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# Theatricals and Theatricality in Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*

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# Table of Contents

# Theatricals and Theatricality in Jane Austen's "Mansfield Park"

## Abstract

*Mansfield Park* is among Jane Austen's novels that deals most directly with theatrical subjects. Themes in the novel are strongly connected with the choice of the popular eighteenth-century play, *Lover's Vows*. A performance of that play as a home-theatrical covers a significant place in the first volume of the book.

In the novel, The Bertrams, her cousins and their fashionable new neighbours Mary and Henry Crawford, decide to set a staging of a popular drama to spend joyful time, while patriarch Sir Thomas is on business trip in Antigua. "Theatre" at *Mansfield Park* extends from billiard room to all places, Sir Thomas's Study. The episode in the first volume that describes Sir Thomas's return from Antigua, is the point when theatricality in this novel is destroyed by his order to burn every copy of *Lover's Vow*s. Despite the destruction of theatre as place, theatricality as a topic turns out to spread over the novel. Even though the theatrical content occupies a dominant position in the novel, the vision of the theatre presented in the novel might be considered complicated, even negative. The theatricals initiate acts of moral degradation that the novel ultimately condemns. Furthermore, the theatre and the specific play chosen are criticized and resisted on moral grounds by main characters that are identified to be positive characters (Fanny Price and Edmund Bertram), and celebrated by those who are considered to be characters with lower moral values (Maria Bertram, Tom Bertram and The Crawfords).

Additionally, by paying attention to the description of the theatricals indicated by Fanny Price and Henry Crawford, it is possible to examine the similarity of their language. Although each of them states their opinion in a completely different way, both Fanny and Henry

characterize theatricals in terms of “discontent” or “anxiety”. For them, the theatre is not just an object but the very site of anxiety. In *Mansfield Park*, the theatre which colonizes the rest of the novel, becomes strongly connected with unavoidable social existence and political postures. As a novel about theatricality, *Mansfield Park* describes theatrical forms as a danger threatening the interests of a certain period society. This paper aims to demonstrate the effect of the theme Theatre and Theatricality in the novel of *Mansfield Park* by Jane Austen by providing a deep literary analysis and approach to the topic from different perspectives.

# Introduction

In Introduction Part there is given a detailed information about Jane Austen's life and creativity. First part begins with before the birth of Jane Austen. By providing short information about her parents reveals where the creative genes of Jane come from. Her father was a scholar who was able to prepare two of his sons for university, as well as handle the studies of his other children, whether sons or daughters, and increase his income by tutoring students individually. Austen's mother owned deep common sense and vivid imagination which were frequently articulated in epigrammatic force and point, both in writing and in conversation.

As mentioned in the Introduction part she had six brothers and a sister. Some brief information about her brothers and sisters is necessary in order to provide any idea of the objects which mainly engaged her thoughts and filled her heart. Therefore, some of them, from their characters or professions in life, are believed to have significant influence on her writings.

Her family and immediate surroundings was the basic environment where Jane Austen discovered herself and grew up as a well-known novelist. The family had a great richness of spirit and liveliness, and never experienced any disagreements even in little matters, as it was not common in Austen family to argue with each other. Consequently, there was strong family affection and firm union, never to be broken but by death. Undoubtedly, all this had its significant influence on the author in the construction of her stories, in which a family part usually provides the narrow stage.

In the next part there is a brief information about the early writings and novels of Jane Austen. Some of them such as *Lady Susan*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Northanger Abbey*, *Mansfield Park* have been discussed.

Jane Austen was born on 16 December 1775 at the Parsonage house of Stevenson Hemisphere. The first house in which her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Austen resided was located in Deane, however, in 1771 they moved to Steventon, which was residence for about thirty years. His father Mr. Austen was a scholar. He was a remarkably good-looking man, both in his youth and his old age. Being a wise scholar, he had an opportunity to prepare two of his sons for the University, and to manage the studies of his other children, whether sons or daughters, as well as to increase his income by taking pupils.

The origins of much of the ability that Mrs. Austen owned was concentrated in Jane, but of which others of her children had a share. Her strong common sense and colourful imagination were often expressed both in writing and in conversation, with epigrammatic force and point.

Jane Austen's own family were so much, while the rest of the world was so little. Some brief information about her brothers and sisters is necessary in order to provide any idea of the objects which mainly engaged her thoughts and filled her heart. Therefore, some of them, from their characters or professions in life, are believed to have significant influence on her writings.

Jane had six brothers and a sister. Two of her youngest brothers Charles and Francis were sailors during the glorious period of the British navy. These brothers' honourable career accounts for Jane Austen's partiality for the Navy, as well as for the readiness and accuracy with which she wrote about it. Being careful not to meddle with matters which she did not thoroughly understand was one of the main principles of Jane Austen.

Politics, law or medicine, such subjects were never been the themes of her novels while some novel writers have referred to these subjects in an arrogant way, and have treated, perhaps, with more brilliancy than accuracy.

However, by preferring themes with ships and sailors she felt at home, or at least could always trust to a brotherly critic to gain right direction. It is believed that no flaw has ever been found

in her seamanship either in *Mansfield Park* or in *Persuasion*.

Although Jane had strong family connections with her brothers, the deepest side of her heart belonged to her sister Cassandra, approximately three years older than her. Their sisterly affection for each other could be describes as a mother-daughter relationship. With high probability it began on Jane's side with the feeling of respect natural to a loving child towards a kind elder sister. Something of this feeling always remained, and even in maturity of her powers, and in the enjoyment of increasing success, she would still speak of Cassandra as of one wiser and better than herself. They lived in the same home, and shared the same bedroom, till separated by death. Despite the fact that they had a quite strong connection, it would not be real to assert that they were alike. Cassandra had colder and calmer nature; she was always prudent and well judging. While Cassandra had the ability of remaining her temper under command, Jane had freer and more positive and spontaneous temper that never needed to be commanded. When *Sense and Sensibility* was published, some persons, who knew the family slightly, surmised that the two elder Miss Dashwood were created by the author as a prototype of her sister and herself.

Her family and immediate surroundings was the basic environment where Jane Austen discovered herself and grew up as a well-known novelist. The family had a great richness of spirit and liveliness, and never experienced any disagreements even in little matters, as it was not common in Austen family to argue with each other. Consequently, there was strong family affection and firm union, never to be broken but by death. Undoubtedly, all this had its significant influence on the author in the construction of her stories, in which a family party usually provides the narrow stage.

Although her circle of society was small, yet she found in her neighbourhood persons of good taste and cultivated minds. Additionally, her acquaintance, in fact constituted not only the character which were familiar to her, but also the imaginary characters ranging from the

member of parliament, or large landed proprietor, to the young curate or younger midshipman of equally good family; and the influence of these early associations may be followed in her writings, especially in two particulars. First, that she is entirely free from vulgarity, which is so offensive in some novels, on dwelling on the outward appendages of wealth or rank, as if they were things which the writer was unaccustomed, and secondly, she deals only a little with very high stations in life.

It was common for the family to indulge in private theatricals, having their summer theatre in the barn, and their winter one within the narrow limits of the dining-room, where the number of the audience must have been very limited. Jane was only twelve years old at the time of the earliest of these representations, and not more than fifteen when the last took place. She was, however, an early observer, and it may be reasonably supposed that some of the incidents and feelings which are so vividly painted in the *Mansfield Park* theatricals are the results of her recollections of these entertainments. (Leigh 1882: 3-17)

Her earliest writings which dated from 1787 and 1783 was a large body of material that was gathered in three manuscript notebooks: Volume the First, Volume the Second, and Volume the Third. These writings consist of plays, verses, short novels, and other prose.

In 1793-94 Jane Austen wrote *Lady Susan*- a short epistolary novel. Unfortunately, the novel was not published until 1871. In this novel the portrait of a woman described as a personality who has a powerful mind, in effect, study of frustration and woman's fate in society that has no use for her talents.

The earliest of her novels were published during her lifetime. *Sense and Sensibility* was written in 1795 as a novel-in-letters called *Elinor and Marianne* after its heroines. Between the years of 1796 and 1797 Austen managed to complete the first version of *Pride and Prejudice*. The last of her early novels was *Northanger Abbey* which was written between the years 1798-1799.

In 1811 Jane Austen began *Mansfield Park*, which was finished in 1814. Between January 1814 and March 1815, she wrote *Emma*. In 1815 there was a second edition of Mansfield Park. Both *Mansfield Park* and *Emma* were published by Lord Byron's publisher, John Murray. *Persuasion* was written in August 1815- August 1816, however, published together with *Northanger Abbey* after the death of Jane Austen.

She lived through the French Revolution, the rise and the fall of Napoleon Bonaparte, the American War of Independence. She died midway between Waterloo (1815) and Peterloo (1819) and she lived through much of the turmoil which accompanied what E.P.Thompson has described as "The Making of the English Working Class" .She must also have been aware of the Jacobin and anti-Jacobin struggle which went on in England as a result of French Revolution. These huge revolutions, changes and arguments which have left the deep marks in history seem to have very little mark on her fiction, and yet, surely, she knew what was happening at that time. (Tanner 2007: 2)

As a result of the analysis, it came out that on the horizontal dimension, words farther to the left are more abstract and connected with the state of mind and social relationships: acquaintance, affection, resolution, resolved, gratitude, indulgence etc.

Words farther to the right connected with the physical world and the senses: outside, picked, rolled, slowly, watch, top.

Another study compared words in Jane Austen's novels with a collection of contemporary British fictions.

It was found out that Austen used more words related to the women: she,her,Miss,sister etc. Additionally, she used intensifying words such as: very, much, so more than other writers.

To sum up, all this distinctive word choices, grammatical constructions expresses the depth of her writerly mind: efforts of her characters to understand others and themselves. By refusing fantastic and dramatic elements in her plots, Austen succeed to create real-life

characters and express their emotional states so clearly. (Flynn; Katz 2017)

*Mansfield Park*

*Mansfield Park* was published in 1814, only a year after Pride and Prejudice, however there are serious differences between two novels. Moving from one novel to the other the reader feels sharp change of tone and atmosphere. Since *Mansfield Park* is evidently the work of an older, mature, however, one who, while an insider of the world she portrays, can also see beyond it.

One of the main aspects that differentiates *Mansfield Park* from author's other novels is that the narrator of the novel is created in an omniscient mood. Jane Austen continuously provides opportunity for the narrative to move freely in and out of the consciousness of a whole range of characters. In *Pride and Prejudice*, there are moments, especially early in the novel, when Darcy's and Charlotte Lucas' thoughts are presented. In *Persuasion*, the reader is shown at one vital moment Captain Wentworth's still-burning anger against Anne. In *Mansfield Park*, on the other hand, the independence of the narrator from any one controlling consciousness is a structural principle. This text at various times represents the thinking processes or picks up the internal speech-cadences of Maria Bertram, Edmund Bertram, Sir Thomas, Mary Crawford, and several others, besides Fanny Price. When Sir Thomas overhears Mr. Yates in full ranting flight on the improvised stage at Mansfield the narrative borrows his point of view at the beginning of the paragraph, and, to heighten the comic effect, Tom Bertram's at the close.

Perhaps most significantly, this novel presents whole scenes and dialogues from which the heroine is absent. The scenes at the Personage between Mary and Henry Crawford (and sometimes with Mrs. Grant) are quite freestanding. They depict the relationship between the Crawfords at first without reference to Fanny.

## Characters, Setting, Main Themes and Summary

This chapter is divided into several parts which form the general structure of Mansfield Park. They are: the characters, setting, main themes, and the plot summary of the novel.

Characters individually own quite rich personalities. Fanny Price is the protagonist of the novel. She is a member of a big, financially poor family with nine siblings. When her aunt Lady Bertram and uncle Sir Thomas take her as an act of charity to her parents, Fanny comes to live in Mansfield Park. She is only nine years old when she lefts her home. Sir Thomas Bertram is a wealthy landlord, a patriarch of Mansfield Park and Fanny's uncle. He owns slaves on his plantations in Caribbean. In many ways Sir Thomas functions as an antagonistic figure in the text. Lady Bertram is Fanny's aunt, Sir Thomas's wife who is so lazy woman that she comes across as constantly out of it. Her total lack of awareness has an impact of her opinions. Tom Bertram is the older son of Lady Bertram and Sir Bertram who stands to inherit his father's estate. He is an extremely wasteful person that prefers mainly the entertaining way of living. Edmund Bertram is the second son of Lady Bertram and Sir Thomas. As he is not heir to the estate, he has to pick an occupation, and he chooses to be a clergyman. Maria and Julia Bertram are the daughters of Sir Thomas who will undergo the risk of losing their reputation in the society. Mary and Henry Crawfords are the new neighbours of the Bertrams who impact the family in a negative way. The other characters are Mrs. Norris- the sister of Fanny's mother, Susan and William- the siblings of Fanny Price.

The events in the novel take place in 4 different settings. Each of them: Mansfield Park, the Personage, Sotherton, Portsmouth creates different shades in the novel with their characteristic environmental features.

Main themes in the novel are marriage, morality, inheritance and meritocracy. In this chapter each of these themes have been discussed and analysed by providing examples from the novel.

## Characters

### Fanny Price

Fanny Price is the protagonist of the novel. She is a member of a big family with nine siblings. Her mother made a different choice from her sisters by marrying a very poor and drunken sailor. Price family have serious problems with meeting their needs, they hardly could earn some money for food. When her aunt Lady Bertram and uncle Sir Thomas take her as an act of charity to her parents, Fanny comes to live in Mansfield Park. She is only nine years old when she lefts her home. Although she is mistreated and always reminded of her place as a charity ward, by time her good sense and modesty cause her to become an accepted member of the family. As she grows older, quite beautiful, Fanny secretly begins to love her cousin Edmund who is himself attracted to Mary Crawford.

### Sir Thomas Bertram

Sir Thomas Bertram is a wealthy landlord, a patriarch of Mansfield Park and Fanny's uncle. He owns slaves on his plantations in Caribbean. In many ways Sir Thomas functions as an antagonistic figure in the text. His niece's fear of him leads to a great distress for her, and his daughters' dislike of him authoritarian behaviours drives them away from home and results in independent rebellion which ends up with some questionable marriages. However, by the end he manages to become aware of his failure as a parent and understands that he has been blind to his own children.

### Lady Bertram

Lady Bertram is Fanny's aunt, Sir Thomas's wife. She is so lazy woman that she comes across as constantly out of it. Her total lack of awareness has an impact of her opinions. Thus she always feels the need of asking her husband what she should think of about certain issues.

Tom Bertram

Tom Bertram is the older son of Lady Bertram and Sir Bertram who stands to inherit his father's estate. He is an extremely wasteful person that prefers mainly the entertaining way of living. Tom's lifestyle causes his father and his brother hardship for his excessive debts. Later his inappropriate way of living results in an illness caused by too much drinking. After he recovers from his illness he is hugely changed to a positive side.

Edmund Bertram

Edmund Bertram is the second son of Lady Bertram and Sir Thomas. As he is not heir to the estate, he has to pick an occupation, and he chooses to be a clergyman. His intelligence and good heart differentiate him from his siblings. Edmund is Fanny's closest companion. Although he falls in love with Mary Crawford, their loves ends with a mess and in the end he marriages to Fanny.

Maria Bertram

Maria Bertram is Sir Thomas and Lady Bertram's vain, pretentious, narcissistic older daughter. She marries Mr. Rushworth only for money and social standing despite her attraction to Henry Crawford, whom she ultimately runs away. Maria is the fallen woman in the end, living with broken heart and reputation in society.

Julia Bertram

Julia Bertram is the second daughter of Sir Thomas and Lady Bertram. Julia is less vain than her sister Maria. She always function as her sister's shadow. Both of the sisters fall in love with Henry Crawford, however, he favours married Maria.

Henry Crawford

Henry Crawford is the wealthy younger brother of Mrs. Grant who hails from London. Henry's charm increases women's attraction towards him. He sets Bertram sisters against each other, thus, although both fall in love with Henry, he choses Maria despite her engagement. Later he falls in love with Fancy, however, it can be considered as an instinct of possession rather than love.

Mary Crawford

Mary Crawford is the sister of Mrs. Grant who is the wife of second parson at Mansfield. Besides her charming attractiveness there is an evilness that is clearly seen in some chapters of the novel. Becoming friends with Fanny for the purpose of Edmund shows her being an abusive person.

Mrs. Norris

Mrs. Norris is the sister of Fanny's mother and Lady Bertram. Additionally, she is the wife of first parson at Mansfield Parsonage. Mrs. Norris does not have her own offspring.As a negative character she is very cruel to Fanny and besides, she always interlopes in others' affairs.

Susan Price

Susan Price is Fanny's younger sister who later replace Fanny in Mansfield Park as a result of her being smart and well-mannered.

William Price

William Price is Fanny's younger brother who has retained a commission in the Navy. Fanny and William illustrate the right way of relationship between siblings in the novel.

Mr. Rushworth

Mr. Rushworth is the owner of Sotherton, an estate next to Mansfield Park. He is so blindly in love with Maria Bertram's beauty that he fails to perceive that she has married to him only for his fortune.

Mr. Yates

Mr. Yates is a friend of Tom Bertram who visits Mansfield Park and proposes the amateur theatricals *Lovers' Vow* at Mansfield. He shows an interest in Julia. After Maria and Henry run away, Julia and Yates elope and marry. Fortunately, they are accepted back within the Bertram's family later.

Setting

Mansfield Park

Mansfield Park is the home of the Bertram family. It is a country estate, one of the huge estates in that area.

The Parsonage

The Parsonage is a home at Mansfield park where the parson lives. Most of the novel, Dr. and Mrs. Grant settle in the parsonage.

Sotherton

Sotherton is the estate of Mr. Rushworth.

Portsmouth

Portsmouth is the homeland of Fanny where she grows up and lives before coming to Mansfield Park. She is later sent there when she refuses Mr. Crawford's proposal.

## Main Themes

### Marriage

As so many novels in its day, *Mansfield Park* is organized around a marriage plot. Thus, the culmination and fulfilment of the plot are concentrated around this theme. Marriage, moreover, seems to be the only socially acceptable form of love while extramarital affairs are criticized in the book. Additionally, the characters of the novel refer to marriage as an ideal love match. Despite the characters' alleged opinions to marital love matches, marriage, in practice serves primarily as a means for economic and social advancement in the book. As an example, it is possible to mention acceptance of the Bertram family that Maria married Mr. Rushworth for material comfort and social influence rather than love. At the same time, Fanny's family also encourages her to marry Henry Crawford as he is of high economic status. Jane Austen not only points economic based marriages but also draws attention to emotional marriages. By exemplifying the marriage of Mr and Mrs. Price she shows that not always love marriages end with a happy ending.

### Morality

In *Mansfield Park*, Jane Austen explores the complex relationship between morality and manners. It is hard to identify Austen's view of manners as the characters in the novel express their opinions about manners in a vague way. The meaning of manners in the book is somewhat changeable, as it sometimes might refer to general politeness or etiquette, and sometimes personal qualities. The protagonist of the novel has a very strong moral principles and succeeds to maintain her moral attitude till the end of the novel. By the book's end, Fanny has elevated herself to an equal place in the Bertram household, and her own will in choosing a moral path is more respected.

Inheritance and Meritocracy

Austen explores how characters' different positions in families and society affect their incomes by referring to inheritance and meritocracy issues in Mansfield Park. She represents the inheritance system in the novel on that of real-world England in the early 1800s, when inheritance worked through the system of male primogeniture. Briefly, it means that a father's entire fortune goes to his first-born son. Often, childless uncles would save money for younger male children. Otherwise, younger sons could not legally inherit their fathers' estates, unless their older brothers died before their fathers. The main purpose of this system was to remain family estates intact.

In the world of *Mansfield Park*, the negative effects of this system can be seen clearly in the approach to marriage—due to the rules of inheritance, women cannot inherit, and so have to marry rich men in order to lead lives of luxury. Moreover, in the Bertram family, Austen gives the reader two sons: Tom, who is older, and a younger son Edmund. Tom, who is decided to inherit all his father's fortune and his title, is wildly irresponsible with money. Edmund, on the other hand, who has grown up knowing his whole life that he would not have a fortune of his own, behaves in a more responsible and obedient way than Tom. In the conclusion, Austen achieves to end the novel with the victory of the merit of middle-class people over the indulgence of the upper class, foreshadowing a common theme in later 19th century literature. In this way, Austen uses her strong critique of the inheritance system by valuing meritocracy over aristocracy.

Summary

The three sisters of the Ward marry very different men. Around thirty years before the time of the novel, and eleven years before the beginning of the events to be recounted, one of

the sisters called Maria Ward married a rich man named Sir Thomas Bertram of Mansfield Park. The other ended up marrying a clergyman, Rev. Norris, and the third one a sailor, who was soon wounded in the line of duty and came home to drink with his father's children. Mrs. Norris, the reverend's wife, lives near her sister, Lady Bertram, however, for several years, the two women have not heard from their third sister until, one day, a letter comes telling them that she is about to give birth again and begging them to help see her older children put in the world. The sense of self-importance rather than any strong family feeling lead Mrs. Norris, Lady Bertram, and Sir Thomas to adopt woman's oldest daughter of nine named Fanny. As soon as Fanny arrives at Mansfield Park, she meets the family. Sir Thomas and Lady Bertram have four children: Tom, the elder son and the heir of all property , is 17; Edmund, who is on the way of being a clergyman, is 16; the daughters Maria and Julia is 13 and 12. Maria and Julia, are shallow, very cruel ladies, willing to marry well and to be fashionable. Tom is the elder son and the sole heir to Mansfield Park. His father and brother undergo hardship because of his wasteful lifestyle and alcohol addiction. The younger son of Bertram, Edmund who is expected to be a clergyman, is kind to Fanny and he becomes her dearest friend. Fanny spends most of her life in this luxurious place being frequently reminded of her status. She stands in the service of her aunts, being fully aware that if she isn't obliging, she might very well be thrown out.

After some period, Tom Bertram's gambling debts and wasteful lifestyle causes Sir Thomas significant financial difficulties. Thus, for earning money to pay his son’s debts Sir Thomas leaves Mansfield Park for Antigua, where he owns plantations.

In his absence, two new figures appear at Mansfield: Henry and Mary Crawford, the brother and sister of the wife of the regional minister. Henry and Mary are attractive and elegant, and they soon become welcome guests at Mansfield Park. Henry flirts heavily with Maria, who is engaged to marry the dull yet rich Rushworth. He flirts with Julia as well when it serves his purposes. His Sister Mary finds herself becoming more and more attracted to Edmund, though she does not know that he is intended to become a clergyman. By time Fanny starts to recognize her feelings that mean she's been in love with Edmund over the years. Yates, Tom's visiting mate, suggests putting on a play in Mansfield Park estate. His suggestion was enthusiastically welcomed by all but Edmund and Fanny, who were horrified by the idea of acting. Despite their concerns, the development of the scandalous Vows of the Lovers gathers steam. Fanny is forced to play a part since one of the women cannot manage performance. She was almost pressured to give in when Sir Thomas made a sudden arrival, returning from Antigua. In his absence, he becomes frustrated at the improper behaviour of his family and appreciates Fanny's opposition to the performance. While Maria is attracted to Henry Crawford, she still marries Rushworth for his financial status and estate and leaves Mansfield Park to London with her sister, Julia. Edmund's affection with Mary Crawford continues to progress, much to Fanny's grief. Edmund almost proposes Mary many times, but her condescension and egoism had always stopped him at the last minute. Henry starts to feel different emotions towards Fanny while Maria and Julia left, and he discovers in time that he has really fallen in love with her. While her brother William comes to a ball in Mansfield Park to visit Fanny, Mary Crawford manages to give Fanny a secret gift of Henry. He later obliges Fanny's brother by recommending him to his Admiral Uncle for naval promotion, after proposing to Fanny.

She refuses him, though he insists on not accepting refusal as an answer. Sir Thomas believes that she should approve Henry's proposal to provide easier life for her, as the mistress of his house. Therefore, he expects that a return to her original home in Portsmouth would persuade her to accept Henry's proposal. Fanny is distressed by returning to her parents, who live in a tiny, messy house with an excessive number of rebellious children. She is barely paid attention by her parents; however, her sister Susan becomes her closest mate. She hopes to be called back to Mansfield every day, yet she turns to be upset by not hearing from her uncle. She starts to regret her decision not to marry him while Henry comes to visit her and treats her family very well and is almost saddened to see him leave. In the meantime, she receives letters from Mary Crawford persuading and even manipulating her to consider Henry as her husband. Fanny realizes that Henry has place Marry into this duty as he cannot write himself to her-young ladies at this time could not perceive letters from men to whom they have not at least been engaged. Tom Bertram became seriously ill as a result of his vicious lifestyle and was obliged to return to Mansfield Park to recover. After leaving Fanny at Portsmouth, Henry Crawford heads to London and runs off with Mrs. Rushworth, better known as Maria Bertram. On the other side, Julia Bertram elopes with a friend of Tom, Mr. Yates. Consequently, both of the Bertram's daughters lose their reputation in the society. In this way, the entire family is in trouble, and Fanny is called back to Mansfield. Lady Bertram writes to Fanny and asks her to bring her fourteen-year-old sister with her, and Edmund at once arrives to take them to Mansfield Park. He acknowledges that Mary Crawford revealed her real intentions by suggesting him that if Tom died, life would be so much better for them. Thus, in her point of view, Edmund would then become the only heir to the property, and not have to continue working as a clergyman. In a short time, predictably , Henry leaves the dishonoured Maria, who is pressured to live with her aunt, Mrs. Norris.

Julia and Yates are welcomed by the family in time, and Edmund turns to look at Fanny with the eyes of adoration which resulted in marriage. After wedding, they move to parsonage, Susan replaces Fanny at Mansfield Park, and they all lead a happy life.

# What is Theatricality?

In this chapter the general term of “Theatricality” is explained in a detailed way. Firstly, making reference to the dictionaries the term theatricality is described in two definitions. A first definition declares theatrical to mean ‘of or relating to theatre,' while a second definition declares it to mean ‘exaggerated or affected,' especially when such affectations can pertain to human behaviour.

Scenic arts took a distinct turn toward more specific aspects of performance during the twentieth century, objects that do not fit into a solely textual interpretation of the dramatic work as it is printed on paper. The importance of theatricality and performativity developed. This part of the thesis investigates what are these values, exactly, and how do they apply to the audience and the performance ritual.

In this chapter another topic is discussed, as well: Theatricality before the theatre. The beginning of theatrical expression. It is referred to "theatre" as a complex artistic and social incident that, based on the repetitive mimic feature and task, that is, the iconic representation of real or imagined acts and circumstances, constitutes a meta-lingual communication as well as a diachronic universal cultural phenomenon.

The term "theatre" encompasses a wide range of semiotic possibilities, including actual acting and role-playing, the deliberate and intentional transformation of a real person (or actor) into a dramatic character (play's hero), which occurs only during the performance and in front of the audience. It a refers to the open or closed space, as well as the physical structure or building in which the stage act takes place. The parameter of the complex artistic event (performance), which incorporates multiple artistic forms such as literature, painting, sculpture, music, architecture, and video art, is also significant.

There are two definitions of ‘theatrical' in a traditional dictionary. A first definition declares theatrical to mean ‘of or relating to theatre,' while a second definition declares it to mean ‘exaggerated or affected,' especially when such affectations can pertain to human behaviour. Both of these meanings are discussed in the papers that comprise this topic of Performance Research, which has theatricality as its subject. Some writers concentrate on the edges of what is generally referred to as theatre, while others move into analyses of theatricality in terms of distortion, presentation, and showiness – or, rather, they challenge certain characterizations of theatricality. All of the pieces in this series, crucially, compel their readers to question – and rethink – what ‘theatre' is, has been, or may be. (Fried 1998:148-72)

During the twentieth century, scenic arts took a distinct turn toward more complex elements of performance, items that do not fit into a purely literary view of the dramatic work, as it is printed on paper. Theatricality and performativity became more significant. But what exactly are these principles, and how do they relate to the audience and the performance ritual?

Scenic arts do not exist apart from the audience: these people who contribute to the theatrical act even only by observation. There are several theories that support this claim: The universe, according to phenomenology, exists through the self; all events are characterized through human perception and experience: “The ‘events' are shapes cut out of the spatiotemporal totality of the objective universe by a finite observer.” (Marleau-Ponty 2005:477) Similarly, according to reception aesthetics, the experience of the artwork is often something active.

According to Hans Robert Jauss, every work of art, theatre, and literature has a historical and communicative character, a sense that shifts depending on how the public perceives it at various historical intersections. (Jauss 1982: 20-45). As a result, the audience has an important role in the artwork since it can affect it in a variety of ways.

People from different times and locations, for example, will see different things in the same artwork and give it new life and meaning based on what they see and perceive. Similarly, the public's expectations – not only the artistic aspect of the artwork and its symbolic and communicative function, but also depending on their experience and cultural context – influence the artist, who may attempt to satisfy or contradict these expectations. The principle of performativity describes how meaning is created during the dramatic act by interpretation. This means that performativity varies depending on the quality of the performance as well as the audience's personality. Performativity might be affected by factors such as the cognitive level of the audience, their cultural preconceptions, and their emotional reaction.

The same way as you cannot travel through the same river twice, because the water in it is continually flowing and shifting, you cannot have the same performance twice because the actor-audience (or artist-audience) dynamic would be different each time. The reception of the artwork by the audience is especially critical in performance art, where they are often called to act or respond to what they see; typically, the instructions or text preceding each performance is only a few lines long, while the potential acts that may occur during the performance are numerous. This unwritten behaviour is referred to as theatricality. The term "theatricality" refers to all of the elements in a theatrical play that go beyond the written text.

Roland Barthes asserts:

"What is the concept of theatricality? It is theatre-minus-text, a density of signs and sensations built up on stage from the written argument; it is that ecumenical experience of sensuous artifice – gesture, sound, distance, content, light – which submerges the text beneath the profusion of its external language". (Barthes 1972: 26)

In other words, theatricality is the non-textual elements of a theatrical play, that often become more important than the external language –even more so in performance art, where the text is not always present. Theatricality includes performativity, however, goes beyond it. Although theatricality is treated as an intrinsic aspect of the text, which contains non-theatrical aspects, there is no question that the interpretation of the text by the actors or artists will be performed as they understand it – and the audience will create an ever-changing dynamic. The artwork becomes as mysterious as the reality of now from an external viewpoint, in a specific time and place, within the fluidity that is inherent in contemporary theatre and production

## Theatricality before the theatre. The beginning of theatrical expression.

For more than a century, scholars have been researching drama genealogy and the origins of the theatre in different ways. Since then, several methods have been used, and an equal number of responses have been given by anthropologists, religiologists philologists historians of culture and other scientists who attempted to approach the issue from the perspective of their respective disciplines.

The theatre, which the Western world perceives, a result of certain conditions of historical, social and cultural life in ancient Greece, comes out of a century of creation, which begins in the prehistory of human civilization as well as rituals that occurred at the time known as rituals. In recent years, more interpretations of conventional disciplines, such as neurophysiological sciences, social anthropological studies, cultural studies, theatre studies, and so on have been made available that shed light on this phenomenon and have analysed it in its many dimensions. There are ten fundamental points that, although similar to both modes studied, the theatre and the primitive ritual, are provided with different contents and orientations, leading to the broadening and enrichment of the general scientific debate on the theatre's genealogy. In order to seek deeply the issues, explore the criteria of the theatre as a concept, we must first establish an initial structure and determine the contents, which relate to the specific characteristics and special features of each category.

It is referred to "theatre" as a complex artistic and social incident that, based on the repetitive mimic feature and task, that is, the iconic representation of real or imagined acts and circumstances, constitutes a meta-lingual communication as well as a diachronic universal cultural phenomenon.

Despite the fact that it is a deliberately illusionist reality, it is nevertheless viewed as genuine by those who experience it on stage (actors) and those who receive it in the stalls (audience) as its sole receivers and utter critics, within a constant mutually communicative game between sender and recipient, stage and stalls. This live projection and formulation of symbols of literal or metaphorical content occurs through speech and verbal contact between the actors, most often in the form of dialogue or internal monologue. The end recipient of the spectacle is often an actual or future receiver of the spoken word, whether it is the performer, the listener, or both of them.

The term "theatre" encompasses a wide range of semiotic possibilities, including actual acting and role-playing, the deliberate and intentional transformation of a real person (or actor) into a dramatic character (play's hero), which occurs only during the performance and in front of the audience. It a refers to the open or closed space, as well as the physical structure or building in which the stage act takes place. The parameter of the complex artistic event (performance), which incorporates multiple artistic forms such as literature, painting, sculpture, music, architecture, and video art, is also significant.

Furthermore, it is a social and societal phenomenon with a major cultural dimension that influences and affects society as a whole, as well as an important educational good and a specific system of shared interactive communication. Finally " theatre," which includes specific elements (dialogues, actions, conflicts, plays), morphological features (description of people, "teachings "), stylistic features (open text with eleptic speech, gaps, silences which will be fulfilled in the performing process). can be described as a specific category of literal text addressed to both the viewer and not to the reader.

Its "theatricality," which is a complex semiotic potentiality made up of aural-oral stimuli, gestures and physical acts, place-time interchanges and kinetic alterations that take place in front of the audience and constitute a proposal for a spectacle to be watched, is a fundamental ingredient of the theatre, but it can very well occur off stage.

Attempting to approach the primitive rituals in theatrological terms and identifying their theatrical elements long before they were turned into "theatre" can reveal the following specific characteristics:

## Place

It is religious, not ordinary, "totemic," used for a particular ceremony rather than for some other purpose. Even where this singularity is lost and much more widespread, it undergoes purification by a specific rite so that it may attain the sacredness it needs. The location is chosen based on geodesy, cosmology, and geography requirements that fit evidence and parameters of the area's magnetic and energy field, as well as its special geophysical features, which are sufficiently validated by mythological narratives, and are often important to the ultimate "sacred" moment of celestial existence.

## Time

It's also distinct, out of the ordinary, and exceptional in contrast to the typically vague vision the ancient human had of the same idea, as seen by the cycles of the sun and moon, the transition between day and night, and the passing of the seasons. This out-of-the-ordinary period is linked to celestial and meteorological phenomena (planetary motions, winter and spring solstices, moon phases) as well as other dates that are immediately apparent and perceptible to the senses. The scenic time, that is, the length of the action done, is therefore distinguished from the objective time when the ritual happens. It is a timeless present that is taking the non-existent meaning of time into existence, revealing the primal human being as an actor in a mythological hyper-reality without some rational dimension of time.

## The aim

It is a ceremony for both acting in the bodies and those watching the play, a ritual of contents of catharsis and relaxation.

The aim is to heal, to create a shield from darkness, to correct something that could harm the community, to follow what is right and good, to connect with history and to exemplify the gods and ancestors. The return to the first holy moment of life. When it all first happened, that is, the exclusivity of meaning and can never be replicated (Eliade 1963: 26-31) The primal human being learns the capacity to regulate these powers and use them creatively in its best interest as he falls in touch with this first source of creation through Myth and ritual. It also attempts to educate and build role models that will guarantee the continuation and cohesiveness of the group and the enjoyment and pleasure of all ritual members.

## The Character

It's both mystical and metaphysical. It is based on the belief of human-nature unity, in the presence of a single life-giving cosmic beginning that connects both animate and inanimate beings, plants, creatures, and humans as members of the same unity. The actor departs their own scientifically observable space and time and is taken back to the origins of celestial life, where the event in question first happened. The legendary characters, who are well-known in the world, become current citizens who can be addressed personally, while the impersonal cosmic forces are inscribed physically and granted a body, creating a major catalytic effect on the whole community. Simultaneously, through camouflage and role play, the primal human being gains the ability to leave the self, even if only for a short while, embrace the otherness, and behave in a relieving manner, not only on a religious and spiritual basis, but also on a social and psychological level. This content provides ritual with a direction to the society that brings it to become closer to the sacredness of its original celestial energies and controls members and witnesses by communicating in a fun and amusing way all the wisdom and information required in order to live.

# The Theme

It is characterized as being magical and sacred, evolving into mythological over time as it is differentiated and tailored to the needs and specifications of the particular culture to which it is guided. Thus, the myth has always established the fundamental canvas from which action and portrayal of the fictional account emerges.

Furthermore, it is the idea of a moral entity and actions, free will and personal obligation, which may contribute to the human being's greatness or death, transcendence, or submission, in contrast to some sort of internal or external coercion and convincing. The action's bearers, the people, or heroes, as well as their acts and consequences, are taken from well-known mythological myths that are in the public sphere. Nonetheless, despite the fact that their goals are predetermined, and the result is predetermined, there is no stereotypical replication of the same, as there is throughout the ceremony. On the opposite, even though the subject and heroes are the same, any instance dependent on a text written by a certain individual author (the dramatic poet) is never similar to another. The play's fundamental canvas, based on the traditional elements of theatre, such as dialogue and action, storyline and confrontation, tense events, and characters, of course are intervened and reformulated by the author's artistic conscience. Drama is created in this manner, with its multiplicity of possible meanings and the unveiling of the hero's identity as the ultimate objective, not only instruction and exemplification, but also amusement and aesthetic enjoyment. The growth of expression and verbal contact within the acting actors is stressed, adding to the character's individuality and exclusivity, which becomes a characteristic symbol and archetype in later creations.

## Communication

It's both traditional and deceptive. This is the crucial distinction between ritual and entertainment since the performers' undeniable identity and experiential interest in the depicted activity vanishes. On the other hand, the actor's association with the hero's (role) behaviour on stage continues to function. However, its interaction with the stage persona is imitative rather than experiential. In the theatre, there is an increasing knowledge that what is being done is not real.

## The actors

They are both participants and mediators in the contact with the unspeakable and spiritual, bearers and manipulators of the message by their very physical existence, which serves as both material and container**.** They behave naturally and unconsciously, forming the essence of the ritual with their actions, with no correcting or aesthetic intentions. As a result, body communication is powerful, and movement is nonstop and orgiastic, leading to joy and a state of transcendence for the performers. Actors do not fulfil the performance, but rather learn it by experience. They adopt the characteristics and the very life of the person they behave as, gaining complete association with them and thus recognizing their acts, with the aid of masks and costumes, purely codified mimic and ritual gestures. As a result, not only is the symbolic reality credibly replicated, but the mythological past is often formulated, and by being constantly reproduced, this past is resurrected and recurs.

The characters are turned into mythic heroes, accomplishing deeds and acts that result in the community's redemption and relief.

## The technique

It is manifested by the actor's instinctive, unconscious capacity to imitate sound, speech, pose, and body expression in response to those of animals first, then other living creatures, mythological and actual forces and individuals, and finally particular mythological and real people, with whom the individual participating in the action attempts to interact. The multiple sections consist of complicated audio-visual cues, physical movements, motional changes, and time-place alternations, which take the shape of a spectacle to be viewed by an audience that has assembled specifically for this purpose. The actors use all their physical talents strictly in imitating them repeatedly, which maintains the essential nature of the ritual mission. While there are strong theatrical aspects, the code of verbal communication and dialog between the actors or between the actors and the audience, due to the extreme impact of expression and communication technology and the help of other audiovisual codes, is completely absent.

## The receivers

They are members of a culture which has a homogeneous psychology and cosmic understanding, with similar perceptions and similar views. They are as familiar with the magical tale as the actors are, and all they ask is the materialization of what is supposed to be through a particular ritual in which they engage experientially, perfectly identifying with the actors.

The predicted spectacle elicits identical and familiar responses that are in perfect sync with the action. Surprises and unpredictable acts are out of the question, by being replaced with traditional repetitions, eroding the chance of subjective expression or individual judgment. There is no distinction made between the performers and the audience. Regardless of their social status, everyone shares the same faith in the ritual system's indisputable principles and traditions, which they engage in in their given function from which they cannot depart. The audience therefore expects to completely submit  the law of the game, to meet the roles which were defined at first, as the actual value lies solely in the optical event itself. The "speech of the image" is similar to what it means to monopolize the action and classify every other category as an error or non-acceptable, in the strictly pictorial message, spectacularity of action. Everyone recognizes the common acts and circumstances that take the form of a spectacle and are equally important to all, creating a collective consciousness that rejects every individual. Any distinction or rejection by the group immediately leads to exclusion and excommunication and has a very severe effect on the person on several levels (Turner 1982: 112)

## From ritual to drama

The "Theatre" is a result of cultural situations such as those that existed in ancient Greece in the 6thcentury B.C. and is reflected in the Dionysian and Dithyram Rituals. However a centuries-long tradition of the dramatized events had been in place long before Thespis and the Great Dionysea (534-533 B.C.) to create the conditions for the appearance of a drama. The main features listed in the former ritual process continue to exist, including certain theatre features. However, some evolve and are redefined while others are discarded, which leads to a new reality which in turn defines a new cultural development.

Pre-existing genetic material cannot be traced in a straight line of evolution, but it can be traced in a variety of ways, both directly and indirectly, in terms of religious and secularity, as well as in other ways(Rosik 2002). However, for the first time, a qualitative distinction, a systemic development, can be seen, which ends the stereotypical repetitiveness of the ritual and transforms into a secular spectacle, which is closely linked to the previous culture formation studied as "dromeno" (ritual). Even if we accept another source of drama which is not only the roots of Dionysean rituals, but also types of secular activities such as narrative art, music and sports competitions, banquets and comics focused mirth and wine, theatre and drama comprises the ancient Greeks' specific cultural properties.

# Chapters in *Mansfield Park* involving the theme of Theatricals and Theatricality

In this chapter the impact of theatricality to the particular chapters of the novel is explained. Every chapter connected with the theme of theatricality is described in a detailed version. The sequence of the events happened in *Mansfield park* is followed in regular turn.

In Mansfield Park theatricals play a major role and structure key concern and narrative culmination of Volume I. It not only causes moral tension but also shapes the novel with its symbolic significance. In this book, the concept of theatricality depicts the way the characters and their narrative are understood and distinct from what we expect of a novel.

The theme of theatricality begins to be noticed clearly in the novel in Chapter 13, Volume 1. The chapter begins with the introduction John Yates, Tom's friend who accompanies Tom back to Mansfield Park. When Yates greets Tom, he mentions the possibility of putting on a play there. Tom is pleased, and he tells his brother and sisters about the possibilities. There is immediate joy about this proposal, with the exception of those who think that Sir Thomas is going to be against it, including Edmund and Fanny. When all these happen Sir Thomas is not at Mansfield Park.

Chapter 14 begins with physical preparations for the play. With the high vividness of demonstrating the preparation scenes, Austen achieves to vitalize the same environment for readers.

The next chapters events progress in several different ways. By reading these chapters, reader notices how the moral values are being disappeared gradually within a family.

Additionally, what happens in the absence of the dominant father, Sir Thomas questions his treatment towards his children.

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The theme of theatricality begins to be noticed clearly in the novel in Chapter 13, Volume 1. The chapter begins with the introduction John Yates, Tom's friend who accompanies Tom back to Mansfield Park. Yates enjoys performance and has been about to play. However, the play was cancelled three days before the show when one of the actors' grandmother died. Yates rushes over to Mansfield Park as he remembers that Tom had asked him to stay for a while. When Yates greets Tom, he mentions the possibility of putting on a play there. Tom is pleased, and he tells his brother and sisters about the possibilities. Yates will manage the performance, Tom announces. It would be a small show for only the estate members. Thus, t here would be no one to watch and no one to discuss it. Tom looks around the manor for a suitable location to stage the action. Finally, he chooses two of his father's rooms that are parallel to one another. There is immediate joy about this proposal, with the exception of those who think that Sir Thomas is going to be against it, including Edmund and Fanny: "I cannot agree with you," said Edmund, "I am convinced that my father would totally disprove it". He mentions especially financial issues that this play can cause. Tom assures them that little money will be invested, as they mainly do with what was available. There is the issue of scenery and other props on the stage, but Maria suggests that instead of the stage and its decorations they make it the centre of attention.

Edmund keeps arguing and hopes that his mother's objection will be expressed. Lady Bertram, who is a little sleepy throughout the whole conversation, does not object to the suggestion. Tom uses the scenario and says the play may be a fun diversion to his mother. After all, Lady Bertram was concerned about the upcoming return of her husband. The play will relieve her anxiety. Edmund then considers approaching Mrs. Norris and pleading with her to help him. Edmund, on the other hand, is surprised when Mrs. Norris arrives at the home. Mrs. Norris is fascinated with the concept and becomes animated as she considers how she can assist the young actors in their endeavours. Edmund then suggests that while the men might be okay with it, his father might be against his sisters participating. Edmund points out to Tom that, despite the fact that he and Tom put on shows all their lives, their sisters were never involved. Julia protests, claiming that she is free to do as she pleases. When Henry Crawford arrives, he speaks on behalf of his sister, who he is certain will be thrilled to participate. Fanny is the only one who steps into Edmond's shoes. She tries to comfort him by suggesting that the community may not be able to settle on a play. Tom has already proposed that they do a comedy, but his sisters prefer drama.

Chapter 14 begins with physical preparations for the play. A carpenter has been called in to make some changes to the room. Mrs. Norris has made a purchase for stage curtain material. She prepares the sewing of it until it arrives. During this time, however, no play has been chosen. Mary Crawford and Tom Bertram argue in favor of a comedy while o thers insist on performing a tragedy. They go through a list of Shakespearean plays, but they are all rejected for various reasons. The women insist on three strong female roles in the play and will not tolerate anything less. The majority of them accept that only a few characters should be in the action. When they come across a comedy, they dismiss it as being too ridiculous. They discover that they don't have enough actors to play all of the characters in tragedies when they read them.

They are wasting so much time, Tom complains. He claims that they must avoid being so nice and particular in order to find a match. He claims to be the one to lead the way. He'll take whatever part they give him as long as it's a comedy. It's possible that the character they send him would only play a minor role. The debates continue for a while and it seems that they can never reach a conclusion. Finally the play "Lover's Vow" is selected. Even after the play Lover's Vows is chosen, the young people continue to argue over who will play which role. Maria and Julia quarrel over the female lead, which is unsurprising. Fanny realizes that the cast members are unaware that the play is scandalous after reading it: "I think it exceedingly unfit for private representation and I hope you will give it up." Maria insists that they go ahead and put it up, and that anything that is "a little too warm" should be left out. Julia, for some strange reason, refuses to take part if she does not get the part she likes, opposite Henry Crawford. When she doesn't get the female lead, she leaves production, refusing to participate in any way. As the preparations for the theatrical production progress, there is a lot of uncertainty about casting. Rushworth makes a huge deal out of his small part, claiming that having to wear the blue and pink of a fop makes him uncomfortable; obviously, he feels very self-important.

In chapter 15 Edmund remains really upset about his family and friends who intend to do the play. His sister Maria appeals to him. She's too crass a job, and he doesn't want her to play it out. He asks her to read the script to get to know it better. Marie answers that she knows very well the role she chose and she doesn't see any problem in her decision. However, Edmund disagrees with her. He assures her that other people would follow her if she stands for what is morally right. If she doesn't want to participate in the presentation, others will also leave the game. However, Maria does not find the position objectionable. She tells Edmund that she knows that he is nice, but the two look completely different. Moreover, she says, she knows Julia would gladly take it over, if she gives up her half.

Edmund keeps his mind that  Maria's decision should be reconsidered. He thinks his dad doesn't approve:

Do you imagine that I could have such an idea in my head? No let your conduct be the only harangue.—Say that, on examining the part, you feel yourself unequal to it, that you find it requiring more exertion and confidence than you can be supposed to have.—Say this with firmness, and it will be quite enough.—All who can distinguish, will understand your motive.—The play will be given up, and your delicacy honoured as it ought. (Chapter 15, Volume 1)

Ms. Norris mentions all the work she has done in order to ensure a successful play. She mentions even the money spent on the ribbons she created. She takes advantage of the publicity she focuses on and adds a side note: from the stage construction she captured the young son of one of the staff in the house picking up wooden scraps. She is proud of her deep concern for the well-being of the family.

Tom, Maria, Yates, and Henry sit at a table , debating who should fill the remaining roles. Edmund declines again when Tom asks him to play a part. After that, he approaches Fanny and inquires. Fanny claims she is unable to intervene, but Tom insists she must. Mrs. Norris scolds Fanny when she refuses. She tells Fanny that she is ungrateful and that she should be more considerate, particularly because of her lower position in the family:

What a piece of work here is about nothing,-I am quite ashamed of you, Fanny, to make such a difficulty of obliging your cousins in a trifle of this sort,-So kind as they are to you!—Take the part with a good grace, and let us hear no more of the matter, I entreat.

Mary Crawford rushes to Fanny's side to comfort her as she starts to weep softly.

In chapter 16 Fanny returns to her room, disturbed by Mrs. Norris's comments to her. She dreads facing the Bertrams the next morning, knowing that Mary and Edmund may not be there to protect her. She has slept in the tiny, cramped attic room since she first arrived at Mansfield Park. She has, however, steadily transferred some of her belongings into the space one floor below her bedroom over the years. The lower level has more room. It had been used when her cousins were young, but had since been forgotten. As a result, Fanny has gradually taken over. She's gathered books and furniture that the rest of the family had thrown away in the larger space. She has plants to look after and a desk to read and write at. There's even a fireplace, but Mrs. Norris forbids Fanny from lighting a fire in it. Despite the fact that the room is always cold, Fanny appreciates the space it provides and considers it a good place to meditate. She has hurried to this space to work through the feelings she is currently feeling. She rethinks about what happened earlier in the day. She was taken aback when Tom insisted on starring in the play. She does, however, wonder if she has been honest. Mrs. Norris had previously referred to her as obstinate and ungrateful. She is unsure if this is correct. She moves her gaze to a display of gifts Tom has brought her over the years. Perhaps she needs to be more considerate of him. She's not sure if what she's done is right. Then she recalls Lady Bertram's defense of her in the past. Edmund used to be on her side as well. However, things seem to have changed. She is interrupted by a knock at the door. Edmund walks into the roomand informs her that he is seeking her feedback on a decision he is contemplated. Edmund tells Fanny that his brother Tom is insistent on getting an extra actor into the house to complete the play's cast of characters. Edmund considers this a violation of his privacy. No stranger should be allowed to be in their midst at all hours of the day or night, experiencing their private moments. To avoid this, Edmund will fill the open position in the match.

Fanny is astounded. Edmund has never been so contradictory, she has never seen him go against his better judgement. She is bewildered as to how he might accept a role in the same play that he has condemned. Edmund informs Fanny that it's for Mary Crawford's sake that he has to do it. In the part he is playing, he will be on the opposite side of her. Mary would be seriously compromised if he allows a stranger to play the part. He also needs Fanny's blessing on his behaviour. Fanny disagrees with Edmund, leading Edmund to believe that Fanny lacks empathy for Mary.

Chapter 17 opens with the description of the victory of Tom and Maria.They are silently congratulating themselves on their performance. Tom is relieved that Edmund has agreed to participate in the play. He's also relieved to discover Edmund has lowered his high expectations, despite his own dictates and doubts about the play's morality. Maria's triumph is that she has secured the leading role as well as Henry's approval. She is certain that Henry has chosen her over her sister Julia.

Tom tells Edmund that now that he's joined them, Fanny might reconsider her decision. Fanny is concerned that she will be expected to play the part, but Mrs. Grant has stepped in to help. She'll play the role that Fanny was supposed to play.

Fanny is a little envious, in a way. Mrs. Grant is praised by all for her graciousness. Fanny, on the other hand, is easily abandoned. Though Mrs. Grant has become the centre of attention, Fanny is certain that no one would notice if she returns to her bed. Furthermore, it was Mary who made the arrangements with Mrs. Grant, so Fanny must be grateful for Mary's presence on Fanny's behalf once more. Fanny's heart, on the other hand, is breaking. Edmund's feelings for Mary do not sit well with her. Fanny is overwhelmed by her insignificance.

Julia, too, is quietly feeling miserable and unappreciated. She has a feeling Maria has won Henry's heart. Julia had fallen in love with Henry, despite the fact that no one knew, and now she thinks she has no hope of winning his favor. She thinks back to when she and Maria were younger and how similar they were. They're acting more like mortal rivals now. Mrs. Grant confides in Mary that she believes Julia loves Henry. Mary assumes Henry has feelings for both Bertram sisters. When Mary share her opinion with Mrs. Grant, she disagrees with it completely . She advises Mary to talk to her brother about his feelings to avoid problems. Mrs. Grant must give Henry away if he is unable to control his emotions. Mrs. Grant is eagerly anticipating Sir Thomas's return. He is the family's real leader. Everything else falls into place while he is there. He maintains influence over his children, consoles his wife, and keeps Mrs. Norris in check. Meanwhile, Fanny, who is alone and away from the bustle of activity, notices Julia. Fanny has the impression that she and Julia are experiencing similar emotions. Both of them are depressed and abandoned. Both of their hearts are broken. Fanny, on the other hand, concludes that their relationship isn't good enough for her to confide in Julia. So, Fanny keeps her place in the family's affairs in the background.

In chapter 18, relationships and tempers are deteriorating, as the first rehearsals approach When painters are called into action to paint backgrounds for scenes, more money is expended than had been appropriated. Tom invites neighbours to sit in the audience in his ecstasy, a plan that no one has accepted.

Fanny's main contribution to the preparations is to listen to everyone's concerns. Mr. Rushworth has trouble remembering his lines, so Fanny wants to help him develop his memory. Nothing seems to be working. Fanny has to keep reminding him. None of the actors want to work with him in the rehearsal room.

Tom, who has played a variety of minor roles, is losing patience and speaking his lines too quickly. Some people say that they have an excessive number of lines. Others complain that they don't have enough. Fanny is kept occupied by her position as audience and critic, despite the fact that she is much too meek to critique any performance. Mrs. Norris informs Fanny that she can't afford to sit around and do nothing, despite the many chores she does. Mrs. Norris claims that if everybody did as little as Fanny, nothing would get done. Lady Bertram defends Fanny and then inquires about the play. Fanny refuses to justify herself and advises Lady Bertram to wait until the play is over so she can see it.

Later, Mary enters Fanny's room and expresses her embarrassment at not being able to practice a specific scene with Edmund. Fanny has read it and is terrified to see Mary and Edmund performing it. Mary's character confesses her love for Edmund's character in the scene. When another knock comes at Mary's door, she starts reading her lines. Edmund has also come to seek Fanny's assistance. Fanny's spirits begin to sag.

Mary informs Fanny and Edmund that she has snooped on another rehearsed scene, this time involving Maria and Henry. Mr. Rushworth and she had both witnessed their embrace. Mary had tried to say that it was all acting, but she wasn't sure. That evening, as rehearsals begin, the cast is informed that Mrs. Grant will be unable to attend. Her husband is ill, and she is obligated to be with him. As a result, Fanny is persuaded, against her will, to read Mrs. Grant's lines. The footsteps in the hallway are heard as they prepare to begin. Sir Thomas has returned.

Chapter 19 keeps readers looking forward to the reaction of Sir Thomas towards the events that has taken place in his absence. With his premature return to Mansfield Park, Sir Thomas shocks all. Nobody knows how Sir Thomas would respond to what they've been doing. After they have composed themselves, they all step into the rooms to welcome Sir Thomas, Tom, Edmund, Maria, Julia, Lady Bertram and Ms. Norris. Mr. Rushworth is still wondering whether he ought to go into the drawing room, when the Bertrams are gone. He remains in motion until Henry Crawford advises him to actually join the rest of the family. Then the Crawfords decide to leave and say to Yates that he is welcome to go home with them. Yates does not see why he should leave, not understanding Sir Thomas' personality. He is so involved in the play, Yates expects rehearse after a break for tea because they have to be prepared for the next show.

Once again Fanny was left behind. Her former fear of Sir Thomas is filling her mind. Now that she has to face Sir Thomas, she, like the children from Bertram, is guilty of all the changes she has made in the house for playing. Fanny fears to reunite with Sir Thomas but, recognizing that it's unavoidable, goes to the desk and opens the door. She hears the reference to her name as she enters. Sir Thomas' asking where is his "fancy fanny" astonishes her. As Fanny is standing before him, Sir Thomas looks up. He points out how much she grew up and how beautiful she was. The face of Fanny is blowing. Sir Thomas's changed, she thinks, and she can't sense it. She wondered if she ever had to be afraid of him. Or even when he was gone, she should have missed him more. Sir Thomas also questions her about her family's well-being. Fanny claims that his absence from his home made him sweeter. She's also flushed Lady Bertram, sitting by her husband. She is shocked how excited she is to have him at home. She feels so comforted to see him once more. However, Ms. Norris's feelings are mixed. She is losing, believing that now that Sir Thomas is back her strength has been significantly weakened.

The subject of the play is presented by Lady Bertram. Until this moment Sir Thomas had seen no evidence that his house was overtaken by the production. However, before Sir Thomas gets up and goes to his private rooms, he does not too much attention to this problem. When he does, he is shocked, and a lot of his former, more usual gravitational mood reappears. Yates, who has no understanding of Sir Thomas's personality, plays with him as he does with all adults of a certain age, thinking he can brush them aside when they appear in his way. Sir Thomas's attitude remains polite, yet his children can notice easily that their father has become quite irritated by his tone of voice and facial expressions.

In chapter 20 the tense in the Bertram family remains its actuality. Edmund attaches importance to see his father the next morning and discuss his role in the play. He informs his father that he was initially opposed to it, though that under the circumstances of involving a stranger, he decided to become more involved as the best way to control the situation. Fanny, Edmund claims, was the only one who objected to the idea of putting on a play in all of the discussions. Only Fanny realized how offended he would be by the production.

Sir Thomas is not interested in disciplining his children because it takes time and resources. The play would not continue, and it would be over. Carpenters arrive to dismantle the stage and reassemble Sir Thomas' place. Mrs. Norris is the only one that Sir Thomas wishes to blame. When Sir Thomas summons her to his bed, however, Mrs. Norris keeps discussing all the good things she has done while he has been away, to the point that Sir Thomas has had enough of her. Maria would not be engaged to such a decent and well-meaning man as Mr. Rushworth if it weren't for her efforts, she reminds Sir Thomas.

Yates had been out hunting all morning. When he was out on the field, he devised a strategy for approaching Sir Thomas and requesting that the play be resumed. When Yates returns to the table for breakfast with Sir Thomas, he discovers that Sir Thomas is not a man to be allowed to interfere . Therefore,  h e is the most oppressive father Yates has ever encountered. The discussion about the play topic is unexpectedly abandoned by Yates.

Maria waits for Henry to arrive at her home, meet with her father, and ask for her hand for the whole morning. She knows Henry adores her as much as she adores him. Mr. Rushworth has gone to his farm, and Maria hopes he never comes back. Maria is overjoyed to see that Dr. Grant has brought Henry with him to meet with Sir Thomas when he enters the home. Unfortunately, Maria can not hear what she expects Henry to say when he speaks. Henry questions  whether the play will proceed as scheduled. Tom informs him that the stage is being destroyed and that all traces of the planned production will be removed from the house as soon as possible. Henry claims that if there had been a need for his services, he would have stayed at the parsonage. But, since there isn't any, he'll be leaving soon. Henry claims that he must see his uncle, despite the fact that it is clear to Maria that Henry is leaving of his own volition. Maria is deeply deeply depressed.

Julia is so relieved when she learns of his departure that she feels sorry for her sister. Fanny is relieved that Henry will be departing as well. Since, s he has never been fond of him. Mrs. Norris is the only one who is bewildered. She was certain Henry would propose to Julia as his wife. Julia is scolded by Mrs. Norris for not accepting Henry's feelings.

Sir Thomas knows far too little about Henry to be impacted by his departure. Sir Thomas, on the other hand, realizes he is relieved to see Yates leave his home as he walks him to the front door.

# Analysis

Despite the fact that *Mansfield Park* appears to be Jane Austen's least inclusive or dialectical book, it has failed to achieve the critical unanimity that such an unambiguous work should allow. Despite repeated attempts to lay the groundwork for scholarly agreement, this ostensibly non-ionic novel tends to elicit contradictory responses. The question of why Austen, in championing the priggish Fanny Price, appears to dishonour her own artistic verve, appears to be answered, paradoxically, in more than one way. Recent criticism has been split between those who see *Mansfield Park* as a deeply anti-Jacobin, Christian work, and those who see it as a subtly veiled but no less potent version of the feminist or anti-authoritarian message that other Austen novels grow less subtly. One may be tempted to believe that the novel's dogma is shakier than it should be based on this discord. The aim of this essay is not to decide once and for all whether Edmund Burke or Mary Wollstonecraft is Mansfield Park's presiding genius, but to investigate the novel's central instability, the instability that makes such a decision impossible. To argue as much, however, would require demonstrating the tenacity of that conservatism, qualifying any understanding that is too quick to assert *Mansfield Park* as a text of humanistic amplitude.

One recent synthesis call in Austen criticism asks us to imagine a structure broad enough to accommodate an affirmative text with a subversive subtext. *Mansfield Park* demonstrates how perilous such a structure must be by definition. The most problematic structure in a novel that abounds in talk of structures—their erection, improvement, and dismantlement—is the improvised "theatre" set up in Mansfield Park's billiard-room.

This structure concretizes a more abstract "structure"—the theatrical episode, the textual locus of so much vital focus. According to Jonas Barish, "theatricals come charged with a mysterious iniquity that threatens explanation." The theatrical episode, the "crux of the novel," disturbs us because we don't understand why Austen would be distracted by an art form whose energies are fundamentally the same as her own. However, one might argue that it disturbs us much more insistently because it is the book's central theme—that is, because it has the ability to transcend its local context and spread perplexingly throughout the novel, just as the "theatre" at Mansfield Park quickly expands from the billiard room to include, of all places, Sir Thomas's study. His return from Antigua suddenly ends the episode, which takes up the last third of the first volume: He loses no time in destroying all signs of the theatricals, ordering the sets to be demolished and even burning every copy of *Lover's Vows*, the play chosen for private performance. Despite this violent attempt at oppression, and despite the devastation of the theatre as a location, the novel's central theme of theatricality turns out to be pervasive. We can see a process of refinement, of increasingly subtle infiltration, as we transition from a literal framework to a more metaphorical one. After outlining Sir Thomas's ruthless destruction plan, Austen slyly tells us that at least one relic of the episode has survived his wrath: Mrs. Norris has taken possession of the curtain, secretly transporting it to her cottage, "where she happened to be in desperate need of green baize." This appropriation and transformation may be a metaphor for the theatre’s adaptability, which helps it to survive and thrive in less visible ways, reaching into the most unexpected corners of the text.

However, if the change from theatre to theatricality denotes the victorious expansion of a "subversive subtext," we must define theatricality. The political implications of theatricality in *Mansfield Park* are inextricably vague, as we can see.

It is associated with Mary and Henry Crawford, the novel's most appealingly self-dramatizing protagonists, construing it in terms of urban glamor and decadence. Theatricality, on the other hand, has a less glamorous dimension, and this version turns out to be remarkably compatible with the authoritarianism represented by Sir Thomas, Mrs. Norris, Fannv, and Edmund in various wavs. The generalized, pervasive framework of theatricality starts to reveal their relationship as one of almost systemic interdependence rather than resistance, as it oscillates between affirmative and subversive poles. While an all-encompassing theatricality may seem to jeopardize the very foundations of a novel whose heroine epitomizes what Tony Tanner refers to as "immobility," theatricality is only able to spread so widely because it has certain characteristics that not only adhere to but also allow the novel's overarching conservatism.

In other words, the question isn't so much "What motivated Austen's anti-theatricalism?" as "What motivated her to generate anti-theatricalism impressions?" Theatricality in *Mansfield Park* provides the spectacle of a distinct overdetermination, alien enough to give her pause but not so alien as to avoid the uses to which Austen puts it. Yet what is it about theatricality that causes ostensibly opposing philosophies to converge on it? We note the similarity in their words as much as the difference in their tones when Fanny and Henry Crawford give their respective explanations of the theatricals. Fanny's perspective on the rehearsals is as follows:

> So far from being all satisfied and all enjoying, she found everybody requiring something they had not, and giving occasion of discontent to the others. --Everybody had a part either too long or too short; --nobody would attend as they ought, nobody would remember on which side they were to come in--nobody but the complainer would observe any directions.

Henry remembers the same nostalgic experience:

It is as a dream, a pleasant dream!" he exclaimed, breaking forth again after a few minutes musing. "I shall always look back on our theatricals with exquisite pleasure. There was such an interest, such an animation, such a spirit diffused! Everybody felt it. We were all alive. There was enjoyment, hope, solicitude, bustle, for ever' hour of the day. Always some little objection, some little doubt, some little anxiety to be got over. I never was happier.

Although one reply indicates that the detachment is perplexed, the other suggests the ruthlessness of an absolute involvement, Fannv and Henry, in terms of «disconcern» or «anxiety», describe theatricals. However, theatre is not simply an object of anxiety for Fanny and Henry but the same place of anxiety, a place that crosses its own limits to the novel's anxiety as a whole. Austen says that "she was never much more peaceful in her mind during these rehearsals" she is agitated by "a lot of uneasy, worried, apprehensive sentiments." In a confused, long-suffering state she observes the preparations. Precisely because she knows that it is less a framework to which one can find a stable outside position than the fluctuating space in which all roles find their tenuous base, Fanny is anxious for the theatre. While Henry Crawford can excel in this environment while Fanny Price may struggle, neither the libertine nor the Evangelical moralist can work outside of it. The theatre, or the theatricality by which it disperses and colonizes the rest of the book, becomes practically synonymous with the inextricable sense of all social life and all political postures in Mansfield Park. Like Henry Crawford, who despises "something like a permanence of abode," theatricality turns up unexpectedly—even in the self-effacing Fanny's inner meditations.

*Mansfield Park* is about the incursion of public ideals upon private practice, about the theatricality of daily life, in which to say, "No, indeed, I cannot act," as Fanny does, is already to perform, whether one wants to or not.

Austen's anti-theatricalism, like Fanny's, starts to appear as a futile rebellion against the theatrical imperative, futile in part because it is disingenuous, considering the degree to which *Mansfield Park*'s political order is dependent on a certain theatricality. Actual theatres can be constrained spaces that can be destroyed, but theatricality is everywhere but recognizable nowhere in its most generalized form. If the Tory mind is paranoid as a result of this invisibility, it also allows for more effective policing of the social practices that uphold power. Austen isn't the only one who notices this uncertainty. *Mansfield Park*, which was published in 1814, is part of a larger cultural debate about theatricality, influenced by lay writers whose disagreements seem much more intractable than those between Fanny Price and Henry Crawford. These real-life conservatives and progressives, including Fanny and Henrv, share a striking kinship when it comes to the problem of theatricality, which seems to inspire not only a slew of tellingly recurring images but also a certain rhetorical oscillation in writings that are otherwise divided along political lines.

# The point of views of Thomas Gisborne, Hannah More and Hazzlit about theatricality

In this chapter of the thesis references to several authors are made by highlighting the key points of their valuable comments about theatricality. Thomas Gisborne's point of view about theatricality in late eighteenth and early nineth century is shared and analysed carefully in the first section of this chapter. *Enquiry into the Duties of Female Sex* (1797) by Thomas Gisborne foreshadows Austen's insight into the theatre's inability to remain within limits. Gisborne's slightly disorienting syntax hints at the ambiguity that characterizes contemporary discussions of theatricality, because it's not clear at first whether the vicious character will infect the youthful mind because it's adorned with refined manners and the like, or whether it will infect the mind despite its adornment.

In the next section Hannah More's point of view about theatricality is discussed. Hannah More criticizes the theatricalization of private life more harshly than Gisborne. More defines theatricality as an illness in its advanced stages, at least among women of rank and fortune, where Gisborne sees it as simply a possible danger—as the aggravation of otherwise stable "tendencies"—rather than a potential danger. Mrs. More advises heightened vigilance in the face of such disasters. However, if her tone is especially melodramatic-apparent translation changes serve to corrupt the mind "more definitely, but more slowly"-some of this straining to compare less with more and better with worse can mean that she has become a prisoner of what she would produce. Her rhetoric of mistrust is based on a paradoxical logic, in which quantitative distinctions vanish and everything becomes the polar opposite.

The last section is based on the ideas of Hazlitt about theatricality. Gisborne, More, and Hazlitt work together to define the disease environment in which Mansfield Park takes place. Hazlitt undertakes to offer actors and actors a liberal paean, while also being driven towards

authoritarianism. Unlike the legality of theatricality, the issue appears to impose an almost inexorable derision.

## Thomas Gisborne’s point of view about theatricality in late eighteenth and early nineth century.

*Enquiry into the Duties of Female Sex* (1797) by Thomas Gisborne foreshadows Austen's insight into the theatre’s inability to remain within limits. “He knows nothing of human nature," Gisborne warns, "who thinks that a frigid moral, delivered at the conclusion, or to be deduced from the events of the drama, will protect the youthful mind from the infecting power of a vicious character, adorned with polished manners, wit, fortitude, and kindness, by a frigid moral, delivered at the conclusion, or to be deduced from the events of the drama." (Gisborne 1797: 171-172) Gisborne's slightly disorienting syntax already hints at the ambiguity that characterizes contemporary discussions of theatricality, because it's not clear at first whether the vicious character will infect the youthful mind because it's adorned with refined manners and the like, or whether it will infect the mind despite its adornment. On closer examination, it appears that Gisborne is referring to the former; in theatrical discourse, the polish that would act as an antidote to poison is often confused with the poison itself. Infection metaphors inevitably lead to seduction metaphors. The "infection" of acting "spread as those things always spread you know," as Tom Bertram explains to his father to justify the theatrical scheme. However, Gisborne's language, which is a little less hazy than Tom's, indicates that "those things always spread" because the poison might fool us into thinking it's the cure. After all, Austen describes acting as both an "infection" and a "charm," and what "spreads" is nothing more than a seduction play.

When Gisborne discusses why young women are especially vulnerable to the enchantments of playacting, he reveals the significance of this mixed metaphor:

A propensity to imitation is natural to the human mind, and is attended with various effects highly favourable to human happiness . . . This propensity shows itself with especial strength in the female sex. Providence, designing from the beginning that the manner of life to be adopted 1y women should in many respects ultimately depend, not so much on their own deliberate choice, as on the interest and convenience of the parent, of the husband, or of some other connection; has implanted in them a remarkable tendency to conform to the wishes and examples of those for whom they feel a warmth of regard, and even of all those with whom they are in familiar habits of intercourse . . . As the mind, in obeying the impulse of this principle, no less than in following any other of its native or acquired tendencies, is capable of being ensnared into errors and excesses; the season of youth, the season when the principle itself is in its greatest strength, and when it has vet derived few lessons from reflection and experience, is the time when error and excesses are most to be apprehended. (Gisborne 1797: 115-117)

Young women are much more vulnerable to corruption than young men, because their extraordinarily high propensity to imitate can easily make them sick. Acting, which is essentially imitation, seduces by narrowing the gap between negative and positive words, such as poison and cure, illness, and wellbeing. Of course, if the latent theatricality of female sex, "implanted" in them by "Providence," is properly regulated, it can have a beneficial effect, ensuring that they can conform to the desires and examples of their (male) superiors. Obviously, a careful patrolling of the border between "good" acting and "poor" acting is necessary. Acting, on the other hand, frustrates attempts to define-let alone patrol-the boundary between the safely domestic and the menacingly international, between the private and the public, between the inside and the outside, in addition to blurring the boundaries between illness and health or poison and cure. After claiming that Providence has inserted the principle of imitation in the female sex, Gisborne continues to be undecided on whether this principle is native or acquired.

## The point of view of Hannah More about Theatricality

Hannah More criticizes the theatricalization of private life more harshly than Gisborne. More defines theatricality as an illness in its advanced stages, at least among women of rank and fortune, where Gisborne sees it as simply a possible danger—as the aggravation of otherwise stable "tendencies"—rather than a potential danger: "If a young lady's life used to imitate that of a confectioner, it now resembles that of an actress; the mornings are all preparation, and the evenings are all performance." Mrs. Inchbald, the translator and adaptor of Kotzebue's Lovers' Vows, is among the "new apostles of infidelity and immorality" who have intensified their assaults on female virtue by enlisting the satirical services of German literature, according to More. Mrs. More indicates that in many of these translations, some stronger excerpts, which, although well received in Germany, may have excited disgust in England, are wholly omitted, in order that the mind might be more definitely, but more painfully, prepared for the full effect of the same poison to be applied in a stronger degree at another time. (More.1:42). Mrs. Inchbald defends her omissions and changes in the preface to her translation of Lovers' Vows by citing her own dramatic savvy, her sense of what will work in Germany but not in England. Mrs. More, on the other hand, believes that such reforms are intended to weaken rather than acknowledge the distinctions between the two nationalities.

The poison of theatricality, as in so much right-wing literature of the day, is inextricably linked to the poison of foreignness—specifically, the new ideologies threatening to come to England from the continent. The immune system of the body politic is destroyed by theatricality, which, like most other immune systems, is based on the capacity to differentiate between native and foreign, self and other. The most devious translation is one that seems so familiar that it prevents us from recognizing and repelling the unfamiliar substance.

The poison's seductive strength is owed to its manipulative folksiness rather than its shiny exterior. "They seem to belong to us-they seem to be part of ourselves," Edmund says of the Crawfords, which is an interesting way for Jane Austen to signal the seriousness of the theatrical infection . If those intruders have managed to fool Edmund, Mansfield Park's immune system has evidently failed.

Mrs. More advises heightened vigilance in the face of such disasters. However, if her tone is especially melodramatic-apparent translation changes serve to corrupt the mind "more definitely, but more slowly"-some of this straining to compare less with more and better with worse can mean that she has become a prisoner of what she would produce. Her rhetoric of mistrust is based on a paradoxical logic, in which quantitative distinctions vanish and everything becomes the polar opposite. Isn't this failure to distinguish between things one of the main signs of the theatrical disease? Even as she rails about upper class young women's resemblance to actors, More's writing is replete with dramatic references, relating to the roles that a young Christian woman would "perform" on many occasions. Mrs. More was a playwright, a mentor and enthusiastic admirer of Garrick, and a member in good standing of the London theatrical community earlier in her career; independent of her current sympathies, her writing carries the traces of this history. (Jones 1952:25-40) However, where Gisborne may be able to discern between moral and unethical conduct, More's modern militancy rules out this idea, as if to conceal its own infection. The effort to place oneself outside the nervous realm of playacting, once again, creates more fear, more proof of one's inextricable involvement in that world. Gisborne seems to be more willing to accept what More prefers to deny—that all social interactions entail a degree of theatricality.

Yet as we've shown, acknowledging the contagion doesn't mean ignoring the consequences: Gisborne's vocabulary, with its own, admittedly milder inconsistencies, joins More's in highlighting the predicament of an authoritarianism forced to interact with movements it would rather control or pronounce on from afar. In the Mansfield production of Kotzebue's play, Edmund Bertram has to fall into their midst in order to stop the spread of the theatricals, playing the extremely compromising part of Mary Crawford's lover in order to stop the spread of the theatricals. However, if Gisborne and More exemplify the complexities of a certain populism in dealing with theatricality, a liberal and more intellectual writer will treat the topic with something akin to urbane equanimity. This approach is reflected in Hazlitt's essay *On Actors and Acting*(1817), a witty and vibrant rebuttal to the stage's detractors. Surprisingly, Hazlitt's defence contains some of the same instabilities that we've seen in the critics' language. Whereas Gisborne and More accuse the theatre—at least in its current form—of promoting immorality, Hazlitt praises it as the "only teacher of values" because it presents the "truest and most intelligible image of life." When he goes on to explain how theatrical mimesis affects this spiritual schooling, things get a little more complicated. He mentions that theatrical mimesis draws our hate for the vain and depraved, and our reverence for the amiable and generous; and if it dresses the more seductive vices with borrowed graces of wit and fancy, even these graces serve as a distraction from the coarser poison of experience and poor example, and sometimes avoid or carry off the infection by inoculating the mind with a certain taste and beauty. (Hazzlit 1964: 23) Seduction and infection appear to evoke each other almost immediately, just as they did in the previous texts, but their relationship is more complicated here. If polish is not the poison but the cure for Hazlitt, these "borrowed graces of wit and fancy" seem to be part of a homeopathic program.

Since, as Gisborne and More would point out, wit and fancy, or the "taste and charm" of which they inoculate the spirit, may become seductive vices in and of themselves. Insofar as he compares the dramatic graces with the coarser toxin of vices not wearing this borrowed clothing, Hazlitt continues to share this viewpoint. However, the mixed metaphor may be a sign of something more serious. While Hazlitt begins by affirming mimesis' morally instructive properties, the method he is now explaining has nothing to do with mimesis or teaching, but rather with a kind of mind-seduction. Wit and fancy "prevent or carry off the infection" of the mind by seducing it into other, less coarse vices by adorning rather than imitating fact. The ego is not only seduced, but it is also diminished, relegated to the status of a passive entity that can only be diverted toward the lesser of two evils.

## Hazlitt’s point of view about theatricality in *Mansfield Park*

Gisborne, More, and Hazlitt work together to define the disease environment in which *Mansfield Park* takes place. However, placing the novel in this light does not inherently lead to a better understanding of Jane Austen's true feelings regarding the theatre. Most of the criticism of *Mansfield Park* focuses on trying to figure out what the author's intention was, but the argument of the preceding survey is that theatricality messes with intentions. Whether on the left or on the right, writers who are going to clarify the issue will soon be puzzled by unforeseen complexities. Hazlitt undertakes to offer actors and actors a liberal paean, while also being driven towards authoritarianism. Unlike the legality of theatricality, the issue appears to impose an almost inexorable derision. Despite what we might think about rightward drifts, our Evangelical authors' texts reveal a surprising restlessness. Gisborne succeeds in calling for a careful control of the theatre impulses to demonstrate that such monitoring is unworkable. In its turn, the sermon against theatricality as the enemy proceeds unintentionally to show how far a speech can take to cover up the signs of its occupation. *Mansfield Park* dramatizes the conservative appropriation of theatre types as a novel on theatricality and how these forms jeopardize their own interests, threatening to make captors hostage.

What are the ways in which conservatism appropriates theatricality? We could detect a homeopathic logic in the novel, if we follow Hazlitt's lead. Sir Thomas is a cunningly manipulative patriarchal authority who keeps everybody in their positions. He would not hesitate, for example, to exile Fanny to Portsmouth in the name of a "medicinal project upon understanding, which he would regard as currently diseased.

Though the theatrical scheme appears to be a defiance of his authority since it was conceived and started while he was away, and despite the possibility of his rejection, the theatricals serve a different purpose, as a kind of therapeutic project on *Mansfield Park* itself, which a conscientious authority would also consider diseased. *Mansfield Park* already has an overabundance of theatricality before the Crawfords arrive. Indeed, the government in question seems to be more of a parody of authority than true authority. Mrs. Norris, who has a "love of directing" and sees the household as a showcase for her own skills in management and domestic economy, has been given much too much influence by Sir Thomas. It's no surprise that she becomes an active supporter and supervisor of the theatricals. She's already aided in the schooling, or miseducation, of Sir Thomas's daughters, Maria and Julia, who typify the kind of "accomplished" young women Hannah More rails against:

The Miss Bertrams were now fully established among the belles of the neighbourhood; and as they joined to beauty and brilliant acquirements, a manner naturally easy, and carefully formed to general civility and obligingness, they possessed its favour as well as its admiration. Their vanity was in such good order, that they seemed to be quite free from it, and gave themselves no airs; while the praises attending such behaviour, secured, and brought round by their aunt, served to strengthen them in believing they had no faults.

Maria and Julia, who are actresses in every way except the title, hide their illness. The height of arrogance is to "seem very free from it," and the perfection of theatrical artifice is an obvious artlessness, just as the poison of subversive ideas works best when delivered in a familiar disguise for Mrs. More.

Given the situation, why not try to treat like with like, "treating" theatricality with more theatricality? Sir Thomas, obviously, has nothing to do with the production. I'm not implying that he orchestrates and directs it from under the ground. He will, however, portray the authority behind the book—namely, Jane Austen herself—as the book's major authority. It is his obligation to "authorize" various activities and relationships at Mansfield Park, as he notes at the beginning, and this responsibility echoes a more basic authorizing. (Gilbert and Gubar 1979: 3-99).

Probably Austen not only writes but also authorizes the dramatic episode, laying out a therapeutic project or experiment on *Mansfield Park*'s diseased body politic and, by implication, the English gentry as a whole in terms of narrative structure. The Crawfords—and, to a lesser degree, Mr. Yates—would help to shock Mansfield Park's structure into defending itself against such intruders.

The theatricals would be the most disturbing symptom of the infection they bear, but this attack would end with a return to health. Indeed, the episode seems to have had some of the desired impact, as it concludes with Yates' expulsion, the Crawfords' retreat, and the departure of Maria and Julia, and begins both Fanny's rise and Mrs. Norris' decline.

The only problem with this scheme is that it ignores the significant gap between the end of the theatrical episode and the end of the novel itself: two entire volumes stand between Mansfield Park's ostensible purgation and full recovery from the evils that have afflicted it. The disease persists, no matter how adventurous the homeopathic experiment. Since the Crawfords are only repelled by Sir Thomas's displeasure for a few pages, their absence is only temporary.

Furthermore, Edmund makes his comment on how the Crawfords are immediately following this drastic attempt at cleaning "It seems that they are a part of us. Sir Thomas, instead of resolving the family's identity crisis, exacerbates it by attempting to persuade Fanny to marry Henry Crawford. Sir Thomas does not seem to consider the Crawfords as the true "daemons of the piece," as the primary perpetrators of the murders "bustle and confusion of acting". Mary and Henry, like Maria and Julia, whose ego is so advanced that it hides it, are such skilled performers that they know how to hide their dramatic bousv-ness. As a result, they are quickly readmitted, although Mr. Yates, who "bustles" more visibly, is expelled. Of all, Yates isn't just a scapegoat; after all, it was he who spread the acting infection from Ecclesford to Mansfield in the first place. However the narrative's deeper reasoning supports the sanctioning of a veiled theatricality over an explicit one: the theatricals function not as a homeopathic cure—though Austen may wish us to think so—but as a "diversion," as Hazlitt may put it, from the subtler and more thorough theatricality that continues long after Sir Thomas has reclaimed his research.

Jane Austen draws our attention away from the theatricality in order for us to miss how important it is to the restoration of Mansfield Park. The explanation why the Crawfords, who seem to belong to us, and the bustling Mrs. Norris, who "seemed to be a member of" Sir Thomas, are not expelled until the end of the novel is not because theatricality takes too long to kill, but because theatricality takes so long to take effect.

By the end of the book, these characters have done such a good job of "implanting" theatricality that they no longer need to be at Mansfield: they have outlived their usefulness rather than overstayed their welcome. The homeopathic experiment, which is a kind of sideshow, fails because it was never meant to succeed.

*Mansfield Park* is alive with theatricality before, during, and after the theatrical episode. But are there distinctions between the Miss Bertrams' theatricality and the Crawfords' theatricality, or between the Crawfords' theatricality and Fanny's theatricality? Whereas Fannvy's cousins represent a dangerously centrifugal sociability, Fanny establishes a stubborn and almost impenetrable inwardness at the other end of the narrative spectrum. Mary and Henry Crawford are not so much in the middle of these two extremes as they are at odds with the very dichotomy on which this model is based. Mary, for example, has been the subject of several agonizing discussions between Fanny and Edmund, in which they start figuring out whether her apparent irreverence is due to some deep fault in her character or is simply a product of the company she keeps. We can understand Fanny and Edmund's confusion: on the one hand, Mary seems to have real warmth and affection for others; on the other hand, Austen also stresses the tremendous amount of technique that underpins this show, such as when Mary takes great pains to tell everyone what he or she needs to hear at Fanny's coming-out party. She causes Maria and Julia to shame with her artful artlessness, seducing not only Edmund but also many a suspicious, if not cantankerous, critic. (Austen 1952: 155-80)

Her brother, on the other hand, is an even better performer, who seamlessly blends comedy and seriousness. As a result, Fanny, whose mind only accepts either/or distinctions, is baffled by his amorous actions toward her:

How could she have excited serious attachment in a man, who had seen so many, and been admired b)v so many, and flirted with so many, infinitely her superiors-who seemed so little open to serious impressions, even where pains had been taken to please him-who thought so slightly, so carelessly, so un- feelingly on all such points-who was everything to everybody, and seemed to find no one essential to him? . . . Everything might be possible rather than serious attachment or serious approbation of it toward her. She had quite convinced herself of this before Sir Thomas and Mr. Crawford joined them.

The difficulty was in maintaining the conviction quite so absolutely after Mr. Crawford was in the room; for once or twice a look seemed forced on her which she did not know how to class among the common meaning; in any other man at least, she would have said that it meant something very earnest, very pointed. But she still tried to believe it no more than what he might often have expressed towards her cousins or fifty other women.

Henry, an inveterate role player who is incapable of understanding what he means. How does such semiotic promiscuity coexist with Fanny's invocation of "seriousness"? Crawford, on the other hand, is an outlier in that he not only blends role-playing with honesty, but also shows sincerity as a result of role-playing. Fanny is perplexed by Crawford because she believes that if one is not serious, one must be behaving, manipulating norms rather than speaking from the heart. Austen's indirect libre style, on the other hand, reveals more than Fanny's consciousness can contain: words and actions that one can class among the common sense or place into a traditional slot are those that express honesty, not those that lack it. Henry reveals seriousness as a product of artifice and conventionality, despite the fact that he appears to personify an illegal deviation from the standard of seriousness into the no-man's-land of artifice and conventionality. He is the outlier who infects the standard.

Furthermore, what is contagious about Henry isn't the uncontrollable indecision that Fanny sees in him, but something eerily similar to the values of hierarchy and propriety that we associate with a character like Sir Thomas. Since, despite the fact that Henry joins the novel trailing clouds of indecision—as befits one as a "ontological floater"—the authoritarian appropriation of theatricality seeks to demystify it, to move its emphasis away from glamorous excess and toward a more pedestrian trading in such codified procedures.

The conquest of the Crawfords is a key intermediate stage in the novel's ideological conflict. Because, if Mary and Henry represent the anarchy of the unbounded self at first, they magnify Maria and Julia's objectionable theatricality, who, as Sir Thomas eventually admits, "had never been properly taught to govern their inclinations and tempers." The victory of Fanny at the end of the novel represents the triumph of governance over a rogue country, but the demonization of Mary and Henry marks a turning point in the battle. Surely, we've described the Bertram sisters' most distinguishing characteristic as artful artlessness, but their theatricality is too dispersed, too outward-directed, to conform to the novel's centripetal ethos. The task of the novel's middle section is to stage the theatricalization of the self in such a way that theatricality is submerged in the form of rigorously inculcated habits of mind and modes of response. *Mansfield Park*, on the other hand, attempts to go backwards from Gisborne's "theatrical young ladies, ensnared in errors and excesses," to the latent actresses whose "propensity for imitation, carefully shaped and supervised, becomes the very assurance of their virtuous "conformity." The Crawfords allow this corrective movement from the theatrically extroverted Maria and Julia to the theatrically introverted Fanny by lending themselves to a demonstration of how the theatrical self can be redefined.

Fanny's involuntary immersion in the production as Henry reads aloud from Shakespeare, for example, signifies more than just the transitory power of actor over spectator. Reading has always been a way for Fanny to avoid the public attention that comes with acting. Fanny withdraws into the chill of her fireless room if the eroticism of the rehearsals becomes too much for her claustral sensibility, where her books provide the solace of silent and strictly spiritual intercourse. It's not shocking that during her greatest crisis during the theatrical episode-the stage at which she almost succumbs to the company's request that she read the part of the Cottager's wife-Fanny can't stop thinking about going back to her room.

It may be argued that theatricality is not the same as conventionality, and that Fanny, though thinking in cliches, does not accept the theatrical imperative. However, the thesis of this paper is that, in the case of *Mansfield Park*, theatricality is so closely associated with conventionality that the two words become interchangeable.

The move from metaphors of infection and seduction to metaphors of debt and repayment exemplifies how theatricality-as-conventionality has replaced theatricality-as-subversion. By the end of the book, an omniscient authority has sufficiently subjugated the universe to the point that it can be said to own its subjects in the same way as a traditional utterance or gesture owns a defined and stable meaning. By marrying Edmund rather than Henry Crawford, Fanny aids Sir Thomas in consolidating his empire and preventing his land from being dispersed by outsiders. "Sir Thomas saw repeated, and for ever repeated justification to rejoice in what he had done for them all," she says, affirming repetition over difference and legitimizing Sir Thomas' patriarchal program. After the disappointments of his own daughters' grievous mismanagement, he finally sees Fanny as a lucrative return on his investment. Fanny was just what he was looking for in a daughter. His generous kindness had been providing him with a great deal of warmth. His generosity paid off richly.

Indeed, reading the novel's final chapter, one comes to the conclusion that the protagonist is Sir Thomas himself, or the "governing body" that he serves, rather than Fanny. Fanny and Edmund live happily ever after, but only because they want to return to the authority that created them. As previously stated, Sir Thomas can be seen as Jane Austen's agent insofar as both tend to support the strengthening of a conservative social order. However, it is only here, where this order seems to have triumphed over the powers of subversion, that authority begins to seem strangely vulnerable.

*Mansfield Park*'s lesson seems to be that satirical theatricality can only be repressed, briefly neutralized, by a deliberate attempt of demystification. This process is possible precisely because theatricality is a self-divided collection of activities capable of serving both reactionary and subversive ends, rather than a single, unitary phenomenon. If it can represent both, it can deceive both, providing at best a shaky investment in whatever version of truth it has been hired to promote. *Mansfield Park* has been lauded as a psychological study that exposes the impurity of even the most noble intentions, but it also serves as a political examination, revealing the inherent contradictions of every ideological stance that appropriates theatricality for its own ends. This argument should be illustrated with a final example. As Edmund decides that his censorious position must be abandoned in order to participate in the theatricals, he attempts to convince Fanny and himself that this about-face only creates the appearance of inconsistency. If he doesn't play the romantic lead opposite Mary Crawford, he explains, anyone from beyond the immediate circle would. As a result, he must behave in such a way that he "can be the means of restricting the business's exposure, of limiting the show, of concentrating our folly. Of course, his folly is concentrated, not just in the sense of being constrained, but also in the sense of being amplified. Edmund loses some of his moral paragon status as a result of his participation in the theatrical scheme, earning the disapproval of both Fanny and his father.He might honestly want to "limit the display," but he might also want to show his affection to Mary Crawford. Although acting in what he believes is his father's best interests, he is able to tolerate some of his own ideas, which may be at odds with the maintenance of law and order. Edmund's erratic conduct threatens to sulvert authority itself. Jane Austen summons Sir Thomas back to Mansfield Park in the face of this emergency, so that authority could attempt to include what might disrupt it once more.

# *Mansfield Park* and Kotzebue's *Lover's Vow*

## Jane Austen's Reflections on English Sense and German Sensibility

This chapter aims to discuss Jane Austen's Reflections on English Sense and German Sensibility. Austen's constant sensitivity to detail, as well as her implicit understanding of sensibility in general, and, Augustus von Kotzebue, one of its leading German exponents, cannot be adequately represented in such readings of the book. Her treatment of *Lovers' Vows* in *Mansfield Park* is a subtle study of both the causes and consequences of the play's extraordinary success among the English at the end of the eighteenth century, an examination very close in purpose and outcome to modern reception studies. Austen delivers a balanced, witty, retrospective appraisal of the importance of the Germanophilia that afflicted the English during her lifetime in *Mansfield Park*: a transient threat to English norms, she decides, but ultimately a way of putting certain norms to the test. Hans Robert Jauss and his colleague Wolfgang Iser, modern receipt scholars, agree that texts may either break or strengthen norms, but that both is more likely to derive from specific types of reader actions.

Additionally, this part of the thesis explores the reason of Austen's choice of play and its impacts to *Mansfield Park.* Austen aims to use, rather than misuse, Kotzebue's play in her novel: Far from extolling sexual liberty, *Lovers' Vows* reveals the viciousness of unethical behaviour and its miserable repercussions.... As a result, it is not *Lovers' Vows* that poses a threat to *Mansfield Park.* Secondly, the English players are at the middle of Austen's goal in this scenario, rather than the German players: the play miscarries not because of its inherent existence and consistency, but because of the incorrigible nature of the main performers—Henry, Maria, Mary

Jane Austen, as her heroines, is often challenged by her friends' insistence on sticking to first thoughts. They accept, considering their varying approaches, that Austen is constitutionally anti-sentimental, referring to her witty satire aimed towards the literature of sensibility in her early writings. Austen's views are characterized by "inherent skepticism," "cold-blooded judgment,"occasional malice," and "a cynical evaluation of human nature," according to John Halperin's profile of Austen. If Austen is interpreted in this sense, *Mansfield Park* becomes a troublesome text; for its heroine Fanny Price is "all sensibility," an unequivocal woman of emotion, moved to action mainly by her many romantic attachments to places and individuals, as Austen's circle of friends understood right away. The anti-sentimental school of Austen criticism aims to concentrate on the novel's theatrical episode rather than the protagonist, whom they see as either ironic or imperfect. Sir Thomas Bertram's decision to burn all copies of a nostalgic German play that his children and friends had intended to stage at Mansfield reflects Austen's view to them: a rejection of sensibility as a threat to one's own dignity. Austen's constant sensitivity to detail, as well as her implicit understanding of sensibility in general, and, Augustus von Kotzebue, one of its leading German exponents, cannot be adequately represented in such readings of the book.

Her treatment of *Lovers' Vows* in *Mansfield Park* is a subtle study of both the causes and consequences of the play's extraordinary success among the English at the end of the eighteenth century, an examination very close in purpose and outcome to modern reception studies. Austen delivers a balanced, witty, retrospective appraisal of the importance of the Germanophilia that afflicted the English during her lifetime in *Mansfield Park*: a transient threat to English norms, she decides, but ultimately a way of putting certain norms to the test. Hans Robert Jauss and his colleague Wolfgang Iser, modern receipt scholars, agree that texts may either break or strengthen norms, but that both is more likely to derive from specific types of reader actions.

In Jauss's words, the Crawfords and Bertram daughters exhibit innocent, pre-reflective reader behaviour, demonstrating a level of identification with the text that is comparable to "cultic involvement.". They become the protagonists they portray, even if only for their own sophisticated reasons, and this permanently changes their lives. Using the classic examples of Don Quixote and Werther, Jauss labels certain responses to a text "pathological,"especially if they are not followed by any subsequent reflection. Edmund and Fanny, on the other hand, are more enthusiastic readers. They are initially horrified by *Lovers' Vows* and categorically condemn it, earning them the undeserved status as spiritual rigorists. But, as Iser points out, readers' initial responses do not have to be their final ones. They become eager to speculate about the play despite initially ignoring it as a challenge to their beliefs. They dissect scenes, players' motivations, and their own motivations, being divided against one another and themselves in the process. Then, when they express their final thoughts on the topic, it's clear that both their norms and their relationship have been strengthened significantly. Kotzebue's play has prompted them to consider ethical issues, which is one of the highest goals that any literary work should achieve, according to Jauss and Iser. (Reinstein 1983: 269-83)

Austen is a precise Aristotelian in populating her works, as Gilbert Ryle states in his *Jane Austen and the Moralists*. She identifies the precise type of character of which she is concerned, as well as the exact degree of that quality, by comparing it to the same quality in various degrees, simulations of the quality, and deficiencies of it. The submerged tradition in Austen's novels is essentially the earlier sensibility literature ,however by the end of the eighteenth century, moralists like Hannah More were carefully discriminating between "excess" or "false" sensibility and "right" or "actual" sensibility. Correct sensibility, with its acute vulnerability to immediate circumstances, is an essential condition for exercising responsible moral choice, according to Austen. (Moler 1968: 27) Jean Hagstrum recently stressed the importance of such sensibility to Austen's protagonists .In comparison, Austen's antagonists often lack sensibility to differing degrees. They, like the mean Isabella Thorpe and Lucy Steele, feign its appearance at their worst. Such differences remain at the heart of the perceptions that underpin the characters in *Mansfield Park*. False sensibility is demonstrated by Mary Crawford and Mrs. Norris; excess is demonstrated by the Price family, lack by the Bertram parents; and correct sensibility is expressed in this novel by Edmund Bertram, who was kind as a child, and his tender-hearted cousin Fanny. They both show many of the traits of genuine sensibility: Sensitivity to others, good literature, and nature; pity and kindness; and a natural humility and an often-debilitating propensity to silence. Anything else Austen's inclusion of the nostalgic Kotzebue play in their story may say, it cannot be interpreted as a blanket dismissal of sensibility. Is it a criticism of Kotzebue as a purveyor of deceptive sensibility? Even that is improbable. *The Inefficacy of Lovers' Vows* by Dvora Zelicovici argues persuasively that the general standard of conduct ruling Kotzebue's play is essentially the one governing *Mansfield Park*; in doing so, it departs from previous interpretations by making two main assumptions.(Zelicovici 1983: 531-32)

To continue, Austen aims to use, rather than misuse, Kotzebue's play in her novel: "Far from extolling sexual liberty, *Lovers' Vows* reveals the viciousness of unethical behaviour and its miserable repercussions.... As a result, it is not *Lovers' Vows* that poses a threat to *Mansfield Park.* The true challenge in both works is chic society's wrong ideals and its insufficient focus on pity and self-restraint" (Zelicovici 1983: 530-32). Second, and closely related to the first point, the English players are at the middle of Austen's goal in this scenario, rather than the German players: the play miscarries not because of its inherent existence and consistency, but because of the incorrigible nature of the main performers—Henry, Maria, Mary. (Zelicovici 1983:537).

Zelicovici might have added further parallels between Kotzebue's plays and Austen's novels: their realism, for example, their affinity for social comedies about the mores and etiquette of the landed gentry, or, more pertinent to the interests of this essay, their shared emphasis on marriages of love and the woman's right to choose in matrimony. In the key scene of *Lovers' Vows* , the chaplain Anhalt paints a vision of happy marriage that Austen could hardly find objectionable ; and an image of an unhappy marriage that recalls many of Austen's mismatched partners, including the Bennets, Allens, Palmers, and Prices, to name a few. And the obedient heroine Fanny objects to the character of Kotzebue's heroine Amelia as "totally unacceptable for home presentation". Nonetheless, she sounds remarkably similar to Amelia in her defence of her right to decline Henry Crawford's marriage proposal . While Zelicovici's article falls short of drawing those comparisons, it points in a hopeful new direction, acknowledging that Austen may have invoked a Kotzebue play to recognise and con- template his formidable influence over her contemporaries. In *Mansfield Park*, Joseph Litvak's latest essay on the broader issue of theatricality stresses the importance of play and refines Zelicovici's image of the dynamics of the relationship between an author and her source materials.

For Litvak, even if some Mansfield Park residents (particularly Sir Thomas, Fanny, and Edmund) reject the allure of *Lovers' Vows* to some degree, in a broader context, they all appropriate theatricality for their own purposes. Here Sir Thomas must be "a cunningly manipulative authority". Fanny and, to a lesser degree, Edmund, in order to be angels who fulfil their duties flawlessly, whose histrionic talents are all the more regrettable because they are hidden, "submerged in the form of vigorously inculcated habits of mind and modes of response" . *Mansfield Park*, according to Litvak, is a novel about the theatricality of daily life, in which Fanny's reactions already means to play, whether one wishes to or not. Austen's starts to appear as a futile rebellion against the dramatic imperative-futile in large part because disingenuous, considering the extent to which the political order of *Mansfield Park* relies on a certain theatricality (Litvak 1986:33).

Although the present essay completely agrees with Litvak's assertion that *Mansfield Park* has a lot to do with theatre, it makes no assumptions about the novel's self-contradiction or the futility or dishonesty of Austen's anti-theatrical protest. It claims that, on a more concrete basis, Mansfield Park is about the English obsession for German sentimental drama, as represented by Kotzebue, and on that level, the novel works to provide its readers with a clear-eyed evaluation of the causes and consequences of that mania. Around the same time, it works to liberate at least some of its characters from romantic theatricality, allowing them to discover more about their companions, themselves, and their ideals. In contrast to Litvak's article, this one is based on the premise that the narrative voice of *Mansfield Park* is not actually stuck within the discourse of romantic theatricality that it evokes, but instead tries to make its own light, analytic-comic escape. The first of the remaining three parts of this essay examines Kotzebue's play and its English critics to include a brief sketch of the expectations that Austen faced when she wrote *Mansfield Park*; the other two examine Austen's initial observations into Kotzebue's success in the English provinces.

L. F. Thompson, author of one of the few full-length reviews of Kotzebue's reception in his own day, emphasizes Kotzebue's status as an eighteenth-century boy, a "cosmopolitan and a rationalist." He didn't so much create new movements as he did partake in emerging ones, and one of the most noticeable of those trends was sensibility. His *Lovers' Vows* is a collection of romantic literature from the time period. Its central plot, which involves an oppressed lower-class heroine Agatha, a guilt-driven aristocratic libertine Baron Wildenhaim, and their emotionally charged reunion late in the play, is reminiscent of Richardson's Pamela. Their plot unfolds in a series of emotionally charged scenes: Agatha, coming home after a twenty-year absence, is turned out of the nearby inn when the landlord learns she is sick and penniless; her only son Frederick, who is on leave from the army, discovers her on the highway while looking for a birth certificate. These circumstances compel her to admit that he is not her son; weak but kind cottagers befriend them; and the Baron, meanwhile, agonizes in constant soliloquy about his youthful deception of Agatha. When Frederick learns he is the Baron's son, the Baron's first desire is to find and beg for forgiveness the mother.

What should be evident by now is that Austen was far from alone in her speculations about Kotzebue. Her contemporaries were concerned about his disruption to English traditions, and commentators have since been perplexed by the paradox of his English fame. *Mansfield Park* tackles all these issues, both consequences and causes in a typical Austen middle ground. The reasons, according to Austen's book, may be overstated and eradicable, and the consequences, to some degree, may be beneficial. If German romantic drama undermines some English values in the short term, it has the potential to clarify certain values in the long run, the most important of which is correct sensibility.

Literary historians have typically used one of two theories to clarify the mystery of Kotzebue's fame in England: a temporary deficiency of fresh, high-quality English plays, or a temporary loss of taste among English theatregoers. *Mansfield Park* prevents any exaggeration or simplification. With Shakespeare in its library, the Bertram house has no shortage of available content.

However, Bertrams and Crawfords reject Shakespeare on practical rather than artistic grounds. His plays do not have a huge number of female characters. "They wanted a piece with very few characters in all, but every character was first-rate, and three main women" (Austen 1934:130). Austen's books investigate the reasons, analysing the protagonists' past histories and psyches. There is a long list that can be summarized to a single key explanation: insufficient education. The honourable John Yates, an acquaintance of Tom Bertram's with "not much to recommend him except patterns of fashion and expenses," is the immediate explanation for Kotzebue's introduction to Mansfield Park (Austen 1934:121). Through Yates, Austen indicates to her readers that among Kotzebue's warmest English admirers are mindless, fickle young men and women of leisure in pursuit of excitement, not inherently subversives themselves, as the anti-Jacobins suspected, but unquestionably simple prey to the subversion of others; since they are so engrossed in contemporary popular culture that they fail to respect cultural values. Yates' absorption in the moment is complemented by his strikingly insular narcissism and general disregard for conventional structures such as family, principle, and propriety. His highest value is novelty, and self-gratification is his primary motive; and these pursuits exclude him from the natural events of domestic life—the loss of a relative, for example, or the return of a long-absent parent. "To be sure, the dear old dowager could not have died at a worse time; and it is difficult to resist hoping, that the news could have been suppressed for only the three days we needed," says dad, with disturbing distance (Austen 1934:122).

Yates's trademark, and an apt one, is his rant. Sir Thomas first meets him in "his own dear bed," where he is ranting on a makeshift stage. "Someone was talking there in a really loud accent- he didn't recognize the voice—more than talking—almost hallooing" (Austen 1934: 182). In later reminiscing about the Mansfield adventure, Mary Crawford recalls only one aspect of Yates': "What a difference a vowel makes!-if his rentals were only equal to his rants!" As Mary well knows, the single vowel gap embodies all that is worse about Yates: his egocentricity, disdain for domestic tranquillity, and utter inability to hear others.

A social butterfly introduces Kotzebue's play to provincial culture here without discernment, diffidence, delicacy, and judgment. Thus, that is, without the slightest hint of sensibility, strangely sufficient. However, it is recommended, and the Bertrams and Crawfords are to blame, according to *Mansfield Park*. The appearance of a play on a London stage can be clarified by fashion, but people must be eager parts of it, if it is taken into their homes. In this scenario, Tom, Henry, Julia, and Maria are the most willing, and Austen gives a variety of possible explanations for their eagerness. Some of them are arising from the lingering effects of early training while others are based on their current circumstances. Tom's interest in the theatre is the most innocent and least repugnant of the four principals in question. He has so much leisure and so little opportunities to put it to use . For Henry, at the same time, "with all the riot of his gratifications... the notion of a theatrical is a welcome innovation." "an untasted delight" (Austen 1934 :123), however, the pleasure he anticipates makes his curiosity more culpable than Tom's. He desires to expand and deepen his flirtation with the engaged Maria Bertram by playacting, and *Lovers' Vows* would provide him with the ideal chance.

"Julia did seem inclined to admit that Maria's condition could need special care and delicacy-but that could not apply to her-she was at liberty; and Maria obviously saw her marriage as just elevating her beyond restraint, giving her less opportunity to consult either father or mother than Julia" (Austen 1934 :128-29). Self-control, as implied by this passage, is largely unknown to the Crawfords and Bertram daughters, a flaw Austen traces back to their early schooling and then forward to their last flights into the wasteland of unconstitutional marriage. They are carefully educated in outward successes as children: Henry learns to read brilliantly, Mary learns to play the harp, Julia and Maria learn to play the violin, do water colours, the chronological order of the kings of England with the dates of their accession, and much of the principal events of their reigns. The Bertram children are very proud of their ability to memorize. Julia and Maria regard Fanny as "ignorant" as a child because she lacks this ability though she has by far the best memory.

Sadly, as Sir Thomas discovers only very late, quite little attention was paid to his children's interior creation. He had been reserved and scrupulous himself, but he had failed to cultivate in his children his own values: It had to be lacking inside, or time would have washed away all of the ill impact. He feared the theory, active principle, had been lacking, that they had never been properly trained to control their own inclinations and tempers by that sense of duty that can only suffice . They matured into adults with polish and poise but without self-knowledge, generosity, or modesty-three qualities very evident in true sensibility characters-decorously ruthless in the pursuit of their own pleasures. In the book, the best example of this pursuit is Mary Crawford's domination over Fanny in order to gain Edmund's affection and respect, an enjoyment that comes entirely at the cost of Fanny's happiness and health:

Miss Crawford was so engrossed in her riding that she didn't know where to stop. Active and courageous... to the sure enjoyment of the workout, something was possibly introduced in Edmund's attendance... and something more in the conviction that she was far outperforming her sex in general by her early success, to make her reluctant to dismount (Austen 1934:66-67).

These young English provincials clearly choose Kotzebue over any other author for reasons other than bad taste. To be so riotous in the father's grave absence; to pair Maria, even on the stage, with any other man on the eve of her marriage, is, according to Edmund and Fanny, extremely unwise. The play is considered to be totally inappropriate for home representation since it unfits to be expressed by any woman of modesty. Tom, Henry, Julia, Maria, and Mary, on the other hand, agree that their decision is completely arbitrary:

We mean nothing but a little fun among ourselves, just to vary the scene, and exercise our powers in something different," Tom protests to his younger brother. We don't want an audience or attention...I can conceive of no greater risk or threat to either of us in conversing in the elegant written language of some reputable author than in chattering in our own terms, he says (Austen 1934: 126).

However, there is a danger right there. Rehearsing a sentimental language that wears the mantle of authority would provide a dangerous forum for illegal lovers' quest for greater sexual freedom.

They are attracted to *Lovers' Vows* for inappropriate, extra-literary reasons: they want to divert its sentiment to their own ends, to use it as an artificial stimulation of emotion and as a screen for their own sensuality. They succeed in their design for a period, it must be admitted. Fanny notices the selfishness which, more or less disguised, seemed to rule them all, and wondering how it would end" from the start . To a large degree, the allocation of positions ends exactly as the principals wish. Maria forces her fiancé Rushworth into a situation in which he is not allowed to appear on stage with her. In contrast, Henry manoeuvres Julia out of the way so that Maria can play a romantic role opposite his; then he and Maria rehearse the scene in which they embrace so often that Mary Crawford is reduced to sarcasm and, finally, Fanny is exasperated (Austen 1934:168). Mary, for her part, coerces Edmund into participating in a manner nearly as direct as the conduct of the character Amelia that she is to play. Despite the fact that Edmund enters the troupe late, he, similarly, manages to rehearse his love scene with Mary with warm participation, and, much to Fanny's chagrin, in her own bed . In a brilliant follow-up to the Sotherton episode, Austen encourages her characters to find alternative spaces in which to indulge the sexual intimacy that is actually forbidden: there by scaling the gate into the wilderness, here by fleeing to a manuscript where they can read borrowed words of passion.

In doing so, they unintentionally parody a behaviour long associated with the sensibility movement, in which sentimentally charged passages are read aloud to construct a congenial artificial atmosphere in which to cultivate emotional intimacy among participants. Readers within and outside of texts borrow writers' emotionally charged vocabulary to complement their own, which has become sterile and unfeeling due to the dual forces of propriety and rationality.

*Mansfield Park* is a prime example of the society  influence on individual self. It also reveals, with admirable subtlety, a complex of reasons behind the preference for Kotzebue: to name a few, idleness, greed for novelty, selfishness, sexual needs, exhibitionism, and ease in dissimulation. Both of these questionable reasons, of course, stem from a single remote source, inadequate ethical education in childhood: all, thus, are technically eradicable. For characters that have already been "blunted," "corrupted," or "vitiated," when Edmund describes Mary Crawford as he finally sees her. (Austen 1943: 456), little hope is kept out. With justification, Zelicovici refers to them as "the incorrigibles". They do not reform; on the contrary, they seem to be capable only of spiritual degradation, and engaging in *Lovers' Vows* rehearsals has a startlingly negative effect on them. However, in a broader sense, the play is most effective in bringing about a clarification of core English values. While the reasons for its success are deplorable, the results are far from all poor. Most playwrights and novelists have noted *Lovers' Vows'* ability to mislead the insecure. What they miss from time to time is that the characters, not the German play, are held accountable for this. Austen subverts any reader tendency to see people as merely products of their surroundings by allowing both Mansfield Park and Portsmouth to produce exceptionally good (Edmund Fanny, and William) as well as exceptionally bad children. The "lawlessness"  of Mary, Maria, Henry, and Julia has already pushed them to the edge of socially unacceptable activity at Sotherton; the rehearsals only serve to further their seductive plans. The theatricals, on the other hand, drive certain people apart and others together in ways that have long-term consequences for the relationships in the novel.

Only because regular rehearsals encourage Henry and Maria to hold hands and embrace do they have the audacity to elope following her marriage to Rushworth. And these elopements, which are so detrimental to the Bertram family's reputation, would cause Edmund to assess the spiritual depths of Mary Crawford's mind, abandon his courtship of her, and turn his attention to Fanny. Of course, not all of the main characters are influenced to the same extent. Tom and Rushworth seem to emerge relatively unscathed, and Mary Crawford manages to keep her distance from the events, though the histrionic interlude remains a vivid memory for her, as her later references to it suggest. The play, on the other hand, has had a paradigm-shifting impact. Maria and Henry become so engrossed in their fictional characters that they lose interest in their own lives. The play separates them from their former selves, lives, and, eventually, from respectable society. Even though Julia does not take part in the play, it has corrosive effects on her as well. The events surrounding the theatricals have so enraged her that she disregards all propriety and prudence in order to flirt with the disreputable Mr. Yates. The play separates her as well, first from her niece, of whom she is envious, and then from her family through her elopement. All four of the final characters cause the play's fiction to become their reality; they apply Kotzebue's leeway in coping with a repentant libertine and his long-suffering victim to their own circumstances, despite the fact that they have neither repented nor suffered. The *Lovers' Vows* scheme, on the other hand, involves the virtuous protagonists, attempting to destabilize them and jeopardize their dignity. In the face of the others' constant pressure, Edmund and Fanny's tender hearts find themselves weakening, helping in spite of themselves, and eventually challenging the soundness of their own decision. When Edmund gives in and decides to participate, he begs, like a true gentleman, for the need to show empathy, to understand Mary's feelings:

Consider how it would feel to play Amelia in front of a stranger. She has a right to be cared for because she clearly cares for herself (Austen 1934:154).

Fanny, on the other hand, is far more deeply invested in the theatricals. When she is asked to substitute as the Cottager's Wife, her own self-doubts have undermined her so much that only Sir Thomas's sudden return prevents her acquiescence, and her misgivings, like Edmund's, stem from her own acute sensibility:

Was she right in refusing what was so warmly asked, so strongly wished for? . . . Was it not ill-nature-selfishness-and a fear of exposing herself? ... she was inclined to suspect the truth and purity of her own scruples, and as she looked around her [in her room], the claims of her cousins to being obliged, were strengthened by the sight of present upon present that she had received from them.... she grew bewildered as to the amount of the debt which all these kind remembrances produced (Austen 1934:153).

The play evokes many less meritorious emotions in Fanny as well—jealousy, rage, melancholy, fear—so many that any critic may accuse her of being too sweet. She is particularly terrified of the depiction of the scene in which Amelia (Mary) declares her love for Anhalt (Edmund). She rereads it with many painful, many curious feelings. Fanny's self-control is put to the ultimate test as she is forced to sit through Edmund and Mary's private rehearsal of the scene as prompter, watch their clear pleasure, and then thank them when it's done. She passes the test admirably and earns the narrator's approval . The critical society has different perspectives on Edmund and Fanny's dismay at the theatricals. Some see it as justification to label the hero and heroine as spoilsports and insufferable scumbags. Others see it as reason enough to condemn Kotzebue and all he represents, especially sentiment and theatricals or art.

In the present sense, the situation can be read another way: not as an assault on sensibility, either in the person of Edmund and Fanny or in the form of *Lovers' Vows*, but as an anatomy of the effect of the Crawfords' and other Bertrams' false sensibility on the true sensibility of hero and heroine, an effect more aptly portrayed, as depicted in *Mansfield Park*, as a test than a threat. To be sure, Edmund is occasionally drawn into the nostalgic revel, and Fanny into the kinds of emotions that kill Julia's prudence. Around the same time, Austen's test shows the hero and heroine banding together in the face of adversity. The play does not lure them to abandonment, separation from themselves, family, and community, as it does the others.

It rather prompts them to pause for thought. It momentarily separates them from themselves and from each other, forcing them to challenge their own integrity as well as the ideals upon which they base their actions: "Was she right in refusing...?";"Her emotions must be respected. Doesn't it strike you as odd, Fanny? "You pause"; "May it be possible?" Edmund is such a jerk. Wasn't he deceiving himself? Was he not correct? But, alas!" (Austen 1934:153-156.) However, when they think about the issue, they finally express their own beliefs, and with growing conviction:

Edmund: As we are circumstanced, I must think it would be highly injudicious . . . to be imprudent . ... with regard to Maria whose situation is a very delicate one. (125)

Fanny: . . . so totally improper for home presentation. . . . (137)

Edmund: It would show great unit of feeling on my father's account, absent as he is, and in some degree of constant danger. . . . (125)

Fanny: . . . the situation of the one [Agatha], and the language of the other [Amelia], so unfit to be expressed by any woman of modesty. (137)

Edmund: It would be taking liberties with my father's house in his absence which could not be justified. (127)

Finally, their heartfelt articulation and reflection are not in vain. As a result, they will reach Sir Thomas when he returns with some semblance of self-respect, and they are demonstrably enhanced as well. The fact that they bend under pressure is, in the end, a good sign; it shows that they are capable of the rare combination of responsive flexibility and concept that distinguishes Austen's protagonists. Furthermore, each is strengthened privately in a unique way. Edmund gains self-awareness confronts his own fallibility, and courageously admits as much to his father in his candid (generous as well as truthful) remark about Fanny: Fanny is the only one who has judged rightly throughout, who has been consistent. Fanny, on the other hand, discovers an unrecognized strength in herself, one that is often overlooked by modern critics. One of the most difficult things for a young woman to do in a society that values amiability above almost all else is to refuse, to say no. Fanny does so twice in this novel, once to the theatre and once to Henry Crawford's proposal, and the first encounter. Thus, both in terms of self-awareness and distrust of Henry, practically prepares her for the second.

Jane Austen achieved to claim that the Mansfield Parks of England are not actually better off if they are never subjected to the temptation. An occurrence of this magnitude unquestionably represents a test of character and values; nevertheless, any character or value worth preserving should be able to withstand such a test. If *Mansfield Park* is neither an apology nor a tribute to *Lovers' Vows*, it is also not a condemnation. Sentimental literature was a given for Austen, a fact she had lived with since her first novels and one that showed no signs of abating (and did not, for a century, as we know in retrospect). From Northanger Abbey on, she had hoped to teach her contemporaries how to read such literature so that they could better value it. Mansfield Park is her last and most eloquent lesson in this regard.

# Theatricals and Theatricality in *Mansfield Park*

This part discovers further researches on the theme of theatricality and its place in Mansfield Park. The theatricals play a complex role in Mansfield Park, and they are placed as the main concern and narrative climax of Volume I. Their symbolic significance not only creates moral conflict but also forms the novel. Theatricality - the purpose of the ambiguous idea that 'all the world's a stage' works in this novel to depict the way of understanding the characters and their story different from what we normally expect of a novel.

Additionally, through the next sections of this chapter there is a strong comparison between fifteenth-century dramas and Jane Austen's Mansfield Park. The moralistic and didactic tradition which these plays began in popular entertainment survived in these forms: in Shakespeare's employment of the 'Vice' figure, in Jonson's satires, in the city and court comedies of the Restoration, and in prose from Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress to Maria Edgeworth's Moral Tales. The pattern persists also in the second half of the eighteenth century in the enfeebled English comedy of manners. However, the revolutions in thought and feeling at the end of the eighteenth century changed in popular drama. There the form we know as melodrama – a type of play remains its moralistic pattern but provides primarily a great deal of sensation and sentiment in place of the old-fashioned 'wit' of the native form.

Lastly, the novel is analysed from different point of view, such as Christianity View, Victorian view, etc. A detailed analysis of particular parts of the novel and the impact of the theatricals to *Mansfield park* continues to maintain its actuality in this chapter.

The theatricals play a complex role in *Mansfield Park*, and they are placed as the main concern and narrative climax of Volume I. Their symbolic significance not only creates moral conflict but also forms the novel. Theatricality - the purpose of the ambiguous idea that 'all the world's a stage' works in this novel to depict the way of understanding the characters and their story different from what we normally expect of a novel. Precisely, Mansfield Park deliberately aims to deny the expectations raised by the novelistic perfection of Pride and Prejudice. Fanny is the antithesis of the conventional heroine, a young woman who denies the role of Cinderella and refuses the charming lover in the end. In *Mansfield Park* Jane Austen demonstrates one of the methods by which our pleasant expectations of 'fiction' is completely changed.

The fifteenth-century morality dramas usually took the form of a conflict from the Christian viewpoint. Thus, the characters are generally divided into two main groups, first, those who show mostly good qualities and various virtues, and the second, those who mostly own vices and negative qualities. A major and most entertaining character the 'Vice', a trickster figure, often very attractive, who enlists the sympathy of the audience through his wit and cleverness, however, at the same time, who is nevertheless clearly on the Devil's side. In this case, the play's content and the audience's moral engagement with the conflict become much more complicated - in the same way, *Mansfield Park* makes us confront with the charm of the world and the flesh, and the Devil in some parts.

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Kotzebue's *Das Kind der Liebe*, or *Lovers' Vows* can be considered as an excellent example of the new form. It gained an enormous popularity in England in the 1790s and early 1800s. With high probability, Jane Austen would have seen it performed during her residence in Bath.

The elements of Victorian melodrama are almost all there: the exotic and rural setting (castle and cottage rather than the town of English comedy), violent action (Frederick's attack on the Baron), having an affair or being in an inappropriate flirtatious relationship, and perhaps most significant, the conflict of the classes, in which a 'new morality' is outlined. Here the poor display essentially virtuous behaviour, even while betraying the moral law-they are always forced into this by abandoned aristocrats. In contrast, the upper classes consist of the people that are inevitably corrupt.

For any reader of *Mansfield Park*, it must be evident that, for all her fundamental conservatism Jane Austen uses the novel to challenge the full right of Sir Thomas' way of doing things.

. Two major examples of Jane Austen's property-owners are also a father (Mr. Darcy and Mr. Knightley), however, neither of them is owned by Sir Thomas's moral blindness. The Crawfords, similarly strong family, but poor upbringing, reflect the worldliness and moral laxity of the upper social classes. The protagonist of the novel on the other hand, despite her poverty, acts as the Bible's *Pearl of Great Price*.

Fanny owns nothing more than her strong sense of what is true, not even beauty , albeit a gentle beauty, wit or attractiveness; she can be considered as an ultimate example of melodrama heroine. Thus, her moral strength allows her to remain her position as a true heroine. Deserted at one crucial stage -theatricals, by a man whom she looks up to as a mentor, beset at another by all the wiles of the world's temptations -Henry Crawford's courtship, she nevertheless continues to preserve her dignity, and thereby eventually enjoys the reward of all the best that remains of the old establishment—its physical warmth, its civilized kindness, and its divine authority.

Sexuality is the key feature of the Crawfords, and the novel shifts from the style of a simplistic Christian moral tale to a multi-dimensional mode where unique character types illustrate the complexities of moral life in the real world with their presentation (Chapter 4). At the end of chapter 4, it is obvious from their first dialogue that the Crawfords, in specific, Henry embodies sexuality, debating marital opportunities with a vibrant curiosity. Mary and Henry was raised up by this uncle and his wife, and especially Mary, has learned the worldly principle that 'anybody should marry as soon as they can benefit from from it' (p. 43)-which, surely, means financial advantage.

In the novel, the main role of Mary is to show the superficiality of this conception of the sacrament of marriage, caused in her attraction to the clergyman Edmund and her reluctance to be driven by the higher ideals of Christianity that he represents.

The argument appears when Edmund shares her final dissatisfaction with Mary, that she should see the sacrificial sin of adultery as mere 'folly... no hesitation, no horror, no feminine. Powerful sentences, however, they come from a clergyman who, by his attraction to this worldly lady, has himself experienced profound spiritual checking, and has only managed to stay rigid, even though the episode of the theatricals is almost fanatic. Ever since women appear the stage in the 1660s, moralists have been fulminating against such tolerance of debauchery.

A nice indication, here, of the sexual naivety of Fanny. The reality is that the Church has had a problematic relationship with the theatre, particularly since the Reformation: The Roman Catholic Church has introduced rituals in its worship quite similar to play-acting, while the Reformed churches have always been profoundly sceptical of any attempt to display, entertainment, magic, or role-playing in the relationship of humankind with his God. Acting was considered as deception, pretending to be another person than one is, and the work of the Devil. The novel's representative for the Church is Edmund, the future clergyman, and it is he who expresses the fundamental point of the novel against what the theatricals symbolize. His objections to the suggested play-acting start with those of a gentleman from the eighteenth century: Although he likes to see 'good hardened real conduct he does not tolerate 'the raw efforts of those who have not been bred to the trade,' a group of gentlemen and ladies who have to fight through all the drawbacks of education and courtesy' (p. 124). However, this objection does not have effective power, thus, he is obliged to explain his true vocation as one who aspires to 'the guardianship of faith and morality' in two speeches (p. 92).

Yet, as in the oldest moral tale of all times sexuality is Edmund's failure, and Fanny is expected to bear the symbol of pure incorruptibility. It is the initial test of the protagonist of the novel-a test, not of the virtues that make her suited for marriage, but of her religion. It has consistently claimed, in chapter 15, that she 'cannot act'-repeat emphasizes not only its modesty but, more deeply, its religious steadfastness and unwillingness to join the realm of deceit. When Edmund betrays her in chapter 16, she goes through a dark night of the soul. She didn't care how things ended; she just wanted them to go their own way. Her cousins could assault, but they couldn't tease her. She was beyond their control, and even though they were compelled to yield, it didn't matter; it was all misery now' (p. 157) Only the author's use of the melodramatic turning point of Sir Thomas's return saves our heroine from slipping into the corrupt realm of the theatre.

Henry Crawford, the morality play's 'Vice', is the novel's supreme actor, both in art and in life. Henry is repeatedly and emphatically put in this tradition by Jane Austen. At his first introduction it is remarked that , unfortunately, Henry Crawford had a great dislike (p. 41). Henry Crawford is a strong example of a person who is both a 'personification' of immorality, in the manner of old dramas, and an 'impersonation' of a real human being, in post-Renaissance fashion. However, the reason which complicates our reaction to him is that he is presented as a person who indulges in theatrical activity and considers the entire world as a theatre. In addition, after Henry's open show at Sotherton of his willingness to play the part of seducer to every available young lady, his being placed as the Vice becomes more marked. The term vanity is frequently used in combination with Henry Crawford from chapter 12 of Volume I to the final chapter of the book:

... to a temper of vanity and hope like Crawford's, the truth, or at least the strength of her indifference, might well be questionable. (p. 328)

Henry Crawford, ruined by early independence and bad domestic example, indulged in the freaks of a cold-blooded vanity a little too long ... He was entangled by his own vanity. (pp. 467-8)

The episode of the theatricals where Henry Crawford is displayed as an outstanding and passionate actor, symbolically demonstrates his role in the play of morality in the novel. He owns several qualities such as being quick, sensitive, and highly talented as an actor. However, the narrative comment that presents this show of dynamic enthusiasm is often sharp about the debauchery that Henry Crawford reflects in the novel's moral scheme. Henry's acting and role as the Vice proceed in the chapters related to theatricals. His conversation with Edmund about the advantages of clerical eloquence is based primarily on his conception of himself as a trendy preacher:

A thoroughly good sermon, thoroughly well delivered, is a capital gratification. I can never hear such a one without the greatest admiration and respect, and more than half a mind to take orders and preach myself ... I never listened to a distinguished preacher in my life, without a sort of envy. But then, I must have a London audience. I could not preach, but to the educated; to those who were capable of estimating my composition. And, I do not know that I should be fond of preaching often; now and then, perhaps, once or twice in the spring, after being anxiously expected for half a dozen Sundays together; but not for a constancy; it would not do for a constancy.(p. 34)

Words such as gratification, jealousy, and audience all point to Henry's lifelong ambition. Only Fanny has the courage to question him about his meaningless acceptance of a lack of 'constancy' in such serious matters. Henry shows actors being changeable in his search of numerous ladies in the novel. At some other moment, Henry is fascinated by the possibility of performing a brave young sailor in the manner of William Price - however, as the narrator notes, “the wish was more eager than permanent” (p. 236).

Henry Crawford, same as the wicked Vices of old plays, is a professional poker player and gambler. In his courtship of Fanny, Henry is most persuasive as an actor - an episode that at first seems full of sincerity, but which should be understood as a cold-hearted game played between brother and sister.  The good things he performs in an ambitious effort to win her heart are guided by a sense of principle, active principal, or even an urge to pressure her to love him (p. 326).

“I cannot be satisfied without Fanny Price, without making a small hole in Fanny Price's heart” ( p. 229).

At some moments Henry Crawford's vanity and luxury temporarily transform into the form of virtue, however, all too easily revert to their former obvious immorality in the seduction of Maria. He takes on a new task as he progresses through the stages as soon as he moves on to a different stage. Jane Austen, the moralist, does not allow him to become the leading character in a romantic comedy. Her Cinderella does not own soft feelings for impudent ‘Prince Charming’. Mary Crawford, while not a significant figure from the dramatic tradition like the Vice, is an experienced actress with several memorable scenes due to her temperament and upbringing.

The subtlest and most victorious show of her art is when she attempts to manipulate Fanny into accepting Henry's necklace. (Volume II, Chapter 8). As Fanny and then Edmund remain mentally faithful in their moral, Mary grows more desperate in her attempts to make things go her way, and her acting becomes harsher. Thus, when she visits Fanny for the first time since the rehearsal with Edmund, her expressions and tone of voice have a strong stage effect. “Ha!” she cried, with instant animation, “am I here again? The east room. Once only was I in this room before!” - and after stopping to look about her, and seemingly to retrace all that had then passed, she added, “Once only before. Do you remember it? I came to rehearse. Your cousin came too; and we had a rehearsal. You were our audience and prompter. A delightful rehearsal. I shall never forget it. Here we were, just in this part of the room; here was your cousin, here was I, here were the chairs. - Oh! why will such things ever pass away?” Happily, for her companion, she wanted no answer. Her mind was entirely self-engrossed. She was in a reverie of sweet remembrances. (pp. 357-8)

The argument that mixing life and theatre in this way is morally risky - not just especially for a decent man who falls under her command - is clarified in the middle of Mary's next rhapsodic utterance:

If I had the power of recalling anyone week of my existence, its should be that week, that acting week. Say what you would, Fanny, it should be that; for I never knew such exquisite happiness in any other. His sturdy spirit to bend as it did! Oh! it was sweet beyond expression. (p. 358)

# Conclusion

Conclusion chapter intends to sum up the main contents of the thesis. Mainly it concentrates on the place of Mansfield Park in Jane Austen’s life and creativity as a novel writer. The stages of Jane Austen’s growth as a well-known novelist is explained clearly here.

Mansfield Park, Austen's first full-length adult maturity book, was written when she was in her late thirties. It was her first novel after a long break from writing and years spent revising and republishing her earlier works, Pride and Prejudice and Sense and Sensibility, which she conceived in her early twenties. Austen's transition from silent observation to fully confidential novel writing and, most importantly, publishing in a public forum in which her work was accepted finally, may represent Fanny Price's transition to speech.

Austen's first full-length novel of adult maturity, Mansfield Park, was published when she was in her late thirties. It was her first novel to be written and published immediately after a long break from writing  and years spent revising and republishing her earlier books, Pride and Prejudice and Sense and Sensibility, which she conceived in her early twenties. Austen's transition from silent observation (and play watching) to completely confident novel writing and, most importantly, publication, where her work was eventually welcomed in a public forum, may have mirrored Fanny Price's transition to expression. Mansfield Park, being complex, serious, and peculiar, was the first of Austen's novels published when she knew she would have an audience, following the long-awaited publication of Sense and Sensibility and Pride and Prejudice in 1811 and 1813, respectively. After years of upheaval surrounding her father's retirement and death, Fanny's move to the centre of the stage in Mansfield may represent Austen's own stable move to the centre of her life as an artist. She was able to support herself, her mother, and her sister by publishing for the first time. The layers of theatricality implied in Fanny's transformation from audience to actor, particularly in light of these aspects of Austen's biography, are perhaps even more important in assessing Austen's relationship to the theatre than the novel's theatrical subjects. They definitely provide strong ground for the dramatic adaptation and staging of Mansfield Park.

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