



Università  
Ca' Foscari  
Venezia

**Corso di Laurea magistrale**  
in Lingue e Letterature Europee,  
Americane e Postcoloniali

Tesi di Laurea

—

Ca' Foscari  
Dorsoduro 3246  
30123 Venezia

**Letters in the Fiction of Eliza  
Haywood**

**Relatore**

Ch. Prof. Jeanne Frances Clegg

**Laureando**

Alessandra Martellotta  
Matricola 813042

**Anno Accademico**

**2012 / 2013**

## **Acknowledgments**

I would like to especially thank my advisor, Professor Jeanne Clegg Frances, for guiding and supporting this project from the very beginning. Her dedication to this project and faith in me never wavered. Thank you for your patience and encouragement and for not giving up on me. I appreciate your help with conceiving this topic, and being extremely generous with your time during the research and writing process.

I was extremely lucky to learn from and be inspired by an extraordinary scholar and teacher like her. I have been growing up on her critical vigour, cheerful generosity, and passion for literature.

# Index

Introduction	p. 1
1. Eliza Haywood: An Outline of Her Career	p. 4
2. Letters in the 18 <sup>th</sup> century Novel	p. 16
3. Letters in the Early Fictions	
3.1 <i>Love in Excess</i> (1719 – 1720)	p. 33
3.2 <i>Fantomina</i> (1724)	p. 44
3.3 <i>The City Jilt</i> (1726)	p. 48
3.4 <i>Love Letters on All Occasions</i> (1730)	p. 53
4. Letters in the Later Fiction	
4.1 <i>The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless</i>	p. 63
Conclusion	p. 81
Bibliography	

# Introduction

My interest in the works of Eliza Haywood grew out from taking part in university courses on eighteenth-century culture and society, where I came into contact with Haywood and read some of the works which form the starting point for my thesis. Eliza Haywood was one of the most prolific writer of the eighteenth century. In her own time she was known especially as an author of amatory fictions, “referred to as ‘the Great Arbitress of Passion’” (Saxton 2000: 1) and likened to two earlier women writers, Aphra Behn and Delarivier Manley. Together, these were called “Fair Triumvirate of Wit”, an expression which a modern critic takes to indicate that they were “the three most popular, influential, and controversial women writers of the Restoration and Augustan eras (Saxton 2000: 2).

Eliza Haywood’s literary production ranges very broadly. The more than seventy works published in her lifetime include plays, translations, conduct books, periodicals, political treatises and literary criticism, but it was her fiction focused on love, marriage, sex and women that cost her the epithet of ‘scandalous writer’, causing her to be cut out of the English literary canon and neglected by critics until the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was at this point that her contributions to the novel form began to be recognized, and that interest grew in a time when “the literary marketplace and the profession of authorship expanded tremendously with the increasing participation of a range of writers, including women” (Ingrassia 1998: 79).

This study wants to underline a special aspect of the importance of Eliza Haywood in the writing production of the eighteenth century. This was a period when letter – writing developed rapidly. The eighteenth century has been defined by Susan Whyman in *The Pen and the People: English Letter Writers 1660 – 1800* as the “golden age of letters”. The mid-1700s was also the period during which epistolary fiction first gained prominence in as distinct genre. As Ruth Perry affirms in *Women, Letters and Novel*, literacy was on the increase and the public appreciated literary works offering depictions of ordinary experience and greater psychological realism than were found in the old heroic romances. Epistolary fiction in particular gave readers the opportunity the possibility to identify with the protagonists of the works they were reading. The eighteenth century also represents the first period in European history in which large numbers of women began to write: social changes were taking place, which contributed to the emergence of more women writers who demanded for greater educational opportunities also according to their rising rate of literacy.

My inquiry begins with chapter I tracing an outline of Haywood’s long career as writer, translator and editor. After a period of active theatrical involvement in works for the stage, in 1719 she started writing fictions of amorous intrigue, a genre which occupied her for most of the 1720s. After a decade of theatrical, political and periodical writing, she returned to fiction in the 1740s. Crucial to this was the publication in 1740 of Samuel Richardson’s epistolary masterpiece *Pamela*, which William Warner in *Licensing Entertainment* in 1998 defines as a real “media event” of the eighteenth century. In her *Anti-Pamela* (1741).Eliza Haywood was to react

against Richardson, but she contributed an imitative translation (*The Virtuous Villager*), and the novels of the 1750s incorporate some of Richardson's innovations.

Chapter II offers a brief overview of relevant recent criticism, a panorama of the theories of 20<sup>th</sup> century literary critics on eighteenth-century epistolary fiction. Its object is to try to understand how they considered this literary genre and what they believed were the most important and representative writers of epistolary fiction of eighteenth century.

Chapter III analyses the use Eliza Haywood made of letters in her first amatory fictions, and especially in *Love in Excess* (1720), *Fantomina* (1724), *The City Jilt* (1724), and *Love – Letters on All Occasions* (1730), trying to outline how each letter differs or is similar to the other ones.

Finally, chapter IV analyses Haywood's use of letters Eliza Haywood in one of her best known novels, *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* (1751). Called by Paula Backscheider in her introduction to *Selected Fiction and Drama of Eliza Haywood* (1999) "a novel of marriage", this novel is not an epistolary one in the strict sense, but it contains many letters which deeply contributed to the development of the story.

# 1

## **Eliza Haywood: An Outline of Her Career**

In this chapter I want to give informations of the life and works of Eliza Haywood, trying to show the importance of her career, which is not only represented by her figure as writer and as actress, but also by her contribution in other literary fields like translation, literary critic and publishing. She was one of the most popular and prolific writers of the early eighteenth century and she wrote so many works, more than other English women writers wrote and published in their life.

Works like *The Passionate Fiction of Eliza Haywood*, Spedding's *Bibliography of Eliza Haywood* and the biography in the Broadview Press editions of *Fantomina* and in *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* are indispensable tools and fundamental sources for the writing of her bibliography in my work.

We know little about the private life of the woman we know as Eliza Haywood. She was probably born in 1693, and, her father may have been Robert Fowler, a small shop-keeper. She may have left home young, against her parents' will, and apparently separated from a husband, though it remains unclear whether she really married at all. Two recently discovered letters, however, make it clear that she was driven to look for literary patronage to support herself and her family (Saxton

2000: 6). The first one, probably written around 1721, refers to her “unfortunate” marriage, and to “the melancholy necessity of depending on my Pen for the support of myself and two Children, the eldest of whom is no more than 7 years age”. The second, probably written three years later, talks about “the Sudden Deaths of both a Father and a Husband, and at an age I was little prepar’d to stem the tide of Ill fortune”. The two children Haywood refers to were almost sure both born outside marriage. The first was fathered by the poet Richard Savage, the second by actor playwright and long term partner, William Hatchett. Haywood's difficult private life is reflected in many of her stories: in fact her writings are full of vivid scenes of in love.

In the meantime, however, Haywood was making a public name for herself. In 1714, according to Pettit in *Fantomina*, or 1715, according to Aokleak in *Love in Excess*, she appeared on the Dublin stage in an adaptation for Shakespeare, and from 1715 she worked continuously in the world of the London theatre: in 1721 she wrote her first play, a tragedy entitled *The Fair Captive*, in which she also performed. In 1723 she wrote and again performed in a comedy, *The Wife to be Lett*, and in 1729 a tragedy entitled *Frederick, Duke of Brunswick-Lunenburgh*, performed the same year. This last was shortly afterwards published with a dedication to Frederick Lewis, Prince of Wales, clearly in the hope of obtaining royal patronage. In this, however, Haywood she did not succeed, probably because she had early expressed her pro-Tory sympathies in a *Secret History of the Present Intrigues of the Court of Caramania* in 1727. This was the second of her political writings, the first being *Memoirs of a Certain Island, Adjacent to Utopia*, in 1724, a scandal romance in the tradition of Delarivier Manley. In 1730 Eliza Haywood took part in Hatchett's, *Rival*

*Father, or the Death of Achilles*, and three years later, in 1733, she joined with him to produce the *Opera of Operas*, an adaptation of Fielding's Tragedy of Tragedies. Her stage career ended in 1737 when Robert Walpole's Licensing Act led to the closing of the Haymarket Theatre.

Haywood's interest in the theatre was not, however limited to writing and performing; she was also a theatre critic. Her *The Dramatic Historiographer, or the British Theatre Delineated*, went through more than seven editions between 1735 and 1756.

It was, however, in the genre of “amatory fiction” that the young Eliza Haywood achieved her greatest success, beginning in 1719 – 1720 with the publication in three parts of *Love in Excess*. Instantly popular, this best seller was reprinted six times. Over the next decade, in the course of which Haywood's production was enormous. To cite only a few, in 1722 we have *The British Recluse*, in 1723 *The Injur'd Husband, Idalia, and Lasselia*; in 1724 *Bath Intrigues, The Arragonian Queen*; in 1725 *The Fatal Fondness and The Unequal Conflict*; in 1726 *The City Jilt and The Mercenary Lover*; in 1727 *The Perplex'd Dutchess and Philadore and Placentia*; in 1728 *Persecuted Virtue*; in 1729 *The City Widow and The Fair Hebrew*. In 1730 she published *Love – Letters on All Occasions Lately Passed Between Persons of Distinction*, a set of individual love letters where each one is about a different face of love. This work could have been an object of study for Richardson before writing *Pamela*: for example Catherine Ingrassia sees an universal Haywoodian influence on Richardson. She writes,

[T]he so-called “new species of writing,” which helps Richardson accrue cultural credit in terms of both popularity and profit, relies on

his appropriation of the narrative and stylistic conventions developed by Eliza Haywood. Margaret Doody has recorded specific instances where Richardson seemingly appropriates sections of Haywood's work and transplants them into his fiction. Doody's analysis is quite acute, and I believe even more instances of appropriation exist. But in some ways the implication of the gesture is more significant than a list of specific examples for it reshapes our understanding of the novel. Though Richardson always claimed that Pamela emerged "naturally" out of his work on *Familiar Letters on All Occasions*, it is readily apparent that he wrote within the existing fictional discourse produced by Eliza Haywood. (Ingrassia 1998: 148 - 149)

In discussing Haywood's influence on Richardson production, also William Warner asserts that

through [Richardson's] antagonism to the novels of amorous intrigue, which he claims never to have read, but whose influence upon readers he decries, those novels enter his texts. This is less a conscious or unconscious influence than it is something akin to an influenza to which he seeks an antidote (Warner 1998: 182).

Also David Oakleaf, however, suggests that Richardson "certainly read her work" (Oakleaf 1994: 8).

In the meantime Haywood also supplied a lively market for romance with translations from French and Spanish. In 1724 she worked on a translation of a lengthy French work, *La Belle Assemblée* by Mme de Gomez; in 1725, always from French, she translated *The Lady's Philosopher's Stone* by Louis Adrien Duperron de Casterra; in 1727 *Love in its Variety: Being a Collection of Select Novels* from the Spanish of Matteo Bandello; in 1728 *The Disguis'd Prince*. She continued making translations throughout the 1730s and the 1740s; for example in 1734 we have the

translation from the French of *L'Entretien des Beaux Esprits, Being the Sequel to La Belle Assemblée* by Mme de Gomez, in 1742 *The Virtuous Villager* from the French *La Paysanne Parvenue* by Chevalier de Mouhy.

Haywood also pursued a long and prolific career in journalism. In 1724 she published a periodical called *The Tea – Table*, and from 1744 to 1746 she wrote and published *The Female Spectator*, the first English periodical written by a woman for women. In 1746 she started another journal disseminating pro – Tory political propaganda, *The Parrot*; this led to her being questioned by the government on suspicion of supporting the recent Jacobite Rising. This was to happen again after the publication of *A Letter from H---- G----g, Esq.* In the 1750s even more directly political were with *The Invisible Spy* published in 1755 and *The Wife* in 1756.

Haywood also achieved success in the genre of the conduct book, her most popular production being *A Present for a Servant Maid* of 1743. Advice from a woman to women is also the mode of *Epistles for the Ladies*, 1749 - 50, in which Haywood offers counsels on sobriety, religion, and morality.

By this time, however, Haywood had returned to novel writing, though in a new vein. The appearance of Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* in 1740 had sparked off a nation - wide controversy to which Haywood contributed on both sides, first with the epistolary parody, *Anti-Pamela*, and then with a translation often read as an imitation of *The Virtuous Villager* in 1742. In 1744 came Haywood's first long novel, *The Fortunate Foundlings*, and in 1751 the novel many consider her greatest work *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*: the importance of this novel is underlined in the introduction to *The Passionate Fiction of Eliza Haywood* by two literary critics: Paula Backscheider writes that it “deconstructs women’s delimited power within the

marriage market” (Saxton 2000: 9), and Andrea Austin says “it presents its revelation of women’s poor lot within a sophisticated parody and formal pastiche” (Saxton 2000: 9). Two years after, in 1753, came *The History of Jemmy and Jenny Jessamy*, which explores universal moral precepts, but its structure and themes are based upon the duality of male and female experience.

Eliza Haywood spent the closing years of her life in obscurity; for no notice of her death, on 25 February 1756, was taken by the magazines where obituaries of well-known literary figures usually appeared.

The study and the exam of her life is not very simple, but this problem there was also in 18<sup>th</sup> century; David Erskine Baker, Haywood's first biographer, encountered the problem of a lack of available information about Haywood's life less than a decade after her death he did not find a great deal of material. He wrote in *The Biographica Dramatica* in 1764 that:

from a supposition of some improper liberties being taken with her character after death. She laid a solemn injunction on a person who was well acquainted with all the particulars of it, not to communicate to anyone the least circumstance relating to her. (Baker 1782: 48)

Norma Clarke suggests that "to express the wish for silence about one's private life (whatever the nature of that life) was in itself a sign of virtue. Shutting the door on public knowledge was proper" (Clarke 2004: 94). She also claims that Haywood "reached out from her deathbed" to preserve her "recrafted moral image" (Clarke 2004: 94) through this silence. The same shadow which there is on her life has been reflected also on her works:

It is an astonishing fact that a writer who produced seventy three works over thirty-seven years of intense literary activity, whose

name was a byword for a certain type of writing, who was embedded in London networks of writers, theatrical companies, booksellers and printers, could later be as obscure as Eliza Haywood. (Ingrassia 1998: 93)

Probably Eliza Haywood wanted to keep her personal life from becoming public knowledge so that others could not profit from tales of her life. Her move to cover all her surviving biographical knowledge has created a mystery, inviting continued interest: her silence, which she maintained while she was living and which has continued after her death, would have been part of her persona.

In spite of her discretion and of her will to not be under the critic of her contemporaries, she has been hardly criticized: Alexander Pope publicly ridiculed and infamously referred to her in *The Dunciad* as the "Juno of majestic size, with cow-like udders and with ox-like eyes" (Pope 1999: 163 - 164). Catherine Ingrassia points out that Pope's will to marginalize and not consider Eliza Haywood as an important figure for the 18<sup>th</sup> century literary production actually moves "attention to her cultural significance and her works' popularity" (Ingrassia 1998: 44). Haywood's texts were immediately popular with the public after their publication, and soon after she began writing, her name and the titles of her previous works were used as advertisements to sell her new works. Pope's slight "actually reveals her centrality within the cultural landscape, her associations with a vital and commercially recognized literary product, and her considerable amount of 'paper credit'" (Ingrassia 1998: 77).

Also Richardson continued the condemnation of Haywood's "poisonous" writing underlining the difference between his ethical, reformed novel and the

popular novels written earlier by those “poisonous” female novelists of whom Eliza Haywood is the most prominent (Warner 1992: 17).

The popularity of Haywood’s earlier amatory fictions represented less as an “influence,” upon Richardson and Fielding than a plague-like “influenza,” against the uncontrolled spread of which Richardson and Fielding produce their novels as warning, antidote and cure. (Warner 1992: 6). Warner continues his analogy explaining how the reformed novels conquered their success by considering and then revising earlier works: Warner is obviously playing on the similar sounds and spellings of the words “influence” and “influenza”: the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines influenza

An acute, highly infectious viral disease of humans, which typically occurs in seasonal (winter) outbreaks or as major epidemics or pandemics, is characterized by the sudden onset of fever and chills, headache, muscle pain, weakness, and cough, and can result in death (esp. in the elderly, and usually from viral or secondary bacterial pneumonia); (also) an outbreak, epidemic, or instance of this disease. Freq. with distinguishing word, usu. indicating the geographical origin or viral source of an epidemic.

And influence “The action or fact of flowing in; inflowing, inflow, influx: said of the action of water and other fluids, and of immaterial things conceived of as flowing in”.

So “influenza” implies something that spread unwittingly, accidentally, without intent, while “influence” defines something that is administered through a practice. This would imply that Richardson, through his metaphor, actively recognized Haywood’s agency as an author and the intentionality present in her

writing, and there are interesting ramifications if Warner either consciously or unconsciously attempts to deny that agency by changing the metaphor. Similarly, Warner conflates Richardson's "antidote" with his own word, "cure". Although Warner's model is intended to trace the general elevation of the novel as a genre and his statement involves numerous influential writers, his focus can be narrowed to explore the relationship between specific authors and their works as Warner later does in his comparison of *Pamela* with *Fantomina*.

With the growth of interest in early 18th century women writers over the past 30 years, however, the figure of Eliza Haywood has become the object of increasing attention. She was largely ignored until the late 1980s with the only exception of George Whicher's *The Life and Romances of Mrs. Eliza Haywood*, published in 1915, but he has not a good opinion about her works and explained his study as follows:

The purpose of this study is not to revive the reputation of a forgotten author or to suggest that Mrs. Haywood may yet "come into her own." For the lover of eighteenth century fashions her numerous pages have indeed a stilted, early Georgian charm, but with the passing of Ramillies wigs and velveteen small clothes, the popularity of her novels vanished once and for all. She had her world in her time, but that world and time disappeared with the French Revolution. Now even professed students of the novel shrink from reading many of her seventy odd volumes, nor can the infamous characterized Haywood as an inconsequential, but celebrity conferred by Pope's attack in "The Dunciad" save her name from oblivion (Whicher 1915: vii).

Whicher's work, a part from his personal opinion, also contains many errors or misrepresentations starting from the title: it is quite unclear to understand if the

romances the author refers to are “textual or sexual” (Ballaster 1992: 159), one of the reasons for which he has been found as inaccurate in the analysis Haywood’s work (Saxton 2000: 5). But in spite of the non – reliability of his work, Spedding terms Whicher's work as "pioneering" (Spedding 2004: 15) because his was one of the only critical works done on Haywood in the early twentieth century end especially without the aid of online resources.

In the studies about Eliza Haywood work, her name has always been closely connected with her amatory fictions; over the course of the first part of her career, she was able to promote herself as an authority on the topic of love in part because of the publicized responses by readers to her work. Poems or letters from readers were sometimes included in later editions or reprints of her texts, and she "occupied a precarious professional position that relied on her ability to accommodate public taste, to create and respond to the desires of consumers, and to compete actively within print culture" (Ingrassia 1998: 81). For example, in the fourth edition of *Love in Excess*, the work is prefaced by an anonymous note from a reader praising Haywood's insights, saying that she "writes like one who knew / the pangs of love and all its raptures too" (ix). Her readers were compelled to write her and record their perception of her work. This reader response becomes part of later texts, and part of Haywood's reputation and marketability as a writer, thus increasing her influence and authority in relation to her reading public: her success and influence were backed by the reading public, not by the government or a wealthy patron, or any other institutional machinery. She was a writer "who records and, in turn, contributes to, the texture of subtle social interaction" (Ingrassia 1998: 137). Catherine Ingrassia's deep exam of her publishing activities and analyses of her direct influence on cultural

production of eighteenth century take us to consider Eliza Haywood as both a literary and cultural figure.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century "female authorship was widely considered to be the literary equivalent of prostitution" (Pettit 2004: 9), and women writers were considered like social outcasts or their private lives came under as much scrutiny by male critics as their works, and this can be easily applied at the case of Eliza Haywood and her private life. By taking up the pen, the male symbol of authority, women gained power which could be used to either subvert the existing male - dominated power structure by demanding more equality with men, or women could use their power to enforce and strengthen the status quo by reinforcing those definitions and expectations which the dominating male culture had set upon them. Yet Haywood was prolific, well-known, and a best-selling author, so she was a woman who can be hardly criticised: she was a businesswoman, living by her own pen (Pettit 2004: 10).

We now, for instance, have excellent critical editions of many of her works like Broadview edition of *Love in Excess*, first published in 1993 and the 2002 back cover of the 2nd Broadview edition of this work claims that the novel was, along with Robinson Crusoe, the most popular novel of the early eighteenth century. Rebecca Bocchicchio and Kirsten Saxon co - edited the 2000 collection of essays on Haywood, titled *The Passionate Fictions of Eliza Haywood*. In her introduction, Saxton claims that the collection "is the first critical book-length study on Haywood, and it reflects the range and depth of contemporary Haywood studies. Approaching Haywood's work from thematic, historical, and formal vantage points and from

multiple theoretical positions" and adds that "Finally, in the 1990s, modern critical editions of her work were produced" (Saxon 2000: 3).

Even though the development of criticism and attention for her works and career has increased, the study on her kind of writing is not very developed, for example her use of letter is an aspect which has not received much attention, in spite she wrote *Epistle for The Ladies* (1749 - 1750), entirely composed by letters, and many others of her works contain letters.

## Letters in the 18th century Novel

This chapter will offer an overview of recent criticism on the place of letters in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century novel. The aim is to show how critical thinking defines the limits and characteristics of novels that use epistolary discourse to a greater or lesser degree, dealing both with novels entirely composed by letters, such as Richardson's *Pamela*, and novels which occasionally insert letters, like those of Eliza Haywood. This will provide us with context within which to consider Haywood's much neglected use of epistolary discourse.

To trace a history of criticism on the use of letters in English novel, however, we must start with Ian Watt's classic essay of 1957, *The Rise of the Novel*. Here, writing of Richardson's *Pamela*, Watt affirms that :

Previous traditions of the letter - writing would not have encouraged this narrative direction. John Lyly's *Euphues* (1579), for example, is also an exemplary tale told in letters: but, in keeping with the literary and the epistolary tradition of his time, Lyly's emphasis was on producing new models of eloquence; the characters and their actions are of very secondary importance. By the time of *Pamela*, the majority of the literate public cared little for the traditions of courtly rhetoric, and used letters only for the purpose of sharing their daily thoughts and acts with a friend; the cult of familiar letter - writing, in fact, provided Richardson with a microphone already attuned to the tones of private experience (Watt 1957: 193).

Watt's nor consideration of epistolary fiction before Richardson points not so much on his ability to evidently demonstrate how Richardson's novel differs from earlier epistolary fiction, but only on his ability to associate them with another literary tradition. Linking the tradition of epistolary fiction with "courtly rhetoric", Watt defines the tradition of epistolary fiction as archaic and unsatisfactory for the demands of early modern life. Richardson's novel *Pamela* is considered as "sentimental, to be precise, as presenting a "much wider range of feelings than those to which sentimentalists. Sympathetic tears... he made...flow as no one else and as never before." (Watt 1957: 174). Examples of the sentimental letters sent by Pamela to her parents, where she opened her heart freely, explaining its hopes, fears, grieves, temptations, and especially its moral sensibilities, are available from the first pages:

"I know, dear father and mother, I must give you both grief and pleasure; and so I will only say, Pray for your Pamela; who will ever be Your most dutiful DAUGHTER." (Letter I.)

And in answer to the preceding:

Dear Pamela,

Your letter was indeed a great trouble, and some comfort, to me and your poor mother. We are, 'tis true, very poor, and find it hard enough to live; though once as you know, it was better with us. But we would sooner live upon the water, and, if possible, the clay of the ditches I contentedly dig, than live better at the price of our child's ruin."(Letter II)

Fifteen years later, Elaine Showalter criticised the epistolary novel harshly: "The epistolary novel, despite the prestige of Richardson and Rousseau, was obviously a technical dead end" (Showalter 1972: 121), continuing "The novel was a

blind alley in the eighteenth century, as far as technique was concerned. Until the writer was freed from the bondage of the first person, the genre was unable to move forward" (Shoewalter 1972: 192).

In 1977 Ronald Rossbottom concluded an article on the epistolary novel by suggesting that we should study the epistolary form because it flourished at the time when the modern novel was coming out: "Its historical moment was that of the appearance of what we refer to as the 'modern' novel, and, again, this fact alone makes it an important narrative sub-genre to understand." (Rossbottom 1977: 300). Rossbottom thus considers the epistolary novel only from a generic historical point of view, without focusing in detail on the features of this genre.

It was only with the birth and development of the feminist movement that critics "attempt to find a means to voice femininity in ways that confer social power on women as writers" (Jones 2000: 201) and the contribution of female writing was appreciated as much as to affirm that "few female novelists did not write a novel in letters" (Jones 2000: 295).

More important as a critic of the novel in letters is Ruth Perry. In her groundbreaking work *Women, Letters and Novel*, Perry affirms that the English middle-classes of early eighteenth century were voracious readers, and had an especially good appetite for epistolary fiction, identifying themselves easily with characters who wrote letters talking about their agonies in love, their travel experiences and their secrets, but also used letters to give advice, arrange intrigues, and so on (Perry 1980: 13). This kind of novel rapidly become popular in England, perhaps in part, as Ruth Perry suggests, because epistolary novels, with their characteristics of leaving stories without endings, were very interesting for the readers, who had to wait the

next episode which added new informations to the story. Despite of reading novels was a pleasure that only higher classes could afford, because, for example, own a book was more expensive than go to the theatre, in the eighteenth century book were sold better than before, and the increasing number of sales kept the price of printing low. (Perry 1980: 12 - 13)

Epistolary writing, according to Perry, was popular and in high demand at the beginning of 18<sup>th</sup> century because it satisfied the public taste for realism, offering information and answers to the moral dilemmas of middle class readers (Perry 1980: 14 - 15). Perry also claims that because letters were one of the few media available to women, epistolary fiction constituted a peculiarly feminine kind of discourse, a link reinforced by the fact that in the history of Western culture the “one – to – one format” of the letter has been seen as making it an appropriate mode of expression for women (Perry 1980: xii). Letter writing was, in she argues, one of the few kinds of writing which women had long been encouraged to practice:

One of the reasons women were encouraged to try their hands at epistolary fiction was because it was a format that required no formal education. It did not treat traditional literary problems, it necessitated no school training.....But it is important to remember that women did not dominate this new sort of fiction although they wrote a good deal of it. The most authoritative checklist of pre – Richardson epistolary fiction includes seventy – two volumes written by men and fifty – four volumes written by women, of which Eliza Haywood alone wrote twenty – nine. (Perry 1980: 17).

Going on to consider the contents and style of epistolary discourse, Perry suggests that if the personal nature of correspondence explained its attraction for young women, so did the seductive personal tributes and sexually - charged tones

that such correspondence, whether fictional or not, often contained. Letters were thus often seen as especially dangerous forms of reading matter, and were frequently depicted as enabling secret relationships to escape patriarchal prohibitions:

Almost all epistolary novels make the assumption that when a woman allows a man into her consciousness and writes personal letters to him, sooner or later she will also open her body to him.... Perhaps letter writing was seen as an inevitable prelude to sexual relations because writing permitted private intercourse between unmarried men and women in an era which never allowed such unsupervised communication in polite society. (Perry 1980: 132)

Perry thus focuses on the personal nature of letters, identifying their roles as mediators, but also as substitutes, "functioning as a figure for the lover." (Perry 1980: 8). In this sense letters are expected to make lovers who are physically distant from one another feel as if they are in each other's presence. Ruth Perry notes that "[i]n virtually every epistolary novel, letters are kissed, embraced, mooned over, communed with, treasured—as if they were standing for the absent lover." (Perry 1980: 9).

Two years after *Woman Letters and the Novel* came another important contribution: Janet Altman's *Epistolarity: Approaches to a Form* (1982). Altman focuses on the way the epistolary form favours the creation of particular themes, actions and characters, and argues that the epistolary novel can be seen as a metaphor for eighteenth century narrative as a whole: not only novels but scientific tracts, political treatises and conduct books all used the letter form. The popularity of the form was largely due to its accessibility: "it was considered the most direct, sincere, and transparent form of written communication" (Altman 1982: 3). Defining

epistolarity as the "use of the letter's formal properties to create meaning" (Altman 1982: 4), Altman writes that meaning "may be directly dependent on the epistolary form of the novel or [...] novels that at first appear not to be epistolary may in fact create meaning through the literary structures particular to the letter or the letter forms" (Altman 1982:4). In formulating this definition of epistolarity, Altman grants herself a space from which to interpret the letter novel. To this end, she identifies and examines six elements that can each be studied "as an independent approach to the [epistolary] genre" (Altman 1982: 6). They are:

- Bridge/barrier, where the letter's mediatory property makes it an instrument that both connects and interferes;
- Confiance/non – confiance, which are functions of the letter's dual potential for transparency;
- Writer/reader, because the act of writing invokes simultaneously the act of writing and reading;
- I/you, here/there, now/ then, because letter writing implies the reciprocity of writer – addressee and their presence in a temporal and spatial space:
- Closure/overture, discontinuation/continuation of writing, because letter can be seen as a segment within a chain of dialogue;
- Unit/unity, continuity/discontinuity, coherence/fragmentation, which are necessary elements in letter communication;

Altman focuses on the first of this element, and she defines it as "mediation."

Altman's use of the term "mediation" speaks directly to a problem that is inherent in

the use of: the separation of two parties, particularly lovers. Often separated by social or geographic distances, lovers spend most of the time period covered by the narration trying to overcome this obstacle. Left with no alternative, they resort to letter writing. Filled with expressions of love and desire, letters are exchanged frequently and are instrumental in helping lovers cope with the pain of separation. Letters not only re-establish connections that have suddenly been ruptured: they give lovers opportunities to extend their relationships. It is for this reason that Altman accurately names the letter as a “mediator”. According to Altman, the letter functions as mediator because it acts "as a connector between two distant points, as a bridge between sender and receiver." (Altman 1982: 7) In other words, the letter provides a passageway through which lovers can communicate, essentially decreasing the distance that threatens to divide them permanently.

The letter's power to connect, then, is not merely dependent on the exchange of letters; it is also dependent on how effectively the letter substitutes for an absent lover. As Altman notes,

The letter form seems tailored for the love plot, with its emphasis on separation and reunion, the lover who takes up his pen to write to his loved one is conscious of the interrelation of presence and absence and the way in which his very medium of communication reflects both the absence and presence of his addressee. At one moment he may proclaim the power of the letter to make the distant addressee present [ . . . ] and at the next lament the absence of the loved one and the letter's powerlessness to replace the spoken word or physical presence. The letter is literally a chain of communication, one whose physical shape metamorphoses according to the sentimental forces acting upon it (Altman 1982: 14 - 15)

The 1980s were an excellent decade for the study of epistolary form. In 1986, Linda Kauffman made high claims for epistolary fiction's cultural subversiveness:

If origins cannot be firmly fixed in the identity of the author, neither can they be found in the language. Like the self, the language of this genre is fluid, decentred, multiple: Sappho's Greek decentered Ovid's Latin, or a French Text is ostensibly written by a Portuguese nun to whom three women respond century later in Portuguese. Amorous discourse is indeed a hybrid of languages, of astonishing diversity and simultaneity. The bilingualism (sometimes trilingualism) of the texts mediates against certainty and centrality; each letter writer grapples with the intractability of language and expresses profound scepticism about the connection of words to deeds, to reality, to representation. The result is a radical detachment from ideology as well. (Kauffman 1986: 32).

Linda Kaufmann views especially epistolary fiction in particular, as a way for women writers to try to remove the marginality which the patriarchal order imposed on them:

Love is the ultimate transgression, and therefore love is relegated to the realms of myth and utopia. Yet the aim of all amorous discourse is to inscribe what has been relegated to the margins in the conceptual universe, to explore a theory of knowledge based on the senses - loving as a form of knowing. (Kauffman 1986: 60).

In the same year as Kauffman's, Jane Spencer's essay argued that women writers, many of whom had experienced their lack of education as a hindrance to writing poetry and drama (these genres were steeped in a classical tradition from which women were set apart), found that the emerging novel form held great promise: "As a new form, apparently easy to write and not guarded by classical tradition, it must have appealed to women without classical education. The epistolary novel,

especially, seemed open almost to anyone who could write a letter" (Spencer 1986: 6 - 7). Spencer goes on to evidence the link between the letter - writing tradition and women, the letter being a form of expression that used all the abilities considered special to women writers:

A woman writer was expected to show a heroine's sensibility, to write in the spontaneous manner associated with a woman in love. She was also expected to live up to the ideals of conduct followed by the heroine of romance. A set of firm restrictions on women's writing, in fact, grew up along with the woman writer's fame and respectability" (Spencer 1986: 23).

Spencer goes on to point out that how gender influenced consideration and judgement of eighteenth century writing: "Women were defined by their sexuality: and so were women writers. A woman's writing and her life tended to be judged together on the same terms" (Spencer 1986: 32). Morality and chastity were still the acknowledged spheres for women, so much so in fact, that, as they began writing as a group, women were seen to possess special talents when writing about these spheres:

There were common expectations about women's writing; their main subject would be love, their main interest in their female characters. The idea that women were naturally inclined to virtue and could exert a salutary moral influence on men, was spreading; and so was the idea that it was through women's tender feelings and their ability to stimulate tender feelings in men, that this influence operated. Hence women writers who wished to claim a special place in literature because of their sex were constrained by the twin requirements of love and morality... women writers had the delicate task of balancing a "feminine"

sensitivity to love with an equally "feminine" morality. (Spencer 1986: 32)

The thesis of Ian Watt was also supported, 30 years later, by Michael McKeon: in his work *The Origins of the English Novel* but, while Ian Watt's *Rise of the Novel* (1957) focuses on how individualism influences the emergence of the novel form, McKeon's *Origins of the English Novel* (1987) analyses the development of all the of literary genres and social categories in the eighteenth century, a transformative period. His aim is to underline how the novel differs from its predecessor, the romance and in the meantime its "capacity to change without changing into something else" (McKeon 1987: xiii). McKeon goes on arguing that Watt's definition is insufficient in explaining emergence the novel as a genre:

One central problem that Watt's unusually persuasive argument has helped to uncover is that of the persistence of romance, both within the novel and concurrently with its rise. And behind this lurks a yet more fundamental problem, the inadequacy of our theoretical distinction between "novel" and "romance"(McKeon 1987: 3).

For McKeon, the novel form culminates through "the *Pamela* controversy" in the 1740s, which engages contemporaries in a debate on the relationship between truth-telling and social position through its formal construction as a "documentary history". He affirms that *Pamela*'s "historicity is inextricable from its epistolary form and because it is not a documentary history, *Pamela* is not a romance" (McKeon 1987: 357).

In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Aphra Behn was one of the earliest in Britain who produced works of fiction told through the medium of letters (Todd 1989: 78).

More recently Elizabeth MacArthur has noted that epistolary fiction rose out of French salon culture, which was governed by women:

Within the closed realm of the salons women could create literary works (portraits, maxims, conversation), judge the works of others, and of course construct entirely new rules for social interaction and linguistic precision<sup>4</sup> (MacArthur 1990: 39).

MacArthur goes on to say that the salon culture out of which epistolary fiction emerged created a kind of discourse totally against the narrative conventions of the period:

Without the univocal authority of a narrator to guarantee that the final pages do in fact constitute the end of the story, or even to certify that the collection of letters tells a story, with an ending, readers may suspect that the story continued, or feel that it has not been properly closed off. The epistolary form makes it more difficult, then, to provide the kind of closure that fixes the shape and meaning the text's individual moments. (MacArthur 1990: 10 – 11)

But she points out that epistolary fiction, even if there is more than one characters who writes letters, is always epistolary narrative which comes out from only one single author; though this multivoicedness may have made the epistolary mode especially available to women, MacArthur goes on to point out that same multivoicedness ultimately made epistolary fiction available to other interests and ideologies especially inimical to women: many texts of eighteenth century underline how epistolary fiction can be easily associated with the feminine world.

In 1992, two years after Elizabeth MacArthur, Ros Ballaster underlines the importance of a French works in the tradition of letter – writing, she refers to the anonymous publication by Claude Babin of *Lettres Portugaises* in 1669, the example *par excellence* of a late 17<sup>th</sup> century epistolary novel. The text consists of five letters attributed to a Portuguese nun, Mariana (Mariane) Alcoforado, and addresse to a French officer whom she deeply loved, but who had abandoned her: “It re-established the Ovidian convention of the letter of complaint from the victim of seduction in seventeenth century prose fiction. Although the French heroic romance had privileged women's relation to the letter, it had done so for quite opposite reasons than that of the Portuguese letters” (Ballaster 1992: 62). She underlines also the link between letter and woman from a “physical” point of view, because the woman's letter/body is then more erotic because more concealed than that of the man. Like the body of a woman, the text of letters is hidden and protected from any kind of danger. Because of all the risks which can be involved in the delivery of a letter, even in the private realm of the letter the romance heroine cannot afford to express her desire directly (Ballaster 1992: 62).

But Ros Ballaster goes on considering that if the French romance represented women's letter – writing as superior because there are many disguises, the publication of *Lettres Portugaises* reversed the equation: there are more than twenty pages where an abandoned woman expresses her struggle for the abandon of her absent lover. But what she notices something more important: she observes how the English translation of *Lettres Portugaises* introduces a new kind of language which will influence all the amatory fiction of eighteenth century: the passion that women expressed in their letters was clearly transmitted is graphically, for example there are

parentheses, exclamation marks and dashes, and syntactically, for example there are a lot of rhetorical questions, the inversion of the word order and the abbreviation of sentences and obviously by lexical.

According to Catherine Gallagher, whose *Nobody's Story* appeared in 1994, “the apparent negativity in the rhetoric of these women writers— their emphasis on disembodiment, dispossession, and debt—points not to disabling self-doubts but to an important source of their creativity, a fertile emptiness at the heart of eighteenth century authorship” (Gallagher 1994: 327). She stresses all the positive effects of absence, silence , or what in her book she calls “nobodiness”, of the cultural construction of femininity of the period.

The importance of *Lettres Portuigaise* has not been considered by Ros Ballaster, but also, after few years, by Katherine Jensen

In seventeenth and eighteenth-century France, one of the ideals of femininity, which women were encouraged/compelled to realize, was what I term Epistolary Woman. Seduced, betrayed, and suffering, this woman writes letter after letter of anguished and masochistic lament to the man who has left her behind. (Jensen 1995: 1).

In 1999 Thomas Beebee's wrote *Epistolary Fiction in Europe 1500-1850*. In his work, he considers the letter is not just an object, but “a set of functions and capabilities” (Beebee 1999: 202), and “a Protean form which crystallized social relationships” (Beebee 1999: 3): he stresses its function applied to other fields in addition to literature, like real letters, periodicals, and newspapers, and in the literary field he underlines how lover letter were considered as real person, they were “kissed, wept upon, eaten, beaten, held to the bosom” (Beebee 1999: 50) but often the letter – writing communication was triangularized by third person, who could

read the letter and tell the content to other ones, what Beebee call “defamiliarization of letters” (79): also the often triangular nature of communication gives birth to the “dialectic between private self and the public sphere’ and between ‘speech as presence vs. writing as absence” (Beebee 1999: 205), and sometimes inevitably to gossip.

He also comments on what gender is: on one hand he points out male epistolary restriction of women to stereotypes such as the abandoned lover, on the other hand, he demonstrates that women found in letters a very good territory and analyses the creative literature that they authored. He cautions “the persistence of the metaphor of the lettered woman leads to misrecognition of women’s ability to shape narrative” (Beebee 1999: 118): in many cases, it was first of all in the emotional zone that women produced influential epistolary works, and letter form expressed both the isolation of women and the “weapons of interiority” with which they chose to defend themselves in different historical settings (Beebee 1999: 128).

As we have seen from this outline of late twentieth-century criticism, the epistolary novel, with its reliance on subjective points of view, and epistolary fiction, by its very nature offers intimate insights into characters' thoughts and feelings apparently without interference from the narrator and advances the plot with dramatic immediacy. Epistolary authors commonly wrote about questions of morality, and many epistolary novels are sentimental in nature.

It became evident that to start an outline of criticism in 18<sup>th</sup> century novel the methodology outlined by Ian Watt in *The Rise of the Novel* was incapable of producing a right overview of the place of women within literary history, because its emphasis was so heavily on issues of class, even if Watt did recognised that

significant numbers of women were closely involved with the genre (Watt 1957: 44 - 48). Watt completely ignores all epistolary fiction between Lyly in 1579 and Richardson in 1740. After Watt there is a gap of almost 15 years before than other critics express any interest in criticism in 18<sup>th</sup> century novel, in depth study of letter – writing and its place in relation to early novels only really began to flourish with the birth of feminist criticism in the 1980s, when scholars like Ruth Perry and Janet Altman, began to underline the importance of letters as private spaces which offered women rare opportunities to experiment with self - expression. Writing, and specifically letter-writing, gave eighteenth-century women a space to invent, discover, and experiment with literary conventions and genres, and it is precisely this multiplicity of voices that makes eighteenth century epistolary writing interesting and worthy of continued study.

After the feminist wave, and 30 years after Ian Watt, Michael McKeon re – visitation of the rise of the novel surprisingly ignores the work of these critics and indeed largely ignores the writers they drew attention to.

The end of the ‘80s and the beginning of the ‘90s saw the growing attention of some critics like Elizabeth MacArthur, Ros Ballaster, and Katharine Jensen comment the fact that the use of epistolarity came from French literary tradition and Ros Ballaster explores how three leading Tory women novelists of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries challenged and reworked both contemporary gender ideologies and generic convention: seduction employed in their fictions are a metaphor for both novelistic production (the seduction of the reader by the writer) and party political machination (the seduction of the public by the politician). Ballaster also builds on Spencer's study as well undertakes a complex

negotiation of the existing critical field in an effort to subject women's writing of the period 1684 - 1740 simultaneously to "epistemological and formal questions of genre and its formation" (of the sort that characterize McKeon's approach particularly) and "socio - political and ideological questions of gender and class differences" (of the kind that have preoccupied feminist critics primarily) (11). Later Elizabeth Jensen points out on the aspect that letter - writing is not represented only by love letters and the authors are not only women and not all coming from England.

It is quite surprisingly that an author like Eliza Haywood, who used letters in many of her work and also published works entirely composed by letters, is not considered as much as she deserves by critics.

## Letters in the Early Fictions

In this chapter I shall analyze the use of letters in Eliza Haywood's early fictions. I will consider only a few of her many works: her best seller *Love in Excess* (1719 - 1720), *Fantomina* (1724), *The City Jilt* (1726) and *Love – Letters on All Occasions* (1730). I chose these four works because I think they are an interesting case of study of letter – writing. The first three works are epistolary fictions, where letters are only a part of the text but make significant contributions to our understanding of the characters' personalities; the last. A neglected text which closes Haywood's decade of amatory fictions, is untypical in that it is entirely written in the form of letters which are not linked one to the other to construct a single story, but offer flash glimpses of crucial moments in the evolution of love situations.

The main aim of the chapter is to show how these works fit into in the letter – writing tradition of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, even if 20<sup>th</sup> century criticism of the genre did not focus on Eliza Haywood. Only Margaret Case Croskery commented on the presence of letters in Eliza Haywood's amorous fictions pointing out that "in almost all of Haywood's narratives, seductions are begun, continued, and discovered in an exchange of letters between the participants or interested spectators" (Croskery 2000: 86).

### 3.1 *Love in Excess*

*Love in Excess*, published in three parts in 1719 – 1720, is perhaps Haywood's best-known amatory fiction. On first publication it proved a best-seller, as popular as works such as Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), and Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740). According to David Oakleaf,

*Love in Excess* articulates the cultural shift toward a companionate model of marriage. It begins with ambition, which is public and culturally male, but it ends with conjugal affection, which is private and culturally female.....Haywood confronts directly the social conventions which, by making female sexual desire unspeakable, silence her protagonists. (Oakleaf 1994: 11 – 12)

*Love in Excess* can also be defined as one of the first examples of what William Warner calls “media culture” (Warner 1998: 125), where the word “media” refers to the “print medium”, and the word “culture” links to “the cultural forms and practices associated with the vogue for novels”, that is to say authors, publishers and readers.

The main characters are two young women, Alovera and Amena, both in love with the Count D'Elmont, and it is this love triangle that inevitably gives birth to the events that follow. The triangle, as we will see later, is a very common feature of Haywood's amatory fictions.

Considering all the three parts of *Love in Excess*, the text is almost 300 pages long and there are 30 letters in the whole text, which an average of one letter every 10 pages. This proportion holds over the whole text, in the first part, which is almost 50 pages long, contains 4 letters; the second part, which is almost 100 pages long,

contains 6 letters; in the third and last part, which is almost 130 pages there are 20 letters.

As for the place and importance of letters in the narration, the following table will be of help:

PAR T	PAG E	LETTER NUMBE R	FROM	TO	SENDE R	ADDRESSE E	KIND OF LETTE R
I	3	1	Unknow n (Alovisa)	D'Elmo nt	Lover	Lover	Love Letter - Courtshi p
	10	2	Alovisa	D'Elmo nt	Lover	Lover	Love Letter - Courtsh ip
	12	3	Amena	D'Elmo nt	Lover	Lover	Love Letter - Courtsh ip
	21	4	Unknow n	D'Elmo nt	Lover	Lover	Love Letter - Courtsh ip

II	59 – 60	5	Amena	D'Elmo nt	Lover	Lover	Accusat ory Letter
	63 – 64	6	D'Elmon t	Amena	Lover	Lover	Replyin g Letter
	68	7	Amena	D'Elmo nt	Lover	Lover	Accusat ory Letter
	72 – 73	8	Brillian	D'Elmo nt	Friend	Friend	Friends hip Letter
	106 – 107	9	Unknow n	D'Elmo nt	Lover	Lover	Accusat ory Letter
	129 – 130	10	Ansellina	Brillian	Lover	Lover	Letter for an Appoint ment
III	145 – 146	11	Unknow n	D'Elmo nt	Lover	Lover	Sorrow Letter
	146	12	Unknow	D'Elmo	Lover	Lover	Accusat

			n	nt			ory Letter
	147	13	D'Elmont	Incognita	Lover	Lover	Replying Letter
	164 – 165	14	Sanseverina	Frankville	Friend	Friend	Friends hip Letter
	176 – 177	15	Violetta	Frankville	Bride – to - be	Lover	Love Letter
	182 – 183	16	Camilla	Frankville	Lover	Lover	Love Letter
	183 – 184	17	Unknown	Frankville	Lover	Lover	Love Letter
	185 - 186	18	Camilla	Moon	Woman	Moon	Dedicat ion
	188 – 189	19	Frankville	Camilla	Lover	Lover	Love Letter
	201 – 202	20	Camilla	Frankville	Lover	Lover	Love Letter
	202	21	Frankville	Camilla	Lover	Lover	Replyin g Letter
	204 – 205	22	Ciamara	D'Elmont	Lover	Lover	Love Letter

	207 – 208	23	D'Elmont	Ciamara	Lover	Lover	Replying Letter
	209 – 210 – 211	24	Camilla	Frankville	Lover	Lover	Friendship Letter
	221 – 222	25	Violetta	Frankville	Lover	Lover	Love Letter
	223 – 224	26	D'Elmont	Camilla	Man	Seducer	Sorrow Letter
	227	27	Violetta	Frankville	Bride – to - be	Lover	Information Letter
	228 – 229	28	Brilliant	D'Elmont	Friend	Friend	Friendship Letter
	235	29	Violetta	D'Elmont	Lover	Man	Love Letter
	247 – 248	30	D' Sanguiller	Melliora	Abductor	Victim	Apology Letter

The first thing that strikes us is that majority of the letters are written from one lover to another, even if we have to point out that not in all cases do the sentiments expressed by the sender are returned by the addressee. For example in

letter 22 Ciamara writes to declare her love for D'Elmont, but he does not return her feelings. Similarly in the case of letters 15, 25 and 27, written by Violetta to Frankille, she is his bride to – be, but he is in love with Camilla.

From its first pages *Love in Excess* employs letters as vehicles for declarations of love intended to enchant and enrapture. In Letter 1 Alovera writes to D'Elmont using an even more intensely more and more seductive language, which can be clearly seen in the passage above:

Resistless as you are in War, you are much more so in Love: Here you conquer without making an Attack, and we Surrender before you Summons; the Law of Arms obliges you to show Mercy to an yielding Enemy, and sure the Court cannot inspire less generous Sentiments that the Field..... (Haywood 1719: 3 – 4)

Using this hyperbolic language in comparing love to a war situation, Alovera expresses her very strong passion for this man. Unfortunately for Alovera, who signs the letter only with a “Farewell”, the Count reads believes it has been sent by Amena. His mistake brings to the fore one of the most problematic aspects of letter – writing, when the sender of the letter does not sign him/herself, the addressee may not understand correctly who is the real author of the letter. The consequence, in this instance, is that Alovera is forced into trying to remedy the mistake by means of a trick. She sends D'Elmont another letter, again unsigned, letting him know that "one, of at least an equal beauty [referring to Amena], and far superior in every other consideration, would sacrifice all to purchase the glorious trophy [represented by D'Elmont's heart]" (Haywood 1719: 10). As a letter-writer Alovera is quite explicit using a direct language for her feelings and intentions: and she will use all the tools in her possession to succeed in her plan to conquer him, and is quite determined to

eliminate all the obstacles in her way, and especially her rival. To realize her purpose she tells Amena's father that his daughter is receiving attentions which have not been made public, thus provoking him to oblige Amena to write a letter to D'Elmont letting him know that she may only be courted by gentlemen her father has approved:

Some Malicious Persons have endeavour'd to make the little Conversation I have had with you, appear as Criminals; therefore to put a stop to all such Aspersion, I must for the future deny my self the Honour of your Visits, unless Commanded to receive' em by my Father, who only has the Power of disposing of. (Haywood 1719: 14)

In addition to writing as her father has instructed her, however, she secretly adds expressions of love for the Count, asking him for an appointment: "I beg you will be at your Lodgings towards the Evening, and I will invent a way to send to you" . (Haywood 1719: 14). Also Amena's language is full of passion and emotions: her strong feeling for the count is represented by the addition paragraph she secretly wrote.

As is thus made apparent, Amena too uses tricks to continue her affair in spite of the rules her father has imposed on her. With the help of Amena's servant, Anaret, who functions as a messenger, the lovers arrange a secret rendezvous which nearly culminates in a rape<sup>1</sup>. Ironically, it is Alovisa, who has had her servant Charlo follow the count, who interrupts the scene and saves Amena's virtue. This turn gives rise to another situation in which a letter is an important element. The count, afraid of meeting Amena's father, sends her away to Alovisa's house, where she realizes that the count's intentions have not been honourable and asks him to return her last letter.

---

<sup>1</sup> This scene is very similar to the first assignment described in Haywood's subsequent novel *Fantomina*.

Again he gets confused and with her own letter includes Alovisa's anonymous note: Amena recognizes Alovisa's handwriting and realizes she is no friend to her but a rival for the count's affections.

At this point Alovisa decides that she must rid of Amena, and arranges with her father to send her to a convent, the standard destiny Haywood assigns women who have transgressed social norms <sup>2</sup>. Alovisa now believes that she has overcome all obstacles to her love, and when D'Elmont learns that his brother, the Chevalier Brillian, is in love with Alovisa's sister Ansellina, and decides to marry Alovisa. "Part the First" thus ends with two brothers planning to marry two sisters.

As we seen, the function of letters in this first part is noticeable: all the four letters have in common the fact of not being signed, and all four use a language which is quite hyperbolic.

At the beginning of "Part the Second" D'Elmont learns that his protector, Monsieur Frankville, is ill and has asked D'Elmont to look after his daughter Melliora after his death. The count is entranced by Melliora and at the same time becomes increasingly disgusted with his wife when he discovers that she has intercepted his letters to Amena. In reply to a 'farewell' letter in which Amena had declared that "Sleeping or Waking you are ever with me, you mingle with my most Solemn Devotion....." (Haywood 1719: 59 – 60) , where again with her words expresses the intensity of love. D'Elmont had written:

To the Lovely Amena.....You accuse me of Cruelty, when at the Same Time you kill me with yours.....I yet may Love you, tho' in a different way from what I once pretended to; and believe me, the the

---

<sup>2</sup> The conclusion of the first part can be easily compared the conclusion to *Fantomina* where the female protagonist at the end of the story is sent to a monastery.

Love of Souls, as it is the most uncommon...Can I enjoy the pleasures of a court, while you are shut within a cloyster?--Shall I suffer the world to be deprived of such a treasure as Amena?" (Haywood 1719: 63 – 64)

Without any doubt, if she had received this letter, Amena would not have decided to spend the rest of her life in a convent, Alovisa's having intercepted it and prevented from being delivered leads directly to Amena deciding to take vows in the convent in which she has been confined, and writing her final farewell to D'Elmont:

To the Inhuman D'Elmont.....Ungrateful Man! Cou'd you not spare one Moment from that long Date of Happiness, to give a last farewell to her you have undone?.....I have put all future Correspondence with you out of my Power..... (Haywood 1719: 68)<sup>3</sup>

In this passage there is the expression of frustration, disappointment for the count.

Alovisa has thus achieved her aim of separating D'Elmont from Amena, but is unaware of her husband's growing passion for another woman. The Count's for the young Melliora, which encouraged by his neighbour, the Baron D'esprenay, who is in love with Alovisa, is, once again, neither pure nor chaste. As in "Part First", where Alovisa saves Amena from D'Elmont's advances, Melantha, the Baron's sister, interrupts D'Elmont as he is about to rape Melliora. At the end of "Part Second" the Baron and Alovisa both die, and in a conclusion that echoes that of Part One, Melliora retires to a monastery.

The feature that all the letters in this Part have in common is that all of them start with an epithet qualifying the addressee: "Charming and Perfidious" in letter 5, "Lovely" in letter 6, "Inhuman" in letter 7, "Friend and Brother" in letter 8, "The

---

<sup>3</sup> This letter is very similar to the second one Glicera wrote to Melladore in *The City Jilt*.

Dispairing D'Elmont to his Repenting Charmer" in letter 9 and "Chevalier" in letter 10.

The beginning of "The Third and Last Part" takes place in Italy, where D'Elmont is looking for Melliora, tracking her down by means of abundant letter – writing "He wrote to her from every post-town, and waited till he received her answer; by this means his journey was extremely tedious" (Haywood 1719: 143). D'Elmont has not been long in Rome when he receives a letter from a secret admirer: "To The Never Enough Admired Count D'Elmont.....you have yet a corner of your Heart Unprepossess'd, and an inclination willing to receive the impression of ..... Your Unknown Adorer" (Haywood 1719: 145 - 146). Here another female character writes referring to the Count with the same hyperbolic and passionate language of the previous female characters. From this letter it seems he has not lost his charms, but there is a difference in his response compared to the previous intrigues: his love for Melliora stops him from taking advantage of this situation. He replies: "methinks my mourning habit, to which my countenance and behaviour are no way unconformable, might inform you, I am little disposed for raillery" (Haywood 1719: 147). D'Elmont's letter is cold and the tone is not friendly and polite. Of course, we can imagine that D'Elmont's "mourning" has more to do with the loss of Melliora to a convent than to the loss of Alovisa's life.

This refusal does not, however, bring the relation with the unknown lady to a conclusion. While wandering through the streets of Rome, D'Elmont becomes involved in a brawl in which a man is murdered; he quickly hides in a nearby garden which turns out to be the garden of his admirer, and she defends him from the questions of the authorities. s Back at his lodgings, he is challenged to a duel by

Melliora's brother Frankville, who wants to defend his sister's honour. But when Frankville discovers that it had been D'Elmont who had saved him in the street fight the night before, the two became friends, and D'Elmont learns that the man responsible for the brawl was a certain Cittolini, and that it was because of a letter from Sanseverin that Frankville believes him to have behaved improperly toward Melliora. Another "frustrated" love situation now emerges. Frankville now tells the Count that he cannot marry Camilla, the woman he loves and who loves him, because her hand has been promised to another man. D'Elmont decides to intervene on Frankville's behalf by speaking to Camilla, and during this sees the woman who had previously tried to seduce him and who had hidde him in her garden. When he relays this story to Frankville, they realize that it was actually Ciamara with whom D'Elmont met., Frankville has, however, in the meantime already sent a letter to Camilla with a generous offer: "If vows are any constraint to an inclination so addicted to liberty as yours, I shall make no difficulty to release you, of all you ever made to me!" (Haywood 1719: 202).

A passionate love letter from Ciamara now obliges D'Elmont to agree to a second encounter in the course of which D'Elmont occupies Ciamara while Frankville manages to meet with Camilla, and plan their escape with the the help of Violetta whom, quite predictably, is in love with D'Elmont. D'Elmont now receives a letter from his brother Brillian informing him that Melliora has been abducted from the convent: "my Lord, 'Tis with an inexpressible Grief that I obey the Command you left me.....by some unknown raptor stolen from the Monastery" (Haywood 1719: 228). D'Elmont leaves in search of his beloved accompanied by Fidelio, who actually is Violetta disguised.

Learning of this events, Ciamara kills herself with poison and Cittolini dies of a fever. D'Elmont and "Fidelio" continue their search for Melliora, in the course of which they are offered by the very man, the Marquess De Saguillier, who had abducted Melliora. She is thus saved, while De Saguillier is reunited with the woman who truly loves him, and Fidelio conveniently dies. The story thus ends with three couples: Frankville and Camilla, De Saguillier and Charlotta and D'Elmont and Melliora.

The first 2 letters of this Part differ from the other ones in the way that they are numbered ("Letter I" and "Letter II"). All 20 open an initial epithet, such as "Ungrateful" in letter 12 or "The Most Lovely and Adorable" in letter 19: these epithets they give the readers a brief but clear idea of the thoughts of the sender about the addressee. Another interesting aspect is how the sender signs him/herself at the end of the letter: the use of adjectives like "Your Most Passionate and Tender" in letter 11 or "The Most Devoted Servant" in letter 23 again give the reader an idea of the feelings the sender feels for the addressee. Others, such as letters 15, 16, 18, are simply signed with a name.

### **3.2 *Fantomina***

*Fantomina* was first published in 1724. In this amatory fiction the central theme is that of the mask, in fact there is a woman, the female character, whose name is unknown, who masking herself manages to trick on Beauplasir, the male characters.

This work is 30 pages long and there are 4 letters, so like the previous work, if we calculate an average, there is a letter every 8 pages. As for the place and importance of letters in the narration, the following table will be of help:

PAGE	LETTER NUMBER	FROM	TO	SENDER	ADDRESSEE	KIND OF LETTER
58	1	Beuplasir	Fantomina as Mrs Bloomer	Man	Mistress	Letter for an Appointment
59	2	Beuplasir	Fantomina as Fantomina	Man	Mistress	Letter for an Appointment
63	3	Fantomina as Incognita	Beuplasir	Mistress	Man	Letter for an Appointment
64	4	Beuplasir	Fantomina as Incognita	Man	Mistress	Letter for an Appointment

As we seen all 4 letters are love letters. Three of them are written by Beuplasir to his mistresses; the first two are to ask for appointments and do not presume an answer, but the last one does. Also the only one letter written by the female protagonist to Beuplasir presumes an answer: here is shown the female protagonist succeeds in hiding her real identity, in fact when Beuplasir writes each one of these letters, he thinks he is writing to different women. In fact, as the table

above shows, each of these women is none other than Fantomina in disguise, “Fantomina” herself being a disguised version of an upper class lady who can find no other way of continuing to enjoy the man she desires than by continually changing her identity from that of prostitute to chamber maid, to widow to masked society lady.

It is in the final phase of this intrigue that letters come to play a part. The first one is Beauplaisir’s attempt to continue his relationship with Mrs. Bloomer: never, he writes “did ever Man adore as I do”; he is anxious to see her that evening “O, ’tis an Age till then”, and she is his “Charming Mrs. Bloomer.....my Angel.....Sweet lovely Mistress of the Soul and all the Faculties” (Haywood 2004: 58). The hyperbolic language and his adulation to the woman are a clear representation of his intention to persuade the woman to reach his purpose of persuasion.

In his second letter Beauplaisir writes to Fantomina in terms similar to those he had used to Mrs. Bloomer referring, calling her “Lovely.....my Dear” (Haywood 2004: 59) expressing his desire to see her again and attempting to excuse his recent absence from London: “If you knew how I have languish’d to renew those Blessings I am permitted to enjoy in your Society, you would rather pity than condemn” (Haywood 2004: 59) ). The purpose is the same and again at the end he signs himself in the same way he had in his epistle to Mrs Bloomer, “Faithful Beauplaisir”.

Unfortunately for Beauplaisir, of course, he has been writing to the same person who, on receiving them, exclaims: “TRAITOR! ... ’tis thus our silly, fond, believing Sex are served when they put Faith in Man: So had I been deceived and

cheated...” (Haywood 2004: 59). This is very surprising because she seems to have forgotten her initial conviction that all men quickly tire of their conquests, and that she had been the one who had initiated all her interactions with Beauplaisir, knowing all along what she was doing with him. Nor does she renounce her project at this stage. She decides to go on with masking herself, because she understands that with this kind of relationships she is able to exert some level of control over Beauplaisir: her ability to trick him more than once throughout the story exemplifies her power over him. She assumes the guise of one Incognita, arranging an erotic rendezvous in her London apartment in the core of which she, stays masked and anonymous, successfully preventing Beauplaisir’s attempts to discover her identity. Now we have the third letter, the only one from the female protagonist, writing as Incognita to Beauplaisir, she tries to capture his interest by addressing him as " the All-conquering Beauplaisir” and declaring that while she is “infinite in Love” “There is but one Thing in my Power to refuse you, which is the Knowledge of my Name, which believing the Sight of my Face will render no Secret, you must not take it ill that I conceal from you” (Haywood 2004: 63).

Incognita uses the same tricks of Beauplaisir to persuade and continue their sexual relationship. She thus does not wait for Beauplaisir to show interest in her and allow her the choice of refusing or accepting his offerings; instead, she makes him the passive partner in their relationship. Beauplaisir comes to the home of Incognita and enjoys all the pleasures of her person but is not allowed power over her true person of identity because they are not revealed to him.

In the fourth letter, which is the third and last one Beauplaisir he expresses acceptance of the kind of relation she proposes: “I am able to content myself with

admiring the Wonders of your Wit alone.....You need no doubt my glad Compliance with your obliging Summons”; his signature, “everlasting slave” (Haywood 2004: 64), expresses his total submission to her. It is, however, a temporary solution. In the end, Fantomina is sent to a monastery<sup>4</sup> and Beauplaisir is left to continue finding new mistresses to satisfy his sexual appetite.

The four letters in this work have in common that all of them start with an epithet which describes the addressee: “Lovely” in letter 1, “Charming” in letter 2, “All – Conquering” in letter 3 and “Obliging and Witty” in letter 4, all these terms define the addressee from the point of view of the sender. But one aspect all the letters have in common is the language: in all the cases it is hyperbolic. The last aspect we can point out is that of the sign, by which we understand how the sender defines him/herself: “Ever Faithful” in letter 1, “Most Faithful” in letter 2, “Yours Incognita”<sup>5</sup> in letter 3 and “Everlasting Slave”<sup>6</sup>.

### ***3.3 The City Jilt***

The title of this amatory fiction immediately moves our attention to the setting: City as location is to be seen as opposite to the country. The Jilt of the title obviously anticipates the story’s concentration on the field of feelings and emotions, but on the most cruel aspect of love as a “a gendered battlefield of bed and heart”. Love and business thus come together confirming Ingrassia’s comment that “Her female subjects are frequently the daughters of bankers, merchants, or aldermen:

---

<sup>4</sup> As we have seen the same end overtakes one of the female protagonist of *Love in Excess* permanently, but another uses a monastery as only a temporary refuge. Margaret Case Croskery point out "in Haywood's works, banishment to convent or monastery was no guarantee of moral transformation, nor was it an effective stopgap to erotic pleasure" (Croskery 2000: 92).

<sup>5</sup> This is a name which will be used by Haywood also in other works.

<sup>6</sup> This is a name which will be used by Haywood also in other works.

individuals of the middling classes consistently located in the socio – economic and often geographical milieu of the City of London” (85).

The context is that of middle – class society. The father of the female protagonist is a merchant who has credits and investments, but nothing more “solid and touchable”, such as, land. The uncertainty of middle - class economy brings him and his family to the ruin: Glicera, his daughter, will be seduced and abandoned by Melladore, who will later marry Helena.

This text is about 40 pages long, and there are 5 letters, about a letter every 8 pages, like in the previous works examined. As for the place and importance of letters in the narration, the following table will be of help:

PAGE	LETTER NUMER	FROM	TO	SENDER	ADDRESSEE	KIND OF LETTER
90 – 91	1	Glicera	Melladore	Woman	Seducer	Sorrow Letter
92 - 93	2	Glicera	Melladore	Woman	Seducer	Sorrow Letter
93 – 94	3	Melladore	Glicera	Seducer	Victim of seduction	Farewell Letter
103 – 104	4	Villagnan	Helena	Suitor	Lover	Denigrating Letter
117 - 118	5	Melladore	Glicera	Seducer	Victim of seduction	Repentance Letter

The first two letters are written by the female character to the man who seduced and abandoned her. The other three letters are written by male characters: Melladore in reply to Glicera in letter 3, and again to Glicera expressing his final repentance in letter 5. Letter 4, from Villagnan, suitor to Melladore's wife Helena, , points out her husband's disastrous financial condition and proposes that she escape with him to Holland.

In the first letter, Glicera's first to Melladore, punctuation, especially exclamations and rhetorical questions play a key role, especially in reinforcing the emotional expressiveness of the letter. Glicera defines Melladore as "Ungrateful and Perfidous". Frequent dashes signal repeated interruptions to the flow of her thought, and reflecting her doubts while writing. Seduced and abandoned, Glicera goes from one extreme of emotions to another, veering from complete adoration for Melladore, to complete hatred for him. This is shown also by her exclamations "Ah! how Inhuman, how barbarous has been your Usage of me! If with the loss of my expected Dower I also lost your Heart, why did you not then reveal it?" (Haywood 1999: 90 – 91). Her vacillating emotions are clear, also when she talks about her unborn child. She first states:

But Oh! there is a tender Part to both of us, which claims a Parent's care: That dear Unborn, that guiltless Consequence of our mutual Raptures, starting within me, makes me feel a Mother's Fondness, and a Mother's Duty: – Nature, Religion, Pity, and Love, all plead in its behalf, and bid me leave no Means untry'd to save its helpless Innocence from Shame and Want, and all the Miseries of an unfriending World [...]. (Haywood 1999: 90)

In this passage the interjection “Oh,” could stand express any number of emotions such as “surprise, frustration, discomfort, longing, disappointment, sorrow, relief, hesitation, etc.” (“Oh, int.”), but most likely indicates sorrow (Saxton 2000: 127). She is by no means happy to be with child, especially Melladore’s child, but feels an obligation to it.

Glicera had earlier stated that she would rather die than have any further obligation to Melladore: “sooner chuse Death than the Obligation to you on my own account” (Haywood 1999: 90). What makes her feel an obligation to the child is the fact that it is a “guiltless Consequence of our mutual Raptures,” (Haywood 1999: 90) meaning that the child is not at fault for their amorous mistake. Further in the passage, she addresses the child’s “helpless Innocence” and her duty as a mother to protect it. The contradictory nature of her feelings becomes clearer later on in the letter when she states:

[...] to the Number of thy monstrous Actions add yet one more, and kill me; the worst of Deaths [...] will be a kind Cruelty not only to me, but to the little Wretch I bear: – Let the Sword finish that ruin which Deceit begun, and send us both from Shame, Reproach, and never-ending Woe. (Haywood 1999: 91)

Appropriately, she signs herself as “Most injured and Afflicted”,

Glicers’s second letter starts by calling her lover “Unworthy”, and complaining of having to live with “the Agonies of my distracted Soul” (Haywood 1999: 92). Again her language is hyperbolic and metaphorical, with many: signs of interruption such as dashes signalling lack of connection between one statement and another (Saxton 2000: 116). Feeling, she admits, has the upper hand over reason:

“tumultuous Passions? o’erwhelm my Reason, and drive me into Madness” (Haywood 1999: 92), masking her revile him in a series of comparison to wild animals:

The Cruelty of Tygers is within thee, and all the base Subtilty of the betraying Crocodile – Perdition Seize thee: How canst thou, darest thou use me thus? Heaven will revenge my Wrongs, tho’ it denies the Power to (Haywood 1999: 92 – 93).

At the end of the letters she signs herself as “Miserable Glicera”, begging him to answer her (Haywood 1999: 93). As Saxton points out, Melladore’s failure to answer Glicera’s first letter is a clear sign of his uncaring indifference to both her and their unborn child (Saxton 2000: 124)-

After this second letter, Melladore answers Glicera without any sign of repenting:

Had Circumstances concur’d, I could, however, have been content to drag those Chins with you, so uneasy to be borne, by most of those who wear them; but since Affairs have happened contrary to both our Expectations, lay the fault on Fate..... (Haywood 1999: 93 – 94)

What he does not know is that the same fate he is referring to will overtake him at the end of the story: he decides to marry Helena, who at the end does not reveal herself to be a good wife in middling sort terms. Rather than preserving the family wealth she spends all his money leading Melladore to regret his marriage.

At this point comes the letter from Villagnan to Helena comment persuading her to escape with him: “your Husband’s Circumstances, I can assure you they are infinitely worse than you imagine.....I would, therefore, once more endeavour to

persuade you.....leave this unworthy husband”. Here he only wants to denigrate Melladore trying to persuade Helena to go with him to Holland.

In the last letter Melladore, ruined and humbled, writes to Glicera a letter admitting to his wrongdoings: “Like the foolish Indians, I have barter’d Gold for Glass, exchang’d the best for one of the vilest that ever disgraced the name of Woman” (Haywood 1999: 117). Melladore’s letter expresses the supposed regret he experiences by choosing to marry the wealthy Helena over Glicera, who is a woman of little wealth but exceeding merit. Although he recognizes his selfish and shallow mistake, he uses words like “barter’d” and “exchang’d” to describe his poor marital decision, describing marriage as a trade process: though Melladore relates himself to the Indians, his greed actually parallels the Europeans’ behaviour: he “trades” Glicera for Helena, or according to his analogy, trades gold for glass. Thus, even after his downfall, Melladore continues to see love as a financial transaction; he realizes the errors in his marital stance, but he simply cannot overcome his profiteering outlook. This letter is full of “-“ which emphasise the discourse and the sorrow of Melladore (Saxton 2000: 124). It also represents the final revenge Glicecera takes on the man who seduced and abandoned her.<sup>7</sup>

### **3.5 Love – Letters on All Occasions**

This work is a sort of manual, set of individual love letters which can give instructions on how to write in many love situations: this is the interesting aspect, because each letter is about a different faces of love. There are letters about

---

<sup>7</sup> The final letter written by the male protagonist which expresses pain and sorrow is a feature which is recurrent in Haywood’s amatory fictions, like what happens in other works as *The Mercenary Lover* (1726).

unrequited love, jealousy, constancy, absence, levity, sincerity, the pleasures of conjugal affection, insensibility etc. The aim of this work by Eliza Haywood is to focus on the precariousness of desire, especially for women (Oakleaf 2004: 30).

As for the place and importance of letters in the narration, the following table will be of help:

PAGE	LETTER NUMBER	FROM	TO	SENDER	ADDRESSEE	KIND OF LETTER
163	1	Darian	Clemene	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter
165 – 166	2	Phyletus	Delia	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter
167 – 168	3	Myrtilla	Sarpedon	Mistress	Lover	Love Letter
169 – 170	4	Sarpedon	Myrtilla	Lover	Mistress	Replying Letter
170 – 171 – 172	5	Anexander	Baretta	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter
172 – 173	6	Sylvander	Janthe	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter
173 - 174	7	Strephon	Dalinda	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter

175 – 176	8	Alexis	Serinda	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter
177 – 178	9	Aristus	Panthea	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter
178	10	Panthea	Aristus	Mistress	Lover	Love Letter
178 – 179 – 180	11	Aristus	Panthea	Lover	Mistress	Replying Letter
180	12	Panthea	Aristus	Mistress	Lover	Replying Letter
181 – 182	13	Theano	Elismonda	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter
182 – 183 – 184	14	Elismonda	Theano	Mistress	Lover	Replying Letter
184 – 185	15	Theano	Elismonda	Lover	Mistress	Replying Letter
185 – 186	16	Elismonda	Theano	Mistress	Lover	Replying Letter
187 – 188	17	Theano	Elismonda	Lover	Mistress	Replying Letter
188 –	18	Elismonda	Theano	Mistress	Lover	Replying Letter

189						
189 – 190	19	Elismonda	Theano	Mistress	Lover	Replying Letter
190 – 191	20	Elismonda	Theano	Mistress	Lover	Replying Letter
191 – 192 – 193	21	Theano	Elismonda	Lover	Mistress	Replying Letter
193 – 194	22	Elismonda	Theano	Mistress	Lover	Replying Letter
194 – 195	23	Theano	Elismonda	Lover	Mistress	Replying Letter
195	24	Theano	Elismonda	Lover	Mistress	Replying Letter
196	25	Theano	Elismonda	Lover	Mistress	Replying Letter
196 – 197	26	Theano	Elismonda	Lover	Mistress	Replying Letter
197 – 198 – 199	27	Elismonda	Theano	Mistress	Lover	Replying Letter
199 – 200	28	Theano	Elismonda	Lover	Mistress	Replying Letter

200 – 201	29	Elismonda	Theano	Mistress	Lover	Replying Letter
201 – 202	30	Theano	Elismonda	Lover	Mistress	Replying Letter
203	31	Elismonda	Theano	Mistress	Lover	Replying Letter
204	32	Theano	Elismonda	Lover	Mistress	Replying Letter
204 – 205	33	Theano	Elismonda	Lover	Mistress	Replying Letter
205 – 206	34	Theano	Elismonda	Lover	Mistress	Replying Letter
206	35	Theano	Elismonda	Lover	Mistress	Replying Letter
207	36	Elismonda	Theano	Mistress	Lover	Replying Letter
207 – 208	37	Dorimenus	Erminia	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter
208 – 209	38	Rosander	Amythea	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter
209 – 210 – 211	39	Agario	Miranda	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter
211 –	40	Julia	Antiphone	Mistress	Lover	Love

212 – 213						Letter
213 – 214	41	Antiphone	Julia	Lover	Mistress	Replying Letter
214 – 215	42	Julia	Antiphone	Mistress	Lover	Replying Letter
215	43	Antiphone	Julia	Lover	Mistress	Replying Letter
215 – 216 – 217	44	Belliza	Philemon	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter
217 – 218 – 219	45	Brilliante	Locutio	Mistress	Lover	Love Letter
219 – 220	46	Locutio	Brilliante	Lover	Mistress	Replying Letter
220 – 221	47	Theolinda	Hersilius	Mistress	Lover	Love Letter
221 – 222	48	Simonides	Amarantha	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter
222 – 223	49	Cleophil	Saphira	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter
223 –	50	Amanda	Lothario	Mistress	Lover	Love

224 – 225						Letter
225 – 226 – 227	51	Lothario	Amanda	Lover	Mistress	Replying Letter
227 – 228	52	Amanda	Lothario	Mistress	Lover	Replying Letter
228 – 229	53	Cleomira	Beaumont	Mistress	Lover	Love Letter
230 – 231	54	Celadon	Florinda	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter
231 – 232	55	Lysetta	Lyonides	Mistress	Lover	Love Letter
233 – 234	56	Urania	Favonius	Mistress	Lover	Love Letter
234 – 235	57	Orontes	Deanira	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter
235 – 236	58	Fidelia	Leander	Mistress	Lover	Love Letter
236 – 237 – 238	59	Amalthea	Periander	Mistress	Lover	Love Letter
238 –	60	Ismena	Horatio	Mistress	Lover	Love

239						Letter
240 - 241	61	Sabina	Fillamour	Mistress	Lover	Love Letter
241 - 242	62	Floridante	Clotilda	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter

In this work there are 62 letters, and each one is clearly numbered, but there is a difference between this work and the previous ones because here we do not have a story, a central idea, a theme, but letters, which are all love letters, are quite disconnected, they only are brief examples of short exchanges of letters between lovers. The only exception is the series of letters between Theano and Elismonda, whose communication goes on for about 20 letters. Even though this exchange is longer than the other ones, it seems incomplete because when the two lovers are just about to be together, Eliza Haywood moves her attention to another couple. It is as if each exchange wants to catch your attention but hides a longer story. All the letters have also in common the aspect that there is no information about how they are delivered. Only in letters 25, 33 and 34 there are some references to the post office where the sender sends the letter. The other characteristic they have in common is that all of them use hyperbolic use of language.

The attention moves quickly from one couple to another, only the case of the correspondence between Theano and Elismonda, (letter XIII to letter XXXVI); we know they want to marry, but we do not know anything about the wedding, only in the last letter Theano refers his arrival. After Theano and Elismonda we have letter XXXVII, where there is the correspondence between Dorimeneus and Erminia:

Haywood discusses the topic of love at first sight: she is very skeptical and he writes her “why suppose there is a Necessity for to be seen more than once, to make be ador’d?” We will never know the woman answer. In letter XXXIX between Amythea and Rosander, we have her rejection of him because he has loved anyone else before her and he writes her “a young and unexperienc’d Heart is set on Fire by the least spark of Beauty.....my passion is inspir’d, assisted and continued by my Reason”. In letter LVII Orontes wrote to Deanira, entreating her to give him a meeting.

Even if the stories are different from each other, there are features that only some letters have in common, such as: the presence, at the beginning of the letter, of an epithet. In letters 3, 4, 5, 9, 11, 21, 55 the epithet refers only to the woman, in 10 (where the epithet refers only to the man), while all the others have only the names of the protagonists. Many letters (letters 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60 and 61) are introduced by a sort of summary of the plot as in. All the letters are signed by the sender, either with only the name (as in letter 9, 12, 13, 14, 22, 31, 32, 39, 45, 47, 53 and 61), or with an epithet like “Most Faithful and Passionate” (letter 17) or “Entirely Devoted and Unchangeable” (letter 21; there are only four cases when the same sign is used in different letters: “Wretched” is used both in letters 16 and 42, “Ever Faithful” is used both in letters 23 and 48, “Tenderly Affectionate” is used both in letters 26 and 56 and “Most Faithful” is used both in letters 34 and 54.

These works of Haywood reflect the limits underlined by criticism on letter – writing tradition of the eighteenth century; first of all Ian Watt and his focus on the lack of realism of letter – writing: Haywood writing is still linked to the romance tradition and it is easily understood from the name of the characters, which have an

allegoric meaning, from the non-linearity of the plot with all its fictitious situations, the lack of references to places which really exist and there are no clear references to the setting, but Haywood moves from the romance tradition in terms of characters because they are not knights or kings and queens. Secondly Ruth Perry talk about letter as a physical representation of the lover and in Haywood works all the times the two lovers decided writing each other. In the end Ros Ballaster, when she describes the female character as a writer whose letters are full of complaints, as a victim, but now they also feels free to express in their writing all their feelings and emotions.

## Letters in the Later Fictions

In this chapters I shall analyze the use of letters in one of Eliza Haywood's later works. *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* (1751), I chose this work because the development of characters and events is influenced by the presence of letters. Many critics studies have analyzed this work on different levels, but no one directly focuses on this one.

### 4.1 *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*

In the course of this long novel Haywood deals a range of different problems and themes, from education to reputation.

To give a very general introduction to its structure, the novel is composed to four volumes, and in each volume there are 23 chapters, except for Volume IV, which contains 24 chapters. The regularity of the novels structure is reinforced by the fact that the number of pages of each volume is roughly the same: in Volume I there are 177 pages, in Volume II and III there are 144 pages and in Volume IV there are 157 pages.

This novel is almost 600 pages long and of each chapter of each volume has an introduction sentence the beginning of each chapter which gives the reader a sort of general introduction on what the chapter is about. Furthermore, as we see from the chart, in the novel there are 78 letters, which means about a letter every 7 pages, and

if we pay attention on the exact number of letter in each volume, we notice that in Volume I and II the numbers of letters is exactly 19 for each volume, in Volume III is 18 and in Volume IV is 22, so there is not the difference which there was in some of her previous works.

As in our previous chapter a brief summary of the letters scattered through the text will give an idea of their importance.

VOLUME	CHAPTER	PAGE	LETTER NUMBER	FROM	TO	SENDER	ADDRESSEE	KIND OF LETTER
1	III	42	1	Gayland	Betsy	Suitor	Courted	Love Letter - Courtship
	IV	46 – 47	2	Mr. Saving	Betsy	Suitor	Courted	Love Letter - Courtship
		48	3	Betsy	Mr. Saving	Courted	Suitor	Replying Letter
	VIII	68	4	Betsy	Lady Trusty	Girl	Guardian	Information Letter
	IX	80	5	Betsy's brother	Betsy	Brother	Sister	Justification

								Letter
	X	84	6	Betsy	Betsy's brother	Sister	Brother	Replying Letter
		85 – 86	7	Betsy's brother	Betsy	Brothe r	Sister	Encoura gement Letter
	XI	88 – 89 - 90	8	Betsy's brother	Betsy	Brothe r	Sister	Advice Letter
	XII	97 – 98	9	Miss Forward	Betsy	Friend	Friend	Friendsh ip Letter
		98	10	Betsy	Miss Forward	Friend	Friend	Replying Letter
	XIII	105	11	Wildly	Miss Forward	Suitor	Courted	Love Letter - Courtshi p
		107	12	Miss Forward	Wildly	Courte d	Suitor	Replying Letter
	XV	123	13	Betsy's brother	Betsy	Brothe r	Sister	Informat ion Letter
		125 –	14	Betsy's brother	Mr. Goodma	Friend	Friend	Informat ion

		126			n			Letter
	XVI	129 – 130	15	Hysom	Betsy	Suitor	Courted	Love Letter - Courtshi p
	XVII	135 – 136	16	Staple	Betsy	Suitor	Courted	Love Letter - Courtshi p
		137 – 138	17	Truewort h	Betsy	Suitor	Courted	Love Letter - Courtshi p
	XXII	167 – 168	18	Staple	Truewor th	Suitor	Suitor	Esteem Letter
		168	19	Truewort h	Staple	Suitor	Suitor	Replying Letter
2	I	183	20	Staple	Truewor th	Suitor	Suitor	Replying Letter
	II	187 – 188	21	Truewort h	Staple	Suitor	Suitor	Replying Letter
		190	22	Staple	Betsy	Suitor	Courted	Love

		- 191						Letter - Courtshi p
	III	198	23	Unknow n (Miss Flora)	Saving	Woma n	Betsy suitor	Denigrat ing Letter
	IV	201 - 202	24	Betsy's brother	Mr. Goodma n	Friend	Friend	Informat ion Letter
		203 - 204	25	Miss Forward	Betsy	Friend	Friend	Letter between Friends
		204 - 205	26	Betsy's brother	Betsy	Brothe r	Sister	Advice Letter
		206 - 207	27	Lady Trusty	Betsy	Guardi an	Girl	Advice Letter
	V	213	28	Betsy	Lady Trusty	Girl	Guardian	Replying Letter
	VI	216 - 217	29	Unknow n	Betsy		Woman	Advice Letter
	IX	233	30	Miss Forward	Betsy	Friend	Friend	Informat ion

								Letter
	XI	243 – 244	31	Betsy	Miss Forward	Friend	Friend	Farewell Letter
	XII	250 – 251	32	Unknow n (Flora)	Truewor th	Betsy friend	Betsy suitor	Denigrat ing Letter
	XIV	263	33	Marplus	Lady Mellasin	Friend	Friend	Requesti ng Letter
	XVI	273 – 274	34	Lady Trusty	Betsy	Guardi an	Girl	Informat ion Letter
	XVII	284 – 285	35	Truewort h	Betsy	Suitor	Courted	Farewell Letter
	XX	303 – 304	36	Betsy's brother	Betsy	Brothe r	Sister	Advice Letter
	XXI	305	37	Incognit a	Truewor th	Suitor	Man	Letter for an Appoint ment
		306	38	Truewort h	Incognit a	Man	Suitor	Replying Letter

3	I	330	39	Mr. Munden	Betsy	Suitor	Courted	Love Letter - Courtshi p
		331	40	Fineer	Betsy	Suitor	Courted	Love Letter - Courtshi p
		333 – 334	41	Betsy's brother	Betsy	Brothe r	Sister	Informat ion Letter
	III	343 – 344	42	Fineer	Betsy	Suitor	Courted	Love Letter – Courtshi p
	IV	350 – 351	43	Fineer	Betsy	Suitor	Courted	Love Letter – Courtshi p
	VI	366 – 367	44	Flora Mellasin	Truewor th	Suitor	Courted	Love Letter – Courtshi p
	VIII	379	45	Unknow n (Miss	Truewor th	Suitor	Courted	Love Letter –

				Blanchfi eld)				Courtshi p
		380	46	Truewort h	Unknow n (Miss Blanchfi eld)	Courte d	Suitor	Replying Letter
		380 – 381	47	Flora Mellasin	Truewor th	Suitor	Courted	Accusat ory Letter
		382	48	Truewort h	Flora Mellasin	Courte d	Suitor	Replying Letter
	IX	385	49	Fineer	Betsy	Suitor	Courted	Love Letter – Courtshi p
	XI	397	50	Truewort h	Flora Mellasin	Courte d	Suitor	Farewell Letter
		399 – 400	51	Flora Mellasin	Truewor th	Suitor	Courted	Replying Letter
	XIII	407 – 408	52	Fineer	Betsy	Suitor	Courted	Love Letter – Courtshi p
		410	53	Betsy	Mrs.	Friend	Friend	Informat

					Modely			ion Letter
	XIV	415 – 416	54	Miss Airish	Betsy	Friend	Friend	Invitatio n Letter
	XVII	436 – 437	55	Miss. Blanchfi eld	Miss. Loveit	Friend	Friend	Farewell Letter
	XIX	449 - 450	56	Unknow n (Miss Flora)	Miss Loveit		Woman	Advice Letter
4	I	477 – 478	57	Miss Forward	Betsy	Friend	Friend	Letter for Help
		480	58	Betsy	Miss Forward	Friend	Friend	Replying Letter
	IX	517 – 518	59	Lady Mellasin	Mr. Goodma n	Wife	Husband	Letter for Help
		521 – 522	60	Mr. Goodma n	Lady Mellasin	Husba nd	Wife	Replying Letter
	X	525	61	Ralph Trusty	Mr. Munden	Friend	Friend	Informat ion

								Letter
	XII	540 – 541	62	Admirer	Mrs. Munden	Suitor	Married Woman	Love Letter – Courtshi p
	XIII	543	63	Munden family	Mr. Munden	Family	Son	Familiar Letter
		546	64	Unknow n	Unknow n	Lover	Lover	Letter for an Appoint ment
	XV	559	65	Admirer	Mrs. Munden	Suitor	Married Woman	Love Letter – Courtshi p
		561	66	Mrs. Munden	Admirer	Marrie d Woma n	Suitor	Judgmen tal Letter
	XVIII	584	67	Betsy's brother	Mrs. Munden	Brothe r	Sister	Familiar Letter
	XIX	594	68	Mrs. Munden	Mr. Munden	Wife	Husband	Sorrow Letter
		595 –	69	Mr. Munden	Mrs. Munden	Husba nd	Wife	Accusin g Letter

		596						
	XXI	603	70	Mr. Munden	Mrs. Munden	Husba nd	Wife	Request Letter
	XXII	614	71	Betsy's brother	Mrs. Munden	Brothe r	Sister	Informat ion Letter
	XXIII	619 – 620	72	Truewot h	Mrs. Munden	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter
		623	73	Truewort h	Mrs. Munden	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter
		623	74	Truewort h	Mrs. Munden	Lover	Mistress	Sorrow Letter
		624	75	Mrs. Munden	Truewor th	Mistre ss	Lover	Gratitud e Letter
		624	76	Mrs. Munden	Truewor th	Mistre ss	Lover	Gratitud e Letter
	XXIV	626 – 627	77	Truewort h	Mrs. Munden	Lover	Mistress	Love Letter
		627	78	Mrs. Munden	Truewor th	Mistre ss	Lover	Love Letter

There are some differences between earlier works of Eliza Haywood and this one.

First of all as we can see from the chart above, that letter – writing in this work is not

only between lovers, but also between friends, brother and sister, husband and wife. Secondly letters in this novel and the previous writings examined in terms of language: in *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* the writing is more concise and more easily understood for the reader: "I loved Miss Betsy, and would have maintained my claim against all who should have dared to dispute her with me, while justice and while honour permitted me to do so" (Haywood 1998: 183): in this letter from Staple to Truworth he uses a direct, but not impolite, language to tell his rival his feelings for Betsy, without referring to his lover with abstract epithets or hyperbolic expressions.

*The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* is the story of a vain young girl, whose impetuous vanity does not allow her to understand the real needs and necessities of her life. As the novel begins, Betsy's mother has died, and her father has sent her away to boarding school. Shortly after that her father dies, and she travels to London to live with her appointed guardian Mr. Goodman, whose name is quite a symbolical, his wife Lady Mellasin, and her daughter Flora. She has also a childhood friend, Miss Forward, who has sadly chosen a life of vice through an unfortunate event in her early childhood that leads to the birth of a child that ultimately dies. Unfortunately, Miss Forward's father learnt of the situation and disowned his daughter. Her disownment leads her into a life of prostitution.

Betsy is a mixture of virtuousness, vanity, calculation and benevolence. Almost immediately after her arrival in London she becomes the attraction of the town, capturing the attention of many suitors. Letters of assignation play a key role in the consequent intrigues. For example after flirting with the fop Gayland, she receives a letter from him that proposes an assignation. As is evident from her replies, she is

more interested in provoking men than in finding a lover or a husband, which is clear in letter 3: “Tho’ it is my fixed determination to encourage the addresses of no man whatever, without the approbation of my guardians..... I will be at the place you mention to – morrow, sometime in the forenoon” (Haywood 1998: 48): she says to obey to her guardian but she does the opposite. Betsy is at times superficial throughout the early stages of the story she contrives to set her lovers against each other to gratify her feminine ego: she “played with her lovers, as she did with her monkey, but expected more obedience form them” (Haywood 1998: 296)

Her brother Francis, worried by this kind of behaviour, fears that she is not using her time and energy to find herself an appropriate husband. His letters thus naturally tend to of the advice-offering sort. In one he suggests that she consider the attentions of the rather-obviously named Mr. Truworth:

My dear sister, [. . .] I [. . .] have reason to believe, this I now send will meet a double portion of welcome from you. It brings a confirmation of your beauty's power; the intelligence of a new conquest; the offer of a heart, which, if you will trust a brother's recommendation, is well deserving your acceptance: [. . .] you may remember, that the first time I had the pleasure of entertaining you at my rooms, a gentleman called Truworth was with us [. . .] It would require a volume instead of a letter, to repeat half the tender and passionate expressions he uttered in your favour. (Haywood 1998: 88 - 9)

In this letter Francis expresses deep concern for Betsy’s honour and reputation, trying to explain to her that she should be very careful in choosing the kind of male company to keep; the language is simple and the tone is not recriminatory, he only gives her an advice.

Betsy's trusty guardian, Mr. Goodman, also fears that the games she plays with her suitors may turn out to be dangerous, and his premonitions almost come true when Mr. Stable challenges Truworth to a duel that ends with both men wounded physically and emotionally from the sting of shunned love.

Another source of advice letters is Betsy's friend and mentor, Lady Trusty. She makes explicit to the younger woman the wishes of society, which she herself shares. She writes, "you have no tender mother, whose precepts and example might keep you steady in the paths of prudence; — no father, whose authority might awe the daring libertine from any injurious attack; and are but too much mistress of yourself. — In fine, environed with temptations, I see no real defence for you but in a good husband'" (Haywood 1998: 207). Also here the language is simple and the tone is not recriminatory, but the presence of "—" strongly emphasize her recommendations.

The realistic nature of such advice is illustrated in one of the most difficult and unpleasant of the situations Betsy gets herself into. She pays a visit to her childhood friend Miss Forward because Mr Basil, a friend of Mr Truworth, takes Betsy for a woman of the night and takes liberties that should not be afforded to a respectable young lady. Truworth sets him straight and begins warning Betsy of the threats and admonishments to her reputation if she is seen following the wayward Forward. But this opens another problem for Betsy, should she abandon her friend?

At this point, the relationship between Betsy and Truworth begins to break down for more than one reason. In volume II chapter XXI, Flora, step- daughter to Betsy's guardian, writes to Mr. Truworth

I take you to be more a man of honour, than not to be willing to make what reparation is in your power. — If the good opinion I have of you does not

deceive me, you will readily accept this challenge, and not fail to meet me about eleven o'clock to-morrow in the morning.....Your unfortunate, And impatient, Incognita (Haywood 1998: 305)<sup>8</sup>

She wants to persuade him both in terms of language and style, both in terms of "disguises" are used to achieve control and, in some cases, sexual power. Flora is successful in her attempt to seduce Truworth, but does not achieve the lasting relationship she desires, for he quickly leaves her in order to marry a more suitable (virtuous) bride. His decision to break with Flora is announced in a letter: which places the claims of the social and rational before those of feeling:

It is with great difficulty I employ my pen to tell you, it is wholly inconvenient for us ever to meet again, in the manner we have lately done; but I flatter myself you have too much good sense, and too much honour, not to forgive what all laws, both human and divine, oblige me too [. . .] in fine, I am going to be married [. . .] (Haywood 1998: 397)

Truworth's behaviour, and his mode of breaking off accord with the patriarchal double-standard norms of eighteenth-century<sup>9</sup>: all his justification do not make him see as a complete good characters by the readers, but for him there is a sort of justification because he is related to Flora, seen not as good character by the reader. She has been discrediting Betsy via letter in an attempt to destroy her reputation and steal her suitors in a desperate marriage-grab. Though incensed, Betsy does not seek revenge but passes one of her admirers on to her. The situation gets worse for Flora

---

<sup>8</sup> This is the same way Beauplasir signs himself in *Fantomina*.

<sup>9</sup> Truworth behaviour is very similar to Melladore's one in *The City Jilt*.

and her mother when Mr. Goodman, who discovers that his wife is having an affair and stealing from him, sends both women away from the house, dying shortly thereafter.

At this point Betsy, finding out about Truworth's marriage, decides to marry Mr. Munden. After she receives a letter from Miss Forward requesting a loan, and despite her anger toward her former love interest. In this letter Miss Forward want to move Betsy, and the tone expresses all her sorrow, her feeling guilty for what she did, which is graphically underlined by the presence of many “-“.

Betsy marriage is very unhappy but luckily for her, her husband and the wife of Mr. Truworth die. She begins to receive letters from Mr. Truworth and she also writes him and the tone they used makes clear the feelings and emotion they feel for each other. At the end of the novel Betsy and Truworth married.

Now, only to give a brief overview of the similarities between letters, if we focus on love letters Betsy receives, in Volume I all the times a suitor wrote to Betsy, he refers to her calling in a lovely way like Gayland who calls her “Dear” in chapter III letter 1, or Mr. Saving calling her “Most adored of your sex” in chapter IV letter 2, or Hysom who refers to her with the words “Fair Creature” in chapter XVI letter 15, only Mr. Staple and Mr. Truworth referred to her using the word “Madam” like in chapter XVII letters 16 and 17. This definition of Betsy by Mr. Staple and Mr. Truworth continues also in Volume II in chapter II letter 22 and in chapter XVII letter 35. In Volume III the definition of “Madam” comes also by Mr. Munden in chapter I letter 39, but Mr. Fineer, another suitor of Betsy, is more hyperbolic in using the language to refer to Betsy: in chapter I letter 40 he defines her “Divine Charmer”, in chapter III letter 42 he calls her “Adourable Creature”, in chapter IV

letter 43 he calls her “Most divine source of joy”, in chapter IX letter 43 “Divine arbitress of my fate, the omnipotently lovely”, in chapter XIII letter 52 “Bright star of England!”. In Volume IV Betsy receives letters from an admirer, from her husband Mr. Munden and from her future husband Mr. Truworth; the admirer first refers to her in chapter XII letter 62 with the expression “Loveliest of your sex”, but in the later one in chapter XV letter 65 he simply calls her “Madam”. Also Mr. Munden continues been not so warm with the woman who is his wife, and calls her “Madam” in chapter XIX letter 69 and chapter XXI letter 70 and also Mr. Truworth always calls her simply “Madam” also at the end of this volume, in chapter XXIII letters 72 and 73 and chapter XXIV letter 78, even if they will marry.

Simultaneously is significant the way the senders of letters we just refer to signs themselves in the letters: in Volume I chapter III letter 1 Gayland signs himself simply by “Yours Gayland” but Mr. Saving in chapter IV letter 2 in more expressive saying “Most faithful and everlasting slave”<sup>10</sup>, in chapter XVI letter 15 Hysom reflects Mr. Saving kindness with the sign “Most faithful and affectionate lover” and also Mr. Staple saying “Most passionate and faithful admirer” in chapter XVII letter 16. Mr. Truworth in chapter XVII letter and 17 uses a longer epithet “Your very humble, obedient, And eternally devoted servant”. in Volume II in chapter II letter 22 Mr. Staple signs as “You most faithful, Thought unfortunate, humble servant” and in chapter XVII letter 35 Mr. Truworth is “Your very humble servant”.

In Volume III the definition of “Your most humble, and most faithfully devoted servant” comes by Mr. Munden in chapter I letter 39, but Mr. Fineer tells “Your

---

<sup>10</sup> The sign of “everlasting slave” is common in Haywood’s works, we find the same epithet in *Fantomina*

beauty's slave, And everlasting adorer" in chapter I letter 40, in chapter III letter 42 he is much more hyperbolic "Absorbed in the delight image, Dear quintessence of joy, Your most devoted, Most obsequious, And most adoring vassal", in chapter IV letter 43 his hyperbolic style continues because there is not a simply sign, but a whole poem and at the end "Your hoping, - fearing, languish adorer", in chapter IX letter 43 we have again the most common expression, as mean as "Your most adoring, And everlasting slave" written by Fineer, who continues with this emphasis in chapter XIII letter 52 writing "Your passionate adorer, And everlasting slave". In Volume IV Betsy's admirer in chapter XII letter 62 signs with the expression "Your concealed adorer", but in chapter XV letter 65 he is more hyperbolic and defines himself "Your eternally devoted, And most faithful admirer". Mr. Munden is not so lovely with his wife, in chapter XIX letter 69 he signs "Your most affectionate husband", and similar in chapter XXI letter 70 "Your much affronted husband". The last letters of the volume, written by Mr. Truworth to Mrs. Munden, he defined himself always with the word "servant", in chapter XXIII letters 72 he writes "Your most obedient, Most devoted, And most faithful servant", in letter 73 "Your eternally devoted servant"; only in chapter XXIV letter 78 he writes "Your passionately devoted, And most faithful adorer".

Ruth Perry is deeply link to the use of letter Haywood did in this work because, as we noticed, she inserted a new type, but very significant, kind of letter, and I refer to the advice one: its didactic purpose gives the sense of realism to the narration because it transforms something which would be abstract, theoretical in something concrete.

## Conclusion

The aim of my thesis was to show how Eliza Haywood's novels fitted into the tradition of eighteenth century epistolary fiction.

In order to realize this aim I believed it was necessary to identify the literary context for those novels. Chapter I thus delineates her career and critical fortunes. Author of many works and ranging across many different fields of literature, her writings were also deeply influenced by her circumstances, and her need to supporting herself and two children by her pen, critics have divided her career in two periods: the first one goes from the 1720s to the 1730s, during which she dedicated herself to the writing fictions of amorous intrigue and to the theatre. The second phase, which covers the 1740s and goes on until her death in 1756, saw "Haywood's move from amatory to domestic fiction and conduct book literature" (Saxton 2000: 8). Crucial to this shift was the publication of Richardson's *Pamela* in November 1740 ; this provoked a debate from which nobody, Haywood included, seemed to be exempt from participating in.

Chapter 2 moves on to delineate an overview of recent critical writing on the literary letter - writing tradition in the eighteenth century. Ian Watt totally excluded Eliza Haywood from the writers who had an important role in the history of eighteenth century literature, and after him Elaine Showalter and Ronald Rossbottom do not consider the epistolary novel as a successful genre. It was only with the birth of feminism in the 1980s and 1990s with writers like Ruth Perry, Jane Spencer and

Ros Ballaster that the importance of women writers in the eighteenth century and the link which there is between femininity, letters and the novel has been underlined. Surprisingly, however, Haywood's use of the epistolary mode has been largely ignored.

The last two chapters analyse how the theories of the critics considered in chapter II could be applied to a selection of the writings of Eliza Haywood. Chapter III focusses on four early works (*Love in Excess*, *Fantomina*, *The City Jilt* and *Love Letters on All Occasions*) where the first three are amorous fictions and the last one is a manual entirely in the form of letters. In this works Haywood draws heavily on romance tradition, especially in choice of names, settings and language, and it is also significant that all senders and the addressee of letter communication are lovers. The use of love letters reflects a feature of Haywood works which has also been pointed out by Warner, "Haywood [gave] a special privilege to love over every other social value, and subordinate[d] tradition claims to improve the reader to the relatively new one of offering diversion and entertainment" (Warner 1998: 112).

Chapter IV moves on to *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*, where Haywood moves closer to the characteristics of the modern novel, especially as regards setting. A crucial difference between this and her previous work analysed is that senders and addressees of letter communication are not only lovers, but also friends, brothers and sisters. Letters are thus no longer restricted to a single subject matter and style; they offer advice, relay gossip, and deal with the business of everyday life.

# Bibliography

## Primary sources

- Behn, Aphra. *Love - Letters between a Nobleman and his Sister*, third edition. London, 1684.
  - o *Love - Letters between a Nobleman and his Sister*. London: Virago Press, 1987.
- Haywood, Eliza. *Love in Excess, or, the Fatal Enquiry, a novel*. London, 1719.
  - o *Love in Excess, or, the Fatal Enquiry*. Edited by David Oakleaf, Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2000.
  - o “Fantomina” in *Secret Histories, Novels and Poems. In Four Volumes. Written by Mrs. Eliza Haywood*, volume 3, second edition. London, 1725.
  - o *Fantomina and Other Works*. Edited by Alexander Pettit, Margaret Case, Croskery and Anna C. Patchias, Toronto: Broadview Press, 2004.
  - o *The City Jilt: or the Alderman turn'd Beau. A Secret History*. London, 1726.
  - o “The City Jilt” in *Selected Fiction and Drama of Eliza Haywood*. Edited by Paula R. Backscheider, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
  - o “Love Letters on All Occasions” in *Fantomina and Other Works*. Edited by Alexander Pettit, Margaret Case Croskery and Anna C. Patchias, Toronto: Broadview Press, 2004.
  - o *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*. London, 1741.
  - o *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*. Edited by Christine Blouch, Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1998.
- Pope, Alexander. *The Dunciad, in Four Books*. London, 1743.
  - o *The Dunciad*. Edited by Valerie Rumbold, Harlow: Longman, 1999.
- Richardson, Samuel. *Pamela, or, Virtue Rewarded. In a series of Familiar Letters from a Beautiful Young Damsel, to her Parents*. London, 1740.

o *Pamela, or, Virtue Rewarded*. Edited by Peter Sabor, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1985.

### Secondary sources

- Altman, Jane. *Epistolarity: Approaches to a Form*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1982.
- Austin, Andrea. "Shooting Blanks: Potency, Parody and Eliza Haywood's *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*" in Bocchichio and Saxton (2000), pp. 259 – 282.
- Backscheider, Paula R. (ed.), *Selected Fiction and Drama of Eliza Haywood*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Backscheider, Paula R. "The Story of Eliza Haywood's Novels: Caveats and Questions" in Bocchichio and Saxton (2000) , pp. 19 – 47.
- Baker, David Erskine. *Biographia Dramatica*. London:Rivingtons, 1782.
- Ballaster, Ros. *Seductive Forms: Women's Amatory Fiction from 1684 to 1740*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992.
- Beebe Thomas O. *Epistolary fiction in Europe, 1500-1850*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Bocchichio, Rebecca, Kirsten T. Saxon (eds.), *The Passionate Fictions of Eliza Haywood, Essays on her Life and Work*, Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2000.
- Clarke, Norma. *The Rise and Fall of the Woman of Letters*. London: Pimlico, 2004.
- Cook, Elisabeth Heckendorn. *Epistolary Bodies : Gender and Genre in the Eighteenth-Century Republic of Letters*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996.
- Crockery, Margaret C. "Masquing Desire: The Politics of Passion in Eliza Haywood's *Fantomina*" in Bocchichio and Saxton (2000) , pp. 69 – 94.
- Eger, Elizabeth .*Women, Writing and the Public Sphere, 1700-1830*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Gallagher, Catherine. *Nobody's Story: the Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace, 1670-1820*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.

- Hunter, J. Paul. *Before Novels: The Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth Century English Fiction*. London : Norton & Company, 1990.
- Ingrassia, Catherine. *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender in Early Eighteenth-Century England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Jensen, Katharine A. *Writing Love: Letters, Women, and the Novel in France, 1605-1776*. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1995.
- Jones, Vivien. *Women and Literature in Britain in 1700 – 1800*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Kauffman, Linda S. *Discourse of Desire: Fender, Genre, and Epistolary Fiction*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986.
- MacArthur, Elizabeth. *Extravagant Narrative: Closure and Dynamics in the Epistolary Form*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.
- McKeon Michael. *The Origins of the English Novel: 1600 – 1740*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1987.
- Merritt, Juliette. *Beyond Spectacle: Eliza Haywood's Female Spectators*. Toronto: University of Torino Press, 2004.
- Oakleaf, David. "Introduction" to *Love in Excess, or the Fatal Enquiry*. Peterborough, Broadview Press, 1994.
- Oxford English Dictionary <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com>.
- Perry, Ruth. *Women, Letters and Novel*. New York: AMS Press, 1980.
- Rossbottom, Ronald C. "Motifs in Epistolary Fiction: Analysis of a Narrative Sub – Genre" in *L' Esprit Créateur* 17, No. 4. 1977.
- Saxton, Kirsten T. "Introduction" to Bocchichio and Saxton (2000), pp. 1 - 8.
- Saxton, Kirsten T. "Telling Tales: Eliza Haywood and the Crimes of Seduction in *The City Jilt, or, the Alderman turn'd Beau*" in Bocchichio and Saxton (2000), pp. 115 – 142.
- Schofield, Mary Anne. *Masking and Unmasking the Female Mind: Disguising Romances in Feminine Fiction, 1713 – 1799*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1990.

- Showalter, Elaine. *The Evolution of French Novel: 1641 – 1782*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972.
- Spencer, Jane. *The Rise of the Woman Novelist: from Aphra Behn to Jane Austen*. New York: Basil Blackwell, 1986.
- Spedding, Patrick. *A Bibliography of Eliza Haywood*. London: Pickering & Chatto, 2004.
- Todd, Jane. *The Sign of Angelica. Women, Writing and Fiction, 1660 – 1800*. London: Virago Press, 1989.
- Uphaus, Robert W. and Gretchen M. Foster. *The Other Eighteenth Century : English Women of Letters 1660-1800*. East Lansing: Colleagues Press, 1991.
- Watt, Ian. *The Rise of The Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*. Berkeley: California University Press, 1957.
- Warner, William B. *Licensing Entertainment: The Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain, 1684 - 1750*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.
- Warner, William B. *The Elevation of the Novel in England: Hegemony and Literary History*. *ELH*, Vol. 59, No. 3. John Hopkins University Press, Autumn, 1992.
- Waugh, Linda R. “The Poetic Function in the Theory of Roman Jakobson” in *Poetics Today*, Vol. 2, No. 1a. Duke University Press, Autumn 1980.
- Whicher, George Frisbia. *The Life and Romances of Mrs. Eliza Haywood*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1915.
- Williamson, Marilyn L. *Raising Their Voices: British Women Writers, 1650 – 1750*. Detroit: Wayne University Press, 1990.
- Whyman, Susan. *The Pen and the People: English Letter Writers 1660 – 1800*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.