment on ‘the
quackery of all churches’ (64) ‘the disdainful smiles...when anybody appears that is
not dressed exactly in fashion (58), or ‘a shipload of your passive obedient men’ (66)
and I have emulated this in her reflection that ‘Tis as much to our own confinements
that what I have seen appears so very different.’

The schematic and assumed knowledge of her addressee is also evident in the
use of intertextuality, particularly in the letters to male recipients, as when she refers
to ‘Homer’ (74) and ‘The Song of Solomon’ (76). This is due in part to the content of
the letters but is also important in creating a personalisation, which, although not
synthetic, plays a role in the assertion of her voice. I have reproduced this in the
extract to Pope, when the addresser comments on ‘Virgil’ and her knowledge of
‘Turkish’ and ‘Oriental poetry.’ By exploiting her knowledge and the assumed
knowledge of the addressee the addresser supports her statements and is able to
assume a more masculine position, thereby gaining authority in her accounts.

Despite the discursive nature, the letters have a narrative quality to them
which result in the ability to read them as fiction, overlooking the non-linguistic
context and to analyse them in terms of the literary text. She is at once narrator and addresser, writing narratives within her letters. The descriptive elements of Montagu’s writing are frequently in the chain pattern, drawing on semantics, deixis, and the third person singular and plural to refer back, often to her topic sentence, to create a cohesive picture. I have reproduced these pronouns and also the use of deictics such as ‘this,’ ‘there’ and ‘that.’ The narrative moves from the past tense, narrative recounting, to the present, using ‘return in a plain style’ (51) ‘this little digression’ (51). Her ‘digressions’ are often a feature of writing to the moment; she writes as the stream of consciousness progresses, resulting in the narrative bearing resemblances to speech as when she corrects herself ‘the last expression is not very just, for to say truth’ (52) and her use of exclamation marks to indicate points of high feeling.

The positioning of these texts on the diachronic and synchronic scale, result in lexical and grammatical patterns, which are a feature, according to Bradford of ‘the interface between non-literary discourses and systems of representation and literary conventions and practises’ (1997, pg 116). As a result the features of Montagu’s writing are archaic in their functional and pragmatic role, but representative of the conventions of genres in which her writing is situated. Contracted lexical features such as ‘’tis’ and the now archaic adverb ‘Thus’ are used frequently as are archaic constructions such as ‘a month a’coming’ (53) which I have used in my pastiches. Another feature which I have employed is the frequent use of the present and past participles instead of the simple present or past and the inversion of the syntax, for example in the original texts Montagu writes ‘belonging to’ and ‘they immediately fell’ (53) and in my pastiche I have used ‘immediately greeted us’ and ‘encountering.’
Montagu’s frequent deferential comments are a reflection of the notion of sensibility in the eighteenth century. I have masked her assertions by assumptions such as ‘you will pardon’ replicating her request to ‘afford me so agreeable a prospect’ (60) and the self-depreciating of her own abilities and work, more frequently employed when writing to Pope. This allows her the freedom to make statements, based on the assumption that her readers have allowed it which I have reproduced as ‘it is with some liberty’ in the pastiche to Pope.

The complexity of the purpose of the original texts as both private and public documents, conventional epistolary writing and historical, travel narrative creates a multiplicity of voices and styles in both the original documents and my pastiches, and the positioning of their production on the synchronic scale creates a distinctive, syntactic and lexical style. However because they also cross the boundaries between literary and non-literary discourse and to a certain extent, text and speech the variety of modes and genres that the letters utilise and inhabit result in a complex mixture of content, style and voice, dependent on the addressee and the assumptions, inferences and propositional attitude of Montagu.

References

Bibliography
Chapman, R (1973) Linguistics and Literature; An introduction to literary stylistics. London: Edward Arnold


Revealing and Censuring Vice in *Roxana* and *The Monk*

Lorna Greville

In the context of the strongly Christian society of eighteenth century England, ‘vice’ can be equated with ‘sin’. This era was greatly preoccupied with improvement, which pervaded not only the day to day life of the population but also the arts and, of course, literature. This was also the century in which the novel, as a genre in its own right, came to the fore. Due to the preoccupation of ‘improvement’ the novel emerged as innately didactic, offering moral guidance and ‘lessons’ to all who read them.

David Skilton says that ‘there were a number of important writers- Defoe prominent among them- who pursued a progressive line of thought, believing that the condition of mankind could be essentially improved’ (Skilton, 9). Defoe’s *Roxana* (1724) can arguably be interpreted to reflect this viewpoint. Furthermore, Ian Watt argues that ‘if novels tended to differ from the more flattering pictures of humanity presented by many established ethical, social and literary codes, it was merely because they were the product of a more dispassionate and scientific scrutiny of life’ (Watt, 11).

Therefore, due to the novel paralleling ‘life’ it was used to expose vice and sinful behaviour present within the ‘real world’, as it can also be seen in Matthew Lewis’ gothic novel *The Monk* (1796).

Watt also explores ‘“realism” as the defining characteristic [of the novel]’ and says that ‘realism came to be used primarily as the antonym of “idealism”’ (Watt, 10). *Roxana* and *The Monk* both engage with places that exist in ‘real life’, London, Paris, Spain. It is this ‘realism’ of the novel that separates it from former fictional didactic texts, such as John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* or the Edmund Spenser’s *The Faerie Queene*. Both of these take heavily from the bible and mythical stories to form a
structure of moral guidance. Readers, undoubtedly, found the new genre of the realism and the novel easier to relate to. Both *Paradise Lost* and *The Faerie Queene* have a perfect or magical character at its centre, making the concept of being ‘good’ seem almost unattainable. *Roxana* and *The Monk*, take characters from real life; mistresses, monks, lovers, and create through them moral messages for readers to interpret. *The Monk*, though being a gothic novel, including some supernatural elements, does not detach itself from realistic characters. It also shows men of church giving in to temptation, which shows readers that *anyone* is open to giving into vice, and the Monk’s eventual punishment proves that everyone, will, of course feel the consequences of any vice. The degrees to which each novel reveals their respective vices are contrasting, partly due to fundamental differences in genre, gender and social context of the vice-ridden protagonists.

*The Monk* utilises the gothic genre, has a male protagonist and is set in a catholic country. The vices of the principle character, Ambrosio, are both horrifically and sexually violent. Though Ambrosio’s vices are shocking, to an extent, it is infinitely more shocking that it is a woman, Matilda, who is the instigator and encourager of these crimes. The novel offers an explanation for his atrocities; Ambrosio’s upbringing by the monks led to repression of his natural desires; ‘His monastic seclusion had till now been in his favour, since it gave him no room for discovering his bad qualities… As yet his other passions lay dormant; but they only needed to be once awakened, to display themselves with violence as great and irresistible’ (Lewis, 175). The narrator psychologises Ambrosio, foreshadowing the violent future of him within the novel, which leads to rape and murder.

There is a critical point at which Ambrosio reveals the existence of his vices. In this passage the reader can see Ambrosio’s faults more easily than he can see them
himself. He reveals himself to be vain, considering himself as above all others within the hierarchy of which he is a part: ‘who but myself has passed the ordeal of youth yet sees no single stain upon his conscience?… Religion cannot boast Ambrosio’s equal!’ (Lewis, 31). This ‘vice’ could be considered minor, however it also prefigures the climactic events of the novel. Lewis adds Ambrosio’s sexual desire towards the Madonna to his list of vices, later within this chapter. Ambrosio’s relationship with a picture of the Madonna displays, what Peter Brooks refers to as, ‘The problem of the sacred’ (Brooks, 250). Ambrosio ‘fixed his eyes upon a picture of the Virgin’ (Lewis, 32). Ambrosio covets a vision of something that he strongly desires, but that he knows is forbidden, ‘Were I permitted to twine round my fingers those golden ringlets,’ (Lewis, 32. My italics). Ambrosio acknowledges that he is not ‘permitted’ to do this. The sexualised use of ‘twine’ invokes the imagery of interlocking and almost being tied together, as in intercourse. The passage continues with his adoration and lust for ‘the Virgin’ in wanting to ‘press with [his] lips the treasures of that snowy bosom,’ (Lewis, 32). This imagery combines innocence, sexuality and maternal love within one phrase. The virginal use of ‘snowy’ invokes the image of whiteness and pureness and erotic kissing of the bosom exposes a problematic desire of the virgin, of unattainable woman, and of ‘mother’, whose breast is both literally and symbolically used for nurturing and feeding. Though his sexual desires are perfectly natural, he commands his thoughts ‘Away!’ and convinces himself that ‘It is the painter’s skill I adore, it is the Divinity I adore!’ (Lewis, 32). He further represses his desires, deciding that his adoration is not related to lust. However, although he is hiding his own vices from himself, he has revealed them to the reader.

The nunnery is revealed to indulge in its own set of vices, which is the foremost critique of Catholicism in the Novel, and could be argued to be satirical. Ann
Campbell contends that ‘the satirist, penetrat[es] inside the sheltered convent, probing the nuns’ characters, and exposing their sensuality, credulity, and vanity’ (Campbell). In chapter six a discourse takes place between two nuns about the fate of Agnes. The Reverend Mother says ‘Overlook it you say? Mother Camilla, you amaze me! What! After disgracing me in the presence of Madrid’s idol, of the very man on whom I most wished to impress an idea of the strictness of my discipline?’ (Lewis, 170). The Reverend Mother acts on her own vanity, at the cost of an innocent life for a crime that is no more than acting upon natural desires. The use of the noun ‘man’ rather than referring to Ambrosio with his title ‘Abbot’, implies an adoration that goes beyond his religious status and rather a suppressed sexual desire that she has for him. A form of justice is served however, where she is revealed to ‘the mob’ to be a ‘tyrant, barbarian, and a hypocrite’ (Lewis, 260) by St Ursula. These passages reveal the vices running through entire institutions, perhaps not only fictionally but, shown through the use of satire, in reality also.

*Roxana* is introduced as the non-fiction genre of ‘Spiritual Autobiography’, although it is actually all fiction. Within the text certain locations and names have been omitted to give the visage of retaining the propriety of these places and characters. However, in the knowledge that *Roxana* is a fictitious text these omissions merely reinforce and reflect the character of Roxana, who is constantly in disguise to hide her vices from almost everyone in her world. Even the name she is referred to as - ‘Roxana’ - is not real. However, the use of ‘Roxana’ as her chosen name offers a further symbolic representation of her character and vice. She only obtained this name having donned a Turkish dress during her masquerade ball. C.R. Kropf refers to the fact that ‘in Defoe’s time the terms “Turk” and “Turkish” still retained their common Renaissance connotation of cruelty and irreligion. In this sense Roxana has “turned
Furthermore, the notes in *Roxana* say that ‘[Roxana] seems to have been a generic name for oriental queens in drama of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.’ (Mullan, 349). The reference to ‘Oriental’ has had very strong connotations throughout this period. Edward Said argues that ‘The Orient is one of [Europe’s] deepest and most recurring images of the Other.’ (Said, 1). In the light of this statement, Roxana is presented as ‘the Other’. With this title we must question whether she is as full of vice as the novel presents her to be, or whether she is merely a representation of another way to live and a model of proto-feminism; is it really *vice* that is revealed?

During the Enlightenment there was a ‘crazy lust for universal domination - the itch to be monarch of all one surveys: everything must be subjugated, intellectually, physically, and economically, to the order of things as understood by men’ (Rousseau and Porter 1-2). With a strong patriarchal hierarchy present in both Christianity as well as the monarchy during this period, a rebellious woman will inevitably be met with strongly negative responses. However, a modern interpretation of *Roxana*, disregarding its contemporary intentions, is far less likely to consider Roxana a woman full of vice. Both in criticism and the novel itself, there are constant references to Roxana being a ‘whore’ and a ‘prostitute’, however she appears to have genuine emotional interaction with each of the men she engages herself-named ‘prostitution’ with. Arguably, however, this is a mild crime in comparison to her repeated abandonment of her numerous children.

Roxana censures herself for her treatment of Amy; ‘*Poor Amy! what art thou that I am not?*…. Nay, I am guilty of my own Sin, and thine too… I had been the Devil’s instrument, to make her wicked… I had stripp’d her, and prostituted her’ (Defoe, 126). It is arguable that she feels genuine remorse here. However, when she
speaks of her own children she is merely worried about her appearance in the situation; ‘what will my Children say to themselves, and to one another, when they find that their Mother, however rich she may be, is at best a Whore, a common Whore?’ (Defoe, 208) Roxana reveals her vices to be vanity, avarice and a selfish nature. Her concern is not that her children have lead a vile life, she disregards this having now given them money and created career opportunities, twenty years too late, she is still infinitely more concerned about her own reputation.

Her selfishness is not limited to her view of her own sense of motherhood, but also to her sense of Christianity and repentance. On the voyage from France to England, in which she and Amy are caught in a storm, she suddenly has feelings of repentance on the realisation that she may be going to hell if she dies. She says that ‘Upon these serious considerations, I was very Penitent too, for my former Sins, and cry’d out, tho’ softly, two or three times, 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’ (Defoe, 128). Roxana is not tortured by her feelings of guilt through life, rather she fears for her own soul, she is not sorry for her exercised vice, she is merely sorry that she may have to suffer for them. Without this self-torture through guilt and regret we see no punishment and her vices go on without negative consequences. Her feigned repentance seems to exacerbate her vices, not only because it adds hypocrisy to the list, but because it is clear she will continue in this way.

Similarly, in The Monk, Ambrosio does not repent, however he is punished. The final chapter of The Monk reveals the true extent and horror of Ambrosio’s actions, yet is also significantly didactic. Upon being persuaded by the Devil to give up his soul, Ambrosio temporarily defends his original faith, saying; ‘Infinite is the
Almighty’s mercy, and the penitent shall meet his forgiveness.’ (Lewis, 318). Though The Monk is full of violence, murder, rape, incest, disguise and lies, as well a clear critique of Catholicism, it still reverts to the hegemonic view of God and the core of Christianity. However, Ambrosio finally gives in to the Devil, only for the Devil reveal that ‘That Antonia whom you violated, was your sister! That Elvira whom you murdered, gave you birth! Tremble, abandoned hypocrite! Inhuman parricide! Incestuous ravisher! Tremble at the extent of your offences!…. I have long marked you for my prey’ (Lewis, 322). Not only does Ambrosio tremble, but the reader does too. All of Ambrosio’s already horrific crimes are exacerbated by the introduction of the Devil. However, the Devil had him ‘marked for his prey’ due to Ambrosio’s ‘vanity’, which equates all vices as being equally damnable.

In her essay ‘Renegotiating the Gothic’, Betty Rizzo says that ‘the gothic [is] the emotional method of dealing with the threat of evil.’ (Backscheider, 58). I do not entirely agree with this statement, as the gothic genre often reveals evil as being embodied in some kind of supernatural creature, rather than letting evil be seen for what it really is, in the hearts and minds of the characters within the plot. However, I would certainly say that the Gothic novel offers an alternative method to the bible, in its representation and mode of managing evil. The Monk is undoubtedly didactic, both through the use of the virtues of Christian faith in God, as well as through the satirical underpinnings of the critique of Catholicism. Therefore, vice in The Monk is fully revealed and then fully censured, though without any positive transformation.

The more troublesome nature of Roxana, both as a character and a novel, can be seen in the final sentence; ‘my Repentance seem’d to be the only Consequence of my Misery, and my Misery was of my Crime.’ However, when this ‘Repentance’ is for a selfish purpose, to dispel ‘misery’, then it is not true repentance and Roxana is left
rich, miserable and appropriately censured by the readers. Two fundamental aspects of *Roxana* aptly reflect her vice ridden personality; the form of the genre and the pseudonym ‘Roxana’, as well as many more complex aspects of the story and language. The title character’s vice is revealed, but in an inconsistently limited manner, willing to reveal all to the reader yet to almost no one in the society in which she lives. In contrast to Ambrosio, however, Roxana’s vices are more realistic and although she doesn’t learn from her mistakes, it offers the reader a chance to learn from them instead.

**Bibliography**


'Masquerades and Operas (1724)

William Hogarth

With thanks to Tate.org
Courtesy Andrew Edmunds, London.
A Discussion of the Variety of Moral Arguments made by Eighteenth Century Slave and Anti-Slavery Writers

Olivia Bew Miller.

Olaudah Equiano and Ann Yearsley both wrote with a common purpose: to show support of and be part of the abolition of slavery in the late Eighteenth Century. These writers took advantages of the literary techniques they had at their disposal to write texts that are both rhetorically persuasive and emotionally engaging. In this essay, I will be examining the ways that Yearsley and Equiano have attempted to convince their readers of the horrors of slavery, and how their positions as white female and black former slave respectively may have necessarily affected the way in which they presented their arguments, and the way in which their arguments might be received.

There is a constant tug-of-war in the abolitionist texts I have studied between writing something that is at once emotionally affecting and factually informative. A text which falls too much on one side or the other is at risk of undermining it’s design to be both entertaining and enlightening, thus losing its potency as a text which can in some way influence the abolitionist cause. The opening chapter of Equiano’s Interesting Narrative exemplifies the way in which the author is at pains to show the truth about Africa to his readers, in a way that educates and entertains. Equiano describes the customs and traditions of the community he grew up in. Its commerce and its diversions are described with precision, to discredit any accusation that what he depicts has been somehow fabricated.

This mark is conferred on the person entitled to it, by cutting the skin across at the top of the forehead, and drawing it down to the eyebrows; and, while it is in this situation, applying a warm hand, and rubbing it until it shrinks up into a thick weal across the lower part of the forehead. (Equiano, 33)
The surgical precision of Equiano’s description of a ritual that places him firmly in the category of “other” shows that his Western and African cultural identities have merged in his writing. The unembellished¹ account reminds us of Equiano’s “otherness” from the outset, yet his perfect use of English renders the tone distinctly Western. The coexistence of Western and African heritage is part of the complexion of Equiano’s character.

Equiano does not depict his home as a mystical paradise that his white readers would be totally unfamiliar with. It is a civilized society with a justice system and rules that must be obeyed, with serious consequences if they are not. However certain specific values may differ, such as the acceptance of polygamy within marriage, Equiano paints his readers a picture of a society that is not dissimilar to any Western one. We are told: ‘Before we taste our food, we always wash our hands: indeed our cleanliness on all occasions is extreme’ (35) and ‘As to religion, the natives believe that there is one Creator of all things, and that he lives in the sun’ (40). By illustrating that the customs of his society are similar to those of the English, or are at least derivatives of some common principle, he fuses the two cultures together, making the bond difficult to ignore. Andrew Williams argues in To Tell a Free Story that:

‘[Equiano] brought to the writing of autobiography the memory (improved by research) of an African pastoral way of life that he pictured as the moral superior of the West in virtually every respect except in religion…The simplicity of their manners and institutions, the justice of their moral values, and the harmony of their society make for a strong…contrast to the European world.’ (Andrews, 58)

¹ I use the word ‘unembellished’ in the sense that his description is not sensational or loaded with emotion. Of course, the debate that the opening two chapters are in fact an embellishment on the whole Narrative rages, but for the purposes of my essay, I will be assuming Equiano’s account is authentic. In my opinion, authenticating Equiano’s account would be fruitless, as he would still have expressed the experience of the millions of slaves who were taken from Africa and unable to do so themselves.
I would disagree with Williams and argue that Equiano does not attempt to demonstrate disparity between two cultures, but similarities between them. If attempting to be ‘morally superior’ Equiano would risk losing his core message of equality and an air of superiority may undermine his argument or even cause slaveholders and anti-abolitionists to more defensively maintain their views. Equiano shows us the humanity of his ‘countrymen’ by showing us their customs, drawing parallels, thereby attempting to eliminate prejudices of those who considered blacks “sub-human”. Further on in the *Narrative* Equiano tells us: ‘I was wonderfully surprised to see the laws and rules of my country written almost exactly here [in the bible]; a circumstance which I believe tended to impress our manners and customs more deeply on my memory’ (Equiano, 92). Equiano’s story is about highlighting similarities, not enhancing differences.

Equiano’s moral arguments are forceful because they appeal to the logic and reason of his readers as well as compassion and feeling. This method of argument differs from that of the abolitionist poets such as Ann Yearsley. Her poem ‘A Poem on the Inhumanity of the Slave Trade’ (1788) appeals to the emotional sensibility of her readers, attempting to evoke pity rather than understanding. The tone of the poem is oratorical, as if it is supposed to be read before an audience. Unstructured lines of free verse facilitate passionate outbursts of passionate feeling.

Hail, social love! True soul of order, hail!
Thy softest emanations, pity, grief,
Lively emotion, sudden joy, and pangs,
Too deep for language, are thy own. (Yearsley, 389-92)

Here we see at play the sensibility of the era. ‘Pangs,/ too deep for language’ manifest themselves in tears and lamentations of indignation. The defense is an extremely physical one where the body expresses more than the rhetoricians argument.
However, the poem is not without its rhetorical devices. By addressing the people at whom the poem is aimed, she commands the attention of her readers. ‘Bristol, thine heart hath throbb’d to glory’, suggests that the place and the people who live in it are one and the same. The symbolic significance of Bristol as a busy hub for trading slaves, and the personification of the city as a person with a heart, includes all the people who live there.

The language here and throughout the poem is highly sentimental, with the language of the body playing a vital role in the evocation of sympathy. The throbbing heart, the slaves that ‘gaz’d/ With wonder and amazement’, the ‘grov’ling souls’ heighten the emotion of the poem, as the body becomes an object of sorrow and pity. The poem is no more sentimental than in Yearsley’s treatment of the doomed love of Incilanda and Luco. ‘For Incilanda, Luco rang’d the wild,/ Holding her image to his panting heart’ (148-9). The use of figurative language is minimal, because Yearsley is bent on addressing the imagination and not the intellect.

Luco is gone; his little brothers weep,
While his fond mother climbs the hoary rock
Whose point o’er-hangs the main. No Luco there,
No sound, save the hoarse billows. On she roves,
With love, fear, hope, holding alternate rage
In her too anxious bosom. (Yearsley, 114-9)

Yearsley reminds her readers that the slaves have families and are capable of real emotion. Both Yearsley and Equiano are concerned with humanizing black people: the qualities that make people human, ‘love, fear, hope’, are at the centre of both of their texts.

Similarities between the two writers, however, are limited to the subject on which they both speak. Despite the differences in form and style, they also differ
greatly in the representation of the black people. Moira Ferguson argues in the introduction to her book *Subject to Others* that “[Female authors] texts misrepresented the very African-Caribbean slaves whose freedom they advocated…The condition of white middle-class women’s lives - their conscious or unconscious sense of themselves as inferior - set the terms of the anti-slavery debate’ (Ferguson, 3). In ‘A Poem On the Inhumanity of the Slave Trade’ Yearsley’s representation of Luco and Incilanda is sometimes at risk of both misrepresenting two particular characters and underplaying the seriousness and scale of the problem by only focusing on these two and letting the millions of others melt into the background. It is not to say that Yearsley was intentionally racist but that racist prejudices, if covert, were still prevalent. Ferguson goes on to say:

> Women mediated their own needs and desires, their unconscious sense of social invalidation, through representations of the colonial other, who in the process became more severely objectified and marginalized – a silent or silenced individual in need of protection or pity who must always remain “under control.” (Ferguson, 4)

Yearsley’s portrayal of Luco is highly sentimental, causing her eighteenth century readers to feel deep emotion and to feel incensed to act on the injustices done to this particular man. However, as Luco’s master is standing over him we are told: ‘Many slaves there were,/ But none who could suppress the sigh, and bend,/ So quietly as Luco’ (Yearsley, 237-9). By separating Luco from the other slaves in the scene, Yearsley is suggesting that somehow one man suffers, and is braver, than all the others. By romanticizing one particular character, these experiences of a slave become the exception rather than all slaves experiencing the same trials, and suffering the same pains. Ferguson argues that Yearsley constructs her black characters as ones that ‘feel rather than think’ (Ferguson, 172), and denies them the potential to be
intellectual. Luco is able to feel love and pine after Incilanda (‘Oh mutual sentiment! Thou dang’rous bliss!’), but he never has the opportunity to express indignation at his enslavement, and in fact dies before he is given that chance. I would argue that Yearsley’s language further denies the slaves are “real people”, and that they are somehow the intellectual inferior to a white person: ‘But come, ye souls who feel for human woe,/ Tho’ drest in savage guise!’ (31-2) The repeated use of the word ‘savage’ throughout the poem, and throughout colonial discourse, presumes inferiority and to an extent negates their (otherwise well constructed) argument on the basis that they are themselves irrevocably prejudiced. As Ferguson puts it: ‘Women still considered slaves a heterogeneous mass of no differential from one to the next. They championed the abolition, whilst still maintaining the views of slave-holders’ (Ferguson, 4).

Equiano, obviously, does not have this problem with misrepresenting slaves, as he was one himself, and he does not take for granted the privileged position from which he stands as a manumitted slave.

It is true the incidents of [my life] are numerous; and, did I consider myself a European, I might say my sufferings were great; but, when I compare my lot with that of most of my countrymen, I regard myself as a particular favourite of Heaven, and acknowledge the mercies of Providence in every occurrence of my life. (Equiano, 31)

Equiano was a philanthropist, who would not abandon his fellow slaves, and who once freed worked to gain the freedom of others. He says: ‘the worth of the soul cannot be told’ (Equiano, 191). Equiano is in a better position than Yearsley to make a convincing moral argument, because he has viewed the slave trade at its most brutal first-hand. Compare: ‘I would sooner die a free man, than suffer myself to be scourged by the hands of ruffians, and my blood drawn like a slave’ (Equiano, 140) with:
Luco turn’d,  
In strongest agony, and with his hoe  
Struck the rude Christian on the forehead. Pride,  
With hateful malice, seize on Gorgon’s soul,  
By nature fierce. (Yearsley, 257-61)

Both quotes are taken from scenes of high tension, and potential violence, yet Equiano is telling us he resisted temptation to fight, although he was ‘determined to stand [his] ground’ (140), whereas Yearsley portrays her black character as a man subject to nature and to carnal instincts who must attack when threatened. Yet, these two texts would have had equal power and relevance in the late Eighteenth Century. The acceptability of Yearlsey’s poetry, and its conventionality in terms the style of poetry, may have trumped the true power of a narrative like that of Equiano.

Why then should African or African-American writers like Equiano have such difficulty in asserting their authenticity, and authority on a subject that a writer such as Yearsley has next to no first-hand experience of? Michelle Sibley-Collins’ article ‘Who Can Speak?’ argues that the likes of Equiano ‘wrote themselves into’ Western society, as to prove that they were literate was to prove their humanity. Equiano embedded himself in Western communities though his writing: ‘The question which shapes their acculturation is perhaps not so much "who can speak?" as "who will listen?" as these authors challenge their European readers to cast aside that which blinds or deafens them to speakers and writers who differ from them’ (Collins-Sibley). Equiano’s moral argument, then is a mixture of both logically disparaging justifications of slavery (‘But is not the slave trade entirely at war with the heart of man?’ (Equiano, 110)), and, just as importantly, affirming himself as a human being in the presence of those that denied him an identity. Chigor Chike agrees: ‘Many British people would have, probably, seen a slave as coming from some distant land, somewhere in the “dark continent” of Africa… He is saying to the reader “I, a black
African, I am a human being just like you” (Chike, 125). After his manumission, so precious was to him is freedom and his sense of self that he refused to relinquish the rights to his book to the publisher, as was conventionally done. To give up the rights to his story and the words that he had penned, would have been to give up his sense of self.

At the centre of the analysis of Equiano and Yearsley’s work is the question of authenticity. I have asserted that Yearsley’s poem, whilst being extremely emotional and affecting, does not properly attack slavery because she is both writing her own troubles as a woman into the poem and writing the slaves out of it by undermining her own argument. As a modern reader, I think this analysis is easy to make. However, I can appreciate that the highly sentimental style of writing during the Eighteenth Century meant that ‘On The Inhumanity of the Slave Trade’ would not have been received with the same skepticism that we may respond with today.

Equiano and Yearsley both present arguments that call for the slave holders and traders to rethink their attitudes and their ingrained beliefs and reassess their attitudes to black people. Abolitionist writers had the especially difficult task of appealing to readers interested in both informational and entertaining literature. The balance between evoking emotion and enlightening is an extremely delicate one. For their audiences and purposes both of the writers I have looked at achieved in expressing what they desired to say about the slave trade. But perhaps the more successful text of the two is the one that has made it onto the canon of African, African-Caribbean, and Colonial literature as one of the first and certainly one of the most famous slave narratives. I believe that this staying power of Equiano’s narrative is a testimony to the power of both the man himself and his literary ability to present
morally forceful arguments that undoubtedly affected the fight for the abolition of slavery.

**Bibliography**


Abolitionist Slogan and Symbol (1835)

With thanks to: http://aatraditions.blogspot.com/2011/04/graphic-arts-images-then-now.html
The Relationship between Imperial and Domestic Space within
*Mansfield Park and Castle Rackrent*

Vicky Payne

In exploring the complex and intervolving connections between imperial and domestic spaces, Homi Bhabha has suggested that ‘the recesses of domestic space become sites for history’s most intricate invasions… the borders between home and world become confused… forcing upon us a vision that is as divided as it is disorientating’ (9). If we consider this statement in relation to the ways in which imperial spaces and pursuits in the novels, *Mansfield Park* and *Castle Rackrent*, are represented, we note that they cannot be estranged from the domestic estates, after which they are named, but are implicitly linked to them. What I want to consider in this essay is how the ‘invasion’ of the domestic by the imperial disrupts the contained orderliness of the estate and transforms it into what Bhabha calls a ‘confused’, ‘disorientating’ space which is influenced by, and intertwined with, the unsettling issue of empire. The estate’s engagement with its imperial context undermines the social order within the domestic space. Sir Thomas’s removal to Antigua marks the absence of power and control within the household, and sees the gradual declination of orderliness. *Castle Rackrent* is defined by chaos from the beginning; lacking any stable, or fixed body to govern it, the domestic space becomes a site of anarchy and restlessness. Thus the themes of domination, authority and control are central to the plots, where we see the space of the estate enact the political, and often highly unstable, power struggles that are directly related to empire.

Both Antigua and Ireland, whilst seemingly on the peripheries of these novels, actually become central to the action, legitimising the continuation and upkeep of the
estate. In *Mansfield Park*, the relationship to imperial space is made implicit and virtually hidden within the main plot, yet the connection with Antigua informs the entire novel, including the stability of the home. When Mrs Grant and Mary discuss Sir Thomas’s removal to Antigua the principle on which the estate’s orderliness is hinged becomes apparent:

‘… I do not think we do so well without him (Sir Thomas). He has a fine dignified manner, which suits the head of such a house, and keeps everybody in their place. Lady Bertram seems more of a cipher now than when he is at home; and nobody else can keep Mrs Norris in order.’ (180)

Mansfield, as it is represented from the outset of the novel, is defined by the enclosed regularity and orderliness of the domestic space, and, as Mrs Grant observes, Sir Thomas becomes integral to this structure, acting as the central figure that ‘keeps everybody in their place’. The implication is that only by having a central authority in Mansfield Park, constantly employing a surveillance-like watch over the inhabitants, can order be properly maintained. Thus power and control become central to the relationship between imperial and domestic space. As Said suggests ‘… the domestic order, was tied to, located in, even illuminated by a specifically English order abroad’ (90), therefore this hierarchy and structure Mrs Grant alludes to naturally co-insides with empire. In fact it is the very need of Sir Thomas to keep ‘… the repose of his own family circle’ (Mansfield Park, 212), to retain order tightly within the borders of the domestic space, that actually demonstrates Mansfield Park’s relationship to the imperial. The more enclosed, and therefore controlled the domestic space is, the closer, paradoxically, we come to understanding its relationship to the imperial.

Sir Thomas constructs the domestic space as an impenetrable circle of orderliness, therefore what is beyond it must be a threat, and therefore chaotic, ‘The
Rushworths were the only addition to his own domestic circle he could ellicit’ (212) therefore, we see how the order of the domestic space is represented in a similar way, albeit indirectly, to the imperial. It becomes a matter of control and enclosure. Sir Thomas becomes then, the centre point through which domestic order, and thus empire, is maintained. As Bhabha suggests, ‘the personal-is-the political…’ (11) in Mansfield Park, and Sir Thomas’s authority over the domestic demonstrates how the imperial space must also be managed under strict surveillance and control.

Yet, in Castle Rackrent, it is the absence of order that proves to be the most problematic. The chaotic space of the estate points to the problems with lacking a fixed, stable body to govern and manage it. In fact the domestic space in Castle Rackrent, it could be argued, is not really ‘domestic’ at all if we take the definition to be, ‘Of or belonging to the home, house, or household; pertaining to one's place of residence or family affairs; household, home, ‘family’’(OED). If anything, Castle Rackrent, unlike Mansfield Park, appears to completely lack a household or even resemble an inhabitable space: ‘I went moping from room to room, hearing the doors clap for want of right locks, and the wind through the broken windows that the glazier would never mend…’ (61) It merely becomes a hollow, open shell which is looked upon purely for economic gain, rather than having any sentimental or personal value. It is a space, therefore, where the imperial and domestic are completely confused, ‘the personal-is-the political; the-world-in-the-home.’(Bhabha, 11). In fact, perhaps we could go further in Castle Rackrent to say that the imperial endeavours of the landlords deny the domestic space existence. When Sir Kit leaves the estate for Bath and ‘left all to the agent’ (20) it is merely a territory to be exploited for economic gain and imperial exploits completely take over the domestic space, ‘and the value of lands, as the agent informed him, falling every year in Ireland… he must set it as well
as he could to the best bidder.’ (22) The estate becomes a matter of land, and land becomes an issue of money. Therefore, there is a movement from seeing Castle Rackrent as a domestic space to be managed, to the detached, imperialistic attitude of positioning wealth over improvement. Thus, when Bhabha suggests the ‘confusion’ that occurs after these borders are broken down, we see that we cannot easily define or distinguish the space; it becomes an ambivalent mixture between the ‘personal’ and the ‘political’.

This idea of the home as a sort of microcosm can be applied interestingly to Castle Rackrent. As a metaphor for the broader relationship between the domestic and imperial, Castle Rackrent shows the dangers of when the personal and the political overlap: the political threatens and even undermines the existence of the domestic space. Under Sir Murtagh’s control, the estate merely exists as a space to be trespassed over: ‘…he (Sir Murtagh) made a good living of trespassing cattle… he did not like to hear me talking of repairing fences.’ (14). The physical borders in Castle Rackrent, then, as well as the ‘personal’ and the ‘political’ ones, are completely broken down in the novel. When Thady says that he is being ‘true and loyal to the family’ in his narrative (8) we can automatically question his sincerity here, as the Rackrent’s are bound up with so much fluctuation, change and political activity that it is difficult to believably consider them, as Thady claims to, in terms of any sentimental attachment. They are either absent from the estate or quickly succeeded by others, and there is seemingly nothing of any substance to be loyal to. Rather, the estate becomes a question of land over loyalty and sentimentality:

‘Underlying social space are territories, lands, geographical domains, the actual geographical underpinnings of the imperial and also the cultural contest… The actual
geographical possession of land is what empire in the final analysis is all about.’
(Said, 93)

Therefore, to view the domestic space of the estate is to view it as an imperial territory to be fought over. It could be argued, then, that all the characters who inherit or possess Castle Rackrent are enacting the imperial ‘…ideology of control over territory’ (Said, 93). Thus it is interesting that Thady appears sentimental in a novel that actually posits the acquisition of land and wealth over any domestic order and tranquillity. The estate is merely conceived as ‘property’ or land to be controlled, thus when Bhabha says ‘the personal-is-the-political’, we can see how this can be applied to Castle Rackrent, as the landlords interlink the domestic with imperial ideas of control and mastery.

Another facet of both the novels that relates fundamentally to this idea of the ‘political’ - controlling property and enforcing authority - as sacrificing the ‘personal’ is in the representation of women. Their relationship to imperial space is how they can be seen to function as a marketable commodity for which to be owned and controlled. Both within Castle Rackrent and Mansfield Park women become replaceable and disposable, conditioned and imprisoned by marriage and the home, where to occupy any space outside, or possibly even within, the domestic space becomes impossible:

‘She (Maria) was less and less able to endure the restraint which her father imposed. The liberality which his absence had given was now become absolutely necessary… In all the important preparations of the mind she was complete; being prepared for matrimony by an hared of home, restraint and tranquillity…’ (217)

Interestingly, it seems ironic that Maria should consider matrimony an escape here, as marriage will bind her to the very things she despises - ‘home, restraint and
tranquillity’. Yet, this shows the extent to which Mansfield constrains Maria. She is so desperate to escape her father’s control she willingly sacrifices both her happiness and freedom by entering into yet another restrictive, confining position. The space of Mansfield and marriage therefore, becomes a power struggle between the ‘oppressed’ and the ‘master’ thus it seems ironic that marriage, as the ultimate confining, limiting space for the woman, should be deemed an escape.

When Sir Thomas attempts to confront Maria as to her choice of suitor, the language adds to the sense of confinement ‘With solemn kindness Sir Thomas addressed her; told her… he would act for her and release her. Maria had a moment’s struggle as she listened…’ (216) The language seems very physical here, the idea of her ‘release’ and, in particular, her ‘struggle’ suggests the level of suffocation Maria is, quite forcefully, having to endure. Therefore Mansfield and Sir Thomas become affiliated with the kind of oppressive and constraining control over women. In fact Henry is the only man who actually offers Maria any sense of freedom. Although it transgresses the social boundaries, her escape with Henry into the ‘wilderness’ at Sotherton is emblematic of her social escape from the constraints put upon her from civilised society. The very idea of the ‘wilderness’ symbolises this contrast: it denotes the uncivilised, untamed desires that must be kept in check within the neat orderliness of the estates.

In *Castle Rackrent* the women are also constrained by the space of marriage and the estate. Sir Kit’s imprisonment of his wife overrides the domestic harmony of the estate. She becomes a matter of property that can be made disposable, ‘and to make sure of her, he turned the key in the door, and kept it ever after in his pocket… and was as gay and gallant, and as much himself as before he was married.’ (29-30) By rejecting her, Sir Kit is also rejecting the domestic order. She has no power within
the home, as the woman becomes only an object that is able to support the personal economy of her husband: ‘She has thousands of English pounds concealed in diamonds about her, which she as good as promised to give up to my master before she married…’ (28) Therefore Sir Kit’s wife is of no domestic use, she only provides a source of income, and her obstinacy in not yielding to Sir Kit’s wishes results in punishment and imprisonment. Women are refused any freedom, even within the space of the home. As Armstrong asserts, the ‘domestic woman’s capacity to supervise’ (80) is fundamental to the stability of the estate, yet Castle Rackrent denies women this position. The domestic order, therefore, is pushed into near non-existence. The supervisory position of the domestic woman is only every fully realised in Sir Murtagh’s wife, but it is this very role, which she refuses to relinquish, that results in his death, ‘At last, in a dispute about an abatement, my lady would have the last word and Sir Murtagh grew mad… and so it was, for Sir Murtagh in his passion broke a blood vessel, and all the law in the land could do nothing in that case.’ (18) Therefore the novel refuses the domestic space its cohesive, shared order where the woman is allowed to assume her ‘supervisory’ position. Rather, the space of the domestic is controlled; so whilst the borders between home and world may be ‘confusing’ and chaotic, the space in which women exist is well understood.

Yet, as we see in Mansfield Park, it is the very fact that these borders between ‘home’ and ‘world’ are, at times, so well defined that makes the destruction of them seem even more threatening and dangerous. Particularly within the theatre scenes at Mansfield Park we see the most explicit and open subversion of order within the domestic space: ‘It is the very room for a theatre… by merely moving the bookcase in father’s room, is the very thing we could have desired, if we could have sat down to wish for it.’ (147) The theatre physically violates and intrudes on the domestic space.
The significance of this being Sir Thomas’s study suggests the ultimate act of subversion to his authority and the physical transformation of the space at once undermines the previous use of it. Rather than an orderly space from which the estate is privately managed, ironically, it becomes the central space from which public disorder and transgression springs. The very idea of the play works in a similar way, in a sense, to the masquerade. It entails the ‘alienation from inner to outer’ (Castle, 5) where the actors can transgress the propriety expected within their social roles, and effect disguise as a character within a play.

The theatre, therefore, becomes the pivotal moment in the novel where authority and order is openly challenged, and this co-incides with Fanny’s gradual importance within the house. By her refusal to be coerced into performing she positions herself as the vital mediator between the actors, providing order and harmony where potential chaos lies, ‘Fanny, being always a very courteous listener, and often the only listener at hand, came in for the complaints and the distresses of most of them.’ (183) Fanny’s liminalt allows her all the more power here. Like Thady she becomes the implementer of order, accidentally couching herself between the actors as advisor and comforter. Thus whilst the strict authority that Sir Thomas imposes is disobeyed, it is the quiet, obliging authority of Fanny that actually takes over. Therefore the order within the domestic space, becomes indirectly indebted to Fanny. She is the distant ‘observer’ who is able to assert her influence through her mediations between characters.

Yet, Castle Rackrent’s need for ‘improvement’ and order, both in terms of the owners’ wayward behaviour and the physical grounds that reflect it, is never fully met. Rather, ironically, it is the very disorder of the estate that proves to be the vital tool for which Thady is able to impose and consolidate is own powerful position in
the house: ‘I follows with a slate to make up the window… and when I went up with
the slate, the door having no lock, and the bolt spoilt, was a-jar after Miss Jane, and as
I was busy at the window, I heard all that was saying within.’ (65) Thus it is the very
ruin of the estate that empowers Thady here, as it is only through his job of fixing the
window that he is able to spy as he does. We can see that Thady actually relies on the
estate to be kept in disorder - without things to fix he becomes useless. Thus Thady,
like Fanny, is the implementer of order. As we see at the novel’s end he literally does
actually help appropriate the estate from ruin by the succession of Jason, himself the
capable improver, just like Thady. Thus Thady’s liminality actually gives him more
power and authority, just as we see with Fanny in *Mansfield Park*. Within the
domestic space of Mansfield, power is, whether willingly or unwillingly, conferred to
Fanny. She becomes the mediator between Edmond and Mary and within the space of
the play performs a subordinate, yet vital role, ‘sometimes as prompter, sometimes as
spectator – [she] was often very useful.’ (184) Thus without being conventionally, or
officially ‘within’ the family circle, Fanny and Thady actually, through their seeming
loyalty to the household, become the ‘fixers’ that prevent the ruin of the estate.

In conclusion, the relationships between imperial and domestic space are
played out in various different ways within the novels, yet ultimately it is the power
dynamics within them that fully connect the domestic with the imperial. The borders
between home and world, order and disorder are completely broken down within the
novels. In *Mansfield Park* this made even more significant by Sir Thomas’s
surveillance-like control over the estate, whilst in *Castle Rackrent*, domestic order is
compromised by the imperial process from the beginning. Yet within both the novels
the roles of Fanny and Thady suggest where power actually lies: their liminality
actually grants them more power, as they subvert the authority of the ‘master’. This
shows that the relationship between the imperial and domestic is a confusing one, where the power dynamics within the domestic are more fluid and conflicting than they appear.

**Bibliography**


Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 1994


Kedleston Hall

An example of typical eighteenth century architecture; symmetrical and grand.

Transgression and Subversion: the Process of Property Transmission and the Appropriation of Space in Power Relations in 
Mansfield Park and Castle Rackrent’

Daisy Leigh

In Mansfield Park (1814), Mrs Grant describes the estate’s head, Sir Thomas Bertram, thus: “You will find his consequence very just and reasonable when you see him with his family…He has a fine dignified manner, which suits the head of such a house, and keeps every body in their place” (Austen, 180). Here, a powerful statement is made about the necessity of an authoritative patriarchal figure to rule the domestic space within an estate, and keep his family from transgressing their proper boundaries. The estate is a complex space comprising both the domestic sphere of the home, and the economically productive territory of the land. Each space relies on a hierarchical power structure in order to make it function beneficially. In Mansfield Park and Castle Rackrent (1800), the space of the estate is used to examine not only the economic consequences of an absentee patriarch, but also the effect upon domestic power relations between the family, friends and servants. It has been noted that “the estate as an ordered physical structure is a metonym for the inherited structures…[such as]…a code of morality” (Duckworth, ix). In this essay I will explore the ways in which these ‘inherited structures’, as Duckworth calls them, are derived from the power of the patriarch who controls the estate. Therefore it is the absence of the respective landowners and the ensuing mismanagement of their estates, which degrades the structure of morality from the space of their domain. This provides the opportunity for the transgression of power relations within the domestic sphere. By identifying these acts of transgression I will demonstrate how they result
in the subversion of primogenital property transmission, thus inherently undermining patriarchal rule.

The necessity for the departure of Sir Thomas Bertram from Mansfield Park is revealed to be financial; “his own circumstances were rendered less fair than heretofore, by some recent losses on his West India estate” (Austen, 54). His departure marks the reversal of the flow of power between the two estates and instead of benefitting financially, Mansfield Park is drained of its most stabilizing resource; the patriarch. Due to his absence an opportunity for Mrs Norris arises to appropriate a more powerful role within the domestic space of Mansfield Park. The aunt is acknowledged to be of a lower status than the Bertram family, occupying an ambiguous role, which she begrudges. This lower status is established immediately within the space of the novel’s text, as on the first page the narrator notes she is “obliged to be attached to…a friend of her brother-in-law…[who provides]…his friend’s an income in the living of Mansfield” (Austen, 35). Such dependency seals Mrs Norris’s lower rank within the power hierarchy of the estate. However, Mrs Norris is not only a tenant, but a family member and therefore occupies a double role within the family. Mansfield Parsonage is a smaller residence “only across the park” (Austen, 56). The proximity therefore allows for frequent visits of Mrs Norris within the Bertram household, giving her direct access to Sir Thomas’s most precious economic holdings; his children. It is through his children that Sir Thomas will consolidate the social status of his family.

After the death of her husband, Mrs Norris then “took possession of the White House” (Austen, 60). The narrator’s choice of such a bold verb indicates her desire to convey Mrs Norris’s impudence. By specifically choosing the limited space she subversively “prevent[s] it being expected” (Austen, 57) of her to fulfil her duty to Sir
Thomas, by taking on Fanny as her ward. This is an example of Mrs Norris assuming the power to dictate which requirements she chooses to fulfil in order to assume power within the Mansfield domestic space. This is further exemplified upon Sir Thomas’s departure whereby Mrs Norris gladly accepts responsibility of his daughters, Maria and Julia, who are “both emblems of their father’s economic worth and important extensions of his power” due to their “promise of family aggrandizement through exchange” (Cleere, 118). This delegation of authority to a ‘middleman’ sees his power and property transgress beyond the limits of his direct control, to Mrs Norris, thus loosening his authority over the space of his estate. Despite Sir Thomas’s apprehension “of leaving his daughters to the direction of others…he had sufficient confidence [in Mrs Norris] to make him go without fears for their conduct” (Austen, 61). However this confidence is misplaced as Mrs Norris demonstrates “extensive indulgence and flattery” (Austen, 458) towards Maria and Julia, the opposite of the “early habitual restraint” (More, 489) advised in conduct books such as ‘The Benefits of Restraint’ (1799). Such subversion of the patriarchal ideology that was previously implemented by Sir Thomas encourages his daughters to transgress the boundaries of propriety.

The transference of a landowner’s “domestic holdings” (Cleere, 118) to a ‘middleman’ is also examined within the novel Castle Rackrent. Sir Kit Stopgap inherits the Rackrent estate from his deceased brother Sir Murtagh Rackrent. From the offset the reader recognizes the repeated break in primogenital transmission of property. This system should reaffirm the smooth transition of an estate between generations, strengthening the space of the estate, by providing it with inherited sentimental value. Simon Varey notes “it was orthodox to recognize two branches of building: public and private” (Varey, 10). Sir Kit, however, inherits a property which
has such little emotional value to him that he treats Castle Rackrent like “a public-house” (Edgeworth, 19), one which is not his own. This primarily unstable relationship continues to degenerate as he quickly leaves his domain and “sail[s] for England”, a definitive point in the text beginning Sir Kit’s mismanagement as an absentee landlord. The author herself describes middlemen as people who “took the land at a reasonable rent and sub-let at the highest price he could get…caus[ing] untold misery” (Butler, 157-8), so, by using Thady Quirk as a narrator, Edgeworth subverts the traditional gentile perspective of an estate’s management, and allows the ‘faithful servant’ to vocalize his criticism of the use of middlemen: “The agent was one of your middle men, who grind the face of the poor…he ferreted the tenants out of their lives-not a week without a call for money-drafts upon drafts from Sir Kit” (Edgeworth, 20-21). Here the narrative frame of an oral memoir is manipulated to lay the blame of the malpractice with his master Sir Kit. By adding a clause which establishes Sir Kit as the source of the economic depletion, the assertion made at the beginning of the sentence “ceases to be in the least surprizing when you hear the qualifying explanation that follows” (Edgeworth, R.L qtd. in Edgeworth, 105). Here Thady’s dialect transgresses the boundaries of propriety of a servant narrating memoirs, as he is challenging his master’s method of estate management. However, this opportunity to transgress only arises due to Sir Kit’s negligence of his estate through the relinquishment of patriarchal power. Here the novel can be seen to make a clear pro-unionist statement: by satirizing the Anglo-Irish mismanagement of estates and the dangerous consequences of such practices, the novel reveals the necessity of the Act of Union (1800). This act brought Ireland under direct rule of the United Kingdom of Great Britain, in order to limit such transgression.
The glossary of the novel attempts to control the carnivalesque nature of the native dialect by glossing it as “a specimen of a mode of rhetoric common in Ireland” (Edgeworth, R.L, 105). The editor is attempting to establish a dichotomy between the language of Thady and the intended reader, which ratifies a hierarchical system of interdependence between the dominant (the English colonists) and the subject (the Irish). This linguistic colonization is recognized by Homi Bhabha in his essay ‘Of Mimicry and Man’, in which he discusses how the colonialists create “a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite” (Bhabha, 126). Here the subject of power relations within the novel are being played out within the textual space of the novel itself, as the editor imposes his control over Thady’s narrative, “plac[ing him] firmly within the hierarchical social structure as a labourer who must be policed by gentlemen” (Kirkpatrick, xxvii). This assertion of power paradoxically undermines the authority of the colonialist, as it reflects the apprehensiveness of the ruling structure in its ability to suppress the racial ‘other’ from appropriating power. This deconstruction of the editor’s response shows that Thady’s character can be read on a more subtle and subversive level as a rebellious character, sympathetic towards the united Irishmen; “All was now set at the highest penny to a parcel of poor wretches who meant to run away, and did so, after taking two crops out of the ground” (Edgeworth, 21). Such sympathy with the ‘poor wretches’ conflicts with his role as a faithful servant with such “regard for the family” (Edgeworth, 21), and raises the question of duplicity in his nature. Through the subversion of patriarchal authority in Castle Rackrent, Thady appropriates a liminal role, which embodies the uncertainties within the imperial and domestic relationship.

It is precisely this liminality which motivates Mrs Norris to act upon opportunities to transgress; she fears her lack of fixed position within the domestic
sphere of Mansfield Park. This is precisely the reason she brings Fanny into the
domestic space of the estate, so she can define her own position as above Fanny;
“Remember, wherever you are, you must always be the lowest and last” (Austen, 234). Fanny accepts this by being submissive to her manipulative Aunt. In order to
verify her domestic position Mrs Norris takes upon herself to establish an
economically prosperous marriage between Maria Bertram and Mr Rushworth. Maria
accepts the offer of marriage in a bid to escape her father’s control over her; “She was
less and less able to endure the restraint her father imposed. The liberty which his
absence had given was now become absolutely necessary. She must escape from him
and Mansfield as soon as possible” (Austen, 217). In this passage her father and
Mansfield are inextricably linked as the source of her oppression and her decision to
marry a man she does not fully love is born from her desperation to escape the
patriarchal control of her father. In this way the text can be seen as a criticism of this;
“I cannot get out, as the starling said” (Austen, 123). By quoting Laurence Sterne’s A
Sentimental Journey, the text moves on to an attack of slavery, linking the position of
the female to that of chattel, a piece of property.

As a woman, Maria has no options available to her; the only emancipation
from her father’s patriarchal dominance is through marriage, yet through marriage she
will only become her husband’s property. Bound by this reality Maria uses the
physical boundaries of the estate, the iron gate and the ha-ha, to illustrate
metaphorically the “feeling of restraint and hardship” (Austen, 123) which they
symbolize. She is driven by this patriarchal oppression to transgress the boundaries of
propriety and ask Henry Crawford to help her escape the restraints of her impending
marriage, which he does, offering his “assistance” in “passing round the edge of the
gate” which symbolizes “Mr Rushworth’s authority and protection” (Austen, 123).
This transgression foreshadows Maria’s later infidelity as she quits “her husband’s roof in company with the well known and captivating Mr C[rawford]” (Austen, 439). This radical action is accompanied by the comments of Mr Price; “If she belonged to me, I’d give her the rope’s end as long as I could stand over her. A little flogging…would be the best way of preventing such things” (Austen, 438). Through such imagery it is not difficult to imagine Maria as a runaway slave, fleeing her master. Such transgression, though excessive, can be understood as a response to the overly severe management Maria received as her father perceived her, not with love, but as a representation of his economic worth. Sir Thomas mismanages his domestic space, blending the role of estate manager of his slave colony in Antigua with his role as a father. So much so that, as in Castle Rackrent “communal and family feeling are usurped by economic self-interest” (Kilpatrick, xvii), and so, despite knowing his daughter “could not, [and] did not like him” (Austen, 216), economic and social considerations prevail, and he allows the marriage to take place. This failure in parental values can be seen as the consequence of Maria’s elopement, which in turn leads to a divorce and undermines primogenital property transmission of the Rushworth estate. Thus, what ought to have consolidated the Bertram family’s economic and social status, through mismanagement drains capital from the estate.

The actions of both Mr Moneygawl and Sir Conolly of Castle Rackrent can also be viewed as economically motivated. Despite Sir Condy and his son, the Captain, being “the greatest friends ever you see…forever out a shooting or a hunting together” (Edgeworth, 42), upon finding his daughter to be in love with Sir Condy and with a mind to marry him, he “locked [Isabella] up in her chamber and forbid [her] to think of him any more” (Edgeworth, 44). This is undoubtedly due to the imminent ruin of the Rackrent family. Mr Moneygawl does not wish to limit his
family’s prospects by allowing the undesirable marriage and therefore must incarcerate his daughter for her own good. By allowing her to marry Sir Condy he would lose economically, in the form of a dowry but, also, the principles of primogeniture under the guardianship of Sir Condy’s patriarchy would be at risk due to his inability to manage his estate. Under such circumstances Mr Moneygawl feels forced to incarcerate his youngest daughter. However, as with the editor’s enforced translation, the necessity of this physical assertion shows the limits of patriarchal power. By undermining her father, and being “carried off by her own consent to Scotland”, Isabella, like Maria Bertram, “allow[ed her]self to think it not prohibited” (Austen, 123) to refuse to her father’s wishes, and therefore the boundaries of propriety are already transgressed even before her physical incarceration was enforced. Such radical insubordination saw Isabella disowned by her family at Mount Juliet’s town. Isabella’s rejection of patriarchal rule subverts the “distinctions between masculine behaviour, authority and power” (McDonnell, 198) and, from this point, the already inept Sir Condy is completely dominated by Isabella. She is portrayed as an unruly, disobedient wife who appropriates the power of the patriarch in Castle Rackrent, emasculating him in front of her maid and in hearing of Thady (Edgeworth, 66-67), further destabilizing the power structure necessary to maintain the Rackrent estate.

Throughout both novels the plot is dominated by the space of the estates. In Castle Rackrent, the temporal attitudes of the Rackrent heirs is satirized to make a significant statement about the “feudal oppression of Catholic custom and the ruthless greed of Protestant law” (Kilpatrick, xiii), thus urging the necessity of the Act of Union in order to maintain the spatial land of the British colony. By portraying the transgressive behaviour of both females and the lower classes, Edgeworth shows how
the system of patriarchy is repeatedly undermined, and the chaos which ensues. It must be noted though, that the opportunity to transgress arose from the mismanagement of Castle Rackrent and the abuse of power by the various patriarchs. In this sense transgression can be seen as a contagious element derived from the abuse or misuse of patriarchal power. This theme reoccurs within Mansfield Park however, unlike the satire of Castle Rackrent the transgressions of the characters, notably Mrs Norris and Maria, are portrayed in a more complex emotional manner. It is not through rampant abuse that Sir Thomas fails to maintain power, but rather by confusing the boundaries of his domestic and economic spaces, he misinterprets the values necessary to raise his daughters, and through excessive severity, drives them to transgress the boundaries of feminine propriety in order to escape.

**Bibliography:**


Kilpatrick, Kathryn J. ‘‘Going to Law about That Jointure’: Women and Property in


McDonnell, Jane. “‘A Little Spirit of Independence’: Sexual Politics and the
Bildungsroman in Mansfield Park’. NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction. 17. 3.
http://www.jstor.org/stable/1345747

More, Hannah. ‘The Benefits of Restraint’ in Mansfield Park. Lancashire: Broadview

Varey, Simon. Space and the Eighteenth-Century English Novel. Cambridge: