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Women's Place in Henry Fielding's
Tom Jones, a Foundling

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Abstract

The purpose of this research work is to cast a wide net on Henry Fielding's attitudes and portrayal of women in his masterpiece *Tom Jones*. The researcher has invested an analytical method to depict the position of women in the eyes of the British male writer Henry Fielding. Thus, this thesis shows how women characters were portrayed in literature, particularly within the novel. Fielding used comedy to conjugate women's existence on earth and to announce their declaration of independence which permitted them to express much of their feelings and thoughts. Besides, the research has delineated the way in which the novel examines the suffering of women and how they overcame difficulties and attained success. From this novel, the researcher has noticed that Henry Fielding's portrayal of his female protagonist is based on his real world and experience. Even if he was a male author yet he portrayed his female characters better than his male characters. To this effect, Fielding focuses on social inequalities between males and females. He focused on the daily lives of eighteenth century women and consolidated the status of the domestic female life as an accurate subject for his novel.

Dedication

I dedicate this work from deep heart;

To my parents, my father: Khaled and my mother Nedjma who gave me the inspiration
to fulfill this dream with their support and encouragement,

To my beloved brothers who did not make me feel that I have not a sister; Mohamed,
Omar, Tiffour, Kaddour, Chikh, Boubaker and my dear Ismail,

To Amel, Zarga, and SajaHibet AL Rahman,

I dedicate this work to my best and special teacher: MehdaouiAmaria,

To my dear uncle and teacher Larbi,

To my beloved Secondary school teacher: MedjrouniMbarka,

To my cheerful and dearest friends: Ibtissam, Fadela, and Khawla,

To all who has the family name BELADJERAB and KEDDARI

To all whom I love and respect.

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General Introduction

General Introduction

At the outset, Britain witnessed philosophical, economic, religious and literary changes in the eighteenth century. These changes led Britain to be the wealthiest country not only in the economic side but also in cultural side, where the new movements such as Romanticism and Enlightenment emerged. Indeed, the economic changes also affected the social classes of the society. Besides, the status of woman at that time was intriguing; a young woman's job was to make a good marriage for herself. In some cases, marriage was viewed more than an alliance and love marriage was rarely an option during that period.

Moreover, there had been many great changes during that period and one of these foremost changes is the Rise of the Novel which became an interesting subject that many writers has dealt with. This contributed in the birth of many writers and novelists among them Henry Fielding who has regarded himself as the founder of this new literary form. Thus, the woman question became a broad topic that had been taken by Fielding and others who changed the debate about the view on women's rights to work and education. However, women at that time lived in an age characterized by gender inequality, they enjoyed few of legal, social rights and they were expected to remain subservient to their fathers and husbands.

In fact, Fielding showed his techniques of writing and the major themes that he tried to treat in his book *Tom Jones* were chastity, marriage, money, property and prestige for women in society. All these issues has been explored in relation to males' and females' position and roles in society. Thence, marriage was his main point in *Tom Jones*; he has chosen marriage as the main theme because in his society marriage was a

woman's main purpose. Eventually, marriage was a sign of maturity because when a woman got married she takes her place in the society.

Furthermore, Henry Fielding presented his male characters in both good and evil sides. On the other hand, he was a male writer but he portrayed his female character in a good way which was even more intelligent than his male characters even if the female characters were wiser in the 18-century British society. Eventually, he presents this respect for his female character particularly in his masterpiece *Tom Jones* (1749).

Withal, women were treated as slaves under the control of men. Henry Fielding wanted to show women as rational creatures that should be loved and even respected. Indeed, He showed all these through his protagonist Sophia whom her name means wisdom. Impressively, in the current research, there is a stress on the position of woman and her portrayal in Fielding's *Tom Jones* to the following questions could be raised:

- How does Henry Fielding portray his male characters in his novel *Tom Jones* at the times where society was a male dominant one? Alternatively, what are the differences between the represented characters in the works at hand?
- How does Fielding represent the struggle and submission of women in his work?
- To what extent Henry Fielding portrays his women character of *Tom Jones* representative to the condition of women in the eighteenth century if he is a male author?

These questions in return led the researcher to assume the following hypotheses:

- It is hypothesized that almost eighteenth century writers had patriarchal views since feminism and the woman question was not at the rise in that period;
- Even if the 18 century was a male dominant one but Fielding differed in presenting not only his male characters by he tried to both expose the female struggles at that time as well as their counter reactions;

- Even though Henry Fielding is a male writer but he tries to explore the position of women in the English society through tackling their status in his work, he even portrays them better than his male characters.

Thus, to achieve the objective of study and in an attempt to answer the former questions this dissertation will be divided into three main chapters. The first chapter entitled *Cultural Context* will concentrate on the characteristics of the eighteenth century and the major changes that have occurred in the British society. The second chapter, furthermore entitled *The Rise of The Novel and the Women Question* will deal with the emergence of the novel, the woman question and some writings about woman in the late eighteenth century that influenced writers like Fielding. Whereas, the last chapter *Portrayal of Women in Tom Jones* will tackle the portrayal of male characters by Henry fielding in *Tom Jones* in opposition to the struggle and submission of female characters. In the end, it will concentrate mainly on the representation of woman in *Tom Jones* by the male author Henry Fielding.

Chapter One

Cultural Context

Chapter one: Cultural Context

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1-2 England Changes in the Eighteenth Century

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1 -1 Introduction

The eighteenth century was a flourished period, which was characterized by gradual changes in political, cultural, and social fields of life. In particular, these changes happened in Britain. Actually, this chapter covers several areas that would be the groundwork for the research paper. Starting with the different changes that took place in England. These changes were in economy, culture and religion. Next, the enlightenment spell in America, France and England. Then it tackles the status of woman at that time.

1-2 England Changes in the Eighteenth Century

The eighteenth century was known as the Age of Reason and the Age of Enlightenment in history. Also the Age of Industrialization and the Age of Commercialization in economy. Moreover, the Age of Secularization and the Age of Skepticism in religion. Therefore, in history of arts it was called the Age of Baroque, the Age of Sentimentalism, the Age of Romanticism, or even the Classical Age. So this century was a significant period in the history of England because during it many figures and their intellectual ideas emerged representing their works among them Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding, William Godwin, Jane Austen, and John Lewis.

1-2-1 the Economic Changes in England

It is not an easy task to go deeply in the economy of England during the eighteenth century because of the remarkable changes which were happened at that time. The eighteenth century is also known as the century of revolution, industry, agriculture and even the economic century. Besides, the Industrial Revolution is the reason behind this economic shifting.

1-2-1-1 the Industrial Revolution

The Industrial Revolution defined as the first historical sample of the penetration through transforming from an agrarian and domestic economy to a developed one by machine manufacture and industry. For instance, Robert C Allen defined the Industrial Revolution as “one of the most celebrated watersheds in human history. It is no longer regarded as the result of an economic expansion that started in sixteenth century. Nevertheless the eighteenth century does represent a decisive break in the history of technology and the economy” (2006 02). For him the Industrial Revolution is considered as an important shift occurred in the life of humanity. It is the outcome of economy of the sixteenth century. Thus, it punctuated the eighteenth century economy end technology.

Moreover, the Industrial Revolution was the multiple changes that England viewed such as the use of machines by farmers, which had helped them in producing more crops in their country. At that time people started losing their jobs in farms. So in order to find new jobs in factories and coalmines, they preferred to live in towns rather than in countryside. In addition, this had resulted the growth of population.

Withal, the Industrial Revolution brought remarkable things to Britain in the eighteenth century such as:

- 1- Factories had helped people in finding more jobs.
- 2- People built roads, railways and canals, which had facilitated the export of manufactured goods to markets.
- 3- Britain became the wealthiest country due to goods, which it provided to other countries.

- 4- Laws had protected safety and health of the factory and workers and even children

1-2-1-2 the British Iron Industry

Britain witnessed Iron Industry during the Industrial Revolution. According to Robert C Allen, “The reason that the British inventions of the eighteenth century—cheap iron and the steam engine, in particular—were so transformative was because of the possibilities they created for the further development of technology” (Allen 2006 38). In the beginning of the century, the iron was relying on charcoal. In addition, Allen stated, “For the first half of the eighteenth century, coke smelting was limited to only a few furnaces making foundry pig, for the metal was too expensive and impure to refine into wrought iron, the main product of the industry” (Allen 2006 18). Thus, new approaches in producing cast iron were based on the use of coke, which brought from in melting iron ore.

1-2-1-3 the Agricultural Revolution

Agriculture in the eighteenth century had a great importance in the development of economy and on changing the way of living of people. Furthermore, it was different from the Industry because it was based on working in land. However, the Industry was based on manufacturing in the houses of people.

During the Agricultural Revolution, people became healthier and more protected from diseases. Indeed, it viewed interesting changes as well as

- 1- Farming became more developed because of the integrity of horses and drawn seed press.
- 2- Crops such as potato and maize increased in 1750.

- 3- The law that passed in 1760 had limited the number of farmers and it had even allowed them to find extra jobs.

1-2-2 the Religious Alteration of England

The eighteenth century witnessed lack of religious enthusiasm. While England was different because the first thing comes to mind while thinking about the history of religion in it is the church. In addition, at that time people did not have religious liberty since they had been guided by church.

The church was very significant at that time in Britain since it had a good relationship with the state. Behind this, its courts were important because it had controlled and organized the education and charity of the state. Thus, it was involved in teaching men to be good citizens.

In fact, religion was regarded as an interesting subject in politics until the beginning of the nineteenth century when the place of the church in society had changed. Moreover, the years 1740 and 1750 were considered as the peaceful decades in the religious history of Britain.

On the other hand, in 1753, the parliament passed a bill that allowed Jews to be naturalized but they could not participate in Anglican service. In fact, this bill was called the Jew Bill. It brought religious divisions which were supported by many leaders as William Northey who said “but this Bill I must look as an attempt to rob them of their birthrights as Christians” (quoted in Albert 1910 161). He indicated that this Bill had to be as an effort that encouraged them in depriving Englishmen rights. However, the public did not accept this Bill. So they wrote on streets “No Jews, no wooden shoes” (quoted in Allen 1910 161).

In fact, the church and the parliament were united especially in the years 1743 and 1748; they even were looked as a body. People at that time regarded the religion (church) as a very important in England since it played a significant role in the changes, which were occurred such as the new technologies. Whereas, in 1760 the political debates had demanded checking the liturgy of the church and cancelling the corporation acts. To this attempt, the Whig ministers of England, Scotland, Great Britain, Ireland and the United Kingdom had reclaimed towards putting an end to the religious controversy since it was the reason behind disorders. By the end of the consultation, the church removed from the parliamentary politics.

However, in 1739 a new movement appeared in England, which was called Methodism. In fact, it was related to the Protestantism. This new movement was based on the teaching of Jon Wesley and George Whitefield. These two evangelists were preaching at that time in order to make both men and women conscious of God through Christ. Wesley thought that preaching was the reason behind the social changes in England as well as the Industrial Revolution.

1-2-3 England Mutational of Culture

During the eighteenth century, England noticed a significant transformation in the cultural field, and this reflected in several changes during this period. Actually, these deviations changed the course of England's history and gave it a great place in the world.

1-2-3-1 Portraiture

In fact, portraiture became remarkable in Britain. Besides, the genius painters dominated at that time. Moreover, the landscape painting had given birth to famous painters such as George Stubs (1724-1764); who was famous for painting of animals like horses. Furthermore, there were other portraitists as William Hogarth (1697-1764);

he focused more on middle class and ordinary people. He also did not accept the foreign masters and for this, he changed the conversation piece into dramatic scenes. However, Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792); he was different from Hogarth because he concentrates on the upper class people. He also wanted to change the British painting. While Thomas Borough was influenced by landscape painting. Besides, he was poetic and lyrical artist of his time.

1-2-3-2 Caricature

The English culture was characterized also by caricature; it was description, simulation or picture of a person in which particular outstanding characteristics are overstated and made a comic or even grotesque impression. Moreover, the famous caricaturists who made caricature important in England.

- 1- James Gallery who portrayed royal family and politicians, he used high baroque.
- 2- Thomas Rowlandson was unlike Gallery since was influenced on social caricaturists, he concentrates on social life and on countries.

1-2-3-3 Arts and Literature

In the Georgian period, literary and artistic movement became popular. Furthermore, reading was regarded as a pastime among the upper class people; they enjoyed reading novels of writers such as Henry Fielding, Mary Shelly and Jane Austen. Besides, this era was also characterized by architecture of Robert Adam and John Nash. In addition, it witnessed music, which was typified by John Field and William Boyce. In addition, there were Romantic Poetics as Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth.

1-2-3-4 Romanticism

Romanticism was a literary movement that originated in the eighteenth century in Europe. In addition, it emerged against neoclassicism of the seventeenth century. “This was the Romantic Movement, the romantic intellectual praise imagination over reason, emotions over logic and intuition over scientific rigor” (Koestler 2005 33). From this, Romanticism focused on the emotional side of human nature, the beauty of natural world, the simplicity of common people and individualism. Besides, it stressed on individual uniqueness and self-expression.

Furthermore, Romanticism was an international artistic and philosophical movement, which had rebuilt the fundamental ways in which people in Western cultures thought about themselves and about their world. Besides, the Romantics were ambivalent toward the "real" social environment, which they lived in, so they were often politically and socially participated.

For instance, Realism and Symbolism were two identifiable movements that followed Romanticism; they were separate developments of the opposites which Romanticism itself had managed, at its best, to unify and to reconcile. Whether or not this is so, it is clear that Romanticism transformed Western culture in many ways that survive into this time. It is only very recently that any significant turning away from Romantic paradigms has begun to take place, and even that turning away has taken place in a dramatic, typically Romantic way.

Moreover, a significant Romantic theme became the contrast between artist and middle-class ‘Philistine’. Unfortunately, in many ways, this distance between artist and public remains until these days. It should be noted that the Romantic Movement affected not just literature, but all of the arts--from music (consider the rise of Romantic opera)

to painting, from sculpture to architecture. Its reach was also geographically significant, spreading as it did eastward to the world.

1-3 the Enlightenment Spell

During the eighteenth century a shift in thinking occurred. This shift was called Enlightenment or 'Age of Reason' a cultural or philosophical movement that emphasized on reason to change society and advance knowledge. It changed how people in Europe and later in America thought about religion, science, hierarchy and monarchy. Furthermore, it brought an age of scientific and rational thinking, where scientists, philosophers and even people who engaged in arts (music, literature and painting) were all part of this wave of thinking.

For this, Dorinda Quatram defined Enlightenment as: "a desire for human affairs to be guided by rational rather than by faith, superstition, a belief in power of human reason to change society and liberate the individual from the restraints of customs...validated by science rather than by religion or tradition" (quoted from Krleikd 2011 16). As Quatram stated, individuals cared more about transforming their lives to a good ones for this reason the Enlightenment came as a wish to change how they thought through leading them by different guide ways.

1-3-1The Rise of the Enlightenment

Although Enlightenment was originated in Europe but it also expanded to the North of America in the eighteenth century. It was the prosperous period in the America history because it led America to great changes through the Revolution (the American Revolution). This new movement was based on freedom of speech, religious tolerance, freedom of press and equality. Therefore, the Americans did not have these rights.

Thence they desired to get independence from England, For Morris the American Revolution “must be considered as an anticolonial war for independence, not only a war of liberation but a war for freedom. The American Revolution was a movement to fulfill aspirations to acquire more property” (Morris 1781 03). From this the American Revolution was viewed as a reaction to accomplish desires in order to achieve more property, it was not a war by weapons and keeling the others therefore it was a war of writing.

In fact, many European thinkers have been considered as influences on the American Enlightenment as Immanuel Kant, Baron Montesquieu, Denis Diderot, Thomas Hobbes, Voltaire, John Lock and others but America had its own leaders such as Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Paine, John Adams and James Madison. Furthermore, they brought revolutionary ideas focused on liberty, democracy, republicanism, scientific revolutionary and religious tolerance.

In short, there are some ideas that came to punctuate American Enlightenment as liberation, conversation, toleration and scientific progress. In addition, the American Enlightenment resulted also the Writing of the Declaration of Independence (1776), the Bill of Rights (1790) and the United States constitution (1787).

1-3-2 the Enlightenment in France

Initially, the Enlightenment was a complex era where new ideas came to Europe and spread to the world. One of the European countries that had witnessed this movement was France; it was in French, ‘Siècle de Lumières’ means ‘the Century of Enlightened’. Thus, in this country the Enlightenment reached its top because France became populous and richest country. Indeed, the French was the international language which used by educated people.

Moreover, there were French scientists and philosophers who known as intellectuals, they announced that they brought the light of knowledge and reason to their influences in the Age of Enlightenment. In particular, they based their ideas on rationality and individual's relationship with society. Those leaders were Pierre Bayle, Barnard Le Bouvier de Fontelle, Charles Louis de Montesquieu, Denis Diderot, Claude-Adrien Helvétius, Etienne Bonnot de Condillac, Pierre Louis Moreau de Maupertuis, Jean Jack Rousseau, François-Marie Arouel (Voltaire), Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, Paul Henry Thiry d'Holbach and Jean Antoine Micolas Caritat de Condorcet.

Furthermore, the Philosophy had acted for the service of all human beings. One of its leaders Rene Descartes who was known with his publishing Discourse on Method. He stated that through thinking the individuals existed. Beside him, there was Denis Diderot who was a critic of religion. Moreover, on 1747 Diderot joined the philosopher Jean le Rondd'Alembert in editing the Encyclopedia, which means in French l'Encyclopédie. In short, it was systematic dictionary, which summarized sciences and arts; its goal was to transform the thinking of human being scientifically.

However, during the French Revolution (1789), the power of Catholic Church became uninteresting because of the spread of the negative attitudes. On the other hand, Charles de SecondatBron de Montesquieu wrote the Spirit of the Laws in 1748. He stated that those laws guided all things. Therefore, Jean Jack Rousseau favored the democratic participation through giving citizens the right in choosing their ruler, and he rejected the existence forms of government. While, Voltaire published the LettresPhilosophiques on Anglais in 1778; which was series of essays explained Voltaire's experiences when he lived in England between 1726 and 1729. In the beginning, it was written in English then it translated to French.

1-3-3 the English Version Enlightenment

The Enlightenment in England was unique because of its thinkers and their role in the European Enlightenment. Not only eighteenth century thinkers but also the seventeenth century thinkers. Furthermore, English Enlightenment figures were Isaac Newton, John Lock, John Rae, William Harvey, Edmund Halley, Robert Hooke, Francis Bacon, Thomas Harrington and Thomas Hobbes. Thus, they were influenced by reason and rationality through linking the world to physical laws and avoiding magic.

Moreover, they provided rational thoughts, which restricted the God action. For instance, Isaac Newton merged between the two things since he was tacked with the Bible numerology. Besides, he indicated that physical laws directed the world. Eventually, Newton's science led to an intellectual change.

On the other hand, the English Enlightenment had another side, which was a relationship with the democracy or a desire that the power of kings should be limited. This was even included in the letters of the French philosopher Voltaire 'Philosophical Letters Concerning the English Nation' (1778). He wrote these essays because he witnessed experiences when he lived in England between 1726 and 1729. Besides, he argued that the English people were unique because they could restrained their king through fighting (the Glorious Revolution in 1688 and the English Civil War in from 1642 to 1651).

In fact, thinkers of English Enlightenment focused on reason, scientific methods, securization of learning, religious tolerance, liberty and separation between the church and the state. Particularly, John Lock published 'Essays Concerning Human Understanding' in 1689. He maintained that People were born with blank page. Then

they gathered ideas from experiences and education. Additionally, he denied the ideal of Christianity which had misguided people.

For John Locke people can be responsible of their own fate and they had natural rights, which had to be protected by government. Therefore, if the government did not protect these rights, people had to revolt. This idea had an impact on the United States Declaration of independence (1776) and the Constitution of the United States. (1787)

Furthermore, the Anglican Church was regarded as the only leader of the school system. It even refused the rest schools and universities. During this period people desired to generalize education in the eighteenth century. In contrast, this had omitted some people from entering to religious grounds.

During English Enlightenment, a term was found which was called Deism, which in fact was the belief that reason and observation of the natural world had to be accepted whereas; religion and supernatural miracles had to be neglected. Moreover, Deism contained both the Christian Theists and anti-Christian. For deists, people can grasp God through reason and the observation of nature. Lord Herbert of Cherbury was regarded as the father of the English Deism.

1-4 Status of Woman in the Eighteenth Century

The 18th century is a very significant period in order to analyze how the society at that time dealt with women because women lived in an age characterized by gender inequality. Besides, it was the man dominated society even power and pleasure were only for men while Women passed their lives as dependent on their man. From this woman's place was very low, indeed with few legal and economic rights or even receiving little respect, women can be also seen as oppressed victims of a patriarchal

society. Furthermore, they were regarded as docile and domestic creature. Particularly, women were only eligible or accomplished to opt profession.

1-4-1 Women's Status in Social Life

The status of woman becomes important in today's society. Due to the different changes that had occurred to the life of woman, it is hard for woman of twenty-first century to live what eighteenth century had lived. She even cannot imagine how woman had been years ago. Moreover, in the 18 century English society there seemed had been certain traditional and cultural belief through which men and women were different from each other. In fact, the society boys and girls in unequal basis as they grow up. So the superiority of men and the ownership of women had been supported by English laws.

Furthermore, this society had favored one sex over the other and the one sex had the right to excel in life. For this, middle class women were not expected to think of themselves as members of the nation. Likewise, they had no choices since men held all the resources and authorities so they had to obey. They even had no means of subsistence or independence. On the one hand, the social penalties were too high for women who remained single or who could not have children and got along with men thence they attract the social pity.

1-4-2 Woman and Marriage

Actually, every women's sole purpose in life is to get married, to reproduce and then to spend their lives serving their husbands. Whereas, women's marriage in the 18th century was the only real choice in order to have economic security and a respectable fulfilling life. Moreover, if a woman decided to remain single, she would be ridicule and pitied by society. Therefore, if a girl married, her age had to be between 16 and 19 years and if she entered her twenties unmarried, her prospect of marriage would be little.

Furthermore, if she had been more than twenty years and was not married, she was considered a spinster or even her prospect for marriage was nearly impossible.

In fact, Jane Austen's novels included these problems of marriage as in her novel *Pride and Prejudice* when Charlotte is 27 years. It is therefore her advancing age hastened her engagement to Collins "solely the pure and disinterested desires of an establishment. Moreover, for her marriage was a transaction undertaken in the self-interest. So in the novel Jane Austen revealed how marriage in 18 century was based on monetary system but not on love or choice of a girl.

Moreover, most of women had no choice in marriage because they did not have any freedom to choose their life partner and their profession. The shocker thing was that woman herself or even her body had belonged to her husband; this was confirmed in laws and the wife herself agreed for it verbally. Moreover, a promise was written in the Ceremony which ordered the wife to obey her husband and he had the right to force her into sex and childbirth, he even could take her children from her.

On the one hand, when a woman run away from unbearable marriage, the police would catch her. Particularly, all these were also accepted by the church, custom, and society in general. On the other hand, woman situation stayed brutal until the year 1857 when a new divorce act restated the moral unfairness, which allowed woman to obtain divorce if she witnessed problems in her marriage.

1-4-3 Women and Education

The eighteenth century women's education was related with training them on domestic roles and this was among the results of the inequality of education. During

Henry Fielding's time most of the writers indicated that if the work of woman was marriage, she should study those things in order to attract a husband, according to Hurwitz "The goal of education for women was the development of good nature" (Hurwitz 1994 135). Here Hurwitz maintains that the aim of teaching woman was to bring significant changes to society.

Moreover, the educational system was unfair because boys received more education than girls did. Therefore, girls were generally taught at home, either by their parents or by governess. Eventually, they were barred from universities according to Jane Austen "education has been the men's in so much a higher degree" (Austen 1792 206). From this Austen states that men had the opportunity to access the supreme degree in education. This educational system had affected woman negatively because they were powerless since men had privileged access to writing and producing knowledge. Furthermore, men were able to keep women subjected and even maintained their powerful position in society. Elsewise, women were not intellectually stimulated unless they were interested only on domestic things indeed they were barred.

In short, eighteenth century society did not allow women to make their own choices. In fact, women cannot make any statement in public, they were even treated as accessories or therefore slaves under the control of men. Generally, they were receiving little respect because they were considered as docile and domestic creature or oppressed. They had no freedom to decide in their lives even in choosing a husband or a business. Indeed, they did not have right to vote but they could influence their friends, relatives indirectly. Nevertheless, in 1867 women over 21 got the right to vote but with some conditions.

1-5 Conclusion

To sum up, this chapter has shown some characteristics of eighteenth century in different phases such as the remarkable changes that took place in England in many fields as economy, culture and religion, all these changes had guided England to become the wealthiest and developed country in Europe. Then, this chapter has provided a short overview about the new shift that had occurred during this century, which was called Enlightenment; it was originated in Europe and spread to the America, its thinkers brought ideas, which had changes people's lives. Whereas, the end of this chapter has revealed the status of woman and how she was treated in the eighteenth century. After that, the second chapter will be encountered with the subject of the Rise of the Novel. Next, it will deal mainly with the subject of woman, starting with the Woman Question then, Writings about woman.

Chapter Two
The Rise of the Novel
and the Woman
Question

Chapter Two: the Rise of the Novel and the Woman Question

2-1 Introduction

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2-2-1 The Rise of the Novel in England

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2-4-4-1 Samuel Richardson and the Woman Character

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2-4-2 Henry Fielding and the Woman Question

2 - 1 Introduction

Outset, people considered literature as their prosperity area because it led them into a fanciful world of fiction, where they abandoned the actuality's curbs. For McFadden: "literature is a canon which consists of those works in language by which a community defines itself through the course of its history. It includes works primarily artistic and those whose aesthetic qualities are only secondary. The self-defining activity of the community is conducted in the light of the works, as its members have come to read them" (McFadden 1978 56). Thus, literature has created genres that have helped people such as plays, poetry, and novels. In particular, the novel has been considered as the best people thinking's manifestation since it has permitted them in the evocation of imagination.

In fact, this genre of prose has presented characters in real events, among these characters not only man was found but also woman. This recent was regarded as special being in the eighteenth century's novels such as the work of Henry Fielding and Samuel Richardson. However, not only men writers were novelists but also women writers who started asking questions of gender and generic identity. This chapter will tackle firstly the rise of the novel in the eighteenth century. Then it will concentrate mainly on women subject starting with the women question moving to the writings about women at that time.

2-2 the Rise of the Novel

The novel was regarded as a form of art or a literary genre that came to punctuate the literature of the eighteenth century. It was characterized by the use of language, imaginative traditions, genre convention and discursive power related to other forms of literature. Particularly, the rise of the novel had portrayed a pedigree in the field of

literature which had regarded the novel as a form of art. Many writers had taken this subject for example Northrop Frye had viewed the emergence of the novel, as a new term in response to other literary forms that are dominant or even residual (Frye 1957).

2-2-1 the Rise of the Novel in England

The continental fiction had an effectiveness in the origins and the evolution of the English novel. From this idea, one matter of history was significant, namely, that the novel emerged in the beginning as a single literary type in the eighteenth century. Indeed, this century was more interest than any previous century because it was an age of remarkable changes or transformations since it led the foundations for the social sciences

The incentive of the earlier renaissance with its imagination, the fullness of sensuous experience and dazzling poetry had long ago disbursed itself. While in mid-seventeenth century, there were the effects of libertinism on the one hand and sectarian zeal on the other hand. Indeed, the struggle between these two extremes of characters produced, by way of reaction, a temper of reasonableness and moderation, similarly reluctant to the sensualist and to mystic exaltation more concerned with life as it has been and it might be. Eventually, this temper of the eighteenth century was the cerebrated atmosphere where the English novel had its first beginnings.

Furthermore, England was passing through remarkable changes in economy, culture and religion which awakened new aspirations and opened new opportunities in the eighteenth century. The early novel was produced to the audience augmented by mixed classes. Its characters were determined, first by the lively sense of fact and the singularly sane and clear standards of judgment characteristic of the figures of the eighteenth century; and secondly, by the predominant interests of the new reading

public, with their democratic sympathies, their zest for actual experiences and their abundant practicality.

2-2-2 the Emergence of the Novel by Ian Watt

For Watt, the novel was the work of literature, which had occurred as an outcome of a list of historical changes, such as the style of production, ways of living, and in philosophical ideals of the human subject. He even cleared the change of the novel form introduced by Henry Fielding, Samuel Richardson and Daniel Defoe. He also brought a new way in order to understand the rise of a literary form in the context of its logical power.

According to Watt: “The novel is the form of literature...The novel is thus the logical literary vehicle of culture which, in the last few centuries, has set an unprecedented value on originality, on the novel, and it is therefore well named”. (Watt 1957 13). Here Ian Watt clarifies that the novel is an action of literature or the reasonable literary vehicle of a culture which had set an estimate in the past on authenticity, on the novel, that became more interesting at present time.

In Watt’s view, the rise of novel had to be grasped not only by seeking the definition of the novel but also by looking for what the novel did. Besides, Watt supposed that the general and social categories that led the novel rise well fixed, unchallenged and instituted. For him the novel does not have a single origin but it has several origins.

Withal, Watt argues that the novel rose together with the middle class, a diverse social group that possessed income and leisure time as women who were the remarkable readers of the novel. This means that the novel was a middle class enterprise; “The rise of the novel, then, would seem to be connected with the much greater freedom which,

especially as regards marriage, was achieved earlier and more completely in England than elsewhere". (Watt 1957 138). Watt indicates that the rise of the novel had relationship with the huge liberty of women in modern society. Particularly, this liberty was viewed in regards of marriage; it was witnessed in England first then it spread to other countries.

2-2-3 Writings about the Rise of the Novel

When Watt had taken the work of the rise of the novel, this kind has been often studied as a historical advanced or an evolved narrative that started with particular origins and has advanced through time to become "the novel". For this, other revisionists came to revise the multiple aspects of Watt's historization of the novel, among them Michael McKeon who stated that the novel was a place where continual struggles between old and new theories made manifest. He even asserted that the novel was the literary form which accepted the rise of middle class itself.

On the other hand, Leonard Davis in *Factual Fictions* (1983) agreed with McKeon's emphasis that the rise of the novel was not a fixed class. Therefore, the novel came out of the exchanges and competition between different literary forms. Davis indicated that until the early eighteenth century, fact and fiction were unfeatured category and the novel was born as an outcome of a recently imaginary split between fact and fiction.

In fact, he separated the function of the novel from its classical literary context and he linked the novel with other prose forms that were not regarded as literature. For him the novel did not consider as a literary form, but the history of various discourses that interlaced sociopolitical constructions of the world. While, McKeon stated that the connection between the novel and world was as resemblance and incorporate.

Even if these canonical reports of the rise of the novel are different, but they had partaken an identical historical framework that is the rise of the novel. They supposed that the novel rose in the mid eighteenth century, with the work of some significant authors such as Henry Fielding, Samuel Richardson and Daniel Defoe.

Moreover, the novel in the eighteenth century was representing the history of the novel as a genre of prose fiction as it is nowadays. At the beginning of the century, the novel did not really exist as a coherent literary organization. While the middle of the eighteenth century the fictional narratives developed it by presenting its characters in real life situations and events.

Furthermore, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* were considered as early English novels. Besides, great novels of the eighteenth century were regarded as anti-romance because this century was the first time the novel appeared and had widespread among public readers also the growing of literacy resulted more demand on the reading materials that increased vastly, and women were readers of the novel at that time since they had more time for reading.

Besides, because of the huge audience and the widespread of novel all over the land, it became a new form of art and more advanced. In fact, the novel was born when middle class people had influenced by its rise and when novelists started meeting their middle class readers who wanted to read about ordinary people because they enjoyed seeing themselves as protagonists of the stories.

The eighteenth century middle class people were obtaining less specific education in context than the upper class people education. Women had better education around the time of the greater leisure for women in middle and upper ranks, but also men had

the right to be interested. Therefore, both men and women had accepted literary forms, which took them to the new and factual world instead of staying in their own world.

The goal of the novelists was not only to tell but also to denote morality. In particular, the middle class people regarded usefulness considerable and this would involve moral usefulness, in addition, the novel was different from the other genres of fiction because it was long and it brought instantly details. Richardson's *Pamela* (1740) recognized schedule to write group of letters, which furnished examples of right way to pursuit. By producing these letters, women were impressed not only by reading them but also by hearing them from the others. Therefore, there were other novels as Richardson *Clarissa* (1748), Henry Fielding's great novel *Tom Jones* (1749), Laurence Sterne the *Life and opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentle man* (1761) and the *Vicar of Wakefield* (1761) by Oliver Goldsmith.

2-2-4 Factors behind the Rise of the Novel

In fact, behind the rise of this literary form there were factors such as:

- 1- The emergence of literacy where the novel became necessary a written form unlike -poetry which remained a long time to the development of writing.
- 2- The novel had influenced not only educated people but also illiterate people who started organizing groups in order to hear the novel read by others and the part of Dickens' audience was this kind so the practice of reading loudly was much more increased than it is today.
- 3- Printing was regarded as an essential factor that assisted to the rise of the English novel because the recent novel was brought from the printing press, which can produce numerous copies that helped in satisfying literate publication up rise that they can provide.

4- The market economy; the sociology of the novel had built by the relationship between the author and the reader, mediated by publications. Encouraging authors like patronage, via giving money to someone or a group as a charity, or subscription. Due to market economy, relative freedom and isolation of the author grow up, while his direct dependence above groups and interests reduced.

2-2-5- the Impact of Individualism on the Rise of the Novel

The emergence of individualism was very important in the rise of English novel. Ian Watt viewed that the novel contains individualization of characters and the medium details. Therefore, the novel was more connected with the town unless to the village, but in few things they are analogous, because both have great number of people, guiding dependence lives, impacting and depending upon one another.

In his book *The Rise of the Novel* (1957), Ian Watt argues that the fiction of Defoe is the first which exposes people with two sides, individual life in its utters views as a historical process, and its nearer position. Indeed, that presents the process being performed out opposite to the background of the passing thought and action: (Min 2011 *Novel Addiction Consuming Popular Novels in Eighteenth Century Britain* 3-4).

2-3 Writings about Women

Throughout the history of Western, women were relegated in the society of Europe to the border of domestic sphere. They were even unauthorized from enjoying any legal, economic, or political rights. Besides, they were regarded as instruments for men's happiness. They experienced some improvement in their social position especially through literature.

Furthermore, the eighteenth century brought a significant concern in defining woman as a special being. Moreover, women were different because of their

interdependent on marriage and the compression of catching men. However, within new strict ideas of feminine property, major eighteenth century writers were interested in the types of feminine sexual behavior, modest and prude. Eventually, women were manipulated and compared with one another.

2-3-1 Feminism in the Eighteenth Century

Generally, feminism is defined as a movement, which arose in order to call for equality between men and women. In the same context, feminists stated that men and women should have the same rights. Moreover, feminism did not emerge in the middle of nineteenth century but it began in the middle eighteenth century where women started organizing themselves into groups in order to defy their subordinate position and achieving amelioration in their lives.

Besides, they encountered complicated functions during legal barriers, religious beliefs, economic interests and political systems. Thus, some women in Western Europe started claiming about their role in society. On the other hand, the reason behind the development of feminism was the gradual changes which Britain had witnessed in the eighteenth century in various fields political, economic, and cultural. Therefore, not only these changes had contributed on the feminism development, but also on the Enlightenment which had emphasized on reason to change society and advance knowledge. Its thinkers stated that the human being was born with natural rights as freedom of speech and religious belief.

As far as the writers of the eighteenth century, they imposed that there were differences between sexes but a scientific opinion in eighteenth century had supported the position that these social and cultural differences were natural. In the same way, men at that time had to be rational, objective and scientific in their thinking; whilst women

were thought to be emotional, sensual destitute of instinctive reason and arresting in social progress.

In fact, women expressed different views on education, marriage, and politics in an outbreak of articles, novels and pamphlets from the mid eighteenth century. In addition, some well-educated people in England started meeting together in an attempt to influence cultural and intellectual life. In particular, Jean Jack Rousseau influenced them when he wrote *Emile* (1762) which had explained the sexual differences because for him men needed education in order to develop their natural senses for independence, freedom that in turn fitted them for citizenship.

In contrast, women needed education in order to suite them for a domestic role where they focused on motherhood and other acts. For Dorinda Quatram “The carries...of a new morality through which they unnaturalness of civilization ... could be transcended “(Quatram 1995 84). Thus, women’s domestic place had to be submitted politically and legally by their husbands.

Withal, during the French Revolution (1789) in France, a new document had occurred which was called Declaration of the Rights of Men and citizens (1789). Actually, this document had stated collective rights of individuals. It had proclaimed that men came to life with equal rights and freedom. In contact, the monarchist Olympe de Gouges replied with her book *Declaration of the Rights of Woman and Citizens* (1791) which demanded the equality of women and men in society, she even stated that women had the right to play a more propitiatory role in the Assembly and this would be better for the nation.

Throughout the eighteenth century, many women benefited from the new literary forms as a way to participate and contribute to society. Moreover, this was

particularly true of the novel that became an increasingly popular form of reading during the eighteenth century. Even Female authors began to emerge during this period and increased in number over the course of the eighteenth century and beyond. Additionally, a few women started to publish writings or tracts that grappled with the new theories of the Enlightenment and the subordinate position of women in society.

2-3-2 Mary Wollstonecraft and the Women Rights

The British writer Mary Wollstonecraft is considered one of the earliest feminists in Western history. During her lifetime, she wrote several novels, treatises, and other works of nonfiction. In particular, she was famous by her book *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* in 1792, which called for women rights in the late eighteenth century. On the one hand, she indicated that women had to be equal with men in exercising reason. In contrast, women had to see themselves as guided by their feelings and survival only to satisfy men. For her women had to be educated in order to develop their character and to be deserved to participate in the formation of the new social order.

Furthermore, Wollstonecraft followed other writers of that time in arguing that equal intellectual dispositions could be analogous to different social roles. Therefore, she proposed that the women's medium of specialize was motherhood and having children could involve in the evolvement of the republic.

Eventually, she indicated that everyone would benefit from transforming women's character and perspectives. Besides, many nineteenth century writers were influenced by ideas of Wollstonecraft in Britain. In fact, the influence on women's movement was given utmost reorganization. Eventually, Wollstonecraft views had a good impact on the development of feminism.

2-4-3 Jane Austen and the Woman Character

Jane Austen was one of the well-known women writers of late eighteenth century and nineteenth century. Certainly, she gained a good place in English as a feminist writer. Through her work, she spoke about the role of women and gender in society mainly the middle class and upper middle class. Therefore, the major themes in her works were male dominance and marriage.

She portrayed the oppression of women in the eighteenth century through clarifying to her audience about women situation. Moreover, she refused the male dominance towards women because they were considered as the second class. Therefore, Austen showed in her heroes that women had to resist oppression and injustice in their society and search for a good life. In addition, she used female characters in order to prove that women had the right to be rational and being reasonable.

Further, the early eighteenth century writer Marry Wollstonecraft had influenced Austen by her book *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792), and even by her writings about women in the English society. Indeed, in the late eighteenth century she wrote *Pride and Prejudice*, which depicted the life of young women. Thus, this novel presented woman who had not inheritance so she begun starting for rich husbands to her daughters.

In fact, women characters of Jane Austen desired to marry for love, which was regarded as an impossible wish in Austen's time. As a result, women had only role to marry, to have children and to stay at home for her husband. Ended women were poor and single.

2-4The Woman Question

Gender justice has become a global issue because of the continued subordination and exploitation of women in the entire world. Religion and ritual, custom

and sentiment were manipulated to reduce women to the level of domestic servants or nursemaids. On the one hand, objects of pleasure and commodities for disposal. In addition, women had always occupied a subordinate position and enjoyed limited freedom in the patriarchal society. The status of women was attempted in Britain during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Furthermore, the degree of attention that women received was unprecedented, as they had remained so long in obscurity as the second sex. Women's status was related to men in society, the discrimination of being women gave way to a better definition of womanhood. They were no longer treated as inferior to men because of their sex. The traditional attitude of men towards women was negated. Though the changes in the attitude towards women did not bring about immediately a transformation in the practical aspects of their life, it did provide them a strong theoretical framework to fight actively for their rights in the nineteenth century.

Women transited over considerable problems, obstacles and barriers to have a good place in society. Before they did not have any kind of rights, they were isolated mistreated and neglected by men. Indeed, some eighteenth century figures as well as Isaac Newton, Rousseau and others made changes as inventing new things, making new roles and shifting from the thoughts and ideas of the past. Thus through this transformations women fought in order to get their rights.

Besides, women had to be only homemakers, submissive wives, pure, and sincere, they could not study politics, sciences or philosophy because these subjects were available only for men. Furthermore, women were scared from realization of the persecution that made them interacting and asking for equal rights and treatment. The

Woman Question is a matter of changing woman's roles in economics, politics and profession. It covers the social and sexual liberation of women.

Woman Question is translated from the French term 'Querelle des Femmes', it indicates the nature of women and if they have the permission to study, write or even be analogous with men, there were authors who were against or arguing for women's ability to be educated as men.

2-4-1 Samuel Richardson's and Henry Fielding's woman character

Throughout the British literature of eighteenth century, the role of middle class life was more related to the ordinary women's great education. Furthermore, when Samuel Richardson published his great novel Pamela (1740), the novel had flourished. At that time, women were capable to speak about their cultural power by novel and theatre.

Besides, the issues of gender were vastly discussed through the English society of eighteenth century. The period was viewed an overmuch of argument about women's roles. In this period there were interesting works produced: Richardson's epistolary novel Pamela or, Virtue Rewarded and Fielding's An Apology for the Life of Mrs. Shamela Andrews.

2-4-1-1 Samuel Richardson and the Woman Character

Richardson gave fiction a respectful place because he was attached more with the epistolary fiction; numerous of it was written by women. On the one hand, the principal of his achievement was traditions established by women. He even used exemplary characters and goodness in order to attract his audience.

Moreover, Richardson novel Pamela (1740) was feminine. It had brought a remarkable effect to the place of the novel. Normally, it was about a young servant who protected her virginity despite the different aggressions from her employer. From this, Richardson thought that woman's purity was her virginity and if she stayed virgin, she would reward marriage.

This protagonist even if she belonged to low class but she felt confident herself and she even saw that her soul not only had merit unless it returned to her. On the other hand, this novel was letters written by the protagonist then the characters exchanged them, she demanded a help since she seemed that her tormenter is beggar than any constable

As a result, feminism had seen clearly in this sentimental novel mainly when Pamela character believed in her equality. Besides, even if the woman character was weak and stupid but she did not stop anytime to transform her situation and she complained about it.

2-4-1-2 Fielding's Female character

Henry Fielding was dealing with the raise of the novel's standing. Particularly, he was different than Richardson in tradition because he was comic and satiric realism. His picaresque novel of manners was conspicuously masculine. Furthermore, in his work he did not reward or punish his characters. Therefore, he exposed difficulties by making moral decisions

On the other hand, he gave woman character the importance role through doubting, he gave them permission when they could be free, modesty and even slut. In his novel Shamela (1741), the protagonist was an artful insolent who used her virtue to

arouse in society. Furthermore, she behaved as she did for the security of material comforts of herself.

In the novel Shamela used different words as 'pretend', 'act' and 'feign'. She also seduced Booby, and even she feigned to do so obviously, this was keeping her virtuous image. Therefore, she did all these things in order to get married with Booby. Fielding represented his protagonist in a mirage of virtue, she assumed true and solid but in fact, she was shyness. On the same hand, she did not give any important to her virtue. Therefore, she perceived that being virtuous would help her in her position.

2-4-2 Henry Fielding and the Woman Question

Henry Fielding proclaimed in his fiction to the predicament of eighteenth century's woman to whom his culture rejected an education, a political voice, any virtual social significance, or an identity when she was married, such as the writer Angela J. Smallwood demonstrated in her book *Fielding and the Woman Question* (1789) the viewpoint of Fielding about women.

In other words, Fielding was sympathetic to woman's affairs. So that, he employed his heroes, in order to protrude women's real life. In fact, in his characters: Sofia 'Tom Jones 1749' and Amelia 'Amelia 1751', he showed the maltreatment of women by society. Indeed, he presented them in eighteenth century situation. Thus, this did not confined on present characters but also those who were not present in his plots.

Although, this contradictoriness narrative organized by creating reference to female characters who are not present; as Sophia Western's mother in *Tom Jones*, and Mrs. Bennett's mother in *Amelia*. Therefore, Fielding is stager of the imposed liminality of women in society. Moreover, his main goal is to make the reader concentrated the

results of society's unimaginable wish accomplish the cultural myth of the perfect woman.

Researchers and scholars have regarded his novel *Amelia* (1751) as an estrangement from his past, more lively, male oriented, and dexterous novel as well as Charles Knight who included "Fielding is interested in exploring the problems of human behavior and in analyzing the significance of human institution incorrupt state in society"(Charles A Knight 1980 37). Here Knight states that Fielding contributed in both resolving the consideration of human institution in depravity society, and recommitting the troubles of human behavior.

Moreover, his interest with issues fostered by his view as the way he presented his characters in *Amelia* in order to analyze the widespread of woman question, eventually, he fostered his reconnaissance of the good man. From this, he rotates his thinking to a strategy of the female self and the good woman. So, the eighteenth century characterized by the coming of feminine counter-culture.

The sign of Fielding to the absent women did not form a feminist agenda. Therefore, his theme of feminine absence had evolved through his classical use of the perfect woman as a reason item in his early diverse poetry. Moreover, over his satire there were the legal manipulating of wives in champion. In contrast, by deeming works of Fielding with the new feminism literary theory, the result will be that the feminine absence returned to his interest that women were dismissed from society to the harmful because of its ethical and spiritual values.

Modesty and silence were the most interesting features in a woman, with regard to some books at that time as what included in the *Advice to Daughter* "Modesty no less than prudence ought to retrain the wife from complaining about her husband's infidelity

for discretion and silence will be the most prevailing reproof“ (Kenyon 1969 280). Here Kenyon explains that shyness; caution were needed in order to renew the wife from blaming about the husband adultery for prudence and this can be the most predominating reprimand.

As a result, the society of eighteenth century obliged woman to be silent, invisible and indeed away from the men world. Therefore, they asserted that women were socially, if not physically, dead. Also in Joseph Andrews ‘Tublliber’ putted a chair alongside her husband while he eats, all these absent female characters backwards the distorted tales and influenced the feminine action.

For this, the absence of mothers in works of Fielding indicates that the feminine factor is important to eighteenth century's society, each presence encourages the standing morality, and the women were cohabiting cultural issues of womanhood. Nevertheless, in their equipped and component of society.

In fact, Fielding’s utilizing the feminine absence is an evidence to the significance of women in the family, and how they had been opposed and misunderstood by the eighteenth century, his purpose can become more approval in twentieth century feminists. Thus, he maintains that new woman is burlier and more interest than before. Generally, feminine absence resulted effects on masculine society. So Fielding cautions that would be injudicious to proceed keeping women isolation, silence. The women buried was born from the darkness a more stranger and retributive presence than society conceived.

Eventually, The Woman Question is not a question itself, but rather in the context of the entire revolutionary struggle. Therefore, Political lines has to demonstrate the presence conditions and historical development of a given question and to relate it

with other questions. Hence, the analysis of woman question increased in trade unions and other places.

2-5 Conclusion

In the eighteenth century, England was passing an economic and industrial transformation that aroused new aspirations in, and unlocked new occasions to upper middle class. Yet the emergence of novel, which was produced for the audience, who started criticizing the intellectuals of the 18 century, the novel has been a serious form of literature, which attracts women, who started reading it more than men did. For instance, during this period in time, women had a very specific role in the Georgian society and they were expected to be both subservient and innocent. Their primary role was to get married. From this, women did not possess much power in society in relation to men. This chapter has shown some writings about the Rise of the Novel. Next, it has given an overview of Woman Question. Then, Writings about Woman. The following chapter which is the last one will be encountered with the novel of Henry Fielding's male dominance next, the submission and struggle then representation (male gaze).

Chapter Three
Portrayal of Woman in
Tom Jones

Chapter Three: Portrayal of Woman in *Tom Jones*

3-1 Introduction

3-2 Male Dominance

3-2-1 List of Male Characters

3-2-2 Good and Evil

3-2-2-1 Tom Jones and Blifil

3-2-2-2 Squire Allworthy and Squire Western

3-3 Struggle and Submission

3-3-1 Fielding and the Concept of Marriage

3-3-2 Tom Jones and Sophia Western

3-3-3 Blifil and Sophia Western

3-3-4 Squire Western and his Daughter

3-3-5 Lady Bellaston and Tom Jones

3-4 Representation of female Character

3-4-1 Henry Fielding and his Female Characters

3-4-2 List of Women Characters

3-4-2-1 Sophia Western

3-4-2-2 Bridget Blifil nee Allworthy

3-4-2-3 Lady Bellaston

3-4-2-4 Jenny Jones or Mrs. Waters

3-4-2-5 Lady Molly Seagrim

3-4-2-6 Mrs. Deborah Wilkins

3-4-2-7 Mrs. Western

3-5 Conclusion

3-1 Introduction

Britain witnessed in the eighteenth century the rise of the novel which the English writer Henry Fielding was considered as the founder of it;

For as I am, in reality, the Founder of a new Province of Writing, so I am at liberty to make what laws, I please therein. And these Laws, my Reader, whom I consider as my subjects, are bound to believe in and to obey; with which [so] that they may readily and cheerfully comply (Fielding 1749 74).

This was quoted from his famous book; *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling* or simply *Tom Jones*. This comic masterpiece had established Fielding as father of the English novel that was not published until February 1749.

It has also dealt with the subject of women in the eighteenth century, so as soon as people heard the word woman, it emerged into their minds their beautiful appearance, engagement in heavy housework and too much talk. In fact, women forced to meet these expectations in this century because of their subordinate status to men and male dominated society. Furthermore, Henry Fielding was significant in the feminist convention because he reflected the condition of the middle class women in an intimate way in his novels. he wrote as a critical judge of his own society, and with regard to his book *Tom Jones*. This last chapter will concentrate on three subjects; firstly, the portrayal of male dominance, this will lead us as readers and researchers to reflect on how the writer despite of his unconventional views about women; he did not break with the traditional views towards patriarchal society. Secondly, it will shed light on women's submission and struggle with men. Thirdly, it will conclude with the representation of female characters in his novel.

3-2 Male Dominance in *Tom Jones*

Happy and peaceful maintenance of life principally rests upon a sound human society. Therefore, the society has both good and evil pressures with the evil pressure predominating and it cannot be changed into a good one without rigorous, repeated and concerted attempts of correction. There are two ways of social reformation the first is to alter the mind of the vile people while the second one is to eliminate all of them from the society through exercising punishment upon them.

Furthermore, The recent one cannot be a reasonable, commonsensical method for by the continuous process of counseling, motivation and forgiveness which is Fielding's attitude towards human nature, many of the degenerated people may be converted into righteous ones and the society may categorically undergo a radical change. The study of Henry Fielding's novel, *Tom Jones* may stand contributory to the restoration of concord and quiet in social milieu. Even if the eighteenth century society was a male dominant, Fielding portrays his male and female characters as realistic, employs them as illustrations of virtues, and vices in people.

Fielding has showed the power and domination in favor of men rather than women in the 18 century. Thus, Fielding was interested in gender issues, although he appeared as if he was putting gender bias aside from his work. This may appear in his novel when Sophia changes by the end of the novel. Fielding tends to show how Sophia challenges her power and authority.

3-2-1 list of Male Characters

- 1- Tom Jones
- 2- Squire Allworthy
- 3- Master Blifil

- 4- Squire Western
- 5- Partridge
- 6- Mr. Fitzpatrick
- 7- Mr. Dowling
- 8- Nightingale
- 9- Lord Fellamar
- 10-Square
- 11-Thawckum
- 12-Black George
- 13-Narrator

3-2-2 Good and Evil

Fielding in his masterpiece, *Tom Jones* did not use the main character to entertain his readers by their comicality. Therefore, he used them in order to pose moral questions which challenge the readers to understand and judge the nature of the characters and the values of this society.

3-2-2-1 Tom Jones and Blifil

Even if Tom and Blifil came to the same house, lived together, and were educated by the same teacher; these two young men of the same age were different in two things social status and temper. Moreover, Blifil was a legitimate descendant of Squire Allworthy, and thus the honored expectant heir of the estate. In contrast, Tom Jones was only a foster-child or even a foundling with an unknown origin and doubtful future, that led him to fight for the respect of other persons. As far as the temperament is concerned, Blifil “was, indeed a lad of remarkable disposition; sober, discreet, and pious beyond his age; qualities which gained him the love of everyone who knew him.”(99).

According to the story anyone met Blifil had a good emotion for him. Such a behavior highly contrasted with Tom's vitality, indiscretion and intemperance.

Therefore, Tom was "universally disliked, and many expressed their wonder that Mr. Allworthy would suffer such a lad to be educated with his nephew lest the morals of the latter should be corrupted by his example" (99). With regard to the novel, Tom was unaccepted and rejected by the majority of people who blamed Mr. Allworthy when he fostered this child. As they express it "As we determined, when we first sat down to write this history, to flatter no men, but to guide our pen throughout by the directions of truth, we are obliged to bring our hero on the stage in a much more disadvantage manner than we could wish" (89)

Thus, Blifil thanks to his pretended infallibility, made an impression of moral superiority over his adversary. Whilst, the reader in the book realizes the contrariety in the judgment on the two characters and he eventually reveals that although the denouncement of Tom Jones by pressures, he gained a great respect and popularity in the society for his good turns and kindness (110).

Besides, the characters of both Tom and Blifil clarify that in one body, there is always something good as well as something evil. Likewise, as Tom and Blifil are shown nearer to each other in the novel, their differences are even more remarkable, the same as good is always judged as the contrast to evil. In fact, in a society that prizes the values of chastity and prudence, Tom faces problems. Even if the instinct to preserve the species is a natural part of every man, it contributes to the well-being of the society by ensuring its survival. Whereas, Tom Jones, the objection to his free-minded sexual affairs is not faint because it is against the values of the society to which he belongs.

He even likes social events, as hunting with Squire Western, and being friends with a gamekeeper Black George, whose fellowship, he respects so much that he is rather willing to let himself beaten than to betray him (103). Moreover, Tom's love of humankind is apparent from his meeting with The Man of the Hill when Tom arguments against his misanthropy (406).

Afterwards, it is the feeling of sympathy that Tom proved to have on many occasions, especially in the cases of the family of his friend Black George and the family of Mr. Anderson, which both fell into dreadful poverty and Tom's financial support actually helped them survive. In addition, the familial affection is reflected in the character of Tom by his devotion and great respect to his patron Allworthy whom he deemed as his only family. This is expressed, for instance, in Tom's behavior at Allworthy's sickbed: "Jones flung himself at the benefactor's feet and ... assured him his goodness to him, both now and at all other times, had so infinitely exceeded not only his merit but his hopes that no words can express his sense of it" (204).

Additionally, Tom Jones's love of life is proof in the things he does since he appreciates its treats and he displays a great respect for its value, incidentally, when he saves the life of a robber who tries to steal his money (579). Also when he spares the life of Mrs. Waters attacked by a ruffian Northerton (416). However, Tom's behavior in case of his sexual affairs is always caused by natural instincts, and is neither consciously harmful to his mistresses, nor conflicting his social affections, and thus not immodest but only irresponsible.

Moreover, Tom's desire of wealth is extremely limited as he sacrifices his own property to help the poor (118). In addition, he is the only person who feels gratitude instead of envy and greed when he is promised a sum of money from his sick patron

Allworthy on his deathbed (204). Whereas, the character of Blifil illustrates the same self-interests but this time in the immodest degree because he does not show any manifestations of love of life, as he prefers solitude to company and strictly denounces Tom for his enjoyments.

In addition, Blifil's cowardice and squealing when Tom punches him for calling him a bastard (107), and his gingerly attack on him later with the help of Thwackum (220). Tom proves an excessive resentment of injury which, moreover, he would not suffer for anybody but himself. Although Blifil does not find many interests in sex or gastronomy, he reveals himself as a greedy person when he consciously suppresses the truth about Tom's origin (210) in order to become the only heir of the estate and thus his desire of luxury, wealth and material conveniences is undeniable.

Then, Blifil's behavior towards the authorities – his uncle, his schoolmaster Thwackum and the philosopher Square – is often calculated and servile, as Blifil longs for the privileges resulting from their praise. In addition, Tom's expulsion from the Paradise Hall is presented as Blifil's final success as an intriguer and he shows no pity with his mate, which is evident from a rigid letter he sends Tom on his departure (277).

It is clear that Fielding does not sketch a character with rigid virtues but a human being with shades of animalism. His protagonist even if he commits mistakes but learns from them and then wins at the end. He is not a born winner; neither is he a born celibate who can easily avoid sexual advance of beautiful women like some super human and divine creature that never exists on the face of earth.

Intriguingly, these two characters have the same mother who is Bridget. In the beginning of the story, others do not know that she is the mother of Tom. Then, Tom's

father is shown dead because he is removed from the novel, so the mother is blamed. Thus the father is removed, whereas, all the things come on Bridget. She alone handles the situation. Fielding showed that in the eighteenth century, men are flaccid by character but the women are given blame for every bad situation and here it is clear that men were dominated. On the other hand, women were the victim of the interior colonization.

3-2-2-2- Allworthy and Western

Actually, Fielding did not portray the two characters of Tom and Blifil differently, but also the characters of Allworthy and Western. In fact, the significance of liberty and rational judgment is embodied in the character of Squire Allworthy. Besides, by his portrayal such as by his symbolical name, “a gentleman whose name was Allworthy, and who might well be called the favourite of both nature and fortune; for both of these seem to have contended which should bless and enrich him most” (28).

Further, he represents him in calm reasonable wisdom; “Mr. Allworthy inherited a large fortune; that he had a good heart and no family” (29). Fielding states that even if Allworthy has no wife and children but he was a good man and oppositely to the general attitude, Allworthy denies perceiving the baby foundling Tom and giving him a name Thomas something inferior to other people. He even decides to take charge of him, treating him without prejudices as an equal to all the others, by which he proves to be a person whose affections are balanced.

For Fielding Mr. Allworthy represents a gentle, generous man. Indeed, he might be called the favorite of both nature and fortune, because nature had given him the gifts of good health, good sense and a kind heart, and fortune had made him one of the richest men. Even his house and heart are always opened to all people who seek to get

knowledge and education. Thence, Fielding portrays the significance of liberty of thought and of balance of affections in a man, which are both important conditions for achieving a real virtue. Hence, Fielding indicates that Allworthy lived not only as a good man but also as a wealthy man. This stated in his book: “Hence, doubtless... that he lived like an honest man, owed no one a shilling, took nothing but what was his own, kept a good house, entertained his neighbours with a hearty welcome at his table, and was charitable to the poor...that he died immensely rich and built an hospital.” (29).

Withal, even though in eighteenth century society the father had the right to choose a husband for his daughter but Allworthy refuses the marriage of Sophia without her consent. He even disapproves of bringing Sophia to reason by force and serves as an example of the good man, because even if she is not his daughter but he cares more about her. However, the relationship between Squire Western and his daughter Sophia demonstrates the bitter consequences of imbalance in passions of an individual and the inevitable misery of a person without the freedom of thought.

Eventually, Fielding portrayed Squire Western as a caricature of rough-and-ready, conservative country gentleman; his character is ambiguous for his very strong affections towards his daughter on one hand, and his tyrannical treating of her on the other. Such an ambiguity, as well as the lack of reality of emotions, is the side effect of Fielding’s comic approach, which softens the shocking manners of Western, but at the same time, stresses the absurdity of his wrong and unfair behavior towards his daughter.

Briefly, by contrasting the characters of Squire Allworthy and Squire Western, Fielding showed an ideal of a reasonable and well-balanced man who supports liberty and a caricature of an overbearing father who almost ruins his only beloved daughter by his own narrow-mindedness. Thence, Fielding illustrated the significance of liberty of

thought and of balance of affections in a man, which are both important conditions for achieving a real virtue.

In fact, Fielding does not tend to individualize his characters but he makes them of general category. Allworthy as the name implies is a worthy gentleman, Tom Jones is compound name created out of the commonest names and it signifies that Tom is representative of manhood in general

3-3 Struggle and Submission

Obviously, the plot of *Tom Jones* dramatizes the moral view of the human affairs describing the hidden dangers of credulity. Thus Fielding's purpose was to encompass a looser reader, as the narrative is rather didactic in nature he even was objurgated for endorsing immoral and licentious fiction. Fielding reacted against the licentiousness of the sexual exploitation of women, of their being portrayed and reduced to sex objects to be craved. He opposed the double standard of the sexual morality of men and their libertine views of marriage; he also accepted the hierarchical structure of the eighteenth century family and the dictum that the women should obey their parents and husbands

3-3-1 Fielding and the Concept of Marriage

In fact, most of the eighteenth century novels share the same idea about family and social relations. Thus, the work if Fielding has showed a real image about this point of view. Moreover, Fielding portrays his female characters in relation to male domination such as representing them as wives, daughters or as related to other men. In this case, marriage is the first and common thematic to be discussed and especially by Henry Fielding.

Withal, most of the eighteenth century authors discussed females 'chastity and sexual matters and how their sexual relations should be limited to marriage; others

treated planned marriage. Further, they argued that marriage should be regarded as a human necessity for both males and females in order to realize social stability. Therefore, tackling the subject with regard to male writers has raised some controversies especially when their comments are in favor of male domination.

Additionally, marriage was the central subject in *Tom Jones* where Fielding shared positive attitudes towards the representation of women and sexual matters in relation to marriage. He shifted from describing how women should avoid the stereotypes that exist in society through protecting their marriage from the reasons that they ruin their relations. Thus, he insists on the positive effects of marriage on women and tries to show how illegal sexual relations affect women negatively. He also rejected look of males after beautiful ladies without marrying them. He believes that this may lead to the spread of illegal relations or prostitution which may bring illness. Besides, Fielding has focused on treating the problems that the married couples face in their life with each other.

For Fielding, the crisis happens when a man betrays his wife and has a mistress. Indeed, he showed his readers that marriage should be built on real love and affection. Besides, he came across illustrating this by Tom and Sophia who have gotten more fortune and elevating their social class consequently, their marriage succeeded after series of crises. Anyways, Fielding has made his novel *Tom Jones* different when the heroine strives to marry the hero who was only a founding and he even does not belong to the middle or high classes and whose parentage is unknown.

Furthermore, Fielding insisted on the importance of the friendship between the wife and her husband. Indeed, he asserted that they should share their life, their sorrows

and happy moments. Eventually, for him men are the dominant husbands, whilst women are the perfect wives.

3-3-2 Tom Jones and Sofia Western

The novel of *Tom Jones* gives a panoramic view of the England society in the 18 century. It is the story of Tom Jones and Sophia Western who are insurgents against the set norms of this society. In addition, they are depicted as fighting a conventional society whose characteristics are embodied in Blifil and they do not offer a passive resistance as they struggle. In fact, their struggle is to expose the treachery of Blifil.

Probably, Sophia's character reflects the conditions of young women deprived of education and freedom of speech and that, dependent on men's will, trusting and easy to manipulate. Therefore, by the happy end of the story, when Sophia is finally allowed to marry Tom, Fielding presents that the external power cannot enforce internal feeling where the will is opposed, and that Sophia's submission to force would mean her misfortune Blifil who deceives both Squire Allworthy and Squire Western, as he maintains a long time of respectability with them.

Moreover, Sophia has the spirit of the realist, who, without wasting time in unstack computations of what life might give. She eventually does not hasten to gather all that life gives, and joyfully to make the most of it. It is clear that she loves Jones, which undoubtedly, needs courage for every day. Even though Jones seems to warm her against him through doing some acts but she has still persisted in loving him, openly, without any artifice or pretense. She acts on passion, which is raging within her heart. Her passion is the overwhelming force in her. The incident about the muff amply describes her feeling for Tom. She has been type cast as the wisdom that Tom does not

have, and the whole novel is the chronicle of his trying to achieve wisdom and win Sophia.

When Sophia hears from her maid about the behavior of Tom and how he had kissed her muff, Sophia finds an excuse to take it back and she engages with the muff. In fact, Fielding describes an incident that defines her attachment for the muff,

She was playing one of her Father's favourite Tunes, and he was leaning on her Chair, when the Muff fell over her Fingers, and put her out. This so disconcerted the Squire, that he snatched the Muff from her, and with a hearty Curse threw it into the Fire, Sophia instantly started up, and with the utmost Eagerness recovered it from the Flames”(38).

Furthermore, Tom talks to Lady Bellaston at the masquerade, although he does not know who she is. She accuses him of wanting to enter into an affair with Sophia and ruin her. He shows Bellaston through this remark that he truly loves Sophia. While he desires her and would do anything to have her, he would do nothing to hurt her, even if it means he has to lose her: “My love is not of that base kind which seeks its own satisfaction at the expense of what is most dear to its object. I would sacrifice everything to the possession of my Sophia, but Sophia herself”. (13: 7)

3-3-3 Blifil and Sophia

In particular, the wrong perception of prudence is criticized in the wicked character of Blifil; whereas Tom Jones, despite his dissoluteness, treats women with real respect. At first Blifil does not find any interest in them but later pretends respect only to conceal his heartlessness. Fielding describes Blifil's deformed perception of prudence his relationship to Sophia. Thus, instead of being naturally charmed by this beautiful

young woman as Tom Jones, Blifil appears highly ignorant of it. Likewise, he covers his unnatural want of feeling towards people.

Even though he knew that she detested him, it did not change his plans a bit, nor was his desire at all lessened by the aversion that he discovered in her to himself. However, this served rather to heighten the pleasure he proposed in rifling her charms, as it added triumph to passion but he had some further views, from obtaining the absolute possession of her person which had been detested too much even to mention; and revenge itself was not without its share in the gratifications which he promised himself (291).

3-3-4 Squire Western and his Daughter

Squire Western loved Sophia very much and acquiesced to her demands. Thus, his daughter reciprocated his feelings, and sometimes she had to bear the brunt at being laughed for her devotion to her father, “As he loved her with such ardent Affection, that by gratifying her, he commonly conveyed the highest Gratification to himself (222). She was what he frequently called her, his little darling; and she well deserved. She had preserved the most inviolable Duty to him in all Things as she said in the novel “you mistake me, Madam, if you think I value myself upon this Account: For besides that I am barely discharging my Duty, I am likewise pleasing myself. I can truly say, I have no Delight equal to that of contributing to my Father’s Happiness; and if I value myself, my Dear, it is on having this Power, and not on executing it.” (39)

On the other hand, Sophia had vowed that she would not force herself to marry the man chosen by her father, but neither would she marry a man without his consent. There is something else, which is behind the submission to this patriarchal authority. It is an acknowledgement of the bond, which exists between the two of them. It is not out

of deference to her father's authority that she submits herself, but it is for the bond, which she cannot ignore or disown. Deep inside her, she wants that her father be happy with her choice that is why she sets this condition.

Therefore, when she does marry the man whom she loves, she wishes to have the approval of her father and in the process, she also satisfies her own desires, as she will not suffer from any inner conflict. Sophia wishes to have the approval because she wants to show her father that she is not wrong in her choice and that to approve would mean the acceptance of her individual right to choose her life partner. Squire Western in the end urges her to marry Tom the next day instead of waiting for a year to prove his constancy to her (223). Sophia readily acquiesces to his demands without saying anything as the custom forbade her to say anything.

3-3-5 Lady Bellaston and Tom Jones

Bellaston easily seduces Tom who is unable to match wits and sophistication with her in the game of seduction. This sexual transgression is inevitable as Lady Bellaston is enamored of Tom. She has listened to the glowing tributes paid to him by her house cleaner and had looked at him. She with the connivance of Mrs. Fitzpatrick lays the trap to entice Tom. In addition, she uses the ruse of masquerade to ensnare Tom. Tom under the mistaken belief that he is speaking to Mrs. Fitzpatrick, who will lead him to Sophia his true love bares his heart and falls prey to the machinations of Lady Bellaston.

Fielding in using the masquerade sequence to portray the seduction of Tom reveals his displeasure to his readers about masquerades. Thus, Fielding gives a description to Tom's feelings, "Jones had never less inclination to an amour than at present; but gallantry to the ladies was among his principles of honour; and he held it as much incumbent upon him to accept a challenge of love as it had been a challenge to

fight.”(54) Tom when he falls prey to the guiles of Lady Bellaston he becomes enmeshed in her evil designs. Tom despite having the affair with Lady Bellaston harbors a love for Sophia. It is Lady Bellaston among the three, who presents the greatest danger to Tom. He is least attracted to her, but her malice is beyond the comprehension of Tom, as she has the motive and the means to destroy Tom’s happiness.

3-4 Representation of Female Character

In a society stressing male dominance, it is surprising to find a male author who portrays his female character in a good way which is even more intelligent than his male characters even if the female characters were wiser in the eighteenth century British society. Withal, Fielding presents this respect for his female character particularly in masterpiece *Tom Jones* (1749).

This section shed light on the literary traditions of the eighteenth century where it showed Fielding’s techniques of writing and the major themes that he tries to treat in his book *Tom Jones* as well as chastity, marriage, money, property and prestige for women in society. All these issues will be explored in relation to males ‘and females ‘position and roles in society

3-4-1 Henry Fielding and his Female Characters

Fielding has given a special description to his female characters. Even his works have showed inequality between men and women because he concentrates on male dominance. Thus, Fielding presents his respect to women through his female characters in *Tom Jones* though describing the patience of the protagonist. Indeed, Fielding presents males, their conquest in sexual relations and how female characters try to conquer them.

Withal, Fielding links between gender and social class. He tries to show that the upper-class women are always looking for male counterpart from the same social class. Thence, females have the same power as men when they belong. Further, he has attracted the attention of his readers to the issue of male and female chastity and rebellion against their position in society.

Moreover, Fielding wrote on female issues within the eighteenth century cultural consciousness for which women and ideas of femininity were of great importance. Fielding promoted the view that women were considered inferior to men not for the reason that they had a natural defect or that their mental faculties were of an inferior type but because they did not receive proper education. Fielding's primary objective in the portrayal of his characters was to give attention to their subjective lives, to their moral development and to their personal relationships.

3-4-2 List of Female Characters in *Tom Jones*

There are more than 20 characters in the play. Some of the women characters are discussed in further detail. Yet Fielding divided them into categories.

- 1.) Sophia western
- 2.) Mrs. Bridget Allworthy Blifil
- 3.) Jenny Jones/ Mrs. Waters
- 4.) Lady Bellaston
- 5.) Molly Seagrim
- 6.) Mrs. Deborah
- 7.) Mrs. Western
- 8.) Harriet Fitzpatrick
- 9.) Mrs. Miller

- 10.) Nancy Miller
- 11.) Mrs. Wilkins
- 12.) Ms. Susan
- 13.) Mrs. Whitefield
- 14.) Mrs. Seagrim
- 15.) Mrs. Patridge
- 16.) Mrs. Honour
- 17.) The Nanny
- 18.) Betty
- 19.) Mrs. Abigail
- 20.) Mrs. Arebella

3-4-2-1 Sophia Western

Sophia Western is both the central theme of virtue in the story. Fielding hints about the meaning of Sophia, as her name means in Greek wisdom. Sophia is first introduced to the readers in Book IV Chapter 2, and Fielding uses the best language to describe her, “For lo! Adorned with all the Charms in which Nature can array her; bedecked with Beauty, Youth, Sprightliness, Modesty Innocence and Tenderness, breathing Sweetness from her rosy Lips and darting Brightness from her sparkling Eyes, the lovely Sophia comes.”(34) Fielding did not rest here but invited the Reader to conjure up the image of a beautiful woman to visualize the beauty of Sophia, but even that would be inadequate to describe fully her beauty.

Most importantly, Fielding presents his heroine as the ideal woman, the representative of a beauty of form and harmony of spirit so absolute as to be a sort of divine vitalizing force in man and nature alike. As her name implies wisdom, Sophia at

the tender age of thirteen demonstrates a far more mature attitude than others do. She is even an independent spirit but her existence is never free from her relation to the others round her. Sophia's perception about the growing love of Tom for her comes from her wisdom as a woman.

Fielding's representation of Sophia as a girl who is motherless but mature enough to understand the world is truly remarkable. Tom's involvement with Molly Seagrim invokes a different kind of response from her. She understands the emotional reality between herself and Tom, and she tries in her own way to stimulate his response and to make him aware of it. The incident about the illegitimate child of Molly Seagrim, which Squire Western and Parson Supple were debated at dinner, affirms her accusation about Tom's philandering ways, but it also kindles the flame of love for Tom.

Moreover, Fielding portrayed Sophia as a courageous girl and resolutely in her character, she is also mature and intelligent and that her filial love should not be misunderstood or misinterpreted as servile obedience.. She adores music, has a good taste in it, and likes to play Handel. .pure young girl has no sense of false shame when she goes to the help of an unhappy unmarried mother, even when this mother is Molly Seagrim, of whose child Tom is the reputed father.

Fielding portrays Sophia as a woman who does not have subterfuge in her life; she is not a cunning manipulator like Lady Bellaston. Sophia being a well beloved daughter of her father could have married a person of her father's choice and carry on an extramarital affair. Sophia on the other hand chooses to confess about her love for Tom. She is determined to change her father's opinion not through trickery but through reason. Indeed, Fielding provides an image about the rich in the British

society and how they insist on teaching their daughters good behavior. For example, Sophia's father concentrates on her upbringing in order to represent his family's prestige and name; for this reason, he sends her to his sister's house in order to have a good education, although she is the only daughter in the house.

3-4-2-2 Bridget Blifil nee Allworthy

Bridget is the sister of Squire Allworthy and the wife of Captain Blifil. Fielding described her as: "This lady was now somewhat past the age of thirty, an age at which, in the opinion of the malicious, the title of old maid may with no impropriety be assumed." (29). She is hardly the part of action of the story, but is the originator of it and she seems to be created as a pure necessity of the plot. The conflicting demands within her give her ambiguities and struggles an identity of her own. She has been portrayed as a unique individual who has been described by the critics as the supreme example of characterization. She was also, "She was of that species of women whom you commend rather for good qualities than beauty, and who are generally called, by their own sex, very good sort of women—as good a sort of woman, madam, as you would wish to know." (29).

The personality of Bridget develops as the story unfolds, and from a staid unmarried woman she assumes the characteristics of an amorous woman. Thus, this woman has a dour personality, whose opinion is that beauty is an enemy of chastity and virginity, and herself turns out to be amorous. Fielding stated; "Indeed, she was so far from regretting want of beauty, that she never mentioned that perfection...she was not as handsome as Miss Such-a-one, whom perhaps beauty had led into errors which she might have otherwise avoided." (29). According to him even if this woman was beautiful

but she did not use her beauty for bad things. Therefore, she was always avoiding problems.

Impressively, this woman was not good with herself only but also with the others, especially with other women: “very rightly conceived the charms of person in a woman to be no better than snares for herself, as well as for others; and yet so discreet was she in her conduct, that her prudence was as much on the guard as if she had all the snares to apprehend which were ever laid for her whole sex.”(29).

Fielding represented Bridget as an intelligent character because she managed to send off her brother Squire Allworthy to London for three months on business. Then she puts the child on the bed of Squire Allworthy, since she knew that her brother’s character well. She clearly knew that Squire Allworthy would not throw the baby out in the streets but would take proper care of it. In fact, Fielding presented her as a very good actress when the baby was brought in the next morning and she keeps silent for a moment, she also breaks out in a tirade against the unknown mother.

Moreover, Fielding described her action, “However, what she withheld from the Infant, she bestowed with the utmost Profuseness on the poor unknown Mother, whom she called an impudent Slut, a wanton Hussy...a wicked Jade, a vile Strumpet, with every other Appellation...” (47). Her plan succeeds, “ for having looked some Time earnestly at the Child, as it lay asleep in the Lap of Mrs. Deborah, the good lady could not forbear giving it a hearty Kiss, at the same time declaring herself wonderfully pleased with its Beauty and Innocence.”(48).

Besides, Fielding presented her as a brilliant character because she keeps up the pretense of being highly displeased with the child and remarks, “Since it was her Brother’s Whim to adopt the little Brat, she supposed little Master must be treated with

great Tenderness; for her Part she could not help thinking it was an Encouragement to vice.”(49).

Even after marriage to Captain Blifil she has balance her plan about protecting Tom instead of endangering his position. She pretends to take little interest in Tom and talks against him in private to her brother to keep Squire Allworthy on Tom’s side. Thus, she knows that Captain Blifil hates Tom as he thinks him to be a rival of his own son Blifil. Here too Bridget keeps her relations intact by deceiving Captain Blifil through her sweet talk, “frequently recommended to him her own Example, of conniving at the Folly of her Brother, which she said, she at least as well perceived and as much resented as any other possibly could.”(50)

3-4-2-3 Lady Bellaston

Lady Bellaston exudes and exemplifies evil:

She combines the malevolent rhetoric of Milton’s Satan with the unnerving aim of Lady Macbeth. As a result the London sequence, over which she presides, is more menacing than Blifil’s plotting in the first six books, or the dangers posed by the assorted ruffians of the central picaresque section. (52).

In addition, Fielding portrayed her as a bed women. This was shown when Sophia runs away from her country home, she seeks refuge at her cousin’s place Lady Bellaston’s in London. The lady on the other hand exploits Sophia’s innocence and

naivety. Sophia is nearly raped by Lord Fellamar. All these presented Lady Bellaston as evil and she is eventually an evildoer.

In fact, she is better motivated than Blifil, as she has much more to lose if Sophia and Tom are united and married. Fielding describes her, “Women...Mothers, Aunts... do in Reality think it so great a Misfortune to have their Inclinations in Love thwarted... a Woman who hath once been pleased with the Possession of a Man, will go above half way to the Devil, to prevent any other Woman from enjoying the same.”⁵³

In representing a character like Lady Bellaston, Fielding has illustrated that the woman has passion and is averse to be ruled by it. When most of the women of her social standing were content to lead sedate and monotonous lives, who curbed their natural passions for fear of losing their reputation Lady Bellaston is not afraid to restrain her passion. Lady Bellaston as a feminist spokesperson to voice her ideas.

3-4-2-4 Jenny Jones ‘Mrs. Waters’

This female character is in fact the character who is not malevolent, but on the contrary quite generous minded. Mrs. Waters or Jenny Jones was penniless but intelligent girl. Fielding has also concentrates on her describing her as a good, simple, poor and kind woman who came from the village to live in Mr. Allworthy’s house as a servant. Fielding gives women’s ambition on her towards learning and acquiring knowledge and good behavior. Fielding describes her,

This Jenny Jones was no very comely Girl, either in her Face or Parson; but Nature had somewhat compensated the Want of Beauty with what is generally esteemed by those Ladies... for

she had given her a very uncommon Share of Understanding.

This Gift Jenny had good deal improved by Erudition. (63)

She discloses the facts about Tom's parentage before Squire Allworthy, "She was true, that these Hands conveyed the Infant to your Bed; conveyed it thither at the Command of its Mother; at her Commands I afterwards owned it, and thought myself, by her Generosity, nobly rewarded, both for my Secrecy and my Shame."(64). Thus, She presented as a good woman who lives for the present.

Fielding's representation of Mrs. Waters as an independent woman is evident from the adventurous life that she leads. Her independence is depicted through her being enamored of Tom and taking the first steps to seduce him, such behavior on her part does not reflect any malice or on her morality. She is quite capable of handling obnoxious males and such a trait is evident from her handling of Fitzpatrick. She is a conscientious woman who likes to see that justice is done.

She is a very intelligent woman who is used by Mrs. Bridget to deflect suspicions on Tom Jones maternity from her. Jenny Jones is a virtuous woman, but the society spoils her virtue. Later on, she reappears as "Mrs. Waters". In the novel, it is not clear whether she was married to Mrs. Waters or not. She was living a virtuous life, but she was blamed for something she had not done.

3-4-2-5 Molly Seagrim

Molly is Tom's first love. She is the daughter of Black George the gamekeeper, Nevertheless, the narrator notes that there is something about her that "would at least have become a man as well as a woman". Molly is "bold and forward", rather than modest and shy. In other words, Molly is the absolute opposite of Sophia Western: where Sophia is delicate and feminine, Molly is rough and even masculine. Where

Sophia is chaste and careful in her interactions with men, Molly has at least three sexual partners that we know of: Tom, Mr. Square, and Will Barnes. Thus, she gets pregnant outside of marriage. She is always been cheated by the male characters. Will Barnes left her alone. It is also said that she is a bad character.

3-4-2-6 Mrs. Deborah Wilkins

Mrs. Wilkins (and the "Mrs." here just means that she is older, not that she is married) in the story she is Squire Allworthy's servant. She is the one who first takes care of baby Tom when Squire Allworthy finds him wrapped up in his bed. However, even though she helps to look after young Tom, she is not a kind of warm and fuzzy type. Fielding's purpose using Mrs. Wilkins in the story is to show how ungrateful and snobby servants can be.

3-4-2-7 Mrs. Western

Mrs. Western is Squire Western's sister, not his wife. She goes by "Mrs." because she is an older woman, but she is not married. Furthermore, Mrs. Western seems like what Squire Western would be if he had been born a woman. She is incredibly arrogant and sure of herself. Moreover, like Squire Western, she has absolutely no interest in Sophia's protests that she does not want to marry Mr. Blifil. Even more horrifying, she refuses to listen to Sophia's objections to Lord Fellamar, even after Sophia tells her that Lord Fellamar tried to assault her at Lady Bellaston's house. Mrs. Western's other truly important character trait is that she is vain as all get-out. Ended, she never notices. She is so certain that Mr. Fitzpatrick wants to marry her that she never spots her niece's terrible romantic plans.

To sum up Fielding showed both types of women characters in this novel, ones with the bad light and with good light. Overall, the women character in this novel faces injustice in one or the other way. Eventually Henry Fielding has represented sympathy for women in thematic terms. Indeed, the perfect place of woman is the house because woman was made for the comfort and benefit of man and woman before marriage is under the power of her father or her brother then after getting married she will be under the power of her husband.

3-5 Conclusion

This chapter has shown three important topics. Firstly, it has dealt with the male dominance where it showed how Fielding portrayed his male characters in both good and bad ways. Secondly, it dealt with the struggle and submission where it presented how women characters submitted and struggled with male character. Then, it has provided how Fielding portrayed his female characters because even though he is a male author but he wrote them as more intelligent than his male characters. Thus, it has been observed that Fielding represents them from different perspectives, and his views shift according to the context. The ideal woman according to society was beautiful, submissive, gentle and well versed in domestic arts. However, his fiction reveals that he vigorously upheld women's property rights, lamented upon the lack of their legal status and inadequate education. He exposed the double standards of the men concerning marriage and sex. Obviously, it is clear that woman was made only for the comfort and benefit of man. Eventually, in the eighteenth century, the women characters are only in minor role. Importance is not given to the women, they are not at the power position, and they are given only a subordinate position.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

This work delineated in its beginning the most transformations that came to characterize the eighteenth century in cultural, economic and other fields. In fact, these changes awakened new thinkers who announced a war of thinking. Thus, they defended about their home countries with their pens not with weapons this what has been called Enlightenment.

Then, the first chapter putted light on the status of woman at that period, where they lived bad conditions. In fact, in the eighteenth century patriarchal England, women generally did not have as many rights as they do today. They even had no possessions of their own and since they did not want to waive their social status and the way of living, they had been used to; the only way to keep it is to marry a man of the same or of a higher social status. That way they could preserve the status they acquire at their birth and the reputation they have. Because of these reasons, marriage has been a central social concern and most of them married for economic reasons rather than for love.

The next chapter showed the emergence of the novel in the eighteenth century with regard to Ian Watt and others and the important factors behind its rise. After that, it showed the woman question and particular writings of some remarkable authors who made woman as their protagonists, among them Henry Fielding. Thus, this author proved through his novel *Tom Jones* a common point between him and his protagonist Sophia Western. Comparatively, Jane Austen is set as an example of the eighteenth century female writer who dared to tackle female traits. She portrayed the main theme of her time where she showed the misery of women because she believed in love and self-independent. For that, she chose Elizabeth Bennet to be her mirror that reflects her personality.

The focal aim of this dissertation was to shed the light on the place of woman in the late eighteenth century in Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*. The real reason behind the novel writing and Henry Fielding's choice of heroine is to treat the question of woman. The researcher also studies and evaluates women, the position they held, and their conditions in *Tom Jones* novel from feminist perspective and relied on feminist ideas about women conditions. Moreover, Fielding tried to depict them in a world in which they lived.

Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* is considered as a comic masterpiece; it focuses on a fostered child who is blamed for a thing he did not do. The novel is good for those who like romantic stories. Thus, this story itself was strong, the plot made the reader go on because Fielding created a variety of characters and personalities. Indeed, he came across creating a kind of connection between the reader and the characters through calling the reader each time in the novel.

It can be said that Henry Fielding was a literary giant and one of the prominent novelists of the history of English literature. Thus, Sophia Western is one of the greatest heroines that astonished the literary world and reflected the atmosphere of Fielding's time. In the novel, Sophia produced completely a new type of female characters who is determined to marry in accordance with her feelings and expectations. She had the courage to resist the pressure of her father and the conventional way of thinking, she wanted to decide about her own life herself even if her husband was a foundling.

Fielding portrayed his male characters differently. He even classified them into good and evil persons. On the side of the couples in the novel he did not exemplify the bad consequences therefore, he emphasized the importance of a prior affection that it could lead to a future happiness on the sides of both, man and woman, resulting a mutual

understanding and respect. Henry Fielding tried to depict the society of his time as faithfully as he could in *Tom Jones*, and considering the fact that even if he is male author but one may say that he understood women's position better than any other author did.

Henry Fielding's writing are always defending women, his focus was on their manners and intentions. Indeed, after reading the novel readers could easily notice two categories of man and woman: a good or evil. The evil characters influenced by the convention of the eighteenth century. While the good characters rejected the entire social rules and acts.

What can be also added is that the current research work has faced many hindrances due to the lack of sources available locally; even the library is in the other university. Another point that because of the political changes that Algeria witnessed the researcher had problems in communication and even the time did not help him to write the perfect thesis.

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Appendices

Henry Fielding



Appendix 01

A Short Biography

Henry Fielding was born in 1707 from an Aristocratic family. He grew up in an educated family; for this reason, he had a great passion towards learning and Christianity. His maternal state encouraged him to write *Tom Jones*. Some said that the story reflects his real life situation.

In 1728, Fielding joined his father in London and wrote the first play. After that he went to Holland in 1729 and spent a short period of time, and then return. He focused on the political field through the use of parody and satire. Later on, Fielding turned his attention towards writing novels after being a playwright.

In 1734, Fielding turned his attention towards studying law at the Middle Temple five months after Walpole's Licensing Act and got married to Charlotte Craddock. In fact, his wife gave inspiration to him for most female protagonists in some of his novels such as Amelia, Sophia, Fanny Goodwill and Mrs. Wilson. In 1741, he edited the *Champion* which is a satirically political newspaper. During the 1740s, Fielding occupied many positions in law; however, he neither succeeded nor made money. Accordingly, he started to write novels. The great love of Fielding's life was his first wife, and it is said that Sophia Western, the heroine of *Tom Jones* was modelled on her. When Fielding died, his cousin said of him, 'It is a pity he was not immortal, he was so formed for happiness.

(<https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/j/joseph-andrews/henry-fieldingbiography>).

Appendix 02

Tom Jones: A Short Summary

The narrator talks about how the life of Tom which starts as Mr. Allworthy's servant because he was the illegal child of his sister from an illegal relationship. Mr. Allworthy was a very rich landowner in Southwestern England. He found an anonymous baby brought by the servant when he returned from London, then he names him Tom. Later on, Mr. Allworthy gave her money and ordered her to leave in order to protect her reputation. In order to take Mr. Allworthy's large amount of money and lands, Captain Blifil decided to Marry Bridget and had a boy, for this reason Blifil hated poor Tom because he did not want him to compete his boy. For this reason he lied that Tom is Mr. Partridge's secret baby, but Mr. Allworthy did not want to leave little Tom.

Mr. Allworthy's neighbour has a very beautiful and lovely daughter called Sophia. She is the same age of Tom and Blifil. She likes Tom, although she rarely sees him. Later on, they realize that they love each other even though they know very well that their love cannot succeed. The real problem for this relation is that Tom is not an illegal man belonging to the rich class.

After Mrs. Western, Sophia's aunt, visits the house she realizes that she falls in love. She thinks that Sophia wants to marry Mr. Blibil and passes the idea to her brother Mr. Western who arranged for her marriage. She tries to tell her dad that she does not love him but she likes Tom. Mr. Western threatens her that he will kick her out naked without a petty if she thinks about the idea again.

Tom saves Mrs. Waters from being ravished in the woods; however, he is accused in an illegal relation with Mrs. Waters. Quickly, Sophia learnt of his sleeping arrangement, she left behind a token so that he knew that she was there. He arrived in

London after Sophia in order to explain that there was a mistake. Lady Bellaston, the protector of Sophia, made as her own business to take Tom to her side. At the moment, Sophia's father arrived and took her; she was forced to marry Mr. Blifil. Tom found himself accused and put into jail accused of a murder, but he was saved by Mrs. Walters who cleared him from the murder and his birth truth appeared and the story ends happily.