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***“Live at peace and be happy.” Finding the Way to
Happiness in Maria Edgeworth’s *Moral Tales* and
Sarah Fielding’s *The Governess****

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Abstract

What is happiness or better to ask, what is it consist of?

For centuries various intellectuals tried to answer this question. If before the Enlightenment, happiness was promised only in Heaven, with the Age of Reason, fostered by Scientific Revolution, which focused on the method of observation and experimentation in exploring nature, shifted human's belief in happiness as a Divine gift that could be secured afterlife. The people became aware that the pursuit of happiness was real, consisting of pleasurable and good things and could be obtained in this life, on Earth.

Happiness was something that everyone had the right to seek. Thus, the enlightened thinkers were engaged in finding out the answers to the questions of how can one be happy and how to make it easy and possible the pursuit of happiness. Even though the happiness became accessible to every human being, the discussions about the happy life and happiness greatly varied.

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the meaning of happiness according to some prominent thinkers of the English Enlightenment such as John Locke, David Hume, Adam Smith, Jeremy Bentham, Francis Hutcheson and explore the ways of pursuing happiness through reading *The Governess* by Sarah Fielding and *Moral Tales* by Maria Edgeworth.

If Sarah Fielding pioneered in writing a novel dedicated especially to girls and their education, Maria Edgeworth became the first woman author who not only wrote a treatise on education but also developed children's literature by writing for children and young adults.

This thesis also aims to find the link between the philosophical ideas of happiness and the works of Sarah Fielding and Maria Edgeworth.

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To My Family

Introduction

In the eighteenth century, Europe took a new turn in its history, “there is a mighty Light which spreads its self over the world especially in those two free Nations of England and Holland,”¹ wrote Anthony Ashley Cooper to his friend. This light was bringing a huge change in political, philosophical and cultural life, diffusing rapidly. The Enlightenment or the Age of Reason was intellectual movement caused and followed by Scientific Revolution. The discovery of the new scientific methods, which explained the laws of nature, freed the world from the constraints of theological thinking. The church was loosing its powers and religion was becoming a private matter. To the question “What is Enlightenment?” Immanuel Kant answered:

Enlightenment is man’s emergence from his self-incurred immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one’s own understanding without the guidance of another. This immaturity is self-incurred it its cause is not lack of understanding, but lack of resolution and courage to use it without the guidance of another. The motto of enlightenment is therefore: *Sapere aude!* Have courage to use your own understanding!²

This understanding together with the new ways of thinking and seeing were encouraged by various philosophers whose brand new ideas about the world were greatly effecting people’s minds. These ideas were centred upon reason as one and only source of human’s knowledge. Thus, scientific methods, experimentation and observation gained great popularity and were highly promoted. As science was flourishing, man was undertaking the power over nature, questioning Divine Right which led to various political reforms and discussions about the Rights of Man.

In England, the enlightened thinkers did not have to fight over their ideas as in some other European countries, curiously “one trait of enlightened England was a buoyant pragmatism, underpinned by a Baconian philosophy of action, which lay in the uses of

¹ Roy Porter, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World*, London: Penguin Books, 2000, p. 3.

² KANT, “Political Writings,” in *Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought*, ed. by H. S. Reiss, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 54.

freedom, the enjoyment of well-being.”³ This freedom was spreading upon all spheres of society, especially religion, which found its expression in “hospitals for the sick, homes of refuge for the poor and aged of both sexes, schools for the education of the children.”⁴

Thus, industrialization, population growth, urbanization, general income increase as well as freedom in thinking, shifted people’s attention to seek what is most pleasurable in human life, happiness. The main questions of the enlightened thinkers were how can a man be happy and how to make it easy and possible the pursuit of happiness.

John Locke (1632-1704) known for his liberalism, was one of the most influential thinkers of the Enlightenment. He promoted religious toleration and political liberty in *Letters on Toleration* (1689) and in *Two Treatises of Government* (1690). His treatise *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693), which explained how to educate children’s minds, brought revolutionary thinking towards education and educators. Locke’s theory of mind, which defined the self, expressed in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), gave rise to the new ideas of human thinking, later explored and expressed by David Hume, Kant and many other philosophers.

David Hume (1711-1776), a Scottish Enlightenment philosopher followed Locke, arguing that human knowledge derives entirely from experience. Hume’s *A Treatise on Human Nature*, even though “had fallen deadborn from the press”⁵ during his time, nowadays is considered one of Hume’s most important work. In his treatise, Hume was trying to examine human nature through psychological thinking.

Adam Smith (1723-1790), Hume’s follower and friend, was also a Scottish philosopher, who pioneered in political economy writing his *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776) becoming the Father of Economics. His main concern was how rational self-regard and competition can lead to people's welfare.

Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746) was the first to offer an equation for the happy life where benevolence, defined by happiness could be shared with others. Hutcheson’s moral theory, described in his most known writings: *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1725) and *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections, with Illustrations of the Moral Sense* (1728), influenced David Hume and

³ Roy Porter, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World*, p. 14.

⁴ Ibid, p. 15.

⁵ Ibid, p. 90.

Adam Smith, the latter was also his student. Hutcheson's theories focused on human nature, which drew a special attention towards innate care and the well-being of others.

Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) was the founder of utilitarianism. His philosophy was based on the principle of the greatest happiness for the greatest number, adapted from "that action is best which procures the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers,"⁶ first coined by Francis Hutcheson. He was against the idea of natural law, considering it divine in origin. Bentham was a political radical, who promoted equal rights and freedom of thought and expression.

The Enlightenment brought a significant change in cultural and literary spheres. The emphasis on art, music and literature was widely spread especially within the middle class. Literature became one of the means to communicate as well as to learn. With the economy growth, people were more interested in reading and discussing music and arts, therefore, education became an essential element in the formation of a well-balanced person. Women became more confident, trying their abilities in different areas especially writing. Thus, writing became an instrument with which women were able to earn money as well as receive recognition for their talent.

If Maria Edgeworth "shaped public policy through her treatises on education and tenant reform,"⁷ becoming a celebrity during her own time, Sarah Fielding was an expert "of the human heart,"⁸ earning the name of the most popular woman novelist in the mid-eighteenth century England.

I became interested in Sarah Fielding when I first read the syllabus of the English literature which was focused on *Passions, Reason, and Happiness in Eighteenth-Century Sentimental Fiction*. *The Adventures of David Simple* by Sarah Fielding was among the selection of the texts to read. I was not only overwhelmed by the novel, it also led me to discover the world of Sarah Fielding and Maria Edgeworth.

⁶ Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, ed. by W. Leidhold, Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2004, Treatise II, Section III, VIII, p. 87, [online].

⁷ Rebecca Davies, *Written Maternal Authority and Eighteenth-Century Education in Britain: Educating by the Book*, London and New York: Routledge, 2014, p. 85.

⁸ Sarah Fielding, *The Adventures of David Simple Containing an Account of his Travels Through the Cities of London and Westminster; in the Search of a Real Friend and The Adventures of David Simple, Volume the Last in which His history is Concluded*, ed. by P. Sabor, Lexington (KY): The University Press of Kentucky, 1998, Introduction, p. xxiv.

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the meaning of happiness according to some prominent thinkers of the English Enlightenment and explore the ways of pursuing happiness through reading *The Governess* by Sarah Fielding and *Moral Tales* by Maria Edgeworth.

In the first part, I investigate upon the meaning of happiness, focusing on the ideas as well as the pursuit of happiness outlined by John Locke, Francis Hutcheson, David Hume, Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham. All the above mentioned philosophers displayed their own interpretations of happiness as well as discussed the possible ways of achieving it.

In the second part, I focus attention on Sarah Fielding and Maria Edgeworth, investigating their lives and literary careers from the happiness point of view. It is also centred on the analysis of the two most famous educational novels for children, *The Governess* by Sarah Fielding and *Moral Tales* by Maria Edgeworth, through the prism of philosophical concept of happiness.

PART ONE

Happiness in the Age of Enlightenment

CHAPTER ONE

Philosophical and Religious Investigation of Happiness

1.1. The Meaning of Happiness

Happiness is enjoyed only in proportion as it is known.
Samuel Johnson

There has been always a concern about how to pursue such a desirable happiness as well as a question of what makes people happy. Before trying to answer these quite difficult questions it is worth exploring what happiness really means.

If we ask our friend or a member of our family, what is happiness we may hear no clear answer. We all talk about happiness and how somebody or something makes one happy without understanding the true meaning of happiness. And is there a true meaning for happiness? The lexical investigation of the term happiness reveals that in all Indo-European languages the word for happiness is associated with the word for luck. In Old French *bonheur* means good fortune or happiness and the German word *gluck* means both happiness and chance. As for the English language, the term happiness derives from the Old Norse word *happ* meaning luck or chance and from Old English *hæpic* meaning equal. Thus, this lexical investigation suggests that happiness, in the ancient times, was something dictated by Fate or stars, given or taken away by Gods. Therefore, the chances for all the people to be happy were very small.

In the Oxford dictionary the word happiness is explained as the state of feeling or showing pleasure as well as the state of being satisfied that something is good or right. If it is clear that our happiness consists in pleasant and good things why then it has been a concern of various philosophers since the ancient times? Because just the linguistical explanation of the meaning of the word is not enough. To fully understand the notion of

happiness we have to look at different senses of the term happiness. Since the ancient times, various philosophers tried to give their own theories on how to pursuit happiness. Most of all, happiness is viewed by taking into considerations a state of a mind as well as a well-being of a person.

The ideas about happiness and philosophical questions about it were already present and investigated by the ancient Greeks. Julia Annas in her book *Morality of Happiness*, explores Aristotle's idea about happiness from the ethical point of view. She argues that "happiness in ancient theories is given its sense by the role it plays; and the most important role it plays is that of an obvious, but thin, specification of the final good."⁹ Being happy, according to Aristotle is to be positive and satisfied with one's life till the final end. Aristotle views happiness in good actions as well as in two distinct virtues: virtue of character and virtue of thought. If virtue of character relates to emotive state of a person such as anger, love, appetite, the virtue of thought is of major importance as it relates to art and prudence and occupies the rational part of the soul. According to Aristotle, to lead a happy life one must possess not only the virtues of character and of thought but also to do good actions in accordance with those virtues.

Plato also views happiness in virtues, however he specifies that to be happy one must possess four distinct virtues: wisdom, courage, justice and moderation. He also argues that to be really happy one must be moral. Wisdom helps us to understand and make right choices whereas justice helps us to find peace and put desires to rest. With moderation we control our desires and courage gives us strength to act in accordance with our beliefs.

Epicurus views happiness as pleasure – hedonism (after the Greek word *hêdonê*, pleasure). He argues that it is pleasure that we are all aiming for, it is our final good. The life without pain and misery is a happy life. Even though, Epicurus emphasizes that the greatest pleasure stands not just in simple delights but in complete absence of pain. Thus, in the Greek conception, a happy life is a complete life of living well. If for Aristotle happiness resides in good actions and activities, for Epicurus happiness lies in engaging the activities rather than doing or producing them. At the end what matters is not what we do but how we feel about what we do.

The Stoics, on the contrary, maintain an idea that it does not matter if a person

⁹ Julia Annas, *The Morality of Happiness*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 46.

experiences pleasure or pain. People's aims are neither good or bad, so in consequence the achievement or the failure of their aims is of no importance. What matters is to understand one's place in *the overall scheme of things, i.e., the kosmos*¹⁰ and accept whatever is determined by the universe as an inevitable. In Stoic thinking, a happy person is a wise and virtuous person who lives in agreement with nature. If on the one hand the Stoics and Plato agrees in recognising four major virtues; wisdom, courage, justice and moderation and have similar thoughts about consistence of human condition, on the other hand they differ in treating one's desires and emotions. For Stoics the external circumstances are of great importance as they can influence the accomplishment of basic desires.

In the Christian tradition, happiness cannot be obtained in this life, we can find happiness in heaven, in the union with God, practically when we are dead. Thomas Aquinas, one of the greatest philosopher saints, describes happiness as perfect human happiness that consists in the vision of the divine essence¹¹. Thus, if happiness is promised afterlife, the only way to secure our happiness in heaven is to act virtuously, observing the law established by God and living in the love of God on earth. Our life as well as happiness are in the hands of God, therefore without God man can only experience sadness and depression.

Everything changed with the age of the Enlightenment or the Age of Reason, European intellectual and cultural movement of the seventeenth and eighteenth century. It was the age of reason over superstition and the light over darkness as the light was identified not only with illumination but also with knowledge. This knowledge was brought by Sir Isaac Newton who in his book *Principia Mathematica* explained the order in which the planets moved around the sun. His thesis about the law of universal gravitation proved that every body in the universe attracts every other body in precise mathematical relationships. According to this law, the sun, the moon, the Earth, the planets, and all the other bodies move in accordance with the same basic force of gravitation. Newton's mathematical approach, according to which our universe operates, replaced religious interpretation of the forces of nature. Therefore, religion "became a matter of analysis and choice."¹² The question of "How can I be saved?" was translated

¹⁰ Nicholas White, *A Brief History of Happiness*, Malden (MA), Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006, p. 99.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 96.

¹² Roy Porter, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World*, p. 99.

by the enlightened thinkers into “How can I be happy?”¹³ Happiness was viewed as something that could be obtained in this life, here and now¹⁴.

With the rapid progress of science and technology as well as press, people were educated that happiness is not just a Divine gift that one can obtain afterlife but lies in pleasure and good feelings in this life. Happiness was something that everyone had the right to seek, therefore the enlightened intellectuals were engaged in finding out the answers to the question of how can one be happy. The word happiness itself was used in a broader sense, as to be happy for most of the people meant to live a good life and to satisfy one’s one desires.

Happiness became a central theme not only in the works of philosophers but also in those of priests, writers, poets and politicians. In his *Dictionary*, Samuel Johnson identifies happiness as “Felicity; state in which the desires are satisfied.”¹⁵ He distinguishes between happiness and satisfaction because different people may be equally satisfied but not equally happy. Here Johnson agrees with Locke, who considers happiness a very personal thing, explaining that each individual is happy about different things. In Johnson’s view, happiness is a moment that can be found in simple things like conversation with a friend or even just in observation of small details. As he points out to his friend Boswell, “There is nothing, sir, too little for so little a creature as man. It is by studying little things that we attain the great art of having as little misery and as much happiness as possible.”¹⁶ As an Enlightenment thinker, Johnson recognizes that “there is more happiness in being rational.”¹⁷ He underlines that to enjoy happiness one has to be conscious about it. Thus, happiness becomes “a mental state in which all are of a piece (agreeable) and all please.”¹⁸ To achieve a happy mental state and what is the most important to maintain it, is quite hard. Johnson himself was in pursuit of happiness as much as he was in search of knowing himself.

¹³ Ibid, p. 22.

¹⁴ Flavio Gregori, “Introduction,” *English Literature*, 2- 1, (2015), p. 7.

¹⁵ Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language: A Digital Edition*, Word Press, 1755, [online].

¹⁶ James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.*, ed. by J.W. Croker, Boston: Carter, Hendee and CO, 1832, p. 196.

¹⁷ Adam Potkay, *The Passion for Happiness: Samuel Johnson and David Hume*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009, p. 71.

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 72.

The people were changing their way of thinking about happiness. What happened then, that made people think they can achieve happiness in the first place? The answer lies in the word – progress. The quality of life was improving because science and technology were advancing rapidly while disease and famine were slowly decreasing. Man was affirming his power over Nature by taking a greater control over the environment. As Adam Smith pointed out “the uniform, constant, and uninterrupted effort of every man to better his condition”¹⁹ lies in self-improvement, which was the way to happiness. Self-understanding and self-improving as a way to happiness was philosophers’ major concern, in particular that of Thomas Hobbes. If we naturally identify happiness with joy and pleasure, Hobbes views happiness as something that can be obtained thanks to one’s own unique power. According to Hobbes, “the Power of a Man, (to take it Universally) is his present means, to obtain some future apparent Good.”²⁰ He distinguishes between original or instrumental powers that can be achieved through “the Faculties of Body, or Mind.”²¹ Thus, search for happiness consists in desire to act towards increasing one’s own power. For Hobbes, every human is a machine always moving in search of good or moving away, avoiding bad things. These endeavours towards something Hobbes calls appetite or aversion²². It is as natural to seek happiness as it is natural to eat or walk. Humans acquire the knowledge about the world through experience. Thus, by following our appetites we learn which ones lead to happiness. Hobbes argues that:

continually succeed in obtaining those things which a man from time to time desireth, that is to say, continual prospering, is that men call Felicity: I mean the Felicity of this life. For there is no such thing as perpetual Tranquillity of mind, while we live here, because Life it selfe is but Motion, and can never be without Desire, nor without Feare, no more than without Sense.²³

According to Hobbes, whatever man desires is good. However, it is a temporal good as once desire is satisfied, there is another one ready to be fulfilled. Therefore, felicity is “a

¹⁹Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of The Wealth of Nations*, London: Methuen, Liberty Fund, 1904, Book II, Chapter III, p. 289, [online].

²⁰ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, Liberty Fund, 1651, Part I, Chapter X, p. 66, [online].

²¹ Ibidem.

²² Ibid, Part I, Chapter VI, p. 39.

²³ Ibid, Part I, Chapter VI, p. 48.

continual progress of the desire, from one object to another; the attaining of the former, being still but the way to the later.”²⁴ In this way, as long as desires are being continually attained, everyone can achieve felicity.

Every person desires to be happy, “therefore the voluntary actions, and inclinations of all men, tend, not only to the procuring, but also to the assuring of a contented life.”²⁵ Whatever good we do is aimed to satisfy our desires, which in its turn, lead to felicity. Felicity is closely related to the pursuit of power as only through unique, individual power there is possibility to achieve some good.

Defining happiness as motion or progress, Hobbes opposes *old Moral Philosophers*²⁶ who considered happiness to be the final and the greatest good. Hobbes’ felicity is a continual journey in satisfying desires. Hobbes suggests that it is more than natural to have desires as well as to seek for new ones. In his view, without desires there is no future and without future there is only death, “I put for a general inclination of all mankind, a perpetual and restless desire of Power after Power, that ceaseth only in Death.”²⁷ Happiness becomes a motivation towards satisfaction of our pleasures and desires that are not only possible in the present but can also be experienced in the future.

Johnson recalls Hobbes commenting that “life is a progress from want to want, not from enjoyment to enjoyment,”²⁸ without though following Hobbes philosophy, considering him “too morally dangerous.”²⁹ Whereas John Locke agrees with Hobbes about happiness being a continuous progress he, however acknowledges the pauses as “for who is content is happy.”³⁰ According to Locke, only if our happiness is disturbed we are ready to pursuit it again.

²⁴ Ibid, Part I, Chapter II, p. 75.

²⁵ Ibidem.

²⁶ Ibidem.

²⁷ Ibidem.

²⁸ John Wilson Crocker, *Boswel’s Life of Johnson: Including Their Tour to the Hebrides*, London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1848, p. 511.

²⁹ Adam Potkay, *The Passion for Happiness: Samuel Johnson and David Hume*, p. 66.

³⁰ John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2011, Book II, Chapter XXI, § 59, p. 186, [online].

1. 2. Locke's pursuit of true and solid happiness

John Locke in his *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* argues that all that people desire is only to be happy, “we constantly desire happiness.” (Book II, XXI, §39, p. 177.)³¹ What does Happiness consists of? Why according to the Enlightenment thinkers the pursuit of happiness constituted the basis of both individual motivation and social well-being?

In *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, John Locke attempts to give an explanation for what is Happiness comparing it to Pleasure. Pleasure and Pain, Happiness and Misery are the names of the extremes that cannot exist one without another:

Happiness then in its full extent is the utmost Pleasure we are capable of, and Misery the utmost Pain: And the lowest degree of what can be called Happiness, is so much ease from all Pain, and so much present Pleasure, as without which any one cannot be content.” (Book II, XXI, §42, p. 177.)

Locke argues that the ideas come to us through sensation and reflection, where sensation affects our senses and the external world and reflection or “internal sense” (Book II, I, §4, p. 75.) affects our mind's own operations. Where the term operation is used, “as comprehending not barely the actions of the mind about its ideas, but some sort of passions arising sometimes from them, such as is the satisfaction or uneasiness from any thought.” (Book II, I, §4, p. 76.)

As Locke further explains, Pain and Pleasure go hand in hand and “joined to all our ideas both of sensation and reflection.” (Book II, VII, §2, p. 91.) Pain has the same power to set us on work as Pleasure has. People employ the same energy to avoid pain as they employ to pursue happiness. Our ideas are organised in a way that we can distinguish between pain and pleasure only thanks to our own experience. We can avoid pain because our body and our senses can warn us of the harm. The idea of the fire is associated with pain while the memory of the first kiss brings us the idea of pleasure.

³¹ John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2011. Unless otherwise indicated, future references are to *An Essay*, Book I and II.

Locke states that all our ideas are joined to the ideas of pleasure and pain because otherwise there would have no reason to prefer or consider one idea over another. Pleasure and Pain are the most important ideas which we receive from sensation and reflection. They are hard to identify as the only way to know them is only by experience. We can only reflect upon our body sensations and how we feel about them.

Locke explains that Pleasure is associated with Good and Pain with Evil. Whatever we think is good can also bring us happiness and pleasure and whatever we think is evil brings us pain and misery. So the idea of good and evil is related to our mind and body either painfully or pleurably. All Men desire Happiness and Pleasure which is Good. Sometimes it happens that Men choose Evil. What is good for one man can be evil for another. Men are not alike, everyone “does not place his happiness in the same thing, or chuse the same way to it.” (Book II, XXI, §54, p. 183.)

All Men are different, so in consequence the happiness is different for every single man. Some people find their happiness in study, others in debauchery. Some people find their pleasure in bodily delights, some in virtue. What is the greatest happiness if not the absence of pain or misery and the possession of the pleasures of this world. The question that arise though is what are the pleasures of this world. Is it Glory or cheese and lobsters?

Men are moved by different *objects* (Book II, XXI, §55, p. 184.) and choose different ways as well as things to satisfy their happiness, and whatever they choose is right. The other question is what are the pains and why sometimes men choose or prefer misery. Or why men prefer good to evil or evil to good?

Sometimes the pain is caused by the actions that are not in our power, such as the pains of the body from diseases or injuries. What is the Power and how can we use it in pursuing of pleasure and happiness? We may distinguish between several meanings of the word power. The king has a power to control his people, as the fire has the power to burn the forest. Locke argues that the mind is informed by the senses about the change of the simple ideas, “it observes in things without.” (Book II, XXI, §1, p. 162.) It also reflects upon and observes a constant change of “its Ideas, sometimes by the impression of outward Objects on the Senses, and sometimes by the Determination of its own choice,” (Book II, XXI, §1, p. 162.) summarising that “the like Changes will for the future be made, in the same things, by like Agents, and by like ways. Considers in one thing the possibility of having any of its simple Ideas changed, and in another the possibility of

making that change; and so comes by that Idea which we call Power.” (Book II, XXI, §1, p. 162.)

The idea of Power that Locke is talking about is that of capacity or ability. All we need is to have a power to do something and also to be able to do that thing. Locke explains that “there are faculties in Body and Mind: they both of them have their powers of Operating, else neither the one nor the other could operate. For nothing can operate, that is not able to operate; and that is not able to operate, that has no power to operate.” (Book II, XXI, §20, p. 169.) The men’s ability to think, eat, understand, move are all represented by their proper faculties. “For Faculty, Ability, and Power, are but different things of the same thing.” (Book II, XXI, §20, p. 169.)

Locke warns us not to confuse between the powers of the mind such as Understanding and Will that he calls faculties, with the study of the faculties of the soul. (Book II, XXI, §6, p. 164.) The Power is also “the source from whence all action proceeds.” (Book II, XXII, §11, p. 199.) We have the power to produce ideas that can be changed and put into action. For action, in its turn, is “the great business of mankind, and the whole matter about which all laws are conversant.” (Book II, XXII, §10, p. 199.)

All the actions are reduced into thinking and motion, for as long as the man has a power to choose between these two actions, whether it is to think and move or not, so far a Man is Free, and Freedom leads to Happiness.

As Pain and Pleasure:

Power is another of those simple ideas which we receive from sensation and Reflection. For observing in our selves, that we can, at pleasure move several parts of our Bodies, which were at rest; the effects, also, that natural bodies are able to produce in one another, occurring every moment to our senses, we both these ways get the Idea of Power. (Book II, VII, §8, p. 92.)

Locke observes that if we are able to move or rest our bodies, it is only because we can think about it. The power of the thought that determines our actions of either rest or motion is possible because of our experience. And whatever action we are able to do it is because we have experience in doing it.

Locke distinguishes between active and passive powers as well as voluntary and

involuntary powers. We are supplied with passive powers “by almost all sorts of sensible things,” (Book II, XXI, §4, p. 163.) while active powers are more significant as the only way to get them is “by reflection on the Operations of our Minds.” (Book II, XXI, §4, p. 163.) If we are able to reflect on the operations of our mind, and the thoughts that we have, due to our experience, can operate a change in our body, then the idea of power that “we find in ourselves is to begin or forbear, continue or end several actions of our minds, and motions of our Bodies, barely by a thought or preference of the mind, or as it were commanding the doing or not doing such or such a particular action.” (Book II, XXI, §5, p. 164.) Locke calls the power, that enables the mind to take into consideration any idea and move or rest the body according to preference, the will and its exercise volition or willing. The voluntary power happens when the forbearance or performance of the action is operated by the mind while the involuntary power occurs while the action is performed without a thought of the mind. So, if we do really want something we are determined to please ourselves as it is a voluntary action that motivates us to act. If our body is in pain or injured our will is also weak and not strong enough to determine the choice of the actions that lead to Happiness.

Then Locke asks, “what is it that determines the Will in regard to our Actions?” (Book II, XXI, §31, p. 173.) and straight away gives an answer, “I am apt to imagine is not, as is generally supposed, the greater good in view: But some (and for the most part pressing) uneasiness a Man is at present under. This is that which successively determines the Will, and sets us upon those Actions, we perform. This Uneasiness we may call, as it is, Desire.” (Book, II, XXI, §31, p. 173.)

Locke makes clear distinction between desire and volition. When we desire, we aim at good things, things that give us pleasure so we act and behave in a certain way to obtain that good. “The will or power of Volition is conversant about nothing, but our own Actions; terminates there; and reaches no farther.” (Book, II, XXI, §30, p. 172.) If there can be only one volition at a time, the desires however may vary and change every day as we can desire but do nothing to obtain those desires. An uneasiness is related to a desire for it is represented by an idea of an *absent good*. (Book, II, XXI, §31, p. 173.)

This Desire, which is a state of uneasiness, determinates the will and operates as the link between the idea of good and the willing to act in a way to obtain that good. Locke discriminates between desires that are concerned with a relief from pain and desires that

lead to pleasures and happiness. It is possible to relief from the pain without achieving any pleasure while the realisation of happiness depends on a relief from pain. As the uneasiness is a pain of the body as well as the disquiet of the mind, the desire to get rid of the pain is equal to the uneasiness perceived. The greater the pain the stronger is the desire to relief from that pain.

“For desire being nothing but an uneasiness in the want of an absent good, in reference to any pain felt, ease is that absent good; and till that be attained, we may call it desire, no body feeling pain, that he wishes not to be eased of, with a desire equal to that pain, and inseparable from it.” (Book II, XXI, §31, p. 173.) So, if ease is an absent good, the desired ease is concerned with the pain we desire to be relieved of. And once we are relieved from pain, we enjoy the positive goods and pleasures. As mentioned above, the pleasures are all different as

a Man never chuses amiss; he knows what best pleases him, and what he actually prefers. Things in their present enjoyment are what they seem; the apparent and real good are, in this case, always the same. For the Pain or Pleasure being just so great, and no greater, than it is felt, the present Good or Evil is really so much as it appears. And therefore were every Action of ours concluded within it self, and drew no Consequences after it, we should undoubtedly never err in our choice of good; we should always infallibly prefer the best. (Book II, XXI, §58, p. 186.)

Our happiness depends on relief from the pains of everyday life such as “the uneasiness of Hunger, Thirst, Heat, Cold, Weariness with labour and Sleepiness in their constant returns, etc.” (Book II, XXI, §45, p. 179.) Because the desire to get rid of these pains occupy the most of our time and efforts, we forget to enjoy those pleasures that bring greater happiness getting satisfactions only in simple and ordinary pleasures. “All uneasiness therefore being removed, a moderate portion of good serves at present to content Men; and some few degrees of Pleasure in a succession of ordinary Enjoyments make up a happiness, wherein they can be satisfied.” (Book II, XXI, §44, p. 179.) So, once our primary uneasiness are satisfied we are ready to search for that pleasure which can give us greater happiness. How then we decide which of the pleasures can make us happy? The answer is simple. Everything depends on our personal judgement. What we judge as good for us, we desire more, so in consequence, our will is determined to act in order to

satisfy that stronger desire.

Locke believes that we are able and also have a will to make sure our desire for the good we judge the greatest prevail, as well as we have a power to suspend or modify our desires in such a way as to ensure the strongest desires stay the strongest:

Here a Man may suspend the act of his choice from being determined for or against the thing proposed till he has examined, whether it be really of a nature in it self and consequences to make him happy, or no. For when he has once chosen it, and thereby it is become a part of his Happiness it raises desire, and that proportionably gives him uneasiness, which determines his will, and sets him at work in pursuit of his choice on all occasions that offer. (Book II, XXI, §56, p. 184.)

On the contrary, our judgement is changed or wrong if the good we desire is less necessary for our happiness. So when Locke asks “How Men come often prefer the worse to the better?” the answer is because of the wrong judgements. What makes us judge wrong and why? There are as Locke calls *fantastical uneasiness* or *irregular desires* (Book II, XXI, §45, p. 179.) along with our passions that influence our desires as well as our judgements. Together, passionate and irregular desires are strong enough to determine our judgement in pursuing of happiness.

But yet we are not to look upon the uneasiness which makes up, or at least accompanies most of the other Passions, as wholly excluded in the case. Aversion, Fear, Anger, Envy, Shame, etc. have each their uneasiness too, and thereby influence the will. [...] Nay there is, I think, scarce any of the Passions to be found without desire join'd with it. I am sure, where-ever there is uneasiness, there is desire. For we constantly desire happiness; and whatever we feel of uneasiness, so much, 'tis certain, we want of happiness. (Book II, XXI, §39, p. 176.)

Locke states that if we enjoy but one pleasure without any uneasiness and we judge it as good for us then it is sufficient to be happy. A man is willing to change only in case his happiness is disturbed.

Because the indolency and enjoyment we have, sufficing for our present Happiness, we desire not to venture the change: Since we judge that we are happy already, being content, and that is enough. For who is content is happy. But as soon as any new uneasiness comes in, this happiness is disturb'd, and we are set afresh on work in the pursuit of happiness. (Book II, XXI, §59, p. 186.)

If any new uneasiness can appear so easily, how then we can secure our everlasting happiness? And how we distinguish between the good we judge as great, and the good we judge as an essential part of our happiness. The key to our happiness stays in the judgement we make about the good within a certain thing and the “true intrinsic good.” (Book II, XXI, §53, p. 183.)

We usually judge if something is good according to our first, immediate reaction. Instead, we should reflect on the things by making a second judgement. By second judgement we learn what is not expressed by the first. Thus, if we examine something long enough, to see its true value, we will be able to change our judgement, which in consequence, will lead to a greater good, essential to our happiness.

We make wrong judgements because we consider the desires that are easily achieved in the present greater than those which require more efforts and time to be attained in the future:

When we compare present Pleasure or Pain with future, (which is usually the case in the most important determinations of the Will) we often make wrong Judgements of them, taking our measures of them in different positions of distance. Objects, near our view, are apt to be thought greater, than those of a larger size, that are more remote: And so it is with Pleasures and Pains, the present is apt to carry it, and those at a distance have the disadvantage in the Comparison. (Book II, XXI, §63, p. 187.)

That is why Locke distinguishes between happiness and true happiness. He states that “the highest perfection of intellectual nature, lies in a careful and constant pursuit of true and solid happiness.” (Book II, XXI, §51, p. 182.) So, all our powers and efforts should be oriented in search of the true and solid happiness. It is possible to achieve if we match our desires with the true judgements concerning the greatest good. The question is how to determine between the true good which is the key to our everlasting happiness and

the pleasurable things which gives us but temporary happiness?

According to Locke, God gave each one of us the possibility to pursue happiness as a law of nature. He also joined the pleasures and pains so we can experience both good and bad and by understanding what is good, make the correct judgement. “The eternal Law and Nature of things must not be alter’d to comply with his ill order’d choice.” (Book II, XXI, §56, p. 185.)

The combination of the ideas of pleasure and pain with the law of nature gives us a possibility to pursue the solid happiness which lies in the knowledge and veneration of God. “In God we find the fulness of joy and the pleasures for evermore.” (Book II, VII, §5, p. 92.)

1.3. Hutcheson's concept of happiness

To carry the examination of the exploration of happiness in the eighteenth century, it is worth mentioning the contribution of Francis Hutcheson, who was proclaimed Father of the Scottish Enlightenment. Influenced by Locke, Hutcheson was deeply concerned with human's well-being.

John Locke argues that at birth the human mind is a blank sheet. All our knowledge comes from the experience and the senses are the first steps towards that knowledge. He identifies sensation and reflection as the main senses in obtaining the knowledge about various objects, where sensation stands for the processes in the external world and reflection is responsible of the operations of our mind. So reflection is a kind of internal sense as it tells us about our mental processes. Hutcheson partly agrees with Lockean theory about sensation and reflection. He retains different senses as powers that can receive different sensations.

When two perceptions are entirely different from each other, or agree in nothing but the general Idea of Sensation, we call the Powers of receiving those different Perceptions, different senses. Thus Seeing and Hearing denote the different Powers of receiving the ideas of Colours and Sounds.(Inquiry, Treatise I, Section I, II, p. 22.)³²

Hutcheson distinguishes between Internal and External Senses. If we see something beautiful it is because the perception of beauty comes to us through the external sense of sight. While with the internal sense we perceive of the beauty, we do not necessarily have an idea or knowledge why it is beautiful. The internal sense is not possible without perception.

This superior Power of Perception is justly called a Sense, because of its Affinity to the other senses in this, that the Pleasure does not arise from any Knowledge of Principles, Proportions, Causes, or of the Usefulness of the Object; but strikes us at first with the idea of Beauty: nor does the most accurate knowledge increase this Pleasure of Beauty, however it may super-add a distinct rational pleasure from prospects of Advantage, or from the increase of Knowledge. (Inquiry, Treatise I, Section I, XIII, p. 26.)

³² Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, ed. by W. Leidhold, Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2004.

Unless otherwise indicated, future references are to *An Inquiry*.

Hutcheson explains that we are aware about the external senses because they are all well-known to our own experience. However, if we experience the sense that feels either beauty or pleasure that sense is not easy to describe because there are no common names such as seeing or hearing for the internal senses. “We have got distinct Names for the external Senses, and none, or very few, for the Internal.” (Inquiry, Treatise I, Section VI, IX, p. 52.)

Hutcheson considers the internal sense of greater importance as it includes the moral sense which he identifies with conscience. He suggests that the moral sense is a *secret sense* (Inquiry, Treatise II, Introduction, p. 7.) that influences our love for others. Love, in its turn, is an affection of the most importance, subdivided into *Love of Complacence or Esteem* and *Love of Benevolence*. (Inquiry, Treatise II, Section II, II, p. 72.) To act kindly means to give all the love to others as benevolence exclude either self-love or self-interest.

Hutcheson strongly believes human beings do care about the well-being and happiness of their fellows. In what he disagrees with Locke is that the humans were born empty, instead he argues that they were born with the moral sense. Hutcheson considers Benevolence as the one and only source of all our actions, it is the foundation of our moral good. When a person acts morally, from benevolence, then his actions are virtuous and virtuous actions are the “general Foundation of the Moral Sense.” (Inquiry, Treatise II, Section II, p. 71.) We naturally respond to benevolently motivated actions with a feeling of approbation and if the behaviour is bad then our respond to it would be with the feeling of disapprobation. Hutcheson suggests that the feelings of approbation and disapprobation can stand for the feelings of pleasure and pain.

As well as Locke, Hutcheson agrees that pleasure gives us immediate good or happiness. However, he specifies that some *advantageous* (Inquiry, Treatise II, Introduction, p. 62.) as well as disadvantageous objects or actions have sufficient power to influence our happiness. Hutcheson goes further explaining that if we perceive pleasure, which is approbation, accompanied with the advantageous objects and somehow share this pleasure with the other person we come to feel uppermost joy and satisfaction. Hutcheson believes benevolent motives and actions that obtain approbation, among which the personal virtues such as self-respect, industry, common sense are morally good. Taking

into consideration the idea of approbation and disapprobation, Hutcheson makes a clear distinction between the moral good and evil:

the word moral goodness, in this Treatise, denotes our idea of some Quality apprehended in Action, which procures Approbation, and Love toward the Actor, from those who receive no Advantage by the Action. Moral Evil, denotes our idea of a contrary Quality, which excites Aversion, and dislike toward the Actor. (Inquiry, Treatise II, Introduction, p. 62.)

Thus, all moral, naturally good actions cause immediate pleasure and approbation and “some Actions to Men an immediate Goodness; or, that by a superior Sense, which I call a Moral one, we perceive Pleasure in the Contemplation of such Actions in others, are determin’d to love the Agent.”(Inquiry, Treatise II, Introduction, I, p. 63.)

Because Hutcheson tried to analyze benevolence following Locke’s theory about simple and complex ideas, where an idea stands for the object of thinking or perceiving, he identified the external and internal senses with sensation and reflection, retaining that as pleasure and pain referred to the idea of sensation and reflection so did the internal and external senses. If for Locke happiness was just a state of “psychological satisfaction”³³ and self-interest, for Hutcheson, happiness was linked to our passions and affections.

We are happy when our pleasurable passions and affections dominate over the painful ones. Therefore, if we manage to control our passions and affections and guide them in the right direction we can either optimize or increase our chances for happiness. He argued that as we have an external senses such as sight or smell, we also have a moral sense, so the pleasure attained from this sense gives us greater happiness than the pleasure attained from the sensual delights. To understand Hutcheson’s idea about happiness we need to observe the usage he gives to such terms as desire, pleasure and pain.

As mentioned above, Hutcheson considers our passions and affections to be of great importance. So, for example, if the pleasure is derived from our passion then our desire will be directed towards the object of the passion not towards the pleasure. Sometimes it

³³ Deal Wyatt Hudson, *Happiness and the Limits of Satisfaction*, Boston: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 1996, p. 83.

happens that we are pleased with an object or an action without necessarily desiring it. It is natural for us to feel good about, “Fine Smells, harmonious Sounds, beautiful Objects, Wealth, Power, or Grandeur.”³⁴

For Hutcheson, “Desires arise in our Mind, from the Frame of our Nature, upon apprehension of Good or Evil in Objects, action, or events, to obtain for our selves or others the agreeable sensation, when the object or Event is good; or to prevent the uneasy Sensation, when it is evil.”³⁵

In his *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections, with Illustrations on the Moral Sense*, Hutcheson gives a particular attention to our original Desires and Aversions, identifying five classes of them.

I would like to dwell on the third class which is “Desires of the Pleasures arising from Publick Happiness, and Aversion to the Pains arising from the Misery of others”³⁶ as it concerns with the Public Happiness, which Hutcheson was trying to promote. Our happiness will increase if we direct our benevolent affections to the happiness of others. Hutcheson was concerned not only with private happiness but also with the happiness of humanity. According to Hutcheson, our nature lies in doing good for others and “promoting the publick Happiness as fast as we can.”³⁷

Hutcheson also outlines his own formula, where with the help of equation, he explains how our actions determine the pursuit of happiness. In his “universal canon”³⁸ as he calls it, “The moral importance of any Agent, or the Quantity of publick Good produc’d by him, is in a compound Ratio of his Benevolence and Abilities,”³⁹ if we substitute the initial Letters for the Words, we have:

³⁴ Francis Hutcheson, *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections, with Illustrations on the Moral Sense*, ed. by A. Garrett, Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2002, Section IV, II, p. 67, [online].

³⁵ Ibid, Section I, II, p. 18.

³⁶ Ibid, Section I, II, p. 19.

³⁷ Ibid, Section V, X, p. 107.

³⁸ Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, Treatise II, Section III, XI, p. 89.

³⁹ Ibid, Treatise II, Section III, XI, 1, p. 89.

M=Moment of Good, B= Benevolence, A=Ability, S=Self-Love, I=Interest:
 $M=(B+S) \times A=BA+SA$; and therefore $BA=M -SA=M-I$ and $B=M-I$ both over
 divided by A. In the latter Case, $M=(B-S) \times A=BA-SA$; thus $BA=M+SA=M+I$
 and $B=M+I$ over divided by A.⁴⁰

If we reflect upon this formula, we will note that Hutcheson really tried to balance self-interest with the public good. Hutcheson believed that “the happiness of human life cannot be promoted without Society and mutual Aid, even beyond a Family.”⁴¹

Hutcheson argues that the pursuit of happiness depends on strengthening not just our private affections but also the public ones. At the same time he recognizes that without self-interest and self-love our society cannot flourish. “It is well-known, that general Benevolence alone is not a Motive strong enough to Industry [...] Self-Love is really as necessary to the Good of the Whole, as Benevolence.”⁴² He believes that “as all Men have Self-Love, as well as Benevolence, these two Principles may jointly excite a Man to the same Action”⁴³ So, according to Hutcheson, it is possible to pursue the well-being of the society through promoting our own personal happiness, since “Beneficent Actions tend to the publick Good.”⁴⁴

In order to achieve this balance, which is not easy, we must rely on the natural law. Locke suggests that our happiness depends on the observation or violation of moral rules or laws⁴⁵, and all our actions arise in order to produce happiness as a law of nature. Hutcheson also refers to natural law combining it with moral sense. We should establish our societies based on the laws and the moral goodness of its members:

⁴⁰ Ibid, Treatise II, Section III, XI, 6, p. 89.

⁴¹ Francis Hutcheson, *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections, with Illustrations on the Moral Sense*, Treatise I, Section II, VI, p. 45.

⁴² Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, Treatise II, Section VII, VIII, p. 127.

⁴³ Ibid, Treatise II, Section II, III, p. 73.

⁴⁴ Ibid, Textual Notes, VI, p. 181.

⁴⁵ John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Essay, II, XXVIII, §5, p. 238.

We have a Power of Reason and Reflection, by which we may see what Course of Action will naturally tend to procure us the most valuable Gratification of all our Desires, and prevent any intolerable or unnecessary Pains, or provide some support under them. We have Wisdom sufficient to form Ideas of Rights, Laws, Constitutions; so as to preserve large Societies in Peace and Prosperity, and promote a general Good amidst all the private Interests.⁴⁶

Hutcheson proclaims that “Action is best, which procures the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers.”⁴⁷ Our happiness consists not in wealth and external pleasures but in virtue, which is “the chief Happiness in the Judgement of all Mankind.”⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Francis Hutcheson, *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections, with Illustrations on the Moral Sense*, Treatise I, Section VI, III, p. 120.

⁴⁷ Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, Treatise II, Section III, VIII, p. 87.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, Treatise II, Section VI, II, p. 114.

1.4. David Hume: happiness as an essential value of our well-being

As Hutcheson influenced most of the Scottish philosophers, the moral philosophy of David Hume was also initially based on the writings of Francis Hutcheson. David Hume had only left the University when Hutcheson's *Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections, with Illustrations upon the Moral Sense* was available to the public. As well as Hutcheson, Hume argued that, "general virtue and good morals in a state, which are so requisite to happiness."⁴⁹ and benevolence are the main attribute in obtaining the pleasure of the happiness of others regardless to one's own interest.

In order to explore Hume's idea of happiness it is important to understand what are the main components that happiness can be composed of. According to Hume:

human happiness, seems to consist in three ingredients; action, pleasure, and indolence: And though these ingredients ought to be mixed in different proportions, according to the particular disposition of the person; yet no one ingredient can be entirely wanting, without destroying, in some measure, the relish of the whole composition.⁵⁰

As Hume observes further, indolence or repose is fundamental for human nature as we need to rest from both action and pleasure. But at the same time we need to be careful as indolence may turn into a vice, which in its turn, is "as natural to mankind, as the particular instincts to brute-creatures."⁵¹ To pursuit the perfect happiness we need to combine the three ingredients: action, pleasure and indolence with the most perfect object. "But what more perfect than beauty and virtue?"⁵²

Hume considers the sense of virtue a feeling, "to have the sense of virtue, is nothing but to feel a satisfaction of a particular kind from the contemplation of a character. The very feeling constitutes our praise or admiration"⁵³ So if something or someone is virtuous it gives us pleasure therefore our sentiments are of approbation. On the contrary, if

⁴⁹ David Hume, *Essays and Treatise on Several Subjects: Essays Moral, Political, Literary*. Vol.1, Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1987, Essay VIII, p. 43, [online].

⁵⁰ Ibid, Essay II, p. 150.

⁵¹ Ibid, Essay XVIII, p. 102.

⁵² Ibid, Essay XVII, p. 94.

⁵³ David Hume, *A Treatise on Human Nature*, Oxford: Clarendon, Liberty Fund, 1896, Book III, Section II, p. 320, [online].

something is vicious it gives us pain which produces the sentiments of uneasiness or hatred.

As virtue has the power to generate such feelings as love and pride, where pride is a positive sentiment, as to be proud of one's own work, so vice has the same power to generate hate and humility. Hume states that, "pride and humility are pure emotions in the soul, unattended with any desire, and not immediately exciting us to action. But love and hatred are not completed within themselves, nor rest in motion, which they produce, but carry the mind to something farther."⁵⁴

Thus, we desire happiness for the person we love as we desire misery for the person we hate. And we feel aversion for the misery of the beloved as we feel aversion for the happiness of the person we hate. According to this statement, love and hatred are mixed together creating one passion, where "desire and aversion constitute the very nature of love and hatred."⁵⁵ Therefore, the desires that arise upon the idea of the happiness or misery of the person we love or hate are presented by the imagination and are not essential to love or hatred. It is obvious that we desire happiness for the person we love as we desire misery for our enemy.

David Hume suggests that happiness, if shared with others, is more pleasurable and beneficial as humans outside relationships become more miserable and barbarian. He observes that "a perfect solitude is, perhaps, the greatest punishment we can suffer. Every pleasure languishes when enjoy'd a-part from company, and every pain becomes more cruel and intolerable."⁵⁶

Love is important to our happiness as it is related to the satisfaction of our own personal interests. We tend to love somebody who resembles us, this naturally brings a certain sympathy towards the object of resemblance. Hume notes that "we may learn that a sympathy with others is agreeable only by giving an emotion to the spirits, since an easy sympathy and correspondent emotions are alone common to relation, acquaintance, and resemblance."⁵⁷ As love gives us pleasure, sympathy, in its turn, allows us to feel the same pleasure as when we love. Hume writes that even if we are not concerned in the happiness

⁵⁴ Ibid, Part II, Section VI, p. 250.

⁵⁵ Ibid, Part II, Section VI, p. 251.

⁵⁶ Ibid, Part II, Section V, p. 248.

⁵⁷ Ibid, Part II, Section IV, p. 242.

of a stranger, his good and benevolence may affect us, giving way to a sensible emotion.

This emotion we feel through sympathy. Sympathy may vary as we may sympathize more with a person similar to us and less, or not at all, with a person different from us. Sympathy can also influence our happiness as it can transmit either positive or negative feelings. This variation though does not effect the approbation we give to the moral qualities⁵⁸.

Hume identifies sympathy with humanity and benevolence, considering it not just a feeling but “a very powerful principle in human nature, [...] that produces our sentiment of morals in all artificial virtues, it also gives rise to many of the other virtues; and that qualities acquire our approbation, because of their tendency to the good of mankind.”⁵⁹

What moral virtue if not benevolence is there to enhance the happiness of mankind? Hume describes benevolence as a sentiment that has a “tendency to promote the interests of our species, and bestow happiness on human society.”⁶⁰ He distinguishes between two kinds of benevolence, general and particular. With general benevolence we only feel sympathy towards people's pleasures or pains with no esteem towards them, while particular benevolence is based on the opinion we get from people's actions towards us. As we can observe, general benevolence arises from sympathy, consequently, sympathy can stand for what is termed benevolence.

Hume believes that even though we cannot sympathize equally with everybody, we can still be affected by either people's happiness or misery, “none are so entirely indifferent to the interest of their fellow-creatures as to perceive no distinctions of moral good and evil,”⁶¹ our approbation or disapprobation depend on the impressions that we have from the experience of the people we love or hate. The principle of human nature stands in having a fellow-feeling with others, we feel pleasure observing the happiness of other people and pain at their grief. Hume suggests that “the desire of the happiness or misery of others, according to the love or hatred we bear them, be an arbitrary and original instinct implanted in our nature, we find it may be counterfeited on many occasions, and

⁵⁸ Ibid, Part III, Section I, p. 385.

⁵⁹ Ibid, Part III, Section I, p. 383.

⁶⁰ David Hume, *Enquiries Concerning the Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. by L. A. Selby-Bigge, Oxford: Clarendon Press, Liberty Fund, 1902, Part II, Section II, 144, p. 181, [online].

⁶¹ Ibid, Section V, Part II, 183, p. 225.

may arise from secondary principles.”⁶²

Hume further explains that with the secondary principles he means the pity and malice that are produced by sympathy. As pride can be considered a virtue, when it comes from our own good actions, benefiting others as much as ourselves, equally pity can produce benevolent actions. When we are sympathizing with the misery of others it gives us the passion of pity, therefore sympathy has the power to produce the passion of pity or compassion. So reflecting about benevolence we note that it is combined with love as well as sympathy “by a natural and original quality”⁶³ as they both give rise to a desire of the happiness of the people we care of.

Since virtuous actions benefit society, Hume places virtue as the source of every passion which has a tendency to either delight us or give us pleasure. “The very essence of virtue is to produce pleasure,”⁶⁴ as well as to give rise to positive feelings that our character is constituted of. In *Treatise on Human Nature*, Hume argues that there are artificial and natural virtues. If natural virtues are part of human nature, the artificial virtues depend on cultural and social rules, “there are some virtues, that produce pleasure and approbation by means of an artifice or contrivance, which arises from the circumstances and necessity of mankind.”⁶⁵ Beneficence, generosity, clemency are some of the examples of natural virtues because they arise in our character naturally in order to do good to the society, while honesty, and justice are artificial virtues as they come artificially either “from education or from human conventions.”⁶⁶

In *Treatise on Human Nature*, Hume explores the notion of justice as a necessary virtue for the prospering of the society. Without justice there could be no public happiness as justice is based on rules that maintain the safety and welfare of the community. The rules that are established in the family help to preserve its peace and happiness as well as the rules established in the society preserves its members from vices and instability. The happiness of the society depends on mutual respect and preservation. Hume explains that “without justice, society must immediately dissolve, and everyone must fall into that

⁶² David Hume, *A Treatise on Human Nature*, Part II, Section VII, p. 252.

⁶³ Ibid, Part II, Section IX, p. 260.

⁶⁴ Ibid, Part I, Section VII, p. 204.

⁶⁵ Ibid, Part II, Section I, p. 324.

⁶⁶ Ibidem.

savage and solitary condition.”⁶⁷

Hume argues that the single act of justice is not enough in preserving the harmony of our society, on the contrary, it may harm and bring disorder to the society we live in. Even though justice is an artificial virtue that is produced by human conceptions, in the sense of morality, we can consider it an essential virtue in pursuing of our happiness. While speaking about virtue, Hume explains that it is “a quality of the mind agreeable to or approved of by every one who considers or contemplates it.”⁶⁸ By quality of the mind Hume identifies a character of the person.

We consider a character to be virtuous when it gives us pleasant sensations. All our actions should aim towards the sentiments of moral approval as it is the way to obtain pleasure. But before we act we should have virtuous motives. Hume observes that virtuous motives are those which are approved by the person they are directed to. Thus, if we perform a certain action we also have to possess a certain motive, “Tis evident, that when we praise any actions, we regard only the motives that produced them, and consider the actions as signs or indications of certain principles in the mind and temper,”⁶⁹ in order to obtain pleasure not only our actions but also our motives should be virtuous.

At the same time, Hume argues that some actions, if they come from the sense of duty, can be performed without motive, “a person who feels his heart devoid of that motive, may hate himself upon that account, and may perform the action without the motive, from a certain sense of duty, in order to acquire by practice, that virtuous principle.”⁷⁰

According to Hume, by acting from a sense of duty is acting with regard to morality. In *Treatise on Human Nature* he gives an example of a father who takes care of his children not just because it is his duty but also because he has natural predisposition to it⁷¹. There could be no better thing than seeing one’s own children growing in virtue.

Taking pride of one’s own action as well as act virtuously towards others and oneself,

⁶⁷ Ibid, Part II, Section II, p. 336.

⁶⁸ David Hume, *Enquiries Concerning the Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, Section VIII, 211, p. 261.

⁶⁹ David Hume, *A Treatise on Human Nature*, Part II, Section I, p. 324.

⁷⁰ Ibid, Part II, Section I, p. 325.

⁷¹ Ibid, Book III, Part I, Section V, p. 346.

produce such a desirable happiness that we all want to achieve. Thus:

the happiest disposition of the mind is the virtuous; or in other words, that which leads to action and employment, renders us sensible to the social passions, steals the heart against the assaults of fortunes, reduces the affections to a just moderation, makes our own thoughts an entertainment to us, and inclines us rather to the pleasures of society and conversation, than to those of the senses.⁷²

⁷² David Hume, *Essays and Treatise on Several Subjects: Essays Moral, Political, Literary*, Essay XVIII, p. 99.

1.5. Adam Smith's pursuit of happiness

Adam Smith, another philosopher of the Scottish Enlightenment, shares with David Hume a realistic view of our human nature. If Francis Hutcheson was Smith's professor of moral philosophy in Glasgow University, who thought him about classical moral philosophy, David Hume became one of Smith's greatest friend, who greatly influenced his philosophy. Smith's first work of major importance *Theory of Moral Sentiments* was in a way a response to Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature*.

Even though *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* fell in a shadow after his more influential work *Wealth of Nations*, making of Adam Smith the founder of modern economics, it is still worth examining *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*⁷³ as it gives us a different look at human nature as well as morality.

Smith does not speak about the notion of happiness directly in TMS but his comments about it explain Smith's idea of the happiness as an essential component of the well-being of human society. However, we may find lots of similarities with Hume's view about love and sympathy, we may also note how Smith manages to modify and extend Hume's vision of morality, explaining his ideas in a clear and simple way.

Happiness for Smith is something that we ought to have, something that was given to us at our birth, we were created to be happy. "The happiness of mankind, as well as of all other rational creatures, seems to have been the original purpose intended by the Author of nature, when he brought them into existence." (TMS, Part III, Chap. V, p. 147.) Thus, taking care of ourselves and our fellow-friends or family is the main goal of human beings. At the same time Smith warns us to remember our moral principles and act according to "the dictates of our moral faculties" (TMS, Part III, Chap. V, p. 147.) which are the essential means in pursuing and promoting our happiness. Coming from this, we observe that physical preservations is significant to human nature as when we are in a good health we enjoy the pleasures of life better than when we are in pain. Pleasures vary according to our necessities, one person can be happy living in a comfortable house while the other is

⁷³ References to Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, TMS, San Paolo: MetaLibri, 2005, [online].

Hereafter TMS is to be followed by part, section, chapter, page.

happy enough wearing nice clothes. How can we satisfy our necessities if not with “the wages of the meanest labour. We see that they afford him food and clothing, the comfort of a house, and of a family.” (TMS, Part I, Section III, Chap. II, p. 44.)

Smith points out that it is worth considering the material component in pursuing of happiness as well. The material goods that Smith calls, “the advantages of external fortune” (TMS, Part VI, Section I, p. 191.) represent the means for self-preservation, that of our family or the people we love. Since we cannot be possibly all rich, the key to the welfare of the society as well as our own consists in labour, as no society can be happy if its members are poor and depressed.

We naturally dispose to take care of ourselves as well as of our family putting our interests in the first place. “The care of the health, of the fortune, of the rank and reputation of the individual, the objects upon which his comfort and happiness in this life are supposed principally to depend, is considered as the proper business of that virtue which is commonly called Prudence.” (TMS, Part VI, Section I, p. 192.) Smith recognizes prudence as one of the most important virtue along with justice, beneficence and self-command. According to Smith, these four virtues are fundamental in the moral life of the person and are vital for our happiness as the virtue of prudence concerns our own happiness while the virtues of justice and beneficence concern for that of other people. (TMS, Conclusion of the sixth part, p. 239.) Self-command, in its turn, is a virtue related to property and “is not only itself a great virtue, but from it all the other virtues seem to derive their principal lustre.” (TMS, Part VI, Section III, p. 219.) Thus, a virtuous person is the one who embodies the qualities of prudence, justice, beneficence and self-command. Let’s examine to what extent our happiness implies possessing either all or some of those virtues.

As prudence concerns with our self-preservation, a wise and virtuous man should also have some moral principles that enables him to care about his own preservation as well as about other people’s sorrows. “How SELFISH soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it.” (TMS, Part I, Section I, Chap. I, p. 4.)

Smith identifies sympathy as a fellow-feeling that we can experience while observing

or imagining other people's griefs and sorrows. As well as Hume, Smith also argues that we may sympathize with another person by having a fellow-feeling related to either pain or pleasure of this person, without actually feeling the same emotion. If on the one hand, Smith shares Hume's idea that sympathy is a process according to which we come to feel other people's feeling, on the other hand, Smith gives sympathy a broader meaning explaining that "sympathy does not arise so much from the view of the passion, as from that of the situation which excites it." (TMS, Part I, Section I, Chap. I, p. 7.) Therefore, in order to sympathize with the person we not only have to feel and share his passion but also to be informed of its cause.

Smith argues that as man naturally is a social being his happiness consists in interacting with other people.

Were it possible that a human creature could grow up to manhood in some solitary place, without any communication with his own species, he could no more think of his own character, of the property or demerit of his own sentiments and conduct, [...] Bring him into society, and he is immediately provided with the mirror which he wanted before. It is placed in the countenance and behaviour of those he lives with; [...] and it is here that he first views the property and impropriety of his own passions. (TMS, Part III, Chap. I, p. 100.)

We take pleasure in sharing our sentiments with others which we usually do through sympathy. We naturally examine other people's behaviour in order to see how their conduct can affect us. At the same time, we are eager to know what other people think about our own conduct becoming "the spectators of our own behaviour," (TMS, Part III, Chap. I, p. 101.) willing to know not only how other people judge us but also "how far we deserve their censure or applause." (TMS, Part III, Chap. I, p. 101.) Humans, by nature, tend to seek other people's esteem and approbation, "man naturally desires, not only to be loved, but to be lovely; he desires not only praise, but praise-worthiness." (TMS, Part III, Chap. II, p. 102.)

According to Smith, the desire to be praised is very strong in all of us. It is pleasurable to be esteemed and praised for our actions as well as it is unpleasant to be

ashamed for something. Therefore, our action should aim to benefit our own and other people's happiness. A highly respectable person is an individual who cares about other people's feelings with great humanity and great benevolence. (TMS, Part VI, Section II, p. 197.)

“What can be added to the happiness of the man who is in health, who is out of debt, and has a clear conscience?” (TMS, Part I, Section III, Chap. I, p. 40.) The true happiness consists in having clear conscience that we have done something positive to other people. By observing our good actions we feel happy and tranquil. In fact, Smith notes that “happiness consists in tranquillity and enjoyment and ‘without tranquillity there can be no enjoyment.’” (TMS, Part III, Chap. III, p. 131.) The perfection stands in combining our actions with tranquillity as either good actions or tranquillity are not sufficient in pursuing a desirable happiness.

Smith explains that “to feel much for others and little for ourselves, that to restrain our selfish, and to indulge our benevolent affection, constitutes the perfection of human nature.” (TMS, Part I, Section I, Chap. V, p. 19.)

1.6. Jeremy Bentham: happiness as the greatest good

Jeremy Bentham was one of the greatest thinkers of the Late Enlightenment, whose writings contributed to various areas among which ethics, politics, law, education and religion. The founder of Utilitarianism, Bentham's main concern was how to create good system of government and law. Influenced by Locke and Hume, Bentham believed that human's behaviour could be examined according to one's good actions that produce pleasure and one's bad actions that produce pain.

David Hume mentions the idea of utility arguing that "in all determinations of morality, this circumstance of public utility is ever principally in view; and wherever disputes arise, either in philosophy or common life, concerning the bounds of duty, the question cannot, by any means, be decided with greater certainty, than by ascertaining, on any side, the true interest of mankind."⁷⁴ Bentham uses utility, making it the core element of his moral philosophy. In *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* Bentham writes, "by the principle of utility is meant that principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever according to the tendency it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question: or, what is the same thing in other words to promote or to oppose that happiness."⁷⁵ His Philosophy of Utilitarianism was built on the principle that the act is considered moral if it brings the greatest amount of pleasure, which according to Bentham is identified with happiness.

Bentham argues that happiness is not only the greatest good but can also be achieved by every single person as "a man's being and well-being, his happiness and his security; in a word, his pleasures and his immunity from pains, are all dependant, more or less, in the first place, upon his own person."⁷⁶ Since people are social being, the happiness of the community is as important as the personal one, "private ethics concerns every member, that is, the happiness and the actions of every member, of any community that can be proposed."⁷⁷

⁷⁴ David Hume, *Enquiries Concerning the Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, Section II, Part II, 143, p. 180.

⁷⁵ Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, Kitchener: Batoche Books, 2000, Chapter I, II p. 14, [online].

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, Chapter XVI, §2, p. 160.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, Chapter XVII, VIII, p. 227.

Accordingly, if we add the happiness of every single person together we may achieve collective or community happiness, which is Bentham's major concern, "it is in vain to talk of the interest of the community, without understanding what is the interest of the individual."⁷⁸ The question that arise though is what interests of the individual benefit the community. Is it just good, moral actions? Bentham argues that the well-being of the individual is also the well-being of the community, therefore, the actions that increase the well-being of one person will maximize the well-being of the community. "The right and proper end of government in every political community is the greatest happiness of all the individuals of which it is composed, say, in other words, the greatest happiness of the greatest number."⁷⁹

Bentham considers law as an essential element for social order and good government, as good laws protect people's personal goods as well as their well-being. Protecting every single individual, "their pleasure and their security,"⁸⁰ can guarantee the greatest happiness of the individual as well as community. Even though the governments and the laws should procure the happiness for the greatest numbers some individual interests may be scarified for the benefit of the community welfare.

Bentham explains that some people may be either aware or mistaken about their own interests. Thus, the actions that they may choose towards their well-being may be wrong. According to Bentham the element such as social interaction is very important in pursuing happiness as people's behaviour may be determined not just by their own, private interest but also by the public interests. There are the so called *exterior objects*⁸¹, either things or other people that can influence or determine the happiness as well as well-being of the person. Bentham's concern is to find a link that can be positive and beneficial to both individual and collective happiness. Is it possible? According to Bentham, people's behaviour can be modified or redirect in order to understand and where possible adjust the perception of each individual's interest as "ethics then, in as far as it is the art of directing a man's action."⁸² He explains that the government can introduce a system of sanctions and

⁷⁸ Ibid, Chapter I, V, p. 15.

⁷⁹ Jeremy Bentham, *The Works of Jeremy Bentham*, Vol. IX, Edinburgh: William Tait, Indianapolis: Liberty Fund. 1853, Section II, p. 14, [online].

⁸⁰ Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, Chapter III, I, p. 27.

⁸¹ Ibid, Chapter XVI, § 2, XI, p. 160.

⁸² Ibid, Chapter XVII, VI, p. 226.

rewards in order to guide people in the right directions⁸³.

In the opening sentence of *An Introduction*, Bentham writes, “nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure. [...] They govern us in all we do, in all we say, in all we think: every effort we can make to throw off our subjection, will serve but to demonstrate and confirm it.”⁸⁴ Bentham argues that as people are more inclined in search of pleasure rather than pain, they should also be able to determine their good actions in order to maximize their happiness. “Who is there that does not calculate? Bentham asks. ‘Men calculate, some with less exactness, indeed, some with more: but all men calculate.’”⁸⁵

According to Bentham, pleasure is something that can be measured and calculated with mathematical precision, to ensure certain and durable happiness to every single person. He came up with the method called the hedonistic or felicific calculus, the terms used from the Greek word *hêdonê* meaning pleasure and from Latin word *felix* meaning happiness. According to this method, it should be possible to work out the total amount of pleasures or pains produced by people’s act or actions and to estimate the value of its consequences.

Bentham explains that to estimate the value of pleasure or pain one should consider certain circumstances such as intensity, duration, certainty or uncertainty, propinquity or remoteness. There are two additional circumstances added in case the “value of any pleasure or pain is considered for the purpose of estimating the tendency of any act: fecundity, or the chance it has of being followed by sensations of the same kind and purity, or the chance it has of not being followed by sensations of the opposite kind.”⁸⁶ This method should determine which action is best and consequently right. However, Bentham recognized that it could be hard to follow his method, he still considered it to be the model of ideal calculation because “as near as the process actually pursued on these occasions approach to it, so near will such approach to the character of an exact one.”⁸⁷

⁸³ Jeremy Bentham, *The Works of Jeremy Bentham*, Chapter XV, Section I, p. 196.

⁸⁴ Bentham, Jeremy, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, Chapter I, I, p. 14.

⁸⁵ Ibid, Chapter XIV, XXVIII, p. 146.

⁸⁶ Ibid, Chapter IV, III, p. 31.

⁸⁷ Ibid, Chapter IV, VI, p. 33.

Bentham identifies twelve pains and fourteen pleasures⁸⁸ that he calls “by one general word, interesting perceptions.”⁸⁹ Our happiness is determined by the presence of pleasure and absence of pain and can be obtained by acting morally and with good intentions. Bentham suggests that one, who is already experiencing a pleasure in the present can seek for the greater one in future, ensuring greater or lesser but constant happiness. He also considers material happiness to be an essential element in people’s life as physical pleasures are fundamental in the enjoyments of everyday life. The wealth, as well as property, if equally distributed, ensure not just the individual well-being but is also beneficial to community happiness. What interesting about Bentham’s thought of the research of pleasures is that there can be an additional pleasure, “hope that is the prospect of pleasure.”⁹⁰

Bentham believes that as there is hope, people are more inclined to better their conditions of life as well as pursue such a desirable happiness. Bentham’s idea of the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people is viewed as a way of living, taking into consideration people’s interest, preference as well as actions.

⁸⁸ For a detailed account on pleasure and pain, cf Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principle of Morals and Legislation*, Chapter V: *Pleasures and Pains, their Kinds*, p. 35.

⁸⁹ Ibid, Chapter V, I, p. 35.

⁹⁰ Ibid, Chapter II, V, p. 20.

1.7. Religion and Happiness

Lord! Says the Psalmist, lift up the light of thy
countenance upon us! Send us some rays of the grace and
heavenly wisdom, in this benighted search after happiness,
to direct us safely to it!
Laurence Sterne

For centuries the Christian religious tradition considered happiness as something that cannot be obtained in this life. Happiness on Earth was not only impossible but also undesirable. The church promoted the thought that as we were born in sin, the only way to happiness was through sufferings and only to those true and devoted believers. God expelled Adam and Eve from Paradise not to enjoy life but to clean their souls from sin in every day hard work and sufferings. As in average, for most of the people the life was miserable and short, because of various diseases, wars and a series of famines. To believe and have faith was the duty of every good Christian as the only happiness people could hope for was the Paradise in Heaven.

What happened in the eighteenth century? Why the Enlightened thinkers and intellectuals started questioning the authority of the church? To answer these questions we have to look back at a series of events that led to the change not just in religious but also in political and social life.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, England became free from dominion of the Roman Catholic Church. With the establishing of the Anglican church and the British monarch as its supreme governor, the country underwent some fundamental changes. After a series of Civil wars, the Puritans achieved political power, establishing republican commonwealth with Oliver Cromwell as Lord Protector, who acted both as head of the state and head of the government. Cromwell was surprisingly tolerant person in terms of religion. He believed that each congregation was free to believe and operate their own affairs as long as people accepted and tolerated others and their religion. Catholics, however, were seen in a bad light and were not allowed to practice. The Puritans still felt that the church of England was too close to Rome, therefore, they tried to impose their own rules by getting rid of episcopacy and substituting the Book of Common

prayer with long sermons and spontaneous devotions.

With the Restoration, the Church of England started to gain its power dominating in religious, social and political life of England. When James II came to the throne, the Church of England was again under a serious menace. James II lived in Spain and France, he also remarried an Italian princess becoming an ardent follower of the Roman Catholic Church. The people did not want a Catholic king but they were happy to know that he was going to be succeeded by the two Protestant daughters. In his early life James had been married to the daughter of Lord Clarendon, Anne Hyde. By this marriage, he had produced two daughters, Mary and Anne. Mary had been married to the heir to the Dutch throne, William and Anne was married to a prince of Denmark. They were obviously all Protestant.

As James II was not able to legislate Catholicism because the parliament wouldn't approve it. He issued a Declaration of Indulgence which allowed freedom in worshipping God in any way the people were pleased, encouraging religious toleration as well as separating Dissenters from the Anglicans. By the order of the king, the Declaration had to be read in all churches. As the bishops of the Church of England refused to do that, some of them were put on trial. The jury together with the parliament took the side of the bishops, in this way putting the king in a very difficult position. Unexpectedly, the queen gave birth to a baby boy, who was to become a heir to the throne, a Catholic heir. As the parliament could not accept this, with the support of the church, they invited William of Orange and Mary, who was the next in the line to the throne, to come to England and practically take over the government.

If we look back over the period through religious point of view we may notice that Puritans believed in God as well as they believed in providential ordering of the universe. Bible was the word of God, the only source of human knowledge where people could find answers to their questions. And if the answers were not to be found in the Bible or what if people disagreed about the answers they found? The Puritans discovered that to run an orderly church meant not just to follow the principles of the Bible but to go beyond those principles. Where else there could be answers if not in something shared by every single person, human reason? With reason, any truth or falsehood could be measured according to a fair criterion. The Enlightenment thinking arose because of religion which dragged European societies in wars and instability. The aim of the Enlightenment thinkers was to

reform the church as well as wrong beliefs, so in this way they would cease to be an impediment to political stability, social well-being, intellectual improvement and economic growth.

Thus, “religion became subjected to reason,”⁹¹ which began to be applied to any question in science, philosophy and art. The universe was seen as a place of balance, a mechanism governed by laws of nature that questioned an idea about personal salvation, fundamental to Christianity. The scientific discoveries as well as progress in industry improved the material standard of living and rationality penetrated if not in all, in many spheres of life. Religion also had been profoundly effected by the Enlightenment. Preachers were changing their views applying reason and natural law into their sermons. Rational thinking was used to support the existence and benevolence of God as well as explain the works of God without doubting about Him being the prime cause of our existence. Thus, in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the central beliefs of Christianity such as the divinity of Christ and original sin were put aside to beliefs that could be described and known through the use of reason. God was the creator of the laws of nature and had nothing to do with doctrines and churches. “Anglicanism was undergoing change, becoming more latitudinarian, that is to say less exclusively focused on traditional theological matters and frames of reference”⁹² wrote S.J. Barnett in *The Enlightenment and Religion*. England flourished with various religious movements among which the Latitudinarian one. The bishop Burnet in *History of His Own Time* writes,

They declared against superstition on the one hand, and enthusiasm on the other. They loved the constitution of the church and the liturgy, and could well live under them: But they did not think it unlawful to live under another form [...] And they continued to keep a good correspondence with those who had differed from them in opinion, and allowed a great freedom both in philosophy and in divinity: From whence they were called men of Latitude. And upon this men of narrower thoughts and fiercer tempers fastened upon them the name of Latitudinarians.⁹³

⁹¹ Roy Porter, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World*, p. 99.

⁹² S.J. Barnett, *The Enlightenment and Religion: The Myths of Modernity*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003, p. 88.

⁹³ Gilbert Burnet, *History of His Own Time: From the Revolution to the Conclusion of the Treaty of Peace at Utrecht, in the Reign of Queen Anne*. Vol. 2, London: Thomas Ward, Inner-Temple Lane, 1724, p. 188.

Latitudinarians viewed religion as an essential element through which men were able to approach God in order to obtain happiness not just after death, in the next life but in present life as well. Latitudinarians believed that men could improve their fallen nature aiming to perfection through Christian religion and education. With the term perfection they identified Man's "approach to the Divine Nature,"⁹⁴ whereas to possess such qualities as goodness, integrity and virtue meant getting more chances in obtaining eternal happiness. It is natural to have a desire to perfection as in finding perfection one finds God who is "the source of all perfection."⁹⁵ In order to approach to divine perfection a man ought to acquire the knowledge of the self as well as the knowledge of God's nature and His laws. The happiness stays in the gap between the fallen Man and God.

The Latitudinarians suggested that with moral and religious education there is a possibility to fill that gap. As a consequence, acting with goodness and virtue means approaching as well as reconciling with God. No less than to reconcile with God, the Latitudinarians were attempting to prove "the benevolence of Divine Providence."⁹⁶ The men's life, with all its duties and trials is designed by Divine Providence in order to assess men's virtue and integrity. As "virtue is the Foundation and Cause of True Happiness among men,"⁹⁷ then only virtuous men are capable of overcoming the temptations designed by God in pursuing the everlasting happiness.

The Latitudinarian Arch-Bishop Tillotson in his sermon *The Happiness of God* tried not just to identify the meaning of happiness but also to explore to what degree it can be achieved and "what are the true ingredients of it."⁹⁸ Tillotson argues that Divine Nature "is the perfect Pattern and Idea of Happiness, and the Original Spring and Fountain of all the Felicity that Creatures are capable of."⁹⁹ According to Tillotson, happiness is the state of satisfaction as well as of the pleasure and delight. To be happy means not only to have a possession of all that is good and beneficial but also to understand in what happiness consists of. The perfect knowledge of what it means to be happy is already a step forward towards happiness.

⁹⁴ Patrick Müller, *Latitudinarians and Didacticism in Eighteenth Century Literature: Moral Theology in Fielding, Sterne, and Goldsmith*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2009, p. 114.

⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 115.

⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 134.

⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 139.

⁹⁸ John Tillotson, *Several Discourses Upon The Attributes of God*, London: Rose and Crown, 1700, Sermon III, p. 67.

⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 68.

Tillotson suggests that one of the ingredients of happiness is Power, as power enables to do whatever conduced to happiness as well as to check and control what can disturb one's happiness. He also explains that Power alone is useless as it is not in the condition to secure against temptations. There should be another ingredient, that of the Wisdom. Wisdom can direct the Power and guide it towards the right way. "Another most considerable and essential Ingredient of Happiness is Goodness; without which, as there can be no true Majesty and Greatness, for neither can there be any felicity or happiness."¹⁰⁰ According to Tillotson, "to do good is the most pleasant employment in the World. It is natural; and whatever is so, is delightful."¹⁰¹

As Knowledge and Power may be in its nature opposites to God's, Goodness is something that can stay unchanged as it is in human's Nature. What is the most pleasant thing if not following our Nature. Doing good as well as receiving good from others is one of the greatest happiness that a man can obtain. "The delight and satisfaction that a good man takes in doing good"¹⁰² bring joy and comfort to both the giver and the receiver. However, good works are not enough to gain the happiness with God. The Latitudinarians believed that leading a moral life, improving the human qualities such as charity, kindness and compassion were the only ways in pursuing true happiness. As all men desire happiness, it is necessary to prove and perform one's duty every day to achieve happiness. God donated reason and knowledge to humans so they could use them to prevent sin. The possession of reason as well as the understanding of one's spiritual condition make it possible to a man to make all the necessary changes in order to approach to God and to obtain happiness. One of the actions that can make a change is working on one's habits and behaviour. Tillotson suggests that retirement allows individuals to reflect about life, getting rid of sinful habits and to prepare to a better life after death, "happy that man, who in the days of his health hath retir'd himself from the noise and tumult of this world, and made that careful preparation for death and a better life, as may give him that constancy and firmness of spirit, as to be able to bear the thoughts and approaches of his charge without amazement."¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 72.

¹⁰¹ John Tillotson, *Sermons Preach'd Upon Several Occasions. The Second Volume*, London: Golden ball, 1680, Sermon X, p. 291.

¹⁰² Ibid. Sermon X, p. 292.

¹⁰³ John Tillotson, *The Works of the Most Reverend Dr. John Tillotson, Late Lord Archbishop of Canterbury*, London: Three Pigeons. 1714, Sermon XXXIV, p. 408.

It is important to observe constant and good routine as well as follow God's duties in pursuit of happiness. What if a man is weak and sinful? Could there be any promise of happiness? Tillotson believes that "men upon the brink of despair"¹⁰⁴ can do incredible things as "the soul of man [...] discovers its divine power."¹⁰⁵ Tillotson is quite positive about human nature, he affirms that God is benevolent and as long as a man is able and willing to make amends for his actions, he allows to have a second chance in improving his life either on Earth or in Heaven.

The Enlightenment led to a rational thinking not just in science and philosophy but in religion as well. Many Anglican priests made their name not because of their devoutness but also because of their achievements in other spheres. Lawrence Sterne was an Anglican clergyman who became famous for his novels *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*, *Gentleman* and *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*. After Sterne discovered his talent of writing at the age of forty-six, he dedicated himself to writing for the rest of his life. Sterne published many sermons and memories, he "preached chiefly upon philanthropy, and those kindred virtues to it, upon which hang all the law and the prophets."¹⁰⁶ Influenced by Tillotson, Sterne considered Latitudinarianism less dogmatic and rigorous as it "emphasized man's natural capacity for goodness and virtue."¹⁰⁷

Notwithstanding his devotion to the church, Sterne's main interest was the human nature as well as "the psychological springs of human actions"¹⁰⁸ In his Sermon *Inquiry after Happiness*, Sterne explores and questions the notion of happiness as well as what are the human actions that lead towards it. Sterne writes "the great pursuit of man is after happiness: it is the first and strongest desire of his nature;-in every stage of his life he searches for it as for hid treasure."¹⁰⁹ According to Sterne, happiness is a treasure that is worth searching and inquiring for, even if it takes the whole life for it. As it is an essential part of human nature, Sterne examines all the possible spheres of life the true happiness

¹⁰⁴ John Tillotson, *The Works of the Most Reverend Dr. John Tillotson, Late Lord Archbishop of Canterbury*. In Ten Volumes, Vol. II, Edinburgh and Glasgow: Printed for G. Hamilton & L. Balfour, W. Sands, L. Traill, W. Miller, and J. Brown, A. Stalker, and T Glas, Dundee, 1858, Sermon XXIX, p. 175.

¹⁰⁵ Ibidem.

¹⁰⁶ Patrick Müller, *Latitudinarians and Didacticism in Eighteenth Century Literature: Moral Theology in Fielding, Sterne, and Goldsmith*, p. 283.

¹⁰⁷ Manfred Pfister, *Laurence Sterne*, Hordon, Tavistock, Devon: Northcote House, 2001, p. 24.

¹⁰⁸ Patrick Müller, *Latitudinarians and Didacticism in Eighteenth Century Literature: Moral Theology in Fielding, Sterne, and Goldsmith*, p. 283.

¹⁰⁹ Lawrence Sterne, *The Works of Laurence Sterne in Four Volumes with A Life of the Author*, Volume III, London: CADELL AND DAVIES, 1819, Sermon I, p. 3.

can be found. A man is a pilgrim in his search of happiness. Only true believer, as Sterne points out, is able to achieve such a desirable happiness as “there can be no real happiness without religion and virtue, and the assistance of God’s grace and Holy Spirit to direct our lives in the true pursuit of it.”¹¹⁰ Sterne argues that such virtues as tolerance and humility have to be obtained “by the endeavours of our own wills and concurrent influences of a gracious agent!”¹¹¹

Due to our will and grace we can resist to the stream of our affections and appetites that naturally takes us the other way¹¹², that is away from God. Thus, religion and morality go hand in hand and without virtue there is no salvation and happiness “is only to be found in religion,- in the consciousness of virtue,- and the sure and certain hopes of a better life, which brightens all our prospects, and leaves no room to dread disappointments,- because the foundations of it is built upon a rock, whose foundations are as deep as those of heaven and hell.”¹¹³

Even though the Enlightened thinkers and philosophers relied on reason and natural law, there was a strong believe about “man’s capacity to fulfil his duties through his God-given faculties.”¹¹⁴ God was Benevolent Creator, “the architect of natural order,”¹¹⁵ accordingly the natural law was of divine origin. The man was created to enjoy and be happy on condition to follow his duties as well as God’s commandments.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, Sermon I, p. 7.

¹¹¹ Lawrence Sterne, *The Works of Laurence Sterne in Four Volumes with A Life of the Author*, Sermon XXVIII, p. 68.

¹¹² Ibid, Sermon XXVIII, p. 69.

¹¹³ Ibid, Volume III, Sermon I, p. 14.

¹¹⁴ Roy Porter, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World*, p. 100.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p. 304.

PART TWO

The Literary Quest for Happiness

CHAPTER TWO

Women Writers: Their Identity and Contribution

2.1. Maria Edgeworth: the life and philosophy

As a woman, my life, wholly domestic, can offer nothing of
interest to the public; I am like the needy knife-grinder –
I have no story to tell.
Maria Edgeworth

One of the oldest libraries in Europe, Bodleian Library in Oxford, England, opened its doors to *Meet the Edgeworth's' Exhibition*. The exhibition included a variety of manuscripts as well as some of Maria Edgeworth unfinished works. A research project, running from March 2019 to February 2020, aimed to introduce as well as to promote the works of one of the most successful novelist, Maria Edgeworth. If during her own time Maria Edgeworth was a prolific writer, widely read, nowadays she is bearably known outside universities. According to Professor Ros Ballaster, who worked on the project, Maria Edgeworth should have the same level of cultural recognition as Jane Austen. So, who was Maria Edgeworth and what is her legacy?

Even though born in Oxfordshire, England, in 1767, Maria Edgeworth moved to Ireland at the age of sixteen where her farther, Richard Lovell Edgeworth inherited an estate at Edgeworthstown with property in County Longford, one of the counties belonging to the Irish Midland's region. Except from some visits to England and abroad, Maria Edgeworth lived there for the rest of her life. To understand Maria's identity, it is worth tracing a brief account about her father as the lives of father and daughter were closely connected.

Richard Lovell Edgeworth was known as an educational writer, engineer and inventor. As he had highly inventive mind, his theories covered a variety of fields. He was sincerely devoted to the welfare of Ireland, therefore, he was constantly working on

improvement its agricultural and industrial fields. His invention of various sailing and wheel carriages, land measuring machine, a turnip cutter and the invention of a road - building system, even though some rejected, were aimed for the good of Ireland. Richard Edgeworth was not just a theorist, he liked experimenting and putting his ideas into practice. Strongly influenced by Jean Jacques Rousseau's novel *Emile* as well as by his theories on education, Richard Edgeworth decided to raise his first son, also named Richard, according to Rousseau's teachings ascribed in *Emile*. Bringing up his eldest son according to Rousseau's scheme of teaching, succeeding in making him independent and fearless, Richard Edgeworth though found himself "entangled in difficulties with regard to my child's mind and temper as he showed an invincible dislike to control."¹¹⁶ Thus, deeply regretting about adopting Rousseau's system of education with his eldest son, Richard Edgeworth was not applying "upon mistaken principles of Rousseau"¹¹⁷ in raising his other children.

Maria Edgeworth although differently raised, was, however, greatly influenced by Rousseau's teaching. The eldest daughter of R. L. Edgeworth, he fathered twenty two children from four marriages, whose birth was not even noticed in his memoirs, was to become her father's most devoted companion and supporter. R. L. Edgeworth took little notice of Maria when she was little as he was busy training his first born son according to Rousseau's teaching principles. The girl was left to the care of her loving mother, Anna Maria Elers and aunts, who encouraged her early wit and vivacity. Maria lost her mother when she was only six, however, she never forgot her mother's death and how she was taking into the room to receive her mother's last kiss¹¹⁸. R. L. Edgeworth married his second wife, Honora Sneyd shortly after his first wife's death which at first caused little Maria great suffering, soon was replaced by respect and affection towards her stepmother. Because of Honora's poor health and Maria's being labelled as a difficult child, she was first sent to Mrs. Lattafièrè's school in Derby then to Mrs Davis in London, two of the best boarding-schools of the time. During her years in school, Maria became a skilled needlewoman, learnt to write neatly, acquired good Italian and her French "spoken with

¹¹⁶ Richard Lovell Edgeworth, *Richard Lovell Edgeworth: A Selection from His Memoir*, Frankfurt am Main: Outlook, 2018, p. 20.

¹¹⁷ Ibidem.

¹¹⁸ Jean E. Friedman, *Ways of Wisdom: Moral Education in the Early National Period*, Athens (GA): The University of Georgia Press, 2001, p. 61.

so much ease and spirit, that her powers appeared as brilliant as if she was using her native language.”¹¹⁹

Maria’s first letter, even though of no importance, as it was a letter of a child, already showed her no ordinary capacity to write. It was at school that she commenced to entertain her friends with story telling. Maria’s stories were not only taken from books but most of them were written by her own hand, giving way to her imagination and creativity.

Richard Edgeworth still obsessed with the education, was looking for more practical ways in bringing up his children. Thus, leaving dogma and primitivism behind, R. L. Edgeworth became a radical empiricist, adopting a Baconian approach to education. Maria wrote, “I claim for my father the merit of having been the first to recommend, both by example and precept, what Bacon would call the experimental method in education.”¹²⁰ He gave up the idea about a child being natural genius acknowledging that only through upbringing and schooling child’s personality and knowledge could be developed. As Maria remembered, “long before he ever thought of writing or publishing, he had kept a register of observations and facts relative to his children. [...] He and Mrs. Honora Edgeworth kept notes of every circumstances which occurred worth recording.”¹²¹

Already while being in school, Maria was under R. L. Edgeworth’s watchful eye as he took responsibility for his daughter’s education applying his system of teaching. He asked Maria to write letters, “FAMILIARLY: I wish to know what you like and what you dislike; I wish to communicate to you what little knowledge I have acquired, that you may have a tincture of every species of literature, and form your taste by choice and not by chance.”¹²² When R. L. Edgeworth discovered Maria’s talent for the story telling he not only advised her to note and put her original stories on paper, “a remarkable proof of his Enlightenment,”¹²³ but also encouraged her by giving writing assignments. “I also beg that you will send me a tale, about the length of a Spectator, upon the subject of GENEROSITY. It must be taken from history of romance, and must be sent the day se’night after you receive this, and I beg you will take some pains about it.”¹²⁴

¹¹⁹ Alice Paterson, *The Edgeworths: A Study of Later Eighteenth Century Education*, London: University Tutorial Press, 1914, p. 12.

¹²⁰ Richard Lovell Edgeworth, *Richard Lovell Edgeworth: A Selection from His Memoir*, p. 33.

¹²¹ Ibidem.

¹²² Helen Zimmern, *Famous Women: Maria Edgeworth*, Boston: Robert’s Brothers, 1884, p. 10.

¹²³ Ibid, p. 11.

¹²⁴ Ibidem.

R. L. Edgeworth began not only to shape and direct Maria's learning progress, supervising her daughter's early written career, he also became a strong presence in Maria's life. The reappearing of Richard Edgeworth into Maria's life gave way to sincere feelings of love and esteem towards her father. Richard Edgeworth became "simultaneously a superior presence and an intellectual partner, a moral guardian and a literary consultant"¹²⁵ to his daughter.

After Honora's death, R. L. Edgeworth married her sister Elizabeth and the new family moved permanently to Ireland. Richard Edgeworth decided to dedicate his life to the improvement of his estate as well as to the education of his children. Maria moved with the family, starting a new page in her history. As the eldest daughter, Maria undertook the social and domestic duties and devoted herself to raising and teaching her younger siblings. R. L. Edgeworth strongly believed in home education so Maria continued her father's line of education by observing and noting down her younger siblings' anecdotes and stories. She also wrote for her own amusement and instruction some of her father's conversation-lessons, with questions and explanations and the answers of the children¹²⁶.

This experience in educating children inspired Maria to cooperate with her father in writing the very innovative educational treatise *Practical Education*, published in 1798. The title was not chosen accidentally, the teaching, described in the treatise was "entirely upon practice and experience."¹²⁷ As it was explained in the preface of *Practical Education*, "to make any progress in the art of education, it must be patiently reduced to an experimental science [...] we lay before the public the result of our experiments, and in many instances the experiments themselves."¹²⁸

If at the beginning of his experimental teaching R. L. Edgeworth believed that, "children should not be educated for the society of children; nor should they live in that society during their education,"¹²⁹ at the time when *Practical Education* was published, he changed his mind upholding that separation of children in a family may lead to evils as well as induce artifice and disobedience on the part of the children making them

¹²⁵ Elisabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, *Their Fathers' Daughters: Hannah More, Maria Edgeworth and Patriarchal Complicity*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 97.

¹²⁶ Richard Lovell Edgeworth, *Richard Lovell Edgeworth: A Selection from His Memoir*, p. 33.

¹²⁷ Maria & R. L. Edgeworth, *Essays on Practical Education in III Volumes*, Vol. I, London: R. Hunter, 1822, Preface, p. v.

¹²⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 88.

miserable¹³⁰. Initially without great success, *Practical Education* became a very influential educational treatise as it included a variety of topics on history, ancient literature, science, chemistry and mechanics.

The book also addressed the question about moral education as well as promoted the happiness of domestic life for young women encouraging virtue, right behaviour and the pursuit of duties, referring rather than to the individual, more to the education of the community. Even though the treatise contained a variety of subjects it lacked “a clear and precise statement of the aim of education, such as could have given coherence and unity to the whole mass of pedagogical doctrine therein contained.”¹³¹ This collaboration not only tied up closely the father and daughter but also inspired Maria to actively research among different approaches to pedagogy, evaluating kinds of education most appropriate for young ladies.

In her first book, *Letters to Literary Ladies* (1795), Maria Edgeworth argues about the benefits of women’s education joining the literary discussions about women’s rights. She writes that, “Women have not erred from having knowledge, but from not having had experience: they may have grown vain and presumptuous when they have learned but little, they will be sobered into good sense when they shall have learned more.”¹³² Maria’s rational and enlightened ideas about women’s education drew attention of the feminists readers, however, author’s intention was to show women’s potentiality towards intellectual activities within domestic sphere rather than their participation in public life.

When Maria arrived to Ireland at the age of sixteen, she began tranquil, domestic existence. Edgeworthstown became not only her home but her whole world where her father was a supreme ruler. She was not only helping to care about her younger siblings but was employed by her father as an agent and accountant, “an employment in which she showed marvellous acuteness and patience, it not only gave he habits of business and accuracy, but let her into familiarity with the modes of thought and terms of expression

¹³⁰ Richard Lovell Edgeworth, *Memoirs of Richard Lovell Edgeworth Begun by Himself and Concluded by His Daughter Maria Edgeworth in Two Volumes*, Vol. 2, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011, p. 399.

¹³¹ Alice Paterson, *The Edgeworths: A Study of Later Eighteenth Century Education*, p. 36.

¹³² Maria Edgeworth, *Letters to Literary Ladies to Which Is Added, an Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 56.

among young people which she could in no other way have acquired.”¹³³

Notwithstanding her busy domestic everyday experience she considered writing as an essential activity of her daily routine. Maria wrote in the library every day, one of the solitary and reserved room¹³⁴ of the house, undisturbed by the noise of her large family. She cherished her father’s advices as she was accustomed to his help and opinion, describing their relations as *literary partnership*¹³⁵. If in the case of *Practical Education* there was real collaboration, in most of Maria’s writings the part played by R. L. Edgeworth was that of trimming and editing. As in one letter to her cousin Maria wrote,

thank yourself for kind inquires after Letters to Literary Ladies.[...] they are not as well as can be expected, nor they are likely to mend at present. [...] They are now disfigured by all manner of crooked marks of papa’s critical indignation, besides various abusive marginal notes, which I would not have you see for half-a-crown sterling, nor my aunt for a whole crown as pure as King Hiero’s.¹³⁶

It is impossible to know how much influence her father had over Maria’s writing and what sort of changes she did before or after her father’s marks but it is obvious that his constant presence and authority influenced Maria’s thinking and approach to writing. The example of Maria’s own style is *Castle Rackrent* (1800), published anonymously without her father’s knowledge and assistance. It shows “how infinitely superior in spontaneity, flexibility, and nervousness of style, force, pith and boldness”¹³⁷ this writing is in comparison to those meddled by her father. Maria loved her father unconditionally and R. L. Edgeworth’s, “crime was not so much that he was a rather pompous and opinionated utilitarian but that he so conducted himself as to cause his daughter to love him uncritically and therefore to adopt his precepts on literature and life unquestioningly.”¹³⁸ In spite of her father’s authority Maria was enlightened and productive writer.

¹³³ Frances Anne Beaufort Edgeworth, *A Memoir of Maria Edgeworth with A Selection from Her Letters*, Vol. 1, London: Joseph Masters and Son, 1867, p. 15.

¹³⁴ Helen Zimmern, *Famous Women: Maria Edgeworth*, p. 118.

¹³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 23.

¹³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 19.

¹³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 31.

¹³⁸ Elisabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, *Their Fathers’ Daughters: Hannah More, Maria Edgeworth and Patriarchal Complicity*, p. 96.

The stories from *Parent's Assistant* (1796), written for the younger audience, followed by *Moral Tales* (1801), were first read to her brothers and sisters. It was putting her work to the test of childish criticism that made Maria's stories so special and unique.

The Parent's Assistant and *The Letters to the Literary Ladies* were of great success. Thus, when the joint work of father and daughter, *Practical Education* was published Maria Edgeworth's name became known in fashionable literary and social circles. At the same time R. L. Edgeworth's third wife died of consumption and as before, Maria's father was soon married to a young lady, Frances Anne Beaufort, just a year younger than Maria. Within a short period of time Maria became very close to Mrs. Frances Edgeworth. She loved and esteemed her new stepmother calling her my friend and mother¹³⁹.

The joy and happiness of the family were disturbed by Irish Rebellion. Maria Edgeworth in first person witnessed the horrors of the Irish Rebellion. With the arrival of the French invasionary army, the family had to escape from the Edgeworthstown leaving it in the hands of the rebels. This sad, first hand experience inspired Maria to write her most well-known book called *Castle Rackrent*. It was considered the first regional novel, followed by an entire series of novels among which *Ennui* (1809), *The Absentee* (1812) and *Ormond* (1817), that tackled the Irish question. Describing Irish history, culture and customs as well as dealing with racial, social and political issues, Maria Edgeworth gave rise to a taste for fiction about Ireland. Due to her masterful portrayal of Irish characters as well as advanced creation of the narrator, she was recognized as an *early innovator*¹⁴⁰ becoming a central figure in Irish literary history.

Maria Edgeworth became a celebrity and influencer in her own time. She flattered herself as Sir Walter Scott was in any degree influenced to write and publish his novels from seeing her sketches of Irish character, "I should indeed triumph in the thought of having been the proximate cause of such happiness to millions."¹⁴¹ Indeed in Sir Walter Scott's general preface to 1829 Edition of his historical novel *Waverley or, 'Tis Sixty years Since* he wrote:

¹³⁹ Helen Zimmern, *Famous Women: Maria Edgeworth*, p. 21.

¹⁴⁰ Tracy Chevalier, *Encyclopedia of The Essay*, Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1997, p. 240.

¹⁴¹ Maria Edgeworth, *The Life and Letters of Maria Edgeworth*, Volume 2, 2018, Frankfurt am Main: Outlook, p. 106.

without being so presumptuous as to hope to emulate the rich humour, pathetic tenderness, and admirable tact, which pervade the works of my accomplished friend, I felt that something might be attempted for my own country, of the same kind with that which Miss Edgeworth so fortunately achieved for Ireland.¹⁴²

Maria's time was passing busily, happily, uneventfully at Edgeworthstown, while her fame was continually increasing. She preferred her domestic life where she could write with the noise of playing children around her, over the life in Paris or London where she was acclaimed writer. Maria Edgeworth's novels were written in the family, read and discussed among her friends and relatives. Her home was her influential space responsible for the evolution and development of her characters. Maria Edgeworth "created her characters by drawing directly upon her knowledge and impressions of people she had met or her father described. [...] She wrote better when she could base her work upon real characters and events – so much the better, thought Byron, being life."¹⁴³

Her father's death struck her deeply. Maria was so devastated with the loss that for a few months after her father's death she was physically ill. As soon as she restored her physical and emotional state, Maria Edgeworth set to work upon one of her most complicated projects. R.L. Edgeworth's dying wish to complete the memoir of his life, within a month of his death as he told his publisher, caused Maria "two years of doubt and extreme anxiety."¹⁴⁴ Maria Edgeworth was so stressed about its reception that she had to go abroad for a couple of months to avoid "all that I hold most dear and sacred approached by the unhallowed hands of unfeeling persons."¹⁴⁵

After her father's death Maria was "occupied with the necessary business of life, which must be done behind the scene,"¹⁴⁶ enjoying the so much loved routine of domestic life. Notwithstanding she wrote less, her works were of *a new maturity*¹⁴⁷.

¹⁴² Walter Scott, *Waverley; or 'Tis Sixty Years Since*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 388.

¹⁴³ Norman A. Jeffares, *MacMillan History of Literature: Anglo-Irish Literature*, Dublin: Palgrave, 1982, p. 86.

¹⁴⁴ Caroline Gonda, *Reading Daughters Fictions 1709-1834: Novels and Society from Manley to Edgeworth*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 207.

¹⁴⁵ Ibidem.

¹⁴⁶ Helen Zimmern, *Famous Women: Maria Edgeworth*, p. 87.

¹⁴⁷ Deviney Looser, *Women Writers and Old Age in Great Britain, 1750-1859*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008, p. 41.

Maria Edgeworth's one of the last novels *Helen* (1834), was identified with "strengthening of confidence that came in her sixties from years of self-reliance."¹⁴⁸ The novel was well received by her family, their good criticism gave her much pleasure and self-assurance. Her family, their thoughts and opinions were of great importance to Maria. She, in return, was unselfish personality taking care of her enlarged family members, keeping the link well knit¹⁴⁹.

Maria Edgeworth was not only one of the most prominent writers, she was "too inconstantly the artist, too deliberately the moralist."¹⁵⁰ Trying herself in the variety of genres: novels, essays, educational treatise, moral tales she became "one of the most natural story-tellers who ever wrote in English."¹⁵¹ Maria Edgeworth was also an educator, most influential story-teller of children's books, who devoted her long literary career to reform the educational system by improving women's position in society. She considered education a powerful tool towards women's intellectual equality to men, their happiness and independence.

Even though Maria Edgeworth was criticised for sustaining patriarchal system as well as her support of the restriction of women to domestic life, she always depicted her female characters as powerful individuals within that limited domestic space. A perfectionist, she was not only continually improving her works herself by making changes but was also open to any criticism saying that, "I am a creature that can take advice, can be the better for it, and am never offended by it."¹⁵² Maria Edgeworth's aim was to change the role of women from those of only wives, mothers and governess creating female protagonist as "desiring subjects, not just objects of desire."¹⁵³ A dutiful daughter, devoted educator and social reformer, Maria Edgeworth remains one of the most famous and innovative writers of the Anglo-Irish literature.

¹⁴⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁴⁹ Helen Zimmern, *Famous Women: Maria Edgeworth*, p. 44.

¹⁵⁰ Elizabeth O. McWhorter Harden, *Maria Edgeworth's Art of Prose Fiction*, The Hague: Mouton & Co, 1971, p. 75.

¹⁵¹ Frederick Joseph Harvey Darton, *Children's Books in England: Five Centuries of Social Life*, Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 1932, p. 143.

¹⁵² Helen Zimmern, *Famous Women: Maria Edgeworth*, p. 103.

¹⁵³ Peter Hunt, *Understanding Children's Literature*, London: Routledge, 2002, p. 115.

2.2. Sarah Fielding: becoming a writer

Tenderness and Benevolence, which alone can give any real
Pleasure, and which I most sincerely wish to all my readers.
Sarah Fielding

In the last couple of years the attention to the works of women writes of the eighteenth century has increased, attracting modern readers by the complex and independent ideas developed in their novels. Sarah Fielding stands out as a writer who “challenges her readers to make sense of competing voices and perspectives and to wrestle with what is ultimately ineffable – human mind.”¹⁵⁴

Even though Sarah Fielding (1710-1768) was born a gentlewoman, whose family from father’s side descended from aristocratic stock, her life was far from fortunate and happy. Her mother, Sarah Gould, came from a family of “substantial, prudent people”¹⁵⁵ of lawyers, landowners and merchants. Apparently, she married Sarah’s father, Edmund Fielding, a young soldier with a potential military career, without her parent’s approval and “contrary to their good liking.”¹⁵⁶ Sarah Fielding’s grandfather, Sir Henry Gould, purchased The East Stour property for the care of his daughter and her children and stipulated the will of £3000 to secure their living. However, on marriage, Sarah Gould’s property legally became her husband’s. Edmund Fielding, even though of aristocratic origin, had to provide for his family advancing in the military career, one of eighteenth century Britain's risky professions. To obtain a rank in the British Army there was a practice of selling and purchasing the commissions, which was founded on regular and fixed principles. The higher was the rank the higher was the prize of the commission. Thus, to advance in the British army, Edmund Fielding was constantly looking for better military

¹⁵⁴ Christofer D. Johnson, *A Political Biography of Sarah Fielding*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2017, p. 102.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 21.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 22.

posts, running into debts by purchasing expensive commissions. Apart from military commissions, which in most cases turned out financially disastrous, Edmund Fielding was spending huge sums of money on a lifestyle which was beyond his means. “In addition to employing a bailiff and a steward, he kept an extraordinarily large establishment of servants for a gentleman with an estate yielding only around £150 a year.”¹⁵⁷

Besides the housekeeper, nursery maid and the kitchen staff, Edmund Fielding also employed a French governess as he intended his daughters to be educated and brought up as Gentlewomen.

Unfortunately, Sarah’s happy childhood did not last long. Her mother died when she was only seven, and her father went to London in search of a military commission leaving his children, Sarah was the fourth of six surviving children, with their maternal grandmother, Sarah Lady Gould and their great aunt, Mrs. Katherin Cottington. In London, Edmund Fielding was not only commissioned colonel of a new Regiment of Invalids on 11 March 1719, he also married to a Roman Catholic widow, called Anne Rapha. When the couple came back to East Stour, the relationship between Lady Gould and the new family became tense. According to the testimony of the governess, the new Mrs. Fielding was ruling the house treating the children from her husband’s first marriage “after a most barbarous cruel & inhumane manner & did not allow them necessaries.”¹⁵⁸ Sarah’s grandmother not only took the children to Salisbury to live with her and Mrs. Cottingtonbut, Lady Gould also began a legal battle with Sarah’s father for the custody of the children and for “their rights as tenants in common to what was left of the East Stour estate which Sir Henry Gould had purchased for his daughter’s sole and separate use.”¹⁵⁹ The lawsuit that Lady Gould undertook against Edmund Fielding was successful. Not only the children remained under Lady Gould’s custody, the trusteeship of the East Stour estate was also transferred to her and Mrs Cottington for the benefit of her daughter’s children. Sarah, as well as the rest of the children, was deeply affected by the experience of the custody battle. Sarah’s childhood unpleasant experience of her mother’s death, absent father and avid stepmother will be the main theme in her future writings.

Shortly after the family arrival to Salisbury, Sarah and her sisters were sent to Mary

¹⁵⁷ James Alan Downie, *A Political Biography of Henry Fielding*, London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009, p. 16.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 17.

¹⁵⁹ Ibidem.

Rookes's boarding school. Apparently Sarah took Mrs Rookes and her school as a model while writing her *The Governess* (1749) as the story "presents an affectionate account of just such a school [as Mrs. Rookes's] where a group of little girls are able to find companionship, guidance, and tranquillity away from turbulent home lives."¹⁶⁰ The move to Salisbury, with its *gay and rich*¹⁶¹ atmosphere, distracted Sarah from her hard leaving experiences at East Stour. Leaving with her grandmother as well as her school experience gave Sarah "an idea of an alternative society, one governed by women and shaped by the communal values of love and generosity."¹⁶² In Salisbury, Sarah met her three best friends: Jane Collier, her brother Arthur Collier and James Harris. They were not only supporting Sarah throughout her life but also collaborating and contributing to her writings.

Meanwhile, Sarah's stepmother died and shortly, Edmund Fielding married his third wife, Eleanor Hill, a widow from Salisbury. Henry Fielding, Sarah's older brother was making his career as a playwright becoming known for his dramatic satires. However, his successful career in the theatre had to stop with the *Theatrical Licensing Act* of 1737, Henry Fielding continued writing making his name in the literary circles.

Eleanor Hill shortly died and Sarah's father married for the forth time to Elisabeth Sparrye, twenty five years younger than him. This marriage did not last long as Edmund Fielding shortly died, impoverished and in prison for unpaid debts.

Salisbury was Sarah's home until 1733, the year her grandmother, Lady Gould died. After her grandmother's death, Sarah and her sisters returned to East Stour. They sold East Stour when Edmund, Sarah's younger brother reached his majority, dividing the profit between the six siblings. The sum of money Sarah got was hardly enough to sustain her, she was welcomed to live with her older sister Catharine, who inherited Mrs. Cottington's estate in Princes Court, Westminster.

A women's destiny in the eighteenth century England was to become a wife and a mother. With no or little access to education, no voting rights and the lack of employment opportunities for upper or middle-class women, marriage was seen as the best way to a gentlewoman to secure her future. More than that, not only a woman had little or no choice in marriage, a potential husband expected his future wife to bring him a dowry sufficiently

¹⁶⁰ Christofer D. Johnson, *A Political Biography of Sarah Fielding*, p. 24.

¹⁶¹ Ibidem.

¹⁶² Ibid, p. 25.

appropriate to his status. The question of women's right to choose a husband or whether or not to marry was touched in Sarah Fielding's most famous novel *The Adventures of David Simple* (1744). Her character Cynthia, for refusing a man her father designed for her as a husband, as she "had no kind of Ambition to be his upper servant,"¹⁶³ was excluded from her father's will, becoming an impoverished gentlewoman who had to provide for her living.

Neither Sarah nor her three sisters ever married. It is suggested that either they were not rich enough to attract husbands from their own class or their rank was not high enough to compensate for their dowry¹⁶⁴. Thus, while Henry was making his living as a writer and Edmund undertook a military career, Sarah and her sisters, with no chances to work or financial support, suffered economic difficulties. To sustain their living the sisters lived together for many years sharing their resources.

To somehow maintain herself, Sarah Fielding turned to writing, providing her brother's works by adding the pieces written in a woman's voice¹⁶⁵. Her first publication was a letter from Eleonora to Horatio, an anonymous contribution to *Joseph Andrews* (1742), "a work of fiction – a comic Epic-Poem in Prose – and not a polemical pamphlet,"¹⁶⁶ as explained by Henry Fielding. Sarah also wrote a narrative on Anna Boleyn's life in Henry Fielding's *Journey from this World to the Next*, published in his three-volume *Miscellanies* (1743). Henry Fielding identified the narrative as "the Original writ in a Woman's Hand; And tho' the Observations in it are, I think, as excellent as any in the whole Volume, there seems to be a Difference in Style between this and the preceeding Chapters; and as it is the Character of a Woman which is related, I am inclined to fancy it was really written by one of that Sex."¹⁶⁷ Henry Fielding, however, turned to his sister to help him "express the views of a Leonora or an Anna Boleyn,"¹⁶⁸ as "only women can truly understand women, so their writing offers something a man's cannot,"¹⁶⁹

¹⁶³ Sarah Fielding, *The Adventures of David Simple*, p. 86.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid, Introduction, p. ix.

¹⁶⁵ Claude Rawson, (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to Henry Fielding*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 132.

¹⁶⁶ James Alan Downie, *A Political Biography of Henry Fielding*, p. 123.

¹⁶⁷ Sarah Fielding, *The Adventures of David Simple*, Introduction, p. x.

¹⁶⁸ Claude Rawson, (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to Henry Fielding*, p. 132.

¹⁶⁹ Ibidem.

distinguished between woman and man's style of writing, preferring that of a man. This collaboration, even though it brought Sarah *little money and no fame*,¹⁷⁰ encouraged Sarah Fielding to begin her own literary career. Her first novel with a long title *The Adventures of David Simple: Containing An Account of His Travels Through the Cities of London and Westminster, in the Search of a Real Friend* was published anonymously.

In the eighteenth century England anonymous writing was a common practice for women authors as writing was not regarded as respectable and suitable for women. With no occupations, the women were trying themselves in different kinds of arts becoming actresses or writers. Anonymity was a way to women's authors not only to overcome their modesty but also to protect their reputation.

In her advertisement to *The Adventures of David Simple*, Sarah Fielding invited the readers to call her *Moral Romance*¹⁷¹ whatever title they liked, apologizing for "many Inaccuracies in Style and other faults of Composition."¹⁷² She also underlined that "the best Excuse that can be made for a Woman's venturing to write at all, is that which really produced this Book; Distress in her Circumstances: which she could not so well remove by any other Means in her Power."¹⁷³

Sarah Fielding's advertisement clearly confirms how difficult it was for a woman to make a living. Even though *The Adventures of David Simple* was a success, it brought Sarah no financial relief. As the book was published anonymously it was immediately suggested the authorship of Henry Fielding as there were evident similarities between *Joseph Andrews* and *The Adventures of David Simple*. In the preface to the second edition of *The Adventures of David Simple*, which appeared ten weeks later, proving its popularity, Henry Fielding denying his authorship, attributes the work to his sister. He asks the reader not to be subjected to rigorous criticism to the work of women¹⁷⁴, admitting that "Many Errors in Style"¹⁷⁵ can be removed by Experience and Habit as "a good Style, as well as a good Hand in Writing, is chiefly learn'd by Practice."¹⁷⁶ At the same time

¹⁷⁰ Christofer D. Johnson, *A Political Biography of Sarah Fielding*, p. 44.

¹⁷¹ Sarah Fielding, *The Adventures of David Simple*, p. 3.

¹⁷² Ibidem.

¹⁷³ Ibidem.

¹⁷⁴ Susan Staves, *A Literary History of Women's Writing in Britain, 1660-1789*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 253.

¹⁷⁵ Sarah Fielding, *The Adventures of David Simple*, p. 347.

¹⁷⁶ Ibidem.

Henry Fielding praises his sister's

vast Penetration into human Nature, a deep and profound Discernment of all the Mazes, Windings and Labyrinths, which perplex the Heart of Man to such a degree, that he is himself often incapable of seeing through them; and as this is the greatest, noblest, and rarest of all the Talents which constitute a Genius.¹⁷⁷

The increasing popularity of *The Adventure of David Simple*, underwent some other editions as well as translations into German and French during her lifetime, provided Sarah Fielding “with public literary signature as the Author of David Simple.”¹⁷⁸ Encouraged by her novel's success Sarah shortly wrote *Familiar Letters between the Principal Characters in David Simple* (1747), a sequel told in letters, later followed by *The Adventures of David Simple, Volume the Last* (1753).

Struggling financial difficulties, Sarah lived sometimes with her sisters sometimes with her brother's family. When Henry Fielding's wife died in 1744, and he “seemed to have suffered some kind of breakdown,”¹⁷⁹ Sarah moved to live with her brother looking after him and the children. To avoid an embarrassing situation, after her brother married their pregnant kitchen maid, Sarah moved to live with her sisters in Westminster.

Moving away from her brother was not only physical, Sarah was finally ready to step away from her brother's influence. She became acquainted with Elisabeth Montagu, who considered Sarah Fielding “as much an object for charitable patronage as a writer worthy of support on the basis of her accomplishments,”¹⁸⁰ making part of her bluestocking circle.

She made an important connection with extremely popular publisher and author, Samuel Richardson, who not only “enjoyed sharing literary undertakings with his friends,”¹⁸¹ he also “operated as a mentor,”¹⁸² supporting and promoting especially the works of women writers.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 345.

¹⁷⁸ Betty A. Schellenberg, *The Professionalization of Women Writers in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 19.

¹⁷⁹ James Alan Downie, *A Political Biography of Henry Fielding*, p. 145.

¹⁸⁰ Betty A. Schellenberg, *The Professionalization of Women Writers in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, p. 110.

¹⁸¹ Peter Sabor, Betty A. Schellenberg, (eds), *Samuel Richardson in Context*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017, p. 130.

¹⁸² Ibidem.

In 1749, Sarah Fielding published *The Governess: or, Little Female Academy*, which was the “first sustained fictional narrative specifically written to amuse children.”¹⁸³ Sarah Fielding was not only the first woman writer to launch a full-length story for children, *The Governess* was also a didactic novel which aimed to benefit “every Miss from Ten Years Old to Fifty.”¹⁸⁴

The girls, in the eighteenth century, were considered as creatures incapable of learning, having no or little access to education. Cynthia, from *The Adventures of David Simple*, complains about the limitation of education while describing her childhood:

I loved reading, and had a great Desire of Attaining Knowledge; but whenever I asked any Questions of any kind whatsoever, I was always told, such Things were not proper for *Girls of my Age* to know.[...] For Miss *must not enquire too far into things – it would turn her Brain – she had better mind her Needle-work – and such Things as ever useful for Women – Reading and poring on Books, would never get me a Husband.*¹⁸⁵

Even though Sarah Fielding has chosen a school setting for her novel, she masterfully avoids mentioning the curriculum in her Academy. She emphasises that the students will be instructed in “Reading, Writing, Working, and in all proper forms of Behaviour,”¹⁸⁶ underlying the principal aim of the school, which was to improve students’ mind “in all useful knowledge; to render them obedient to their superiors, and gentle, kind and affectionate to each other.”¹⁸⁷ In order to give voice to her young characters, Sarah Fielding experimented with a variety of literary genres such as letters, storytelling, fairy tales. Influenced by educational theory of John Locke, Sarah Fielding focused on learning through the engagement of reading as well as “recounting narratives, listening to narratives, and drawing explicit morals from narratives.”¹⁸⁸ *The Governess* was reprinted several times, gaining its popularity among the wide range of readers. It became “a model

¹⁸³ Susan Staves, *A Literary History of Women’s Writing in Britain, 1660-1789*, p. 257.

¹⁸⁴ Sarah Fielding, *The Adventures of David Simple*, Introduction, p. xiv.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

¹⁸⁶ Sarah Fielding, *The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy*, ed. by C. Ward, Toronto: Broadview editions, 2005, p. 49.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibidem.*

¹⁸⁸ Susan Staves, *A Literary History of Women’s Writing in Britain, 1660-1789*, p. 257.

of female authority in the education of girls and helped lay a foundation for later women writers of children's books and books on the education of children.”¹⁸⁹

Sarah Fielding not only tried herself in creating a didactic novel, she also dared to enter in totally male domain by experimenting in writing a critical essay *Remarks on Clarissa, Addressed to the Author* (1749) and a historical biography *The Lives of Cleopatra and Octavia* (1757). She was also the first woman writer who adopted a subscription method of publishing “becoming increasingly experienced in negotiating her price”¹⁹⁰ as well as good at convincing her publishers “to risk the production of work that was generically wide-ranging and innovative.”¹⁹¹

If 1749 was an extremely good year for Sarah, the following years were the darkest years, full of grief and sadness. All her three sisters, Catharine, Ursula and Beatrice died within a short period of time as well as her little nephew Henry, Henry Fielding's son. Sarah was sued for debt, which added to her already unstable economical situation more distress and anxiety. In 1754 Sarah lost her brother Henry and shortly the following year, her best friend Jane Collier. Jane Collier wasn't just a friend, she was Sarah's great supporter and collaborator. They worked together on Sarah's experimental fiction *The Cry: A New Dramatic Fable* (1754). It was criticised as *absurd*¹⁹² by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and praised by Richardson as “a piece which has so much merit and novelty of design in it.”¹⁹³ To improve her poor health, Sarah Fielding retired from London and moved to live in Bath.

Moving to Bath not only reduced her expenses it also “allowed her greater latitude for pursuing her own inclinations in the publishing projects she took on.”¹⁹⁴ Bath was not only popular for its waters, it was “a major social centre with an increasingly lively cultural and publishing dimension to its civic life.”¹⁹⁵ Sarah Fielding continued writing, publishing *The History of Countess of Dellwyn* (1759), *The History of Ophelia* (1760) and

¹⁸⁹ Ibidem.

¹⁹⁰ Betty A. Schellenberg, *The Professionalization of Women Writers in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, p. 99.

¹⁹¹ Ibidem.

¹⁹² Sarah Fielding, *The Adventures of David Simple*, Introduction, p. xvi.

¹⁹³ Ibid, Introduction, p. xvii.

¹⁹⁴ Betty A. Schellenberg, *The Professionalization of Women Writers in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, p. 108.

¹⁹⁵ Ibidem.

her translation of *Xenophon's Memoirs of Socrates. With the Defence of Socrates* (1762), which was considered "excellent by the Queen of the Bluestockings, Elisabeth Montagu,"¹⁹⁶ who wrote that "Sarah's genius points to the Portico & Academic groves, never let it saunter in the tuilleries... Her Style and manner is more suited to the concise wit of Diogenes in his tub."¹⁹⁷

Sarah Fielding was well acquainted with Greek and Latin studies as she took lessons from Arthur Collier while living in London. She also turned to James Harris, a philosopher, classical scholar and politician, while making her Xenophon translation. James Harris was not just Sarah's friend and contributor to her works, he was also of great help in terms of subscription distribution. As Harris was quite successful in providing prestigious subscribers for the Xenophon's translation, Sarah wrote him a letter where she showed her gratitude "for those Names you was so kind to send me, which will greatly credit my List and for your kind Offer of trying to make the fine Gentlemen and the Ladies forgive me this Attempt."¹⁹⁸

With her translation from Greek, Sarah Fielding again dared to enter the "highly masculine world of classical scholarship."¹⁹⁹ It is the only Sarah Fielding's work carrying her name on the title page and "probably the one for which she would most wish to have been remembered."²⁰⁰

Notwithstanding literary rivals, Henry Fielding and Samuel Richardson were on the same page about Sarah Fielding's knowledge of human nature. They both recognized her talent of tracing original characters as well as her ability to write in a variety of genres. Sarah Fielding's writing out of necessity turned out to be her life main goal and gratification. Her determination and courage helped Sarah to step away from the shadow of her famous brother and experiment with her own writing. Sarah Fielding was an innovator who found her own writing style holding true to it.

¹⁹⁶ Rosie Wyles and Edith Hall, (eds), *Women Classical Scholars*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016, p. 130.

¹⁹⁷ Ibidem.

¹⁹⁸ Betty A. Schellenberg, *The Professionalization of Women Writers in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, p. 111.

¹⁹⁹ Sarah Fielding, *The Adventures of David Simple*, Introduction, p. xxii.

²⁰⁰ Ibid, Introduction, p. xxiii.

Placing creative demand on her readership, [...] she introduces a new philosophy of reception: using her characters as model reader, sentimental anecdotes and vignettes are seen not just as adventures to entertain or moral lessons to instruct, but also as little gifts of pure emotion we give to one another for the sake of the joy and renewal they bring.²⁰¹

²⁰¹ Debra Taylor Bourdeau, Elisabeth Kraft, (eds), *On Second Thought: Updating the Eighteenth - Century Text*, Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2007, p. 100.

3.1. Learning how to be happy with *The Governess*

There is no happiness but in the content of our own minds.
Sarah Fielding

In *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke argues that whatever we call good “is apt to cause or increase pleasure.”²⁰² He further explains that pleasure is produced by “the operation of certain objects, either in our minds or in our bodies, and in different degrees.”²⁰³ Therefore, our happiness consists of whatever has an aptness to produce pleasure: “happiness then in its full extent is the utmost Pleasure we are capable of.”²⁰⁴ As pleasure is produced by different objects, accordingly our happiness may vary depending on the intensity of pleasure we receive from various objects.

In the preface to *The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy*, Sarah Fielding asks the reader to stop and reflect about “the true Use of reading: and if you can once fix this Truth in your Minds, namely, that the true Use of Books is to make you wiser and better, you will then have both Profit and Pleasure from what you read.”²⁰⁵ Sarah Fielding, identifying reading with pleasure further explains that:

The Design of the following Sheets is to prove to you, that Pride, Stubbornness, Malice, Envy, and, in short, all manner of Wickedness, is the greatest Folly we can be possessed of. [...] Certainly, Love and Affection for each other make the Happiness of all Societies; and therefore Love and Affection (if we would be happy) are what we should chiefly encourage and cherish in our Minds.²⁰⁶

According to Sarah Fielding, happiness can be achieved through reading as well as through the knowledge we get from the books. The stories we read in the books can guide

²⁰² John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Book II, Chapter XX, §2, p. 159.

²⁰³ Ibid, Book II, Chapter XXI, §42, p. 178.

²⁰⁴ Ibid, Book II, XXI, §42, p. 177.

²⁰⁵ Sarah Fielding, *The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy*, p. 46.

²⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 48.

us in search of goodness and happiness. At the same time, she suggests that without *Desire of Learning*²⁰⁷ there is hardly any chances to understand things as well as to make use of them.

In 1749, Sarah Fielding published one of her most famous and successful works, *The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy*. *The Governess* gained its popularity because it was the first didactic novel dedicated especially to girls and their education. Writing to *My young Readers*²⁰⁸, she brings the novel to the attention of her younger audience who can learn and improve their minds by the pleasure of reading.

There is a suggestion that *The Governess* was based on Sarah's experience in Mary Rooker's boarding school. The testimony of the affection between Sarah and her teacher, long after her school days were over, can be found in the "presence of a Mrs. Rooke or Rookers on the subscription lists of Sarah's books as late as 1762."²⁰⁹ Jill E. Grey suggests that the idea to write *The Governess* came to Sarah when she was looking after Henry Fielding's children, her niece Harriet probably asked her aunt to tell her fairy-tales and may well have said: "I long to hear what you did, when you was no bigger than I am now,"²¹⁰ a remark, cried out by Miss Polly Suckling, the youngest student of the Academy.

While creating *The Governess*, Sarah lived with her sisters in the atmosphere of love and happiness where "Kitty [Catharine] is at work, Sally [Sarah] is puzzling about it and about it. Bea [Beatrice] playing on her fiddle, and Patty [Ursula] scribbling."²¹¹ The same perfect sisterhood atmosphere of affection and love where everybody is engaged in learning, Sarah Fielding tried to transmit to the young students in *The Governess*.

Well aware about precarious educational system for girls, in *The Governess* Sarah Fielding presents the boarding school where the girls have not only the possibility to learn to read, write, work and "all proper forms of behaviour"²¹² but also to show that "the girls as well as boys are capable of exercising reason."²¹³

²⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 46.

²⁰⁸ Ibidem.

²⁰⁹ Sarah Fielding, *The Adventures of David Simple*, Introduction, p. xv.

²¹⁰ Christofer D. Johnson, *A Political Biography of Sarah Fielding*, p. 111.

²¹¹ Ibid, p. 26.

²¹² Sarah Fielding, *The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy*, p. 49.

²¹³ Ibid, p. 30.

In her Dedication, Sarah Fielding openly declares her intention as well as the aim of the book:

The Design of the following Sheets is to endeavour to cultivate and early Inclination to Benevolence, and a Love of Virtue, in the Minds of young Women, by trying to shew them, that their True Interest is concerned in cherishing and improving those amiable Dispositions into Habits; and in keeping down all rough and boisterous Passions; and that from this alone they can propose to themselves to arrive at true Happiness, in any of the Stations of Life allotted to the Female Character.²¹⁴

Sarah Fielding further explains that in writing her story she used the methods of “Fable and Moral”²¹⁵ because she followed the recommendation “of the wisest Writers, as the most effectual means of conveying useful Instruction.”²¹⁶

Sarah Fielding was a well-educated and committed learner. She studied Ancient Greek and Latin under the tutelage of her friend Arthur Collier, the knowledge she will later use for the translation of *Xenophon's Memoirs of Socrates*, entering in the world of classical studies opened only to men. This shows not only her commitment to learning but also her determination to demonstrate that women should have the same opportunities for learning as men. Her brother, Henry Fielding, in spite of his support and collaboration, would tease and taunt Sarah “with being a literary Lady &c. till at last she resolved to make her whole pleasure out of Study, and becoming justly eminent for her Taste and Knowledge of the Greek language, her Brother never more could perswade himself to endure her Company with Civility.”²¹⁷ A woman in the eighteenth century, who dared to learn things not appropriate to her gender was scorned even within the family.

As a literary Lady, Sarah Fielding was well aware of the works of John Locke, one of the most influential thinker of the Enlightenment. His treatise *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* published in 1693 was well received and popular among educators and parents.

²¹⁴ Ibid, p. 45.

²¹⁵ Ibidem.

²¹⁶ Ibidem.

²¹⁷ Susan Staves, *A Literary History of Women's Writing in Britain, 1660-1789*, p. 253.

Some Thoughts Concerning Education was composed as a series of letters to Locke's close friend, Edward Clarke, who asked for some advice in educating his son. Locke's treatise discusses the ways of educating a child by empowering his mind in acquiring ideas as well as gives suggestions on how to develop a healthy body and a virtuous character.

From the first lines of the treatise, Locke argues that "Men's happiness, is most part of their own making"²¹⁸ and education is one of the means to achieve happiness. Locke stresses about the importance to educate "a good, a wise and a virtuous man"²¹⁹ who is able "to cross his appetite and deny his inclination."²²⁰ His main advice is that the children should learn through play therefore learning "must never be imposed as a task, nor made a rouble to them."²²¹ By stimulating children's curiosity they will be willing to learn themselves as well as have desire to be taught.

In her Dedication, when Sarah Fielding writes *the wisest Writers*, she not only refers to John Locke but also to Abbé Fénelon, a French theologian, poet and writer. Sarah Fielding was without a doubt impressed with Locke's treatise *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* as well as Fénelon's work *Instructions for the Education of Daughters*.

Fist published in 1687 by a French Archbishop François de Salignac de La Mothe-Fénelon, *Traité De L'èducation Des Filles* was translated in English as *Instructions for the Education of Daughters*. It went through several editions in English and was a well-known treatise on girls' education. Fénelon had quite liberal thoughts about education. According to his idea of education, the perfect way to make children learn was to allow "pupils to come to knowledge gradually, rather than through force memorization or the use of corporal punishment."²²² He considered girls' education especially important because they were to become future wives and mothers. As "the attributes of an ideal wife and mother were not innate,"²²³ the girls had to learn how to improve their good qualities and repress

²¹⁸ John Locke, *The Works of John Locke in Nine Volumes, Volume the Eighth*, London: C. Baldwin 1824, Liberty Fund, §1, p. 6, [online].

²¹⁹ Ibid, §52, p. 39.

²²⁰ Ibidem.

²²¹ Ibid, §148, p. 144.

²²² Mary Hatfield, *Growing Up in the Nineteenth-Century Ireland: A Cultural History of Middle-Class Childhood and Gender*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019, p. 136.

²²³ Ibidem.

vanity and idleness.

If *Instructions for the Education of Daughters* was dedicated to female education, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* was written for a young gentleman's education "which in all things will not so perfectly suit the education of daughters."²²⁴ According to Locke and Fénelon the education of girls was not only neglected it also required different treatment.

Influenced by the works of Locke and Fénelon, Sarah Fielding managed to adapt their pedagogy, applying the best of it, in writing *The Governess*. By giving each of her student a voice, Sarah Fielding declares that children, especially girls, have the right to speak as well as express their thoughts and feelings. When children learn from each others experiences they are more willing to reflect as well as to provide reasons for their actions. Sarah Fielding also chooses to set her story in a boarding school, becoming "the first author for children to establish a distinct contemporary social environment."²²⁵ Her boarding school varies greatly from traditional schools of the eighteenth century. Following Locke's idea that "of great advantage to every one's health, but especially children's, is, to be much in the open air, and very little, as may be, by the fire, even in winter,"²²⁶ the students of the Academy are free to amuse themselves in *a pleasant Garden*²²⁷ adjoining to the school building as well as are able to take long walks to the dairy-house. They are also encouraged by their governess "to run in the Fields, and to gather Flowers."²²⁸ These activities, however, were not only prohibited in traditional boarding schools but were most of all considered harmful for young ladies. According to the traditional method of teaching, the girls were to stay indoors, learning what they have to learn to become perfect wives and stay pale and weak, which were the attributes of the feminine beauty. Sarah Fielding shows that there can be a different kind of beauty. While describing her student Miss Jenny Peace, Sarah Fielding outlines her "an exceeding fine Complexion, with as much Colour in her Cheeks as is the natural Effect of perfect Health."²²⁹

²²⁴ John Locke, *The Works of John Locke in Nine Volumes, Volume the Eighth*, §6, p. 9.

²²⁵ Sarah Fielding, *The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy*, p. 29.

²²⁶ John Locke, *The Works of John Locke in Nine Volumes, Volume the Eighth*, §9, p. 12.

²²⁷ Sarah Fielding, *The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy*, p. 51.

²²⁸ Ibid, p. 108.

²²⁹ Ibid, p. 61.

As Sarah Fielding demonstrates that the boarding school can be a happy place to live and learn, so does she introduces a different kind of a teacher. Thus, the one and only teacher of the school is Mrs. Teachum, a “Widow of a Clergyman, with whom she had lived nine Years in all the Harmony and Concord which forms the only satisfactory Happiness in the married state.”²³⁰ As a good and sensible husband, Mr. Teachum “took great Delight in improving his Wife,”²³¹ and Mrs. Teachum on her side was pleased to receive her husband’s instructions. Mrs. Teachum was an intelligent woman, who took care of her children’s education after her husband’s death. Unfortunately, she has lost her two children to *a violent Fever*²³² and was also deprived of all her fortune “by the unforeseen Breaker of a Banker.”²³³ Sarah Fielding depicts a strong, independent woman, who after all the sufferings managed to *armed her Mind*²³⁴ and find a way to maintain herself doing what she “was well qualified for; namely, the Education of Children.”²³⁵

Mrs. Teachum, in contrast to the majority of tutors, who care only about money, was “moderate in her Desires, and did not seek to raise a great Fortune.”²³⁶ She was happy to have only nine students, the number of children she “could have an Eye to herself without the Help of other Teachers,”²³⁷ Mrs. Teachum’s principal, pedagogical aim was to improve her students’ minds “in all useful Knowledge”²³⁸ as well as to teach them kindness, neatness and “a perfect Gentility in their whole Carriage.”²³⁹ Sarah Fielding by representing her governess as an observer and a guider, embodies Lockean idea of the tutor’s role. According to Locke, “tutors should not only read lectures, and talk of; but the labour and art of education should furnish the mind with, and fasten there.”²⁴⁰ The education is complete when there is a true relish and pleasure of it. Even though Mrs. Teachum created an awe in all her little students by her lively and commanding eye²⁴¹, she

²³⁰ Ibid, p. 49.

²³¹ Ibidem.

²³² Ibidem.

²³³ Ibidem.

²³⁴ Ibid, p. 50.

²³⁵ Ibidem.

²³⁶ Ibidem.

²³⁷ Ibidem.

²³⁸ Ibid, p. 49.

²³⁹ Ibidem.

²⁴⁰ John Locke, *The Works of John Locke in Nine Volumes, Volume the Eighth*, §70, p. 58.

²⁴¹ Sarah Fielding, *The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy*, p. 50.

was respected and loved for “something perfectly kind and tender in her Manner.”²⁴²

Sarah Fielding agrees with Locke’s statement that a newborn child’s mind is a *tabula rasa*, accordingly, education becomes one of the major ways to receive the knowledge about the child’s environment. Locke also condemns corporal punishment, which was widely used in English schools, as it is not “the discipline fit to be used in the education of those who would have wise, good, and ingenious men.”²⁴³ He describes corporal punishment as a “passionate tyranny”²⁴⁴ and a “mere cruelty”²⁴⁵ that is not only harmful and painful to the body but also noxious to the mind. Aligning with Locke’s thought about punishment, Fielding’s governess, once caught her students fighting over the apple, simply “silenced them by a positive Command,”²⁴⁶ taking all the apples away. Being against corporal punishment, Sarah Fielding yet does not specify what kind of punishment her governess used, explaining that Mrs. Teachum “punished them as she thought proper.”²⁴⁷ Sarah Fielding prefers her readers “should not know what this punishment was...but they should on reading it, think it to be the same that they themselves had suffered when they deserved it.”²⁴⁸

Thus, the students are left to reflect and take responsibilities for their action. Sarah Fielding gives a leading role to one of the students, Miss Jenny Peace who “used her most endeavours to bring her schoolfellows to be hearty reconciled.”²⁴⁹ Miss Jenny Peace, who is the eldest student in the school, not only succeeds in persuading her schoolfellows that obedience is one of the virtues that lead to happiness, making them “to be reconciled to each with Sincerity and Love,”²⁵⁰ she also takes the responsibility of a leader, under Mrs. Teachum’s guidance. Sarah Fielding shows that the children if “treated as rational creatures”²⁵¹ are more than capable to understand and acknowledge their actions. The incident of fighting over the apple represents an important evolution of the novel. It becomes a push for girls’ reflection about their personal past experiences through

²⁴² Ibidem.

²⁴³ John Locke, *The Works of John Locke in Nine Volumes, Volume the Eighth*, §52, p. 38.

²⁴⁴ Ibid, §112, 1, p. 103.

²⁴⁵ Ibidem.

²⁴⁶ Sarah Fielding, *The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy*, p. 53.

²⁴⁷ Ibidem.

²⁴⁸ Christofer D. Johnson, *A Political Biography of Sarah Fielding*, p. 112.

²⁴⁹ Sarah Fielding, *The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy*, p. 54.

²⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 57.

²⁵¹ John Locke, *The Works of John Locke in Nine Volumes, Volume the Eighth*, §81, p. 69.

sharing their own personal stories. Sarah Fielding masterfully interweaves her students' real, personal histories with fairy-tales and fables. She introduces an approach to learning where the students through reading as well as reflection upon the reading develop their own understanding, making connections with past experiences. Through reading stories, the students learn that "by endeavouring to please and love each other, the End is Happiness"²⁵² which will bring joy not only to them but to all around them.

In *The Governess*, Sarah Fielding creatively combines a variety of narrative genres from fairy-tales and a fable to the autobiographies which describe every single student in her Academy. By using stories, Sarah Fielding communicates directly with her readers not only providing them with good morals that can be read within the lines of the stories but also encouraging them to take responsibilities and learn from their actions.

John Locke, who was against the fairy tales for children, warns the parents to preserve their "tender minds from all impressions and notions of spirits and goblins, or any fearful apprehensions in the dark."²⁵³ He explains that fantastical stories "once got into the tender minds of children, and being set on with a strong impression from the dread that accompanies such apprehensions, sink deep, and fasten themselves so, as not easily, if ever, to be got out again."²⁵⁴

Fénelon, on the contrary, approved the usage of fables, fairy tales as well as mythological or fantastical tales, composing his own series of tales. He underlines that the stories enable to delight as well to instruct children's minds, "exploiting their taste for fantasy and harnessing it to a didactic purpose."²⁵⁵

Taking into consideration the thoughts of Locke and Fénelon about the operation of stories in educating children, Sarah Fielding creates her stories in a way that the scholars, along with her readers are able to find a true meaning of the tales as well as reflect upon their moral message. Mrs. Teachum approves reading stories as long as the girls draw a good moral from them and "read them with the proper Disposition of a Mind not to be hurt by them."²⁵⁶ The governess also warns her students that all fantastical stories with "Giants,

²⁵² Sarah Fielding, *The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy*, p. 58.

²⁵³ John Locke, *The Works of John Locke in Nine Volumes, Volume the Eighth*, §138, p. 129.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid*, §138, p. 130.

²⁵⁵ Penny Brown, *A Critical History of French Children's Literature. Volume One: 1600-1830*, London: Routledge, 2008, p. 42.

²⁵⁶ Sarah Fielding, *The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy*, p. 84.

Magic, Fairies, and all Sorts of supernatural Assistance, are only introduced to amuse and divert.”²⁵⁷

The Story of the Cruel Giant Barbarico, the Good Giant Benefico and the Little Pretty Dwarf Mignon is the first tale which Miss Jenny decides to read to her classmates. The story narrates about two giants, Barbarico “the most miserable as well as the most wicked Creature that ever yet was born,”²⁵⁸ and Benefico “of a very good-natured Turn of Mind.”²⁵⁹ Described as *inhuman*²⁶⁰, Barbarico’s main delight was in destroying the happiness of others. Barbarico imprisoned Mignon, who he had stolen at the age of five, making him his slave. Torturing poor Mignon was not enough to satisfy his thirst for violence, therefore, Barbarico was constantly looking for the opportunity to commit some mischief and cruelty. Once the cruel giant noticed the happy couple, the shepherd Fidus and his loved Amata “in their innocent enjoyment of reciprocal Affection”²⁶¹ he was inflamed with envy and malice. Scaring Amata to death, Barbarico took Fidus to his cave to torture.

Once in the cave Fidus was put in charge of a good-hearted Mignon, who encouraged Fidus to be brave and not to lose faith and hope of escaping from the cruel giant. Eventually, Mignon discovered a magic fillet that could break Barbarico’s power. He managed to bound it upon the giant’s neck rendering him powerless and weak. Once Fidus and other giant’s prisoners were released, they called Benefico “to do Justice on the execrable Wretch.”²⁶² Benefico realising that Barbarico had no remorse for all the cruelty he had done, cut off the wretch's head.

The happiness is complete when Amata finds her loved Fidus together with her long lost brother Mignon. The story ends with the notion about Benfico who “passed the Remainder of his Days in pleasing Reflection on his well-spent Life.”²⁶³

Sarah Fielding draws her reader’s attention on how important it is to reflect upon one’s actions, aligning it with the importance to understand and reflect upon the reading, because it is useless to read ever many books, which would only stuff one’s brain without

²⁵⁷ Ibidem.

²⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 69.

²⁵⁹ Ibidem.

²⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 70.

²⁶¹ Ibidem.

²⁶² Ibid, p. 80.

²⁶³ Ibid, p. 83.

being any improvement to one's mind²⁶⁴.

With the story about giants Sarah Fielding sends a message that patience along with meekness and compassion are some of the virtues with which one can “overcome all Difficulties”²⁶⁵ and find “Peace, Harmony and Love.”²⁶⁶ They can turn out to be powerful prevailing over physical strength. She also teaches that happiness which is “the natural Consequence of Goodness”²⁶⁷ can be achieved through benevolent actions. This echoes Hutcheson's statement, who considers benevolence the foundation of our moral good. In the story, Mignon who himself “had long suffered the most rigorous Fate,”²⁶⁸ not only comforts with kind words his new friend Fidus, helping with patience to endure his afflictions, he manages to keep his mind in peace, hoping to free himself from the wicked giant and find so desired happiness. The evil giant even though he “had teased, beat, and tortured the poor gentle *Mignon*,”²⁶⁹ wasn't able to break his will and good-natured temper. The cruel giant, once Mignon deprives him of his powers becomes easy to defeat. Mignon manages to free the country from giant's cruelty and violence. At the end, Mignon is rewarded for his patience and goodness. His morally right actions not only bring joy and tranquillity to “all the happy Country round,”²⁷⁰ they also lead to his so longing happiness.

Through the voice of Miss Jenny Peace, Sarah Fielding also teaches that it is not enough to only reflect upon the reading, “in order therefore to make what you read of any Use to you, you must not only think of it thus in general, but make the Application to yourselves.”²⁷¹ Thus, application of the knowledge is as important as reflection. For to improve, one should be able to think as well as take actions.

It is interesting how Sarah Fielding manages to entangle a wide range of characters within various layers of writing genres. While telling the main story, Sarah Fielding masterfully draws reader's attention to a great variety of writing styles. Apart from fairy-tales, biographies and a fable she also uses letter writing and a play. Presenting a variety of genres, Sarah Fielding encourages her students as well as readers to discover the pleasure of reading. Apart from reflection upon the reading, Sarah Fielding also encourages her students to think critically upon a literary text. For this purpose she uses the method of

²⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 85.

²⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 86.

²⁶⁶ Ibidem. 83.

²⁶⁷ Ibidem.

²⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 73.

²⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 75.

²⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 83.

²⁷¹ Ibid, p. 86.

retelling. The governess asks Miss Sukey Jennet to give an account of the play that the students were reading by themselves. The plays as well as fairy-tales were not favoured by educators as there was a general believe that plays could only distort the mind of young children. In fact, Miss Jenny Peace, once discovered upon the reading a play, is worried that Mrs. Teachum will consider it “an improper Amusement.”²⁷² Mrs Teachum, on the contrary, explains that the plays are as useful as all kind of writings as long as “you will imprint on your Minds every useful Lesson that is to be drawn from them.”²⁷³

The readers, while reading *The Governess* can also get acquainted with the comedy play *The Funeral, or Grief à la Mode* by Richard Steele, which was very popular at that time. It is a story about an old Lord who pretends to be dead to test his second, young wife’s love and loyalty. After Miss Sukey’s summary of the play, Mrs. Teachum asks Miss Jenny to comment upon the moral of the play. With Miss Jenny we learn that “Folly, Wickedness, and Misery, all Three, as constantly dwell together, as Wisdom, Virtue, and Happiness do.”²⁷⁴ As a good teacher, Mrs Teachum wants the students to go deeper in their thinking. She observes that the moral does not always arise from the happy ending but “in the Peace of Mind that attends the Virtuous.”²⁷⁵ The quality to maintain the peace of mind “even in the midst of Oppression and Distress ”²⁷⁶ is the true way to happiness.

The discussion of the play shows Sarah Fielding’s critical thinking, which she explains through Mrs. Teachum. The teacher observes that it is important to define morals in everything we read and if the “moral is not to be found, the writer will have it to answer for, that he has been guilty of one of the worst of evils; namely that he has clothed vice in so beautiful a dress, that, instead of deterring, it will allure and draw into its Snares the young and tender Mind.”²⁷⁷ Therefore, Sarah Fielding confirms that the reading should be done with the purpose and not for the sake of reading.

If at the beginning of *The Governess* the scholars showed their wickedest side by fighting and telling tales on each other, with the development of the novel the girls learn to reflect upon their faults and make amends by applying moral lessons from the stories to their own conduct. With the help of the stories, that girls choose themselves, they are

²⁷² Ibid, p. 150.

²⁷³ Ibidem.

²⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 154.

²⁷⁵ Ibidem.

²⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 156.

²⁷⁷ Ibidem.

able to share their feelings as well as understand their errors. If the story about giants, chosen by Miss Jenny Peace taught them that friendship, good actions as well as patience lead to happiness, *The Story of Caelia and Chloe* was chosen by Miss Dolly Friendly, who explained her choice saying that “its Subject was Friendship.”²⁷⁸

In *The Story of Caelia and Chloe*, Sarah Fielding not only explores the true meaning of friendship but also examines male manipulation of women. Caelia and Chloe were two cousins, both left orphans and raised by their aunt Amanda. During their childhood they were both “the Admiration of the whole Country where they lived”²⁷⁹ for their “Liveliness of Parts, and Sweetness of Temper.”²⁸⁰ Their aunt not only took a great pleasure in their education she also encouraged love and friendship between the cousins. The cousins grew happily in their own company. When they became adults they showed no interest for “a large Train of Admirers,”²⁸¹ dismissing them in the most polite manner. By refusing the so called good offers of many men, both ladies got “the Name of Jilts,”²⁸² which freed them from any other requests of marriage bringing them so desired peace and happiness.

The tranquillity of the cousins and their aunt, who lived “perfectly happy in their own little Community”²⁸³ was disturbed by the arrival of Colonel Sempronius. Both cousins fell in love with Sempronius “a very sensible, well-bred, agreeable man.”²⁸⁴ Sempronius, struck with cousins’ beauty and the sweetness of temper, was unable to decide which one to marry. To find out which of the two friends merit his love, Sempronius decided to set up a trial. He approached each of the girls asking whether there was anything in the other “not discoverable by him which as a Wife would make him unhappy.”²⁸⁵ Chloe, in a moment of passion, declared that her cousin, though in a small degree was tainted with “an Artfulness of Temper, and some few Sparks of Envy.”²⁸⁶ Caelia, on the other hand said that her cousin had no faults and “if Chloe had any faults, they were to her yet undiscovered.”²⁸⁷

²⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 92.

²⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 93.

²⁸⁰ Ibidem.

²⁸¹ Ibid, p. 94.

²⁸² Ibidem.

²⁸³ Ibidem.

²⁸⁴ Ibidem.

²⁸⁵ Ibid. p. 95.

²⁸⁶ Ibidem.

²⁸⁷ Ibid, p. 96.

Identifying treachery and envy as the things he despised the most, Sempronius married Caelia. Chloe reflecting upon what she had done was deeply ashamed of her falsehood. The sense of guilt “threw her into a Disorder not many degrees short of Madness.”²⁸⁸ Tormented by her wrongdoing she fell into violent fever that put her life in danger. On her death-bed Chloe asked Caelia to forgive her which Caelia did with “the greatest Joy and Sincerity.”²⁸⁹ With the rediscovered friendship, the happiness of the family was restored. Chloe was not only able to conquer her passion, she was also free from any uneasiness and with joy accepted Caelia’s wedding with Sempronius.

Sarah Fielding teaches that real friendship can overcome all the treachery and envy. She also sends a message that friendship can be disturbed by the external factor. In this case Sempronius is as guilty as Chloe. If Chloe’s guilt is the weakness of her mind, ruled by stronger passion, Sempronius is guilty because he consciously chooses trickery to select his wife. He is not only disrupts the happy lives and friendship of the cousins but also of their aunt. By observing a “sort of Horror and Wilderness in the Face of Chloe”²⁹⁰ and “a settled Melancholy in Caelia”²⁹¹ brought to an old lady great suffering and distress. His selfishness resembles that of the cruel giant Barbarico. Sempronius destroys the happiness of the friends, putting them against each other, for his own personal need and pleasure. Only with his absence the girls are able to speak to each other sincerely, acquiring their lost happiness. Due to their goodness and deep love to each other “the Peace and Tranquillity of the Family were perfectly restored.”²⁹²

The tranquillity and peace which stand for happiness are also mentioned by Adam Smith, who argues that happiness consists in tranquillity and enjoyment. He also argues that caring about others and little for ourselves is what make perfect the human nature. Caelia proves to have a great virtue by putting away her resentment, forgiving Chloe her fault. Caelia not only forgives Chloe, she also takes a great care of her friend. The friendship between the cousins is solid and true. Sarah Fielding focuses on women’s friendship showing that if it is real and reciprocal it brings only joy and happiness.

Sarah Fielding also stresses how passion can cause distress and misery. The parents

²⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 98.

²⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 100.

²⁹⁰ Ibid, p. 98.

²⁹¹ Ibidem.

²⁹² Ibid, p. 101.

and educators “have two principal points to aim at, for their own and Children’s Happiness; and indeed for the Happiness of all Posterity; viz. Weakening their [children’s] Passions, and strengthening their Reason.”²⁹³ Sarah Fielding explains that virtue also lies in conquering one’s own passions. The happiness can be achieved with overcoming one’s passions which gives greater and more conscious pleasure and joy.

When the time comes for the next story, Miss Jenny Peace is ready to read another fairy-tale, *The Princess Hebe: A Fairy Tale*. The governess not only trusts Miss Jenny with her choice as “she would read nothing but what was proper,”²⁹⁴ she also stays to listen to her reading. *The Princess Hebe* is a complex and long fairy tale about Princess Hebe, narrated within the life story of the fairy Sybella.

After her father’s death, king of Tongo Abdallah, Princess Hebe and her mother, queen Rousignon had to flee from their kingdom to escape the cruel treachery of Tropo, who was a wife of king’s brother. Tropo, in seven years of marriage, didn’t give her husband a child and envied the Queen for the happiness of having her little baby Princess Hebe, who was to become the heiress to the throne. She managed to convince her husband that the king, who was loved and respected, was poisoned by his wife.

However they escaped from “Tropo’s malicious intentions”²⁹⁵ they became vagabonds without anyone to protect them. When queen’s distress seemed to reach its limits they met a little child, who in reality was the good fairy Sybella. The fairy not only helped little Hebe and the Queen, providing them with the means for living, she also took care of Queen’s unsettle mind by diverting and amusing her²⁹⁶. Eventually, the Queen recollected the calmness of mind, beginning to imagine her life in “calm Content and Pleasure.”²⁹⁷ She started to enjoy her life with little Hebe, finding a perfect state of happiness. When the Queen was free from passion, Sybella told her the history of her life.

Sybella narrated that her father was a magician, who by request of his beautiful wife blessed Brunetta, her older sister with the power “to succeed in all her Designs.”²⁹⁸ He,

²⁹³ James Nelson, *An Essay on the Government of Children, Under Three General Heads, VIZ Health, Manners, and Education*, London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1763, p. 16.

²⁹⁴ Sarah Fielding, *The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy*, p. 112.

²⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 113.

²⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 116.

²⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 117.

²⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 118.

yet, did one restriction to Brunetta's power, "that all wicked Designs ever could and should be rendered ineffectual by the Virtue and Perseverance of those against whom they were intended, if they in a proper manner exerted that Virtue."²⁹⁹

When Sybella was old enough, her father warned her of Brunetta's gift conferring Sybella a superior power of "Strength and Constancy of Mind enough to bear patiently any Injuries."³⁰⁰ After her parent's death, Sybella had to escape from her cruel sister Brunetta as she not only took possession of the castle and everything in it but was also trying to burn Sybella alive. Thus, Sybella settled in the woods and in spite her own difficulties was always eager to help any person in distress. The queen, reflecting upon Sybella's story agreed that "following the Paths of Goodness and performing her Duty was the only Road to Content and Happiness."³⁰¹ Upon Queen's request, good Sybella taught Princess Hebe that "she should intirely obey the Queen her mother, without ever pretending to examine her Commands."³⁰²

Princess Hebe, her mother and Sybella lived happily in the woods, spending "their Time in Serenity and Content."³⁰³ Hebe followed Sybella's instruction, "improving herself in wisdom and goodness and obeying all her mother's commands."³⁰⁴

As in *The Story of Caelia and Chloe*, the happiness of the three women is disturbed by the external factor. Brunetta, with a trick withdraws Sybella from the happy family and with falsehood and deceit manages to take Hebe to her castle. If at first, Hebe is astonished with how happy and pleasant are the guests of the castle, very soon she realises that they are all false and is terrified of the "universal horror and confusion"³⁰⁵ that reigned within the castle.

Eventually Hebe runs away from the castle and once with her mother asks forgiveness for being proud and fancy herself above temptation. The happiness is restored with Hebe's true repentance. After Tropo's death, the princess accedes her father's throne as "she could not innocently refuse the power that would give her such Opportunities of doing Good, and making Others happy."³⁰⁶

²⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 119.

³⁰⁰ Ibidem.

³⁰¹ Ibid, p. 123.

³⁰² Ibidem.

³⁰³ Ibid, p. 127.

³⁰⁴ Ibidem.

³⁰⁵ Ibid, p. 136.

³⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 140.

If the first two stories end up with happy marriages, in this fairy-tale Hebe remains single. It is important to observe that even though Hebe rules without a husband, she is an independent woman who is capable to rule with “great Wisdom and Prudence,”³⁰⁷ taking care of her kingdom.

The lesson that is taken from *The Princess Hebe: a Fairy-Tale* lies in the knowledge of one’s power to be happy. This knowledge is of no use if it is not sustained with one’s duty in persevering virtue. Following Hume’s idea about virtue, who argues that “the happiest disposition of the mind is the virtuous,”³⁰⁸ it is possible to achieve happiness acting according to our duty and moral sense. Once our thoughts are free from passion we can live in a peaceful conscience and a quiet of mind which is what the true content and happiness consists of³⁰⁹.

The stories, even though they are only to amuse, teach the girls as well as the readers how to become good and virtuous. Through Mrs. Teachum, Sarah Fielding explains the use of fairy-tales in her novel, underlining that fairy-tales in general as well as fairies, giants and magic are introduced to entertain the reader, “for if the Story is well written, the common Course of Things would produce the same Incidents, without the Help of Fairies.”³¹⁰ The students need to read through the lines in order to understand and learn the morals of the fairy-tales. Sarah Fielding demonstrates that there are a lot of important lessons to take from the tales. The students, described as wicked at the beginning of the novel, learn to self-control and respect each other. The stories not only help to shape their behaviour but also their minds. The realisation of the students’ faults as well as their confession happen through reading and discussing stories. In *The Governess*, the students are also encouraged to tell their own histories because “nothing more likely to amend the future Part of any one’s Life, than the recollecting and confessing the Faults of the past.”³¹¹

While learning the true meaning of love, friendship and happiness, the students acquire the knowledge of how to live in harmony and peace. For the instructions that are given by their teacher are there to prepare the students to live in a harmonious society. As the novel is written for the girls’ education, Sarah Fielding aims to encourage the girls to

³⁰⁷ Ibidem.

³⁰⁸ David Hume, *Essays and Treatise on Several Subjects: Essays Moral, Political, Literary*, Essay XVIII, p. 99.

³⁰⁹ Sarah Fielding, *The Governess: or, The Little Female Academy*, p. 140.

³¹⁰ Ibid, p. 141.

³¹¹ Ibid, p. 60.

think as well as to reflect about the right actions towards goodness, wisdom and virtue, which are the essential elements of happiness.

The education becomes the means with which the students not only learn to read and write but also to judge independently and be responsible for their actions. Happiness is achieved due to girls' willingness to reflect upon their faults and learn how to improve them. Sarah Fielding carefully leads her students as well as the readers through the tangles and labyrinths of their mind. The learning becomes a natural process, which helps the students not only to acknowledge the true meaning of happiness but also to lead their lives in peace and harmony.

Sarah Fielding not only shows that the students learn to reflect upon the reading, applying the acquired knowledge to their self-examination, she also gives a vivid example of it. After Miss Sukey has read the letter from her cousin, where she told her a sad story about the lady who died of envy, Miss Patty Lockit was especially affected by it. Miss Patty, the girl of only ten years old, was immediately able to connect the story to her own past experience exclaiming, "what Thanks can I give you, my dear Friend, for having put me into a Way of examining my Heart, and reflecting on my own actions; by which you have saved me, perhaps, from a Life as miserable as that of the poor Woman in Miss Sukey's letter!"³¹²

Thus, Miss Patty recognising her fault, has no shame to confess it in front of her friends. The knowledge that she acquired in school not only helped her to control her passions but also to admit and improve her state of mind. Sarah Fielding suggests that looking critically at oneself as well as self-evaluation can help to become a better person. Self-reflection is the key to self improving. On the other hand, it is essential to remember that self-examination should be positive with a quiet peace of mind. Only with a calm peace of mind there is possibility to reach real improvement, free from all uneasiness and become a happy person.

The final story, *The Assembly of the Birds. A Fable* is an extract from *Fables for the Female Sex* by Edward Moore and Henry Brook. At the end of the fable, Sarah Fielding explained that "these verses are a quotation from that tender Fable of the Sparrow and the Dove in the *Fables for the Female Sex*."³¹³ In *A Fable*, the birds gathered together to

³¹² Ibid, p. 105.

³¹³ Ibid, p. 169.

claim for the title of the most admirable and happiest bird. The female dove who “had no Ambition for a public Preference”³¹⁴ wasn’t present as she was in her nest taking care of her little ones, waiting for her mate. When eagle went to check why the female dove wasn’t present, he heard her happy singing in the nest. Struck by her self-contentment and peacefulness, the eagle gave the title of the most happiest bird to the female dove.

At the first glance, *A Fable* is quite different from Sarah Fielding’s previous stories, where she stresses women’s self-reliance and independence. In *A Fable*, she introduces a female being totally depending on male’s power,

Ye tender Objects of my Care,
Peace! Peace! Ye little helpless Pair.
Anon! He comes, you gentle Sire,
And brings you all your Hearts require;
For Us, his Infants and his Bride,
For us, with only Love to guide,
Our lord assumes an Eagle’s Speed,
And, like a Lion, dares to bleed.³¹⁵

Thus, it is male, the father, who takes care of the wife and children. With these lines, Sarah Fielding wants to show a different side of women’s happiness, the happiness of the family life where each member is equally loved and cherished. The students of the Academy who are to become future wives and mothers learn that if they pass their lives with pleasure, “Innocence of Mind, and Integrity of Heart,”³¹⁶ they will be able alone produce and spread their own happiness all around them.

Sarah Fielding masterfully transforms the *Fables for the Female Sex*, which instructed women to behave according to men’s desires, giving her own interpretation. By simple lines she explains that love is an essential element of happiness that can and should be promoted especially within the family.

Sarah Fielding suggests that family can bring happiness to all its members if there is reciprocal respect, care and support. The model of the family, where husband and wife are equally taking care of each other, suggested by Sarah Fielding, aligns with the thoughts of

³¹⁴ Ibidem.

³¹⁵ Ibidem.

³¹⁶ Ibid, p. 171.

Hume, Smith and Bentham. The philosophers argue that the happiness of the families contributes to the happiness of all communities. If people love and cherish each other in the family they will do the same in the society. Therefore, the happiness and welfare of the community depend on the harmonious and happy family.

As Samuel Richardson's friend, Sarah Fielding was a frequent guest in his household. She could observe the happy and united family, which was unusual at that time. In the letter, Sarah Fielding wrote to Richardson, she expressed all her love, admiring a happy union, something she would wish for herself.

To live in a family where there is but one heart, and as many good strong heads as persons, and to have a place in that enlarged single heart, is such a state of happiness as I cannot hear of without feeling the utmost pleasure. Methinks, in such a house, each word that is uttered must sink into the hearer's mind, as the kindly falling showers in April sink into the teeming earth, and enlarge and ripen every idea, as those friendly drops do the new-sown grain, or the water-wanting plant. There is nothing in all the works of nature or of art too trifling to give pleasure, where there is such a capacity to enjoy it, as must be found in such an union.³¹⁷

At the same time Sarah Fielding introduces an idea that true happiness can be realized without marriage, but within community of female friends, where women depending on each other cultivate trustworthy friends. The female friendship becomes a way to achieve pleasure and happiness of others, which in its turn, brings happiness to the whole community.

Even though Sarah Fielding understands that once the students leave the school they will have to learn the difficulties and to cope with harsh realities of life. Notwithstanding, she hopes that her lessons will help young women to resist all temptations once outside, in a big world. Linda Bree argues that "the novel as a whole makes a strong argument for autonomous female morality."³¹⁸ The knowledge that the students acquired in school will help to distinguish between the real values of life, guiding them towards true and solid happiness.

³¹⁷ Ibid, Appendix B, p. 182.

³¹⁸ Marilyn Francus, *Monstrous Motherhood: Eighteenth-Century Culture and the Ideology of Domesticity*, Baltimore (MD): The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012, p. 256.

3.2. *Moral Tales: in search of perfect felicity*

It should be our object to convince them, (children) that the
exchange of mutual good offices contributes to happiness.
Maria & R.L. Edgeworth

In *An Enquiry into the Duties of the Female Sex*, Thomas Gisborne, an English Anglican priest and poet writes that:

the primary end of education is to train up the pupil in the knowledge, love, and application of those principles of conduct which, under the superintending influence of the divine mercy, will lead propably to a considerable share of happiness in the present life, but assuredly to a full measure of it in that which is to come.³¹⁹

In the Age of Reason, the special attention was given to education. Before the Enlightenment, educational system was principally based on religious books, restricted to only males of certain class and gender. The teachers were either priests or physicians, who were teaching basic lessons of reading and writing. The age of Enlightenment, followed by Scientific Revolution broke the traditional ways of thinking about the world. Religion was substituted by reason and scientific facts. John Locke in his *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689) advanced a theory that knowledge is obtained through sensation and reflection, thus, as everyone has the same ability of sensation and reflection, everyone has the same ability of learning. After John Locke published his treatise on *Some Thoughts concerning Education* (1693) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau published *Émile or On Education* (1762), education of the children was seen as fundamental part of their upbringing “for they would be the standardbearers of that brighter morrow so dear to progressive minds.”³²⁰ The child was seen not as a *wicked sinner*³²¹, but as a rational

³¹⁹ Thomas, Gisborne, *An Enquiry into the Female Sex*, London: A. Straham, 1801, p. 38.

³²⁰ Roy Porter, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World*, p. 339.

³²¹ *Ibid*, p. 340.

human creature, who once achieved a proper education can benefit the society bringing wealth and happiness.

Both philosophers proved deeply influential on the works of great variety of writers. The literature for children became one of the means to teach and guide young people on how to become virtuous and respectable members of society. Sarah Trimmer in her *The Guardian of Education* magazine writes that “there never has been a time since the creation of the world, when the important business of EDUCATION was more an object of general concern in any civilized nation, than it is at the present day in our own.”³²² The reading became an essential element in the formation of the young people’s minds. It was promoted by educators as well as parents. However, not all the readings were found useful and appropriate for children’s education. Locke suggests that when a child “begins to be able to read, some easy pleasant book, suited to his capacity, should be put in his hands, wherein the entertainment, that he finds, might draw him on, and reward his pains in reading.”³²³ The parents as well as educators should pay a great attention to what children read, avoiding books that fill the children’s heads with “perfectly useless trumpery, or lay the principles of vice and folly.”³²⁴

Despite the fact that the educational system was gradually improving and the number of books for children, published during the Age of Reason was incredibly high, the role of woman remained that of a wife and a mother. The enlightenment thinkers encouraged and promoted the idea of marriage, where woman’s duty was to preserve the peace and happiness of the family, taking care of her husband and children. With the spread of education, most of the girls of the middle and upper classes were not only educated how to become devoted wives and mothers but they also had the possibility to learn and get acquainted with some knowledge in various fields like literature and science. This changed the role of a mother, who apart from domestic duties, had a duty to educate her children in virtue and benevolence. The importance of parental participation in educating children was promoted by John Locke and Catharine Macaulay, who under Locke’s influence, expressed an idea that boys and girls should be brought together, having the same opportunities in studies, enjoying “the constant presence of those who are set over them,

³²² Janet, Bottoms, “The Battle of the (Children’s) Books,” *Romanticism*, 12-3, 2006, p. 212, [online].

³²³ John Locke, *The Works of John Locke in Nine Volumes, Volume the Eighth*, §156, p. 147.

³²⁴ *Ibidem*.

all that freedom which innocence renders harmless, and in which Nature rejoices.”³²⁵ The women, even though facing lots of boundaries, were acquiring more independence. The consolidation of their role as educators meant that many women were able to earn their living themselves. Notwithstanding the variety of professions was small, the women began to acquire their position in the society.

The writing was one of the ways the women could amuse themselves as well as earn for living. Thus, more women began to write and publish their works, legitimizing their voices in didactic literature which facilitated a simultaneous expansion of their literary professionalism, especially observed in children’s books, educational texts and novels³²⁶. The writing, as a way of earning, was evidenced by Sarah Fielding who in the preface to her novel *The Adventures of David Simple, Containing An Account of his Travels Through the Cities of London and Westminster, in the Search of a Real Friend* (1744) confessed that she wrote her book out of distress and necessity. Education was not only focused on children, it gave rise to an expansion of women writing whose works “became more feminine, and therefore more acceptable, as the purveyors of didacticism—the family guide and mentor became the public guide and mentor.”³²⁷

When Maria Edgeworth tried herself in writing, it wasn’t to earn for the living but to entertain her fellow friends while attending Mrs. Davis school in London. This simple amusement end up to be her most successful job for the whole life. She became not only one of the most prolific women writers of her time but she also dedicated her life to improve and reform educational system, promoting women’s position in society.

After school Maria Edgeworth moved to Ireland, where she helped her father working as his agent. She showed a sharp quality of mind and learnt the habit of business while dealing with the tenants. She also took care of her younger siblings, observing her father’s teaching. Her father, Richard Lovell Edgeworth, an inventor and a scientist, paid great attention to the education of his children. By observing her father as well as taking notes of his teaching, Maria gained an experience of an educator, which she applied in writing *Practical Education* (1798), a cooperated work with her father. This collaboration brought Maria to focus on education in her writing for children and young adults.

³²⁵ Roy Porter, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World*, p. 343.

³²⁶ Cheryl Turner, *Living by the Pen: Women writers in the Eighteenth Century*, London: Routledge, 1994, p. 57.

³²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 22.

Even though Maria Edgeworth wrote in a variety of genres, education was one of her major concern. She deeply believed that education was not only one of the means to children's improvement but also to their happiness ³²⁸.

Maria Edgeworth, influenced by John Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* and Madame de Genlis' *Letters on Education* was especially concerned with girls' education. *Practical Education*, which is a kind of a manual of instructions on how to educate a child, full of teaching techniques and examples as well as various information upon different subjects, echoes Locke's idea of education presented in his *Thoughts*. Maria Edgeworth follows Locke's idea that children should read "useful and agreeable books"³²⁹ to acquire true, moral habits. She also stresses upon the importance to avoid reading of "sentimental stories, and books of mere entertainment, especially in the education of girls,"³³⁰ explaining that "this species of reading cultivates what is called the heart prematurely, lowers the tone of the mind, and induces indifference for those common pleasures and occupations which, however trivial in themselves, constitute by far the greatest portion of our daily happiness."³³¹

Maria Edgeworth draws attention upon the novel reading especially for women, suggesting that "women who cultivate their reasoning powers, and who acquire tastes for science and literature, find sufficient variety in life, and do not require the stimulus of dissipation or of romance."³³² At the same time, she further argues that in case the events in *romance*³³³ are written from the "real life"³³⁴ then those novels may not only have a "powerful effect upon the mind"³⁴⁵ but also "convey useful, moral lessons."³³⁶

Morality and virtue were highly praised and advised in Maria Edgeworth's works. A passionate reader herself, she promoted reading, as a tool to treat with care, that could be used not only in education but also to educate people to be morally correct members of

³²⁸ Maria & R.L. Edgeworth, *Essays on Practical Education in III Volumes*, Vol. II, London: R. Hunter, 1822, p. 230.

³²⁹ Ibid, p. 64.

³³⁰ Ibid, p. 10.

³³¹ Ibidem.

³³² Ibid, p. 51.

³³³ Ibid, p. 75.

³³⁴ Ibidem.

³³⁵ Ibidem.

³³⁶ Ibidem

society. The importance of reading is also suggested in *Practical Education*, where she observes that knowing what company a man keeps, and what books he has read, will already give us an idea about person's personality³³⁷.

When Maria Edgeworth published *Moral Tales* (1801), she was already a celebrity, well-known and famous writer. Her *Moral Tales* were aimed for the teenage readers, thus she was not only “the early nineteenth century's most popular and influential female novelist for adults, far outranking Austen, she was also renowned as a pioneering educator and writer for the children, the prolific literary mother of several ongoing series of juvenile tales she always playfully calls wee-wee stories.”³³⁸ Her deep knowledge of the child's world was due to her constant observation of the children. In her numerous family, Maria Edgeworth worked and wrote her books with children of different ages around her. The children were not only admitted to stay with the parents but they were also encouraged to participate in reading and conversations upon the reading. In the family, the children were completely part of its little society, where they could entertain and amuse themselves playing around the adults.³³⁹ She became a writer who “speaks for, to and as a child; [...] for she rewrites her cultural fathers and writes for herself as well.”³⁴⁰

In the preface to *Moral Tales*, Richard Edgeworth wrote that:

to invent a story is no small effort of the human understanding. How much more difficult is it to construct stories suited to the early years of youth, and, at the same time, conformable to the complicate relations of modern society- fictions, that shall display examples of virtue, without initiating the young reader into the ways of vice – narratives, written in a style level to his capacity, without tedious detail, or vulgar idiom! ³⁴¹

He also explained that *Moral Tales* were written to illustrate the thoughts provided in *Practical Education*. Thus, *Moral Tales* are not only a set of constructive narratives, but

³³⁷ Ibid, p. 175.

³³⁸ Elisabeth Goodenough, Mark. A. Heberle, Naomi Sokoloff, (eds), *Infant Tongues: The Voice of the Child in Literature*, ed. by Detroit, (MI):Wayne State University Press, 1994, p. 57.

³³⁹ Richard Lovell, Edgeworth, *Memoirs of Richard Lovell Edgeworth Begun by Himself and Concluded by His Daughter Maria Edgeworth in Two Volumes*, Vol. II, London: R. Hunter, 1820, p. 398.

³⁴⁰ Elisabeth Goodenough, Mark. A. Heberle, Naomi Sokoloff, (eds), *Infant Tongues: The Voice of the Child in Literature*, p. 59.

³⁴¹ Maria Edgeworth, *Tales and Novels: Moral Tales*, Wroclaw: Create Space-Amazon Fulfillment, 2013, p. 6.

they are a combination of entertaining and instructive stories. *Moral Tales* aimed to make the readers better and happier as well as to show them how it is easy and agreeable to achieve and practice high moral principles ³⁴².

Maria Edgeworth's choice to use the word tale is explained by Mitzi Myers who suggests that Maria Edgeworth's

self-consciously used the term 'tale' for her fictions not because she is prudish about the novel, but because she thus signals to contemporary readers the intellectual, argumentative, analytical genre she domesticates, feminizes and frequently subverts. For a women writer who wants to be taken seriously and explore serious issues, who values her youthful protagonists and is interested in more about them than who they'll marry, the moral tale offers progressive possibilities.³⁴³

In *The Good French Governess*, Maria Edgeworth explains how patience and good instruction can make children enjoy their learning as well as share the happiness of their achievements all around them.

Madame de Rosier had to escape the "bloody reign of Robespierre"³⁴⁴ taking refuge in England, where to maintain herself, she procured an employment of a governess. She became governess to four children of Mrs. Harcourt, a widow, who even though she was a fine lady, lived in a "constant round of dissipation,"³⁴⁵ and didn't have time for the education of her children. She was happy enough knowing that her children were under care of "a fashionable governess and expensive masters."³⁴⁶

While presenting Mad. de Rosier to the children, Mrs. Harcourt introduced her as "a friend, in whom she had entirely confidence, and whom she hoped and believed they would make it their study to please."³⁴⁷ After the presentation, the governess was able to observe the children as well as have a little conversation with them. Isabella, the oldest girl had been taught to believe she was a genius, Matilda, who was a year younger, suffered the

³⁴² Helen, Zimmern, *Famous Women: Maria Edgeworth*, p. 34.

³⁴³ Maria Edgeworth, *Selected Tales for Children and Young People*, ed. by S. Manly, London, Palgrave MacMillan, 2013, Introduction, p. xv.

³⁴⁴ Maria Edgeworth, *Tales and Novels: Moral Tales*, p. 231.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 232.

³⁴⁶ *Ibidem*.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 234.

lack of confidence, always comparing herself to her older sister. Favoretta was the “plaything of her mother and of her mother’s waiting-maid.”³⁴⁸ In the company of adults she was always “happy and in high spirits,”³⁴⁹ becoming capricious when with her siblings or maid. Herbert, the boy of only eight years old was already “a little surly rebel.”³⁵⁰

Mad. de Rosier wisely let the children discover the pleasure of learning at their own pace, inventing various occupations for their body and mind. She also let the children discover, appreciate as well as improve their own strengths and weaknesses. Her way of instructing was different to that the children were used to. Once Mad. de Rosier “studied the habits of all her pupils”³⁵¹ she decided to take them to “the rational toy-shop,”³⁵² where disappointed at first sight, the children were thrilled to inquire about some interesting things that they were not used to play with. Herbert found the radish seeds to sow in the garden and a dry printing press, Matilda “chose a small loom for weaving riband and tape,”³⁵³ Favoretta decided on string and laces to make pretty little baskets, Isabella chose a small silk balloon to draw the map of the world on and a small biographical chart.

Maria Edgeworth stresses out that the governess bought the presents not to purchase the love of the children but “to provide them with independent occupations; to create a taste for industry, without the dangerous excitation of continual variety.”³⁵⁴

Thus, Mad. de Rosier carefully guided her pupils to take interest in various activities that could occupy their minds as well as amuse them. She was also aware that the happiness and enthusiasm of the novelty could be easily replaced by the “power of habit.”³⁵⁵ Once she induced in her pupils’ minds the love for industry, she now and then changed her didactic methods and made her pupils experience the lack of employments which “when contrasted with that of pleasurable mental or bodily activity, becomes odious and insupportable to children.”³⁵⁶

As well as exercising in her pupils the love for industry Mad. de Rosier was also trying to develop their talents, promoting their strengths and improving their *dormant*

³⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 233.

³⁴⁹ Ibidem.

³⁵⁰ Ibidem.

³⁵¹ Ibid, p. 238.

³⁵² Ibidem.

³⁵³ Ibid, p. 241.

³⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 240.

³⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 243.

³⁵⁶ Ibidem.

*powers*³⁵⁷. If Isabella was used to learn everything by heart, Mad. de Rosier “gradually excited her to read books of reasoning,”³⁵⁸ starting with those books in which *reasoning and amusement*³⁵⁹ were mixed. She cultivated Matilda’s confidence by long conversations eventually finding out and promoting Matilda’s talent for arithmetic. She also explained Herbert the “difference between resolution and obstinacy.”³⁶⁰ Herbert’s disposition to obstinacy was due to “his bad habits and false associations.”³⁶¹ Organizing a playful and appropriate environment for the children, Mad. de Rosier stimulated children’s curiosity and willingness to learn new things. Thus, Herbert, who according to Mrs. Grace, a waiting-maid, was considered “thick-headed at his book,”³⁶² decided that he had to learn to read if he wanted to be independent while working with his dry printing press. Favoretta, being the youngest of the children enjoyed learning basket weaving which she was proud to share with her mother, she also, upon the occasion, learnt that truth was better than the sweetest lies.

Along with children’s every day lessons Mad. de Rosier taught them conceptual reasoning. As Herbert was always told off for touching things, Mad. de Rosier instead of *perpetual, irritating prohibitions*³⁶³ explained the meaning of *mine and yours*³⁶⁴, in this way teaching him the notion of property.

Once he began “to respect the rights of things and persons,”³⁶⁵ she tested Herbert’s notion by taking him to a carpenter’s shop where, even though he was tempted with various interesting things “his powers of forbearance came off victorious.”³⁶⁶

The notion of property was also described by Locke in his *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, where he suggested that the children “may be taught early, before they have language and understanding enough to form distinct notions of property, and to know what is theirs by a peculiar right exclusive of others.”³⁶⁷

³⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 249.

³⁵⁸ Ibidem.

³⁵⁹ Ibidem.

³⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 251.

³⁶¹ Ibidem.

³⁶² Ibid, p. 233.

³⁶³ Ibid, p. 243.

³⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 244.

³⁶⁵ Ibidem.

³⁶⁶ Ibidem.

³⁶⁷ John Locke, *The Works of John Locke in Nine Volumes, Volume the Eighth*, §110, p. 101.

Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham both include the notion of property in their thinking about happiness. Adam Smith argues that to have virtues are vital for our happiness. Therefore, as property is related to self-command, which according to Smith is one of the four major virtues between prudence, justice and beneficence, then it also becomes essential to our happiness. Whereas according to Bentham, if property is equally shared it brings happiness not only to the individual but to the whole community. Maria Edgeworth, while explaining the notion of property also explains how knowing what is mine and yours can benefit all members of society.

By treating her pupils with respect and exciting them to “employments in which they felt that they were successful,”³⁶⁸ Mad. de Rosier not only made children happy she also gained their reciprocal respect and admiration.

The aim of the novel is to show a different approach in educating children as well as to instruct the mother to understand the needs of her children. Maria Edgeworth tries to demonstrate the benefits of domestic life and a pleasure the woman can achieve from her maternal duties and responsibilities. Maria Edgeworth gradually prepares Mrs. Harcourt to her role, yet it takes some time before Mrs. Harcourt understands her lesson. When Mrs. Harcourt had to leave to “one of those great dinners,”³⁶⁹ she was pleasantly struck by the happy looks of her children, however “with some real and some affected reluctance departed.”³⁷⁰

Mrs. Harcourt gradually appreciated the happiness of domestic life as she observed her children’s improvements. The children, on the other hand, were happy to please their mother and share their learning with her.

In the story, Maria Edgeworth demonstrates that educating and taking care of the children is not as easy as it seems, for “they who have only seen children in picturesque situations, are not aware how much the duration of this domestic happiness depends upon those who have the care of them.”³⁷¹ She further explains that “people who, with the greatest abilities and the most anxious affection, are unexperienced in education, should not be surprised or mortified if their first attempts be not attended with success.”³⁷²

³⁶⁸ Maria Edgeworth, *Tales and Novels: Moral Tales*, p. 242.

³⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 243.

³⁷⁰ Ibidem.

³⁷¹ Ibid, p. 265.

³⁷² Ibidem.

Eventually, Mrs. Harcourt has discovered the pleasure and happiness of staying with her family as well as found contentment in getting involved in her children's amusements and learning. Day by day she improved in her understanding of the children and learnt the sweet experiences of the pleasures of domestic life³⁷³. When Mad. de Rosier goes back to France, Mrs. Harcourt is ready to start a new page with her family. Even though,

the plan of education, which had been traced out, remained yet unfinished, and she feared, that Isabella and Matilda might feel the want of their accomplished preceptress. But these fears were the best omens for her future success; a sensible mother, in whom the desire to educate her family has once been excited, and who turns the energy of her mind to this interesting subject, seizes upon every useful idea, every practical principle with avidity, and she may trust securely to her own persevering cares.—Whatever a mother learns for the sake of her children, she never forgets.³⁷⁴

Maria Edgeworth in *The Good French Governess* depicts the happiness as something that can be achieved with good instruction and learning. In the tale, her instructions are not only beneficial for the children, who learn to live happily and treat each other with respect but also to their mother, who by putting her fashionable social life aside and taking her maternal responsibilities, achieves greater happiness than that of her fashionable society.

In *Angelina; or, L'amie Inconnue*, another story from the *Moral Tales* series, Maria Edgeworth describes the adventures of a young lady who sets on journey to find her "unknown friend."³⁷⁵ If in *The Good French Governess* Maria Edgeworth displays a mature woman, a mother, who after a series of events, cultivates her understanding in educating her children, choosing the happiness of domestic life, in *Angelina*, Maria Edgeworth presents a young woman, only sixteen years old, who learns upon her own mistakes to recognize false feelings and value what is really important in her life.

Despite Miss Anne Warwick was a young lady of "considerable abilities,"³⁷⁶ her

³⁷³ Ibid, p. 296.

³⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 295.

³⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 182.

³⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 184.

“common sense arose from certain mistakes in her education.”³⁷⁷ Her parents, while cultivating her literary taste, overlooked to educate young lady’s judgement upon the reading. Thus, raised upon the fiction, Miss Warwick mistook the works of imagination with realities. When Miss Warwick was fourteen, her parents died and she went to live with Lady Diana Chillingworth, “a lady who placed her whole happiness in living in a certain circle of high company in London.”³⁷⁸

While living with Lady Diana, Miss Warwick was disgusted by the “follies of the society,”³⁷⁹ that she was making part of, believing herself superior to Lady Diana and her companion, Miss Burrage. Taking refuge in reading books, Miss Warwick happened upon a new novel called *The Woman of Genius* and was charmed beyond measure by its heroine, Araminta³⁸⁰. Once Miss Warwick discovered that Araminta was the *authoress herself*³⁸¹, she wrote her a letter, in this way starting a correspondence which continued for nearly two years. Longing to meet her unknown friend, Angelina Bower alias Miss Warwick, decided to leave London and find her friend, who was “to pass her halcyon days in tranquil, elegant retirement in a charming romantic cottage in South Wales.”³⁸² Miss Warwick, before leaving Lady Diana’s house wrote her a letter expressing her passionate feelings towards her female friend whose tastes, principles and genius she had known and admired and whose virtues she would emulate³⁸³.

Miss Warwick’s mind is completely twisted by the images she created herself. When she leaves her fashionable yet secure life in search of the unknown friend, she translates her imagination into action. Maria Edgeworth creates a female heroine who flees from the known to the unknown because she “wished for a friend, to whom I could open my whole heart, and whom I could love and esteem, and who should have the same tastes and notions with myself.”³⁸⁴

When, without any misfortunes, Miss Warwick arrived to South Wales, excited to meet her unknown friend, she found out that the cottage didn’t look so romantic and her

³⁷⁷ Ibidem.

³⁷⁸ Ibidem.

³⁷⁹ Ibidem.

³⁸⁰ Ibidem.

³⁸¹ Ibidem.

³⁸² Ibid, p. 185.

³⁸³ Ibidem.

³⁸⁴ Ibid, p. 224.

Araminta alias Miss Hodges wasn't there. Angelina's "happy, thrice happy"³⁸⁵ expectation to meet her unknown friend, after boarding one week at her cottage, turned out to be "not quite so satisfactory in actual practice as in poetic theory; at least to a young lady who had been habituated to all the luxuries of fashionable life."³⁸⁶ Anxious and bored, Angelina set out "in quest of her unknown friend at Bristol."³⁸⁷

Further narration described Miss Warwick's adventures in Bristol and how, once she finally met with her unknown friend, she was shocked and disgusted by the vulgarity and awkwardness of Miss Hodges. Miss Warwick began to see everything in a new light³⁸⁸. The illusion she created herself became a reality, which was far more different from the sentimental images of Araminta she had pictured in her head. The dreams in finding the *perfect felicity*³⁸⁹ with her unknown friend became reality, a reality which was not at all so agreeable and pleasant. The only idea of living in a cottage with Miss Hodge, who was also about to marry her Orlando, struck Miss Warwick "with double fear of wretchedness and ridicule."³⁹⁰ Miss Warwick, realising that she had made a mistake, deeply regretted her foolishness.

As Maria Edgeworth wrote her story for young readers, she chose the happy ending. The aim of the story was not to punish a young girl, who was desperately looking for maternal figure, but to make her understand and learn upon her own mistakes. In her misadventure, Miss Warwick found a real friend, Lady Frances Somerset, who was not afraid to think and do what was right. Taking the young woman under her protection, Lady Frances first explained the causes of Miss Warwick foolishness, which created "room enough for scandal-mongers"³⁹¹ and then, when she saw that she made a real impression upon young women's mind, assured Miss Warwick that her aim was "to make an impression upon you that may make you prudent and happy for life."³⁹²

Miss Warwick comes to her senses under Lady Frances' care. The tranquillity, peace and understanding that she was not able to find in her selfish guardian, Lady Diana, who

³⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 189.

³⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 192.

³⁸⁷ Ibid, p. 195.

³⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 219.

³⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 186.

³⁹⁰ Ibid, p. 219.

³⁹¹ Ibid, p. 225.

³⁹² Ibidem.

was only worried about “what will the world say,”³⁹³ Miss Warwick finds in more affectionate Lady Frances. Miss Warwick, young as she is, cannot be blamed for searching her happiness in friendship. However, she has to be educated that reality and romance are two different things and “the difference between reality and fiction is so great, that those who copy from any thing but nature are continually disposed to make mistakes in their conduct, which appear ludicrous to the impartial spectator.”³⁹⁴

Maria Edgeworth calls Miss Warwick a female Quixote and a heroine, who in quest for happiness, yet transgresses rules, manages to come out of her troubles more mature and self-conscious. At the end, she learns to “cure herself of the affectation of sensibility, and the folly of romance.”³⁹⁵ Miss Warwick’s happiness is complete at the realisation of her selfhood. Mitzi Myers argues that “Angelina's case suggests what one reading researcher calls bibliopsychology, an articulation and education of the emotions. Angelina's reading expands her repertoire of discourses and selves, offers a container for her idealism, helps her figure out who she is—and isn't— through role-playing.”³⁹⁶ Maria Edgeworth describes how misfortunes, in this case, can help a young lady to acquire a good sense and find her own identity. Miss Warwick, once realised her mistake, learns to improve her way of thinking. At the end, Miss Warwick is rewarded, as she finds a friend and a wise guider whom she has been looking for.

Forester, another story from *Moral Tales* series, is a masculine version of *Angelina*. In fact, in the preface, R.L. Edgeworth describes Angelina as “a female Forester.”³⁹⁷ Both stories portray the adventures or misadventures of the two young rebels, both orphans, who “react against adult social forms and conventions.”³⁹⁸ If Angelina, disgusted by her fashionable lifestyle, escapes from the house of her guardian in search of perfect felicity with her unknown friend, Forester “scorns the common forms and dependencies of civilized society”³⁹⁹ not only strongly disliking politeness but also considering it the vice

³⁹³ Ibid, p. 230.

³⁹⁴ Maria & R. L. Edgeworth, *Essays on Practical Education in III Volumes*, Vol. II, London: R. Hunter, 1822, p. 102.

³⁹⁵ Maria Edgeworth, *Tales and Novels: Moral Tales*, p. 231.

³⁹⁶ Mitzi Myers, “Quixotes, Orphans, and Subjectivity: Maria Edgeworth's Georgian Heroism and the (En) Gendering of Young Adult Fiction,” *The Lion and the Unicorn*, 13-1, (1989), p. 28.

³⁹⁷ Maria Edgeworth, *Tales and Novels: Moral Tales*, p. 7.

³⁹⁸ Julie Nash, (ed), *New essays on Maria Edgeworth*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006, p. 81.

³⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 6.

which should be brushed off especially from the people of the upper class. Throughout the story, both characters undergo a great change in their way of thinking, learning to appreciate what they have as well as to understand the real values of life.

Forester, a young man of nineteen years old, after his father's death travels to Edinburgh to meet his guardian, Dr. Campbell and his family. Forester is brave and generous and he has a good heart but he has been taught to despise politeness as well as "the common forms of society"⁴⁰⁰ Arriving late to his guardian house, Forester forces his way to the drawing-room where Dr. Campbell's family was just about to have dinner, entering "with dirty shoes, a threadbare coat, and a hair that looked as if it never been combed."⁴⁰¹ Staying true to his principles, Forrester not only didn't care what effect his appearance may have produced on the assembled company but he was also annoyed with the dinner ceremonies, preferring playing with the cat and sitting on the sofa all by himself.

In his guardian house, Forester meets Dr. Campbell's son Henry, a good-natured and well-educated young man, only four years his senior, whom he immediately admired for his manners and behaviour. Maria Edgeworth draws a contrast between two young men comparing Forester's passionate way of being independent, which caused him only troubles to that of Henry, whose independence "did not render him unsociable; he was always ready to sympathize with the pleasures of his friends, [...] he did all the good in his power to those who were in distress"⁴⁰² and compared to Forester, did not want to reform society or "new-model the universe."⁴⁰³ Dr. Campbell and his son Henry "articulate a model of masculine sociability that Edgeworth believes enables both the domestic and the public realm to function properly."⁴⁰⁴

A vivid example of young people's different approach in solving problems is described when they meet a little girl and learn she was mistreated by her school mistress. If Forester, without thinking about the consequences, passionately tells off the schoolmistress, who in return, expels the poor student from the school, Henry tries a different way. His social connections allow him to contact one of the benefactresses of the charity school whom he explains the situation and asks to inquire upon the problems at the school. He succeeds in his mission as the lady agrees to check herself upon the situation in

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 8.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid, p. 9.

⁴⁰² Ibid, p. 10.

⁴⁰³ Ibid, p. 11.

⁴⁰⁴ Julie Nash, (ed), *New essays on Maria Edgeworth*, p. 62.

the school. Struck by Henry's way of solving the problem, Forester yet admits that he acted like a "madman, doing mischief while attempting to do good" and Henry like "a man of sense, who always knows how to do good,"⁴⁰⁵ does not want to give up his principles. He decides to leave his guardian house and try himself in various professions proving that he is more than capable to leave without anybody's support.

The story further follows Forester's social education which he was not able to learn from the books. After working as a gardener and a clerk to a brewer, Forester decides to work as a printer. He manages to overcome all the difficulties of this profession, due to his great industry, gaining quite a success. Working in a printer shop gave him possibility to listen to various conversations upon different subjects of "many ingenious men,"⁴⁰⁶ learning that to have a different opinion does not mean to be a fool. With the time he understands that what he previously considered self-confidence was in fact vanity and pride whereas friendship is a real treasure to cherish. Realising his mistakes he tries to make amends, coming back to his guardian house begging pardon for his past behaviour. Dr. Campbell, who "saw both the defects and the excellent qualities of his young ward"⁴⁰⁷ accepts Forester back to the family, predicting that if he continues to cultivate his understanding of right and wrong he will "be a very great man."⁴⁰⁸

Maria Edgeworth displays a male character, who undergoes a great change in his personality. She underlines that a person is made to live in society to enjoy the life and be happy, echoing David Hume, who suggests that humans are much happier inside relationships and quite miserable when leaving an isolated life. It is important to follow the established rules of the community in order to live in a harmonious society. She shows how civility and politeness "form the bedrock of the bonds that hold people together."⁴⁰⁹

Friendship is an essential element in pursuit of happiness. Friends can listen and support, they are especially helpful in children's development. Real friends act in a caring and generous ways. They can be the source of strength and happiness. As true friends can make one happy, false friends can make one miserable. Therefore, it is important, especially at a young age, to be able to distinguish between true and false

⁴⁰⁵ Maria Edgeworth, *Tales and Novels: Moral Tales*, p. 25.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 56.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 10.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 91

⁴⁰⁹ Julie Nash, (ed), *New essays on Maria Edgeworth*, p. 63.

friends. As Maria Edgeworth asks her readers to distinguish between fiction and reality the same good sense can be applied to distinguish between true and false friends.

Friendship as a way to happiness was highly prized by Adam Smith, who argued that mutual friendship and esteem can bring happiness to all the people who share those sentiments. If the friendship is disturbed it brings sufferings to people's hearts, "putting and end to that happy commerce which had before subsisted between them"⁴¹⁰

The value of true friendship, as well as portrayal of another female character are discussed in *The Good Aunt*. The story also touches upon an important subject in regard of slavery in West Indies.

When little Charles Howard was left an orphan he would have died in misery if not for his aunt Mrs. Frances Howard, "a young and cheerful woman,"⁴¹¹ who took little Charles under her care. On the contrary from Mrs. Harcourt, who had no time for her children's education, hiring the governess, Mrs Frances took very seriously education of her nephew, cultivating her own understanding about education in order to be able to fulfil her duty not only as an aunt but as an educator as well. She wished to educate her nephew so that their mutual love and affection would increase not diminished within the years. Mrs. Frances cultivated Charles' love for reading by encouraging him to understand what he read as well as "talk to her freely about what he read."⁴¹²

The aunt and nephew were really fond of each other and as Mrs. Howard possessed a large fortune, they were able to live happily enjoying the pleasure of each other. Charles had a great esteem for his gentle and patient aunt, every day enjoying the pleasure of her sympathy⁴¹³. As Mrs. Howard did not understand Greek or Latin because "it is not thought necessary that a woman should understand Latin,"⁴¹⁴ she without making her nephew miss "the pleasures of classic taste,"⁴¹⁵ hired a good scholar to instruct Charles in the classical languages. Finding it hard at the beginning, Charles put a lot of energy into his study in this way, being able to learn Latin and Greek perfectly. Mrs. Howard was happy with Charles' improvements, being a lady of high moral principles herself, she was encouraging the same morals in her beloved nephew.

⁴¹⁰ Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, p. 34.

⁴¹¹ Maria Edgeworth, *Tales and Novels: Moral Tales*, p. 118.

⁴¹² Ibidem.

⁴¹³ Ibidem.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid, p. 119.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid, p. 121.

Unfortunately their happiness was disturbed by an unpleasant event that considerably changed their lives. Mrs. Howard was the owner of an estate in West Indies which was the principle source of her considerable fortune. After she sold it, all her property, that was shipped from West Indies, was lost in shipwreck. Thus, Mrs. Howard had to organize her living in order to maintain herself and her nephew. She easily parted with all her jewels and luxuries that she had been used to and Charles, who was aware of all her affairs was employed by his aunt to write and copy her business letters.

Maria Edgeworth describes how unpleasant situation can unite people even more if they love and respect each other. She portrays a woman who manages to find solution in difficult circumstances without losing her good sense and morality.

Not being able to employ a private tutor, she therefore sent Charles to Westminster boarding school where he could proceed his education. She also rented a small house near the school where they could live together in this way she “hoped to unite, as much as possible, the advantages of a private and of a public education.”⁴¹⁶ Maria Edgeworth echoes Locke's idea about boarding schools, who thought public school were not appropriate for children's education “as for that boldness and spirit with a mixture of rudeness and an ill-turned confidence, which lads get amongst their play-fellows at school, must be unlearned and all the tincture washed out again, to make way for better principles, and such manners as make a truly worthy man.”⁴¹⁷ Thus, public schools lack positive maternal input and domestic environment which are essential in the development of morally principled man.

Maria Edgeworth demonstrates the violence that was reigning in the school environment in the fight between Charles and one of the elder students, Augustus Holloway. Charles stood up for a little Creole boy, Oliver, who struggling greatly in his studies, had a misfortune to ask for help to Augustus Holloway, who was considered the best in Latin in Westminster. For his assistance, Augustus made poor Oliver paid a high price, treating him with tyranny, justifying his action by the fact that Oliver was his *fag*⁴¹⁸.

Charles happened to observe Holloway's horrible attitude towards Oliver and when he heard Holloway calling Oliver “a negro-slave”⁴¹⁹ upon which little Oliver “burst into

⁴¹⁶ Ibid, p. 128.

⁴¹⁷ John Locke, *The Works of John Locke in Nine Volumes, Volume the Eighth*, §70, p. 54.

⁴¹⁸ Maria Edgeworth, *Tales and Novels: Moral Tales*, p.130.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid, p. 132.

tears”⁴²⁰ he decided to protect poor Oliver tasting “the art of boxing.”⁴²¹

As Charles was not an experienced boxer, he was beaten badly by Holloway. Charles though did not give up, staying true to his cause, challenging Holloway again and again. He was also supported by his aunt who instead of “wailing over his disaster”⁴²² natural maternal reaction, was happy and proud of her nephew who had fought “in so a good cause.”⁴²³ Maria Edgeworth depicts a maternal figure who is neither too emotional nor too sentimental. Mrs. Howard, sympathising with her nephew’s cause, acts as a woman who has a good sense enough to support and encourage Charles without making him feel uncomfortable.

Eventually, Charles, due to his strong will and belief that he was fighting for the good cause, managed to bring Holloway to the ground, setting Oliver free from the cruelty of the tyranny. When Oliver full of happiness mixed up with gratitude offered Charles to be his fag, Charles, refusing Oliver’s proposal, instead asked little Creole to be his friend. Charles’ offer of friendship was “not merely the sudden enthusiasm of a moment, it was the steady persevering choice of a manly mind, not the caprice of a school-boy.”⁴²⁴ Charles took great care of his little friend, helping him patiently with the studies as well as cultivating his own opinion of himself. Oliver, under careful guidance of his new friend realised that “he was not doomed to be a dunce for life,”⁴²⁵ acquiring stronger belief in himself as well as his abilities. The real friendship between the boys had a miracle effect upon Oliver, “his heart was light, his spirit rose, his countenance brightened with intelligence, and resumed its natural vivacity, he appeared a new creature.”⁴²⁶ Oliver’s happiness, derived from true friendship, was immense, influencing him positively. Charles, educated to have good reason and morality, transmitted the same moral principles to his little friend.

Describing how true friendship can change children’s lives, bringing them joy and happiness, Maria Edgeworth takes an opportunity to send her anti-slavery message, explaining it to the children. Oliver is teased by Holloway not only because he is behind in

⁴²⁰ Ibidem.

⁴²¹ Ibid, p. 133.

⁴²² Ibidem.

⁴²³ Ibidem.

⁴²⁴ Ibid, p. 135.

⁴²⁵ Ibidem.

⁴²⁶ Ibidem.

his studies but also for his different skin colour. In her story, Maria Edgeworth masterfully interweaves the question of slaves, making it comprehensible for the minds of the children. Charles offers his friendship, despite Oliver's skin colour and for nothing in return but for reciprocal feeling of friendship.

The children are made the same and have right to the same happiness in spite of their race and culture. Promoting anti-slavery message, Maria Edgeworth teaches children that black people are the same humans as white people and they can not be treated as slaves. As the story further develops, Maria Edgeworth introduces another female character, a mulatto woman, who comes to England in search of her former mistress. However, she fails to find her mistress' family and happens to be in great distress. Further narration describes how by pure accident, Charles and Oliver meet the poor woman and how this incident brings an incredible turn of events.

In *The Good Aunt* the happiness is achieved due to morally good and reasonable actions. Mrs. Howard with her positive, moral teachings and sensible affections manages to educate a young man with strong moral principles and benevolence. Charles, in his turn, growing under positive influence of his aunt, learns to understand and distinguish between good and bad, standing up for the good causes. With his goodness and benevolence as well as sharp mind, he helps people around him, bringing them joy and happiness. A particular attention is given to little Creole with whom author sympathises.

Even though *The Good Aunt* is written for the younger audience, Maria Edgeworth comments upon racial question by inserting a character of little mulatto boy. Oliver was practically treated as a slave until Charles' arrival. Maria Edgeworth uses her educational story to explain as well as to underline her attitude towards slavery. Mitzi Myers identifies the stories where women writers promote and express their social and political opinions "a fiction of ideas."⁴²⁷ Maria Edgeworth uses the power of writing to point out some educational and social issues and "have her social say."⁴²⁸

Maria Edgeworth follows David Hume's idea about sympathy which was also undertaken by his friend and follower Adam Smith. Both philosophers identified sympathy

⁴²⁷ Mayers Mitzi, "Impeccable Governess, Rational Dames, and Moral Mothers: Mary Wollstonecraft and the Female Tradition in Georgian Children's Books," *Children's Literature*, 14, (1986), p. 35.

⁴²⁸ *Ibidem*.

as essential in people's lives. Tolerance towards others gives us sympathy, which in its turn, helps people understand and feel what other people are feeling.

Virtue, benevolence as well as the benefits of good education are promoted and encouraged throughout the *Moral Tales*. The stories aim to shape young adults' minds and guide them towards morality and justice. As education plays an important role in the formation of a child, Maria Edgeworth shows that teaching benevolence and morality is as important as teaching to write and read.

The vivid example is Augustus Holloway, who in spite of being one of the smartest students at Westminster is ignorant towards other people's feelings. The cause of his ignorance and indifference was because of his bad education. His father was too busy promoting his orators skills, impatient to see his son advancing in the political career. He failed to cultivate his moral education. Holloway, however a clever school-boy, was miserable and unhappy.

Moral Tales, more than teaching its readers what is happiness, draw their attention towards the actions that have to be applied to pursuit happiness. *Moral Tales* encourage independence and self-observation as well as inspire to think and generate ideas. The aim of the tales is to guide its readers to find their own knowledge of happiness. To help us achieve this knowledge, Maria Edgeworth displays a variety of characters with whom the readers can identify. She creates her child-centred characters representing them in time, taking into consideration several aspects such as age, duration and memory. The time as an essential element in formation of children's identity was also described by John Locke, who in his *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* argues that consciousness "unites existence and actions"⁴²⁹ over time and helps the formation of self-consciousness. Maria Edgeworth is using a new different technique to represent better the selfhood of the children.

Maria Edgeworth's main intention is "to make her readers substantially better and happier, to show how easy and agreeable to practice are high principles"⁴³⁰ in what she succeeds.

⁴²⁹ John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, §16, p. 231.

⁴³⁰ Helen Zimmern, *Famous Women: Maria Edgeworth*, p. 34.

Conclusion

Happiness is something that people have been looking for many centuries. The questions of what is happiness and how can one be happy were raised in the past and are still actual now. Nowadays, happiness is supposed to be easily achieved. A good job, a loving family, wealth, country house, fame, power, vacations are considered the ingredients to increase people's happiness. Therefore, if we are all aware of what happiness is, why then people are still in search of happiness? Every day of our lives is faced as the greatest challenge in finding ways to become better and happier. Is it because we are searching in the wrong places or is it because we do not actually know what happiness really is?

The Enlightenment brought a new way of thinking, celebrating reason as a powerful instrument with which people could understand the world around them. It was spread upon "the useful arts- upon agriculture...upon commerce, finance, manufactures, navigations and the colonies, in short upon everything which can contribute to render peoples more happy and States more flourishing."⁴³¹ It was also spread upon people's thinking about happiness that wiped out the medieval, theological understanding of the notion, providing the world with the new ideas about happiness. The main idea raised by the thinkers of the Enlightenment was that happiness could be achieved and enjoyed on earth. The notion of happiness itself was scrutinized over the course of the Enlightenment period so as to understand its affective and subjective meaning. The philosophical ideas about happiness were greatly followed and discussed. They also made a considerable change in people's minds about what it meant to live and lead a good life, making people aware that happiness was in their own hands. The significance of happiness as a powerful instrument that could change people's lives was highly idealised. The main idea, questioned by the majority of the Enlightened thinkers, was how the happiness could be achieved and promoted within society members. Because happiness was defined as the combination of pleasure and pain as well as a state of mind, a great attention was drawn towards morality, which was considered the backbone of the happiness.

The influence of the philosophical thinking about happiness was especially seen in the works of great variety of authors, who either used, modified or combined their own

⁴³¹ Roy Porter, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World*, p. 8.

ideas about happiness with those of the Enlightened philosophers. There were numerous narratives and novels which depicted characters who achieved their moral development and happiness due to their learning and understanding.

The Enlightenment gave rise to print business, which “proved the great engine for the spread of enlightened views and values.”⁴³² The writing became one of the good means to express ideas as well as earn money. The eighteenth century especially witnessed the flourishing of the women writings, even though the majority of authors were publishing their work either anonymously or under the pen names. If at the beginning of the century women writers were “permitted to enter the public sphere of letters only to reinforce the figure of the domestic woman, constructed in a relation of difference to men, a difference of kind rather than degree,”⁴³³ as the time passed, they “learned to meet the Terms of Acceptance for their writing in order to gain acknowledgement of their talents.”⁴³⁴ The novel writing became a form which permitted female authors to express women’s needs and feelings as well as share their point of view on different subjects from woman’s perspective.

Sarah Fielding and Maria Edgeworth managed not only to display their talents by writing successful novels but also to shape the minds of their readers by teaching them to cultivate an understanding of their own identity and of high moral principles. Touching upon variety of subjects, their writings were mainly about and for women and children. Both writers considered education as fundamental and powerful tool in the formation of a person. If Sarah Fielding pioneered in writing a didactic novel, especially dedicated to girls’ education, Maria Edgeworth became an author of the treatise on education, *Practical Education* and a number of children’s stories becoming “the creator of the first real children in English literary history, children who seen from a juvenile perspective, who speak in a juvenile voice.”⁴³⁵

Even though, both authors developed their writing skills under strong male influence, Maria Edgeworth was encouraged to write by her father, who supported his daughter’s talent promoting her works and collaborating on some of them and Sarah Fielding was

⁴³² Ibid, p. 91.

⁴³³ Betty A. Schellenberg, *The Professionalization of Women Writers in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, p. 2.

⁴³⁴ Ibid, p. 3.

⁴³⁵ Elisabeth Goodenough, Mark. A. Heberle, Naomi Sokoloff, (eds), *Infant Tongues: The Voice of the Child in Literature*, p. 60.

influenced by her famous brother who, yet supported his sister, was a bit jealous of her hidden talent, they managed to stay true to their own beliefs and ideas, expressing them in their novels. Both unmarried, the authors were promoting women's independence and self-reliance as a way to happiness.

Sarah Fielding as well as Maria Edgeworth were both prolific writers, famous during their time, whose novels were popular among the readers, widely published and translated into various foreign languages. It is surprising that nowadays the authoresses are little known. They, uncommonly, received little critical attention. The readers may be acquainted with Maria Edgeworth because of her friendship with Sir Walter Scott, whereas Sarah Fielding is known as a sister of Henry Fielding.

The careful analysis of *The Governess* and *Moral Tales*, through the prism of philosophical concept of happiness, reveals how the ideas of Sarah Fielding and Maria Edgeworth are in line with the philosophical concepts of happiness. Both authoresses explore philosophical ideas related to morality, benevolence and sympathy providing their own interpretation towards those ideas. Their opinions about happiness yet different is similar in its context.

Both writers consider virtue as an essential element in pursuit of happiness, and they both agree upon the fact that happiness should be cultivated and encouraged as it benefits not only individuals but all members of society. Maria Edgeworth and Sarah Fielding also agreed that real friendship is essential in children's formation as it can inspire for improvements and good actions. The building of the female friendship described in *The Governess* and the friendship between the boys in *The Good Aunt* represent the idea that children, thanks to their good education, can learn from each other as well as improve themselves.

Sarah Fielding and Maria Edgeworth both write and address to the children. Their language as well as arguments are simple and appropriate for the children. Both authors consider relationships of great importance and beneficence in the development of children's identity. Their novels help in building up children's independence which will benefit to create their relationships in the future.

In *The Governess*, Sarah Fielding prepares her readers to become better and happier

with the true use of reading. Through her stories, along with the main narration, Sarah Fielding not only explains the meaning of happiness but also shows the ways of pursuing it. In *The Governess*, didacticism and morals are overlapped. The novel displays how the combination of benevolence and love together with the wise and kind education benefit children, improving their state of mind bringing them peace and happiness.

In *Moral Tales*, Maria Edgeworth does not explain what happiness is directly, she carefully guides her readers in finding their own happiness, providing a variety of examples. Thus, the readers, by identifying themselves with the characters are able to get the knowledge and cultivate their understanding about happiness.

Maria Edgeworth believes that justice, morality, truth and humanity are fundamental virtues in every single person no matter what gender or class. To develop and reinforce those virtues all the children as well as young adults deserve the same, equal care and education. The happiness of the future generation greatly lies upon their family and educators.

Even though the authoresses differ in their didacticism, Sarah Fielding stresses on reading as a way to cultivate pupil's understanding of the world around them as well as to promote virtue and benevolence whereas Maria Edgeworth does not present reading as fundamental educational method for students, their aim in educating and helping children to become better and happier is the same.

The morals that Sarah Fielding and Maria Edgeworth share in their writings, even though they wanted to draw children's attention and were dedicated to young adults are actual even now and can be read by readers of all ages. The novels teach to reflect about one's own actions as well as how to make amends and become better and happier. Happiness is not easy to achieve and it is even harder to maintain. *Moral Tales* and *The Governess* show its readers various ways towards happiness, we just have to choose the one that suits us best.

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