

THE STRUCTURE OF FIELDING'S JOSEPH ANDREWS

HENRY FIELDING'S JOSEPH ANDREWS:

A STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

By

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SCOPE AND PURPOSE: The scope and purpose of the thesis is
to discover how the basic structures and
patterns of action in a fiction may them-
selves contribute to the meaning of the
work.

An analysis is offered of this process,
and of the meanings conveyed, as they are
found in Joseph Andrews.

PREFACE

The purpose of this thesis is to offer a coherent account of some of the structures of Henry Fielding's first novel, Joseph Andrews. The need for such an account arises for a number of reasons. First, the concentration of Fielding's modern commentators seems to have been unduly directed towards analysis of his fiction in terms of an ethical system offering guides to action in particular circumstances.¹ It may well be true that such a system existed in Fielding's mind, and that it does give a degree of form to Joseph Andrews. It is not true, however, that the novel is read today for such direct instruction alone. In fact, I should say it is hardly read at all for this reason, let alone enjoyed. Other critics² have attempted to offer an analysis of Fielding's artistry and humour in Joseph Andrews; but, to my mind, neither group has taken sufficient note of Fielding's admiration for classical literature and the ideals that literature embodied.

The argument of this thesis, however, is not designed with the aim of denigrating the work of any other critic, as all have contributed

¹Cf. Martin C. Battestin, The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art: A Study of "Joseph Andrews", Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1964; and Sheldon Sacks, Fiction and the Shape of Belief: A Study of Henry Fielding with Glances at Swift, Johnson and Richardson, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1964.

²Cf. Homer Goldberg, The Art of "Joseph Andrews", Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969; and Andrew Wright, Henry Fielding: Mask and Feast, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966.

greatly to my understanding of the novel. It is designed to show how Fielding's use of a classical convention, that of romance, gives not only a formal plot structure to the novel, but also a scale of meanings and values that the author may use for his own special purposes of both education and entertainment.

These special purposes are satirical and comic: they make the reader laugh. But it seems to me that no critic has fully appreciated the manner in which the satirical and humorous elements of the novel arise from a unique form of tension between the convention of romance and the figures in the novel who are opposed to the values that this conventional form embodies. I attempt to show how the classical structure of romance functions as a mythic pattern in Joseph Andrews, and so gives some of the objects of satiric attack a special meaning for the reader.

The result of offering such an analysis for the student of literature is that Joseph Andrews can be seen comprehensively as a 'classicist' novel. Given an understanding of the mythic nature of the classical convention that gives the fiction its underlying structure, it is possible to see more clearly what the real objects of Fielding's satire are, and consequently, exactly what kind of ethical system is embodied in the novel. If we understand the 'classicist' aesthetic, and the manner in which it is exemplified in Joseph Andrews, it is possible to resolve some of the problems of accounting at the same time for the humour, as well as the obvious ethical concerns, of the novel.

The most interesting result of such an analysis is that a coherent account can be offered not only of the structural integrity of the

work, an account of its order, but also of the character and behaviour of its most outstanding figure, Parson Adams. The organisation of the thesis is designed, in fact, to lead to an examination of the way in which the meanings and values carried by the structures analysed, are highlighted by this amiable figure of the parson.

The first chapter gives an outline of the classicist aesthetic; the second offers an outline of the way in which the romance convention dominates the structure of the work; the third chapter deals with Fielding's special personal and classicist forms of satire, and the way in which he uses the convention of romance to generate both "ridicule" and "detestation"; and the last chapter presents an account of the role played by Parson Adams.

I should like to express my gratitude to Dr. B.N. Rosenblood of the Department of English for his guidance at all stages in the composition of this thesis. I am grateful, too, for the comments made by Professor Purnell, also of the Department of English, which have been of considerable help in the final organisation of the thesis.

My thanks are also due to my wife for her excellent typing that does the content of the thesis more than justice.

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CHAPTER I

He must divest himself of the prejudices of his age and country; he must consider right and wrong in their abstracted and invariable state; he must disregard present laws and opinions, and rise to general and transcendental truths, which will always be the same.¹

Throughout the analysis of Joseph Andrews which is offered in the following pages, I rely upon a concept that I call 'the classicist ethic'.² An outline of what I take this to mean is therefore appropriate at this point.

The classicist ethic is centred on a special view or understanding of man. The individual who subscribes to this viewpoint sees human nature as essentially unchanging. In different societies and at different times in history men may differ superficially; but beneath the veneer formed by social and psychological conditioning, one man is, in all important respects, very similar to his fellow. He is similar, primarily, because he is made up of the same basic components: a rational faculty, and a set of specific drives or inclinations.

The classicist further believes that these components may be harmonised in accord with an ideal pattern, or norm. This ideal is one

¹Samuel Johnson, Rasselas (1759), Ch. 10.

²For the account which follows I am heavily indebted to the work of Walter Jackson Bate in From Classic to Romantic: Premises of Taste in Eighteenth-Century England. New York: Harper and Row, 1961.

of order, in which the inclinations and drives may be controlled or directed by the rational faculty, the only faculty capable of perceiving such an ideal. Only this rational faculty, in fact, is capable of both perceiving and achieving the ideal 'end' or purpose of a man. Moreover, not only is the reason capable of such control according to an ideal norm; it is also bound to direct the individual towards the achievement of it: "Humanism, from Plato through the Renaissance, in general subscribes to the contention that what may be called the 'will' is dependent upon the 'reason', and is determined by it. To know the good is to do it: not to do it arises from a misapprehension of precisely what the good is"1

The ethical end of a man is not, then, definable in terms of anything that might be called a system of rules for conduct: it is simply an ordered harmony of elements within the individual which, once achieved, will necessarily lead a man to act well. Before a man can achieve the ideal, however, he must first perceive it by diligent study of human nature; and such perception is not easy when he is continually confronted by the veneer of social and psychological conditioning. The man who wishes, therefore, to perceive the ideal must first penetrate behind this veneer, and find what is genuinely and unchangingly true of all men as well as of himself.

If, for the classicist, fiction and literature in general have an ethical function, it is to represent such basic and general truths of human nature in order to give the reader 'insight' into his own being. If the overall image of man presented by the writer is true, in the sense

¹Walter Jackson Bate, op. cit., p. 22.

given above, then the reader will, by means of his own rational faculty, perceive the ideal towards which he must strive. There is no question of any truly classicist literature which conforms to the view of man I have outlined, presenting any system of precepts or direct guides to the conduct of any individual in particular circumstances:

Aristotle had stated that the subject of poetry, though necessarily ethical in purpose, was less the exposition of moral theory than the revelation of "the manners of men"; and Renaissance critics, as in Scaliger's admonition that "the poet teaches character through actions," generally reiterated this distinction. Joseph Trapp, lecturing at Oxford early in the eighteenth century, stressed the ethical end of poetry as illustrative and not as didactically explanatory; and a similar emphasis is not uncommon in other English critics of the day.¹

This attitude to literature is behind Samuel Johnson's famous critical dictum that "nothing can please many, and please long, but just representations of general nature";² and it is the same view or aesthetic that lies behind Fielding's comments on the nature of a novel that is worthy of close reading:

[It] consists in a vast Penetration into human Nature, a deep and profound Discernment of all the Mazes, Windings, and Labyrinths, which perplex the Heart of man to such a degree, that he is himself often incapable of seeing through them; and . . . this is the greatest, noblest, and rarest of all the Talents which constitute a Genius.³

The scope, then, of classicist orientated literature, and specifically fiction, is not analogous to history, where the objects of study are particular individuals of particular times and places. The fact, or

¹Walter Jackson Bate, op. cit., p. 6.

²Rasselas, (1759), Ch. 10.

³ The Preface to David Simple , The Works of Henry Fielding, London, 1843, p. 630.

truth, that is conditional upon its place in history is not, in the classicist sense, generally true: "Truth in poetry, means such an expression as conforms to the general nature of things: falsehood, that which, however suitable to the particular instance in view, doth yet not correspond to such general nature."¹

It is difficult to doubt that it is this same classicist ethic, and aesthetic, to which Fielding saw himself conforming when he wrote Joseph Andrews. Writing of historians he says:

But though these widely differ in the narrative of facts; some ascribing victory to the one; and others to the other party; some representing the same man as a rogue, while others give him a great and honest character; yet all agree in the scene where the fact is supposed to have happened; and where the person, who is both a rogue and an honest man, lived. Now with us biographers the case is different; the facts we deliver may be relied on, though we often mistake the age and country wherein they happened: for though it may be worth the examination of critics, whether the shepherd Chrysostom, who, as Cervantes informs us, died for love of the fair Marcella, who hated him, was ever in Spain, will any one doubt but that such a silly fellow hath really existed?²

His belief in the classicist concept of general truth is made even more clear a few lines later:

But . . . is not such a book as that which records the achievements of the renowned Don Quixote, more worthy the name of a history than even Mariana's; for whereas the latter is confined to a particular period of time, and to a particular nation; the former is the history of the world in general, at least that part which is polished by laws, arts, and sciences; and of that from the time it was first polished to this day; nay, and forwards as long as it shall so remain.³

¹Richard Hurd, quoted in Walter Jackson Bate, op. cit., p. 8.

²Henry Fielding, Joseph Andrews, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967, pp. 177-178. All future references by page number or chapter alone are to this edition.

³Ibid., p. 179.

Fielding's words in the Preface to Joseph Andrews respecting the genre of the comic, to which he saw the work as belonging, are almost a paraphrase of those quoted earlier from Rasselas: "Indeed . . . we should ever confine ourselves strictly to nature, from the just imitation of which will flow all the pleasure we can this way convey to a sensible reader."¹ Such a view of literary truth and the function of a classicist author, inevitably looks back to the great works of Greece and Rome. There, given a belief in human nature as unchanging, the eighteenth-century classicist could find the complete range of general truths already expressed with a genius and propriety that could only be equalled, never bettered. Gilbert Highet points out what this body of ancient literature and art offered to its eighteenth-century admirers:

First, it supplied themes, which ranged all the way from tragic stories to tiny decorative motifs on a vase, a wall, or a cabinet. . . .

Secondly, it supplied forms - the forms of tragedy, comedy, satire, character-sketch, oration, philosophical dialogue, Pindaric and Horatian ode, and many more.

More important, it acted as a restraining force. . . . The men and women of that period felt the dangers of passion, and sought every proper means of controlling it.²

If, then, as the quotations from Joseph Andrews would seem to indicate, Fielding does subscribe to this classicist aesthetic when writing his "comic epic poem in prose",³ he could legitimately look back to

¹Preface, Joseph Andrews, p. xviii-xix.

²Gilbert Highet, The Classical Tradition: Greek and Roman Influences on Western Literature, New York: Oxford University Press, 1966, p. 291.

³Preface, Joseph Andrews, p. xviii.

the writings of the ancients and find a storehouse of structures that had, over a period of centuries, proven themselves capable of embodying the general truths of human nature that he was concerned to display once more. It is the contention of this thesis that he did use such a structure for Joseph Andrews, whether he borrowed that structure consciously or not.

As we are now aware, these structures are mythic in nature and, as such, capable of embodying just such a universal form of truth as the classicist seeks.¹ It therefore seems strange to me that although a number of critics² have paid considerable attention to the conventional, or classical, structures used in Joseph Andrews, none of them has, to my knowledge, considered these structures as themselves contributing some of the general truths of human nature that Fielding describes himself as presenting. It seems even stranger, in the light of such stated attitudes to literature made by Fielding, that some commentators can persist in seeing conventional figures like Joseph and Lady Booby as "complex human beings".³ The classicist aesthetic specifically rejects as valuable

¹I deal with the mythic meanings of the romance convention in the following chapter.

²For example, Arthur L. Cooke, "Henry Fielding and the Writers of Heroic Romance", PMLA, LXII (1947), 984-994.

³Maurice Johnson, Fielding's Art of Fiction, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1961, p. 58. F. Homes Dudden, Henry Fielding: His Life, Works, and Times, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1966, I, 383, expresses a similar view: "Secondly, a word must be said on the historical value of Fielding's book, as presenting a realistic picture of the life of the English country-side in the first half of the eighteenth century."

literature any work which makes the portrayal of particular people of a particular place and time its main concern. If Fielding's main aim had been to portray, like Defoe in Moll Flanders, the 'low' society of eighteenth-century England (and therefore had created 'realistic' characters) he would have been in flagrant breach of the doctrine to which the quotations above show him as conforming.

Furthermore, the classicist's attitude towards such 'realism' is not stimulated solely by his regard for general as opposed to particular truth. While concerned to imply an ideal image of the ordered man, he saw personal inclinations, or passions, as the opponents of reason.¹ In one particular society like eighteenth-century England, certain passions may be allowed more sway over the reason than in another. As his aim is to show how the passions in general struggle with the reason for dominance and control of the individual, in whatever time and whatever place,² to portray one particular society is a limited function -- and a desertion of the classicist's aesthetic duty.

Critics who see Joseph Andrews as realistic in the sense given above tend to appreciate the comedy of eighteenth-century low life and to analyse the ethical concerns of the novelist as primarily social criticism, thus failing to note Fielding's primary concern with human nature

¹See quotation from Hightet, op. cit., on p. 5 above.

²Any fiction has to have characters and a setting, and Joseph Andrews happens to be set in the world with which Fielding was most familiar, and he does, of course, have identifiable attitudes towards his own milieu. But this world is not, as I hope to show, his major concern.

in general.¹ An alternative to this view, equally one-sided, is to read Joseph Andrews as a moral essay designed as propaganda for a particular moral code.² Such a view, as equally opposed to the classicist ethic as the other, tends to ignore the comedy. As Martin Battestin writes: "The job of defining the moral basis of Fielding's art inevitably involves a shift of focus away from comedy."³

That Fielding's major concern is not to criticise eighteenth-century English society in particular, nor its low life; nor to present a moral essay advocating a specific code of behaviour in the guise of fiction, with little conventional comedy, is sufficiently clear in the following passages:

Thus I believe we may venture to say Mrs. Tow-wouse is coeval with our lawyer: and though perhaps, during the changes which so long an existence must have passed through, she may in her turn have stood behind the bar at an inn; I will not scruple to affirm, she hath likewise in the revolution of ages sat on a throne. In short, where extreme turbulency of temper, avarice, and an insensibility of human misery, with a degree of hypocrisy, have united in a female composition, Mrs. Tow-wouse was that woman; and where a good inclination, eclipsed by a poverty of spirit and understanding, hath glimmered forth in a man, that man hath been no other than her sneaking husband.⁴

Nay, I will appeal to common observation, whether the same companies are not found more full of good-humour and benevolence, after they have been sweetened for two or three hours with entertainments of this kind, than when soured by a tragedy or a grave lecture.⁵

¹Cf. George Sherburn, "Fielding's Social Outlook", Philological Quarterly, XXXV, January 1956, 1-23.

²Cf. Martin C. Battestin, The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1959.

³Martin C. Battestin, op. cit., Preface, p. xi.

⁴Joseph Andrews, pp. 180-181.

⁵Preface, Joseph Andrews, p. xix.

By bearing in mind the classicist attitude to literature outlined here as the account of Joseph Andrews proceeds, it is possible to avoid adopting either of the two extreme views treated above. If this is done, and it is remembered that the classicist work of literature may be genuinely ethical without advocating any particular system of ethics or modes of behaviour applicable to particular situations, and that it can be 'true to nature' without being 'realistic', it is possible to arrive at a more coherent and consistent account than has hitherto been offered. Such an account will only be achieved when due weight and consideration are given to the interaction between the values implicit in the conventional classical structures that Fielding adopts, and the specific details of the action and narration which make his completed work unique.

I should like to make one more preliminary remark concerning the adoption by a classicist like Fielding of a conventional structure. To adopt such a structure is to conform to the classicist ethic in method as well as in scope of subject matter. Such a method avoids allowing the author's own invention or 'fancy' to dominate the literary work he creates; and 'fancy' is not reason:

For the very nature of the universal, [the ideal of hope as found in the romance convention, for example] in its transcendence and control over the accidental and specific, exemplifies order and harmony; and the living exhibition of order and the persuasive infiltration of it into man's moral and mental character are both a vital aspect of the means by which art simultaneously "delights and teaches", and also an end for which it performs these functions. It is ethical in furnishing both the process and the aim.¹

¹Walter Jackson Bate, op. cit., p. 13.

CHAPTER II

[The] love-story and the travel-adventures, chance meetings and evasions and unexpected recognitions . . . are not epic at all in quality, but belong to another literary type. They are the stuff of romance.¹

The concern of this chapter is to examine the convention of romance, and to show how it is used as the fundamental structure of Joseph Andrews. Such an examination is made far easier if it is possible, beforehand, to interpret coherently the theoretical writing of the author found mainly in the prefatory chapters to Books I and III, and in the Preface itself. If a coherent interpretation can be achieved, these theoretical sections should serve, wherever possible, as an aid to understanding the novel of which they are, after all, a part.

It is not, of course, the concern of this chapter to offer a complete account either of Fielding's preface to Joseph Andrews, or of the prefatory chapters to Books I and III. The aim here is to examine what they contain of particular relevance to Fielding's use of the romance convention: and specifically, his description of Joseph Andrews as belonging to the genre of epic as opposed to that of romance:

Thus the Telemachus of the archbishop of Cambray appears to me of the epic kind, as well as the Odyssey of Homer; indeed, it is much fairer and more reasonable to give it a name common with that species from which it differs only in a single instance, than to confound it with those which it resembles in no other. Such are those voluminous works, commonly called Romances, namely, Clelia, Cleopatra, Astraea, Cassandra,

¹Gilbert Highet, op. cit., p. 343.

the Grand Cyrus, and innumerable others, which contain, as I apprehend, very little instruction or entertainment.¹

The reasons for Fielding's preferring to class Joseph Andrews with the epic are perfectly consistent with the classicist aesthetic outlined in the previous chapter. "Those voluminous works, commonly called Romances" were seen by the classicist as decided deviations from classical precedent and propriety. They provided "very little instruction or entertainment". The clue to interpreting this passage is found in Fielding's use of the words "commonly called". The average English reader had come to associate the term "romance" not with genuine classical models, but with works in modern languages which departed from classicist aesthetic values in a number of closely related ways. Homer Goldberg writes that "he [Fielding] was not embarrassed to acknowledge it [Joseph Andrews] a fiction, and he wanted to formulate for his reader his conception of its basic form, not in its particularity but as a member of a perceptible literary kind, and to distinguish that kind from a variety of other species of writing with which it might be confused."²

The classicist criteria from which the well-known 'romances' departed were: 'truth to nature', 'order', and 'probability'. Fielding, in fact, uses the words "nature", "chaos" and "possibly" in a passage from Chapter 2, Book III:

. . . I would by no means be thought to comprehend those persons of surprising genius, the authors of immense romances, or the modern novel and

¹Preface, Joseph Andrews, p. xviii.

²"Comic Prose Epic or Comic Romance: The Argument of the Preface to Joseph Andrews", Philological Quarterly, XLIII, 2nd April, 1964, pp. 214-215.

Atalantis writers; who, without any assistance from nature or history, record persons who never were, or will be, and facts which never did, nor possibly can, happen: whose heroes are of their own creation, and their brains the chaos whence all the materials are selected.¹

Fielding is at one here with "neo-classic critics", in objecting primarily to the writers of romances as having forsaken the 'order' or 'unity of action' of an overall conventional pattern of action in favour of unrestrained 'fancy', and for concentrating on the sensational and hence the improbable:

. . . neo-classic critics continually cited the poetic romances of the Middle Ages and of the Renaissance as characteristic of the inventive use in structural form of "fancy" rather than "reason". The writers of such romances, said one critic, "were seized with an irregular Poetick phrenzy, and having Decency and Probability in Contempt, fill'd the World with endless Absurdities. . . ."²

Fielding clearly defines Joseph Andrews negatively rather than positively, describing the failings of the romances which it does not resemble far more graphically and tightly than he does the "epic" genre of which he sees his work, and that of the Archbishop of Cambray, as members. He sees Joseph Andrews and the Telemachus as epic, then, because they are 'true to nature', in the classicist sense outlined in the previous chapter; and because they observe the 'order' regarded by the classicist as the most prominent feature of a work like the Iliad, and the most prominent lack in the Renaissance romance:

The often unfavorable attitude in neo-classic criticism towards many of the more exuberant romances of the Renaissance was largely conditioned

¹Joseph Andrews, pp. 178-179.

²Walter Jackson Bate, op. cit., p.37.

by the importance attributed to a simple but closely interwoven unity of action. The ordered construction of the Iliad, for example, presents a strong contrast with the lack of it in such a poem as Spenser's Faerie Queene . . .¹

Finally, he also prefers to distinguish Joseph Andrews and the Telemachus from the Renaissance romances because of the 'improbability' of the latter. Although, as Arthur L. Cooke has shown, earlier writers of romance had been as strict in their regard, in theory, for probability as was Fielding, he quite rightly qualifies this point in a footnote:

One must admit, however, that there may have been considerable difference of opinion between Fielding and the romance writers with regard to the exact location of "the bounds of probability". Both insisted that the writer of fiction must follow nature; but, if we may judge from their own respective writings, they would not have agreed as to just what was natural and what was not. This disagreement in the interpretation of the same critical terms largely accounts for the obvious differences between the actual works of Fielding and the romance writers. It is not possible here to trace the gradual changes in the concept of probability during the century from 1650 to 1750. It can only be said that in general there was a constant tendency toward a stricter interpretation of the term . . .²

A coherent interpretation of Fielding's use of the term 'epic' in place of the term 'romance' as descriptive of Joseph Andrews can be completed by noting that he is not concerned to deny that his work is a romance, but to emphasise the differences between it and certain previous romances. These differences having been recognised, Fielding can admit both the comic and serious romances which conform to the classicist criteria of 'order', 'unity of action', 'truth to nature' and respect for the 'probable', as members of an all-inclusive genre - the epic, which is "the counterpart of the term drama, designating . . . the whole realm of

¹Walter Jackson Bate, op. cit., p. 16.

²Arthur L. Cooke, op. cit., p. 989.

narrative poetry, as distinct from the dramatic".¹

Now, a comic romance is a comic epic poem in prose; differing from comedy, as the serious epic from tragedy: its action being more extended and comprehensive; containing a much larger circle of incidents, and introducing a greater variety of characters. It differs from the serious romance in its fable and action, in this; that as in the one these are grave and solemn, so in the other they are light and ridiculous: it differs in its characters by introducing persons of inferior rank, and consequently, of inferior manners, whereas the grave romance sets the highest before us: lastly, in its sentiments and diction; by preserving the ludicrous instead of the sublime.²

Joseph Andrews is, then, a "comic romance" according to Fielding's theory as interpreted here. The comedy will be discussed in the two following chapters, but the major concern at this point is the structure of romance as found in the body of the narrative. The interpretation above enables an examination of Fielding's use of the conventional structure of romance in Joseph Andrews to be carried out in terms of his own words in the Preface and Chapter 1, Book III, as well as in terms of the general classicist ethic outlined in the first chapter of this thesis. The Preface can thus serve as the aid to understanding the novel that it should be.

In spite of Fielding's objections to certain particular romances that had preceded his novel, there were, for the classicist, many 'venerable' examples of the use of a romance structure; and it is the most prominent features of the genuine classical romance structure which are, in fact, consistently maintained in Joseph Andrews. Gilbert Highet offers a useful list of the classical model's main characteristics:

¹Homer Goldberg, op. cit., p. 199.

²Preface, Joseph Andrews, p. xviii.

the long separation of two young lovers;
 their unflinching fidelity through temptation and trial, and the miraculous preservation of the girl's chastity;
 a tremendously intricate plot, containing many subordinate stories within other stories;
 exciting incidents governed not by choice but by chance - kidnappings, shipwrecks, sudden attacks by savages and wild beasts, unexpected inheritance of great wealth and rank;
 travel to distant and exotic lands;
 mistaken and concealed identity: many characters disguise themselves, and even disguise their true sex, girls often masquerading as boys; and the true birth and parentage of hero and heroine are nearly always unknown until the very end;
 a highly elegant style, with much speechifying, and many elaborate descriptions of natural beauties and works of art.¹

The great majority of these features is faithfully reproduced in Joseph Andrews, and it is consequently possible to give a fair summary of the novel's progress in these conventional terms alone. Such strict adherence to convention reflects the classicist's search for general truths; and Goldberg notes Fielding's rejection of 'realism' in the following terms: "If he echoed Richardson, and most writers of his time, in claiming his work was grounded in 'truth' and 'nature', the truth he valued was not the pretence of literal authenticity with which Richardson, and Defoe before him, appeased the puritan distrust of fiction per se."²

The changes Fielding makes in the conventional or symbolic pattern of action centred on Joseph and Fanny are, in fact, minimal. His detailed treatment of this pattern is indeed unique, but he employs the basic structure just as he inherits it, without significant alteration.

¹Gilbert Highet, op. cit., p. 164.

²Homer Goldberg, The Art of "Joseph Andrews", Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969, pp. 5-6.

The first of Highet's criteria is fulfilled in Joseph Andrews by the two young lovers, Joseph and Fanny, and their separation throughout much of the novel. Joseph is introduced amid elaborate encomiums on his character and birth in the mock-heroic manner.¹ He is cast as a model of perfection in the true mould of romance in the face of Fielding's apparent mockery. Perhaps the manner in which Joseph's role as a genuine hero is established from the very beginning can be illustrated by consideration of the following passage:

Those who have read any romance or poetry, ancient or modern, must have been informed that Love hath wings: by which they are not to understand, as some young ladies by mistake have done, that a lover can fly; the writers, by this ingenious allegory, intending to insinuate no more than that lovers do not march like horse-guards; in short, that they put the best leg foremost; which our lusty youth, who could walk with any man, did so heartily on this occasion, that within four hours he reached a famous house of hospitality well known to the western traveller.²

In spite of the mocking tone to all of this, there is not the slightest diminution of Joseph's role as romantic hero within the terms of the conventional structure. Joseph can "walk with any man", and he remains "our lusty youth".

¹Unfortunately there is insufficient space here to discuss mock-heroism at length. It should be noted, however, that the mock-heroic treatment of the classical structure throughout does modify the 'meaning' of the conventional pattern somewhat, particularly in its deflation of verbiage where words are used for stylistic purposes alone. Such treatment does not, however, as I show later, detract from the integrity of the conventional structure. Furthermore, in its implication of ultimate resolution, the mock-heroic style is entirely 'appropriate' to the classical pattern of action embodied in romance. See the cyclic nature of the movement from romance to comedy outlined by Frye below.

²Joseph Andrews, pp. 34-35.

A few lines earlier, soon after we first hear of Fanny, the two of them are established as romantic hero and heroine, again in spite of the mockery directed at the extreme and empty verbiage found in the specific romances of which Fielding disapproved:

Nothing can be imagined more tender than was the parting between these two lovers. A thousand sighs heaved the bosom of Joseph, a thousand tears distilled from the lovely eyes of Fanny (for that was her name). Though her modesty would only suffer her to admit his eager kisses, her violent love made her more than passive in his embraces; and she often pulled him to her breast with a soft pressure, which, though perhaps it would not have squeezed an insect to death, caused more emotion in the heart of Joseph, than the closest Cornish hug could have done.¹

The love that Joseph and Fanny feel for one another is not falsified by this particular form of presentation, although there may well be some attack upon the verbose exaggeration of what is a normal, if powerful, human emotion.

The two young lovers, then, are separated. Fidelity, temptation, trial, and the miraculous preservation of the heroine's chastity come second in Hight's list. Joseph is indeed tempted by Lady Booby, as he confesses to his sister, Pamela, in one of his hilarious letters²; and his fidelity is presumably given a stringent trial by the advances of the chambermaid, Betty.³ In these instances Fielding derives considerable comic effect by emphasising Joseph's 'chastity' or "virtue" rather than his fidelity to Fanny. But in these cases, where conventional romantic

¹Joseph Andrews, p. 34.

²Ibid., Book I, Ch. 10.

³Ibid., Book I, Ch. 18.

love exists between two persons, the distinction between fidelity demanded by the romance structure and 'chastity' demanded by social convention, as a matter of form rather than as a genuine ideal, becomes a difference in motives and not in deeds. Joseph acts entirely in accord with the romance convention by refusing Lady Booby, and Betty, and Slipslop; and there can be no question that Fielding's emphasis upon the word "virtue" casts aspersions primarily upon the motives behind Pamela's obsessive preoccupation with the word. From Fielding's point of view as a classicist it must have appeared that for Pamela, in Richardson's novel, her "virtue" was solely a social expedient which she might use to her advantage, rather than being a true 'ideal' in the classicist sense.

The ramifications of this distinction, however, belong to the following chapter, and it is sufficient here to note that the ideal conventional values of fidelity and chastity are maintained in the figures of Joseph and Fanny.

Higgin's third category, that of "intricacy", is exemplified by the numerous meetings between characters as they cross each other's paths time and time again; and by the interpolated symbolic stories that echo Cervantes. The predominance of chance, or 'fortune', over choice in the causation of events also runs through the structure of the novel from beginning to end, although Fielding appears to have a specialised view of fortune: it is simply the unpredictable. He is, as was noted above, not prepared to admit what he terms the "improbable" into his fiction. For chance or fortune, therefore, Fielding substitutes the machinations of great and small interlocking wheels where it is impossible for the

observer or actor who is personally involved in the action to grasp the necessary consequences of any particular set of deeds: "The world may indeed be considered as a vast machine, in which the great wheels are originally set in motion by those which are very minute, and almost imperceptible to any but the strongest eyes."¹ The effect of this upon the actor within the conventional pattern is not, of course, altered in the slightest by this change from chance to the unpredictable. What Highet says of the classical convention of romance still applies to Joseph Andrews: "The hero and heroine are buffeted about by events without deserving it - as young people always feel that they themselves are buffeted - and yet no irremediable damage happens to them, they are united while they are still fair and young and ardent and chaste."²

To all intents and purposes then, Fielding preserves the convention of having choice dominated by the unexpected. Also, still according to precedent, the hero and heroine are eventually revealed to be of a higher station in life than hitherto expected, in spite of Fielding's avowed intent to deal with low characters rather than high personages.³ Moreover, although he is prepared to use the concealed and mistaken identities as a source of comedy and satire, none of this negates his usage of the convention for what it traditionally is.

True to the convention, the real identities of the hero and heroine are not revealed till the very end.

¹Henry Fielding, Tom Jones, Book V, Ch. 4.

²Gilbert Highet, op. cit., p. 165.

³Preface, Joseph Andrews, p. xviii.

Fielding's most obvious deviation from the classical schema outlined by Hight comes not in the pattern of relationships established between the characters, nor in the kind of experiences presented, but in the location of the action. The hero and heroine do not travel to distant and exotic lands, but apparently remain in England. Fielding makes this one of the distinguishing factors in his Preface between the genre of the comic and the serious romance: Joseph and Fanny are set amongst characters who are, for the reader, everyday English figures, rather than amongst the princes and aristocracy of a distant land. He may thus preserve "the ludicrous instead of the sublime".

It is quite clear, however, that the avoidance of the exotic for his mise-en-scène does not vitiate the fundamental structure of the romance convention as long as that setting is not a principal object of study.¹ The work remains a romance, though not of the "serious" variety.² It remains so because, for the central figures, Joseph and Fanny, there is still a journey to be undertaken through a world that is strange to them. For these two characters, young as they are, the world through which they journey is as bewildering as any foreign country could be.

¹As I pointed out in an earlier footnote, the novelist must have somewhere to locate his action. As long as the particular time and place is not a major focus of his attention he may still preserve a classicist concern for the general and timeless truths of human nature.

²William B. Coley, "The Background of Fielding's Laughter", ELH, XXVI, June 1959, p. 232, writes that "for Fielding, as for Augustans generally, seriousness in literature was not a simple matter. The modern emphasis on Fielding's seriousness may obscure not only the nature of the witty mode evolved for treating grave subjects but also the nature of the important rhetorical pressures present in the background of such a mode."

The important factor for the conventional pattern is the journey itself, not the location, and that it should be bewildering for the protagonists. After all, if Fielding's statements quoted in the first chapter of this thesis are any guide, the people one meets (and it is people who are the objects of the classicist's study) are very much the same in all important respects wherever one travels in "the world in general, at least that part which is polished by laws, arts, and sciences; and of that from the time it was first polished to this day; nay, and forwards as long as it shall so remain."¹

Because the fundamental characteristic of the convention is a general pattern of action, not a particular location, the experiences of Joseph and Fanny are no less emblematic or charged with symbolic meaning within the terms of the romance convention even though the milieu is not 'high'.

The conventional structure outlined by Hight above is, then, left more or less inviolate by Fielding. The same values and meanings carried by this structure will, consequently, be found in Joseph Andrews much the same as they will be found in A Winter's Tale or Clitophon and Leucippe; and this whether the convention of romance is treated seriously or not; whether or not the author consciously intends such an effect.²

¹Joseph Andrews, p. 179.

²It should be clear that no claims whatsoever are being advanced in this thesis as to whether Fielding held the same interpretation of Joseph Andrews as I do. Where I use his theory of the novel as explanation, I do so where it is possible to interpret it as conforming to my view of the work, and because he says what I wish to say far better than I can.

These values and meanings derive from the mythic nature of the structure. Given that the convention of romance is preserved as at least a basic structural element in the characters and action of Joseph Andrews, it is now necessary to describe these values and meanings.

As was shown earlier, the classicist wishes to demonstrate the nature of some ideal or non-transitory realm of our experience and being, and thus to present some special form of general truth common to all men of all times and places. The adoption of a conventional or mythic pattern is therefore almost an artistic prerequisite for the classicist writer of fiction. He is interested in precisely the kind of meaning and value that a mythic structure can embody. Such structures do constitute a system of enduring truths common to all men - just the kind of truth, as was shown in the previous chapter, sought by a classicist like Fielding. The 'truths' embodied in mythic structures are, just as the classicist desires, different in kind from the transitory, socially created values, and the empirical truths of his own, or anybody else's, particular time or country.

The romance convention can be viewed in two major, and slightly different, aspects in terms of the mythic meanings and values embodied there: the first of these is that where the symbolic pattern of action serves to represent certain experiences that genuinely are common to all men of whatever time and place. The second aspect is found where the structure, or convention, is seen to represent not some of the actual experiences of mankind, but his subconscious fears and drives. The first of these is associated with a view of myth as closely related to ritual,

while the second is associated with myth viewed as a very special species of dream. It is worth outlining these two viewpoints as briefly as possible, and then to continue by showing how the romance convention in general, as outlined by Hight above, and the story of Joseph and Fanny in particular, is thought to operate on the mind of the reader.

The ritual view is well summarised by Philip Wheelwright:

. . . there is, I judge, a more general character of primitive ritual, of which the drama of the death and rebirth of the vegetation god is a particular though very basic exemplification. That character, in the theory of the anthropologist Arnold van Gennep, is the total experience, in which man and nature harmoniously join, of transition. (Van Gennep uses the French word passage.) Every change of human condition - birth, puberty, initiation, betrothal, marriage, pregnancy, paternity, specialization of occupation, death - is mythopoeically regarded as a passage from a state of self that is dying to a state of self newly born.¹

Wheelwright points out that in primitive cultures the movement of an individual from one to another of these "conditions" was frequently accompanied by a specific ritual as he was initiated into the succeeding state. Wheelwright offers a possible system of categorisation for the ritual procedures involved in such transitions: ". . . van Gennep distinguishes three stages in the typical 'ceremonies of transition' (rites de passage): the rites of separation, those of 'the margin' when the celebrant finds himself in the darkness and anonymity of 'between two worlds', and those of attainment."²

This schematisation brings to light certain elements of the romance convention in Joseph Andrews. The overall movement is centred on

¹Philip Wheelwright, "Notes on Mythopoeia", Myth and Literature: Contemporary Theory and Practice, ed. John B. Vickery, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966, p. 64.

²Ibid., p. 65.

the hero rather than on the heroine, who, according to this analysis, tends to become a subsidiary figure; and it is a movement that can be characterised as the passage from boyhood to manhood, from a role as student to that of adult. Joseph is shown as a virtuous youth who tends, as we have already noted in the earlier part of this chapter, to lack the ability to discriminate between genuine ideals and the sterile, social rules of conduct. His sense of values is undeveloped and he relies almost exclusively on the precepts of his sister and Parson Adams when he finds it necessary to exercise his will by choosing to reject the advances of his employer. As I have already argued, the distinction between Joseph's act of rejecting Lady Booby, and the precepts he cites in order to justify that rejection, is very important to Fielding's satiric purposes. As the romantic hero, Joseph must be faithful to his heroine, and he is just that. Fielding achieves considerable comic effect, however, by having Joseph offer excuses for his fidelity that reflect an essentially immature adherence to the values of Pamela, that, as a classicist, Fielding was bound to detest.

Following his rejection of Lady Booby, Joseph is banished from the household where he grew up and sent out into the "darkness and anonymity of 'between two worlds'". It is here that he encounters the weird and exotic low-life characters who interact with one another to make his passage to maturity fully educative. As he meets more and more of these characters against whom he must struggle if he is to maintain his stature of romantic hero, and pass from boyhood to manhood and marriage with the heroine, Joseph in fact progressively loses most of his reliance upon the

precepts of Adams and Pamela, and begins to speak, as well as to act, more in accord with his role of the maturing young man.¹

Eventually, of course, and strictly in accord with the convention, Joseph attains his end of marriage with Fanny, and enters the adult world. The point to be noted here is that the romance convention, using this mode of analysis, constitutes a dramatisation (ultimately derived from ritual) of the common human experience of passage from youth to maturity. For the reader, then, the hero is genuinely heroic no matter to what extent his role is surrounded by humour and burlesque. No matter how stupid Joseph may appear to be as he is "buffeted about by events beyond his control", the values or meanings carried by his role within the conventional pattern continue to exist and serve in some sense as a recognisable correlative for a common human experience.

This is so because the fundamental meanings and values embodied in the structure of romance are determined primarily by the pattern of action and the relationships established between the actors, not by the treatment which the author gives to the structure to make the work as a whole uniquely his own. As it is the concern of this thesis to understand some of the meanings of the structural elements at work in Joseph Andrews, the emphasis here is upon an analysis of that dimension of Joseph's character, for example, which embodies the same general truths

¹Dick Taylor Jr., "Joseph as Hero of Joseph Andrews", Tulane Studies in English, VII, New Orleans, 1957, pp. 91-109, has noted Joseph's growing maturity. He makes, however, what I regard as the unjustified, tacit assumption that Joseph is a full, 'rounded' character. Joseph cannot be so regarded since he acts solely in accordance with a predetermined pattern of action. He may lose a veneer of affectation but he may never be regarded as exercising 'choice'.

of human nature and human experience as are found in all examples of the truly conventional romance structure through all time.

Northrop Frye, however, offers a table which is immensely useful in the analysis given in this thesis, not only in this chapter, with respect to the romance convention, but also in the two following chapters where I discuss the structures of Fielding's satire, and the place of Parson Adams in relation to both romance and satire. This table, given below, catalogues the respective places of major literary genres within a cyclic structure centred upon a hero who represents certain basic and universal patterns of human thoughts, desires, and drives:

1. The dawn, spring and birth phase. Myths of the birth of the hero, of revival and resurrection, of creation and (because the four phases are a cycle) of the defeat of the powers of darkness, winter and death. Subordinate characters: the father and the mother. The archetype of romance and of most dithyrambic and rhapsodic poetry.
2. The zenith, summer, and marriage or triumph phase. Myths of apotheosis, of the sacred marriage, and of entering into Paradise. Subordinate characters: the companion and the bride. The archetype of comedy, pastoral and idyll.
3. The sunset, autumn and death phase. Myths of fall, of the dying god, of violent death and sacrifice and of the isolation of the hero. Subordinate characters: the traitor and the siren. The archetype of tragedy and elegy.
4. The darkness, winter and dissolution phase. Myths of the triumph of these powers; myths of floods and the return of chaos, of the defeat of the hero, and Götterdämmerung myths. Subordinate characters: the ogre and the witch. The archetype of satire¹

This schematisation highlights the journey of the hero, and the relationships he establishes, from a slightly different angle than the three-phase system outlined by Wheelwright above. It charts the tendency of human thoughts and emotions to follow certain recognisable

¹Northrop Frye, "The Archetypes of Literature", Myth and Literature, ed. John B. Vickery, op. cit., p. 94.

directions as one mode of imaginative experience leads to another. The hero may, when seen in this light, still exercise his function as a representative for the reader (just as he does from the point of view of the alternative schema given above). The other characters participating in the conventional pattern must also be viewed not as members of a world 'outside' the reader and encountered by him as he moves from youth to maturity, but as representatives, like the hero, of thoughts, drives, and emotions within his own psyche. Seen from this point of view, it is not the hero alone who represents the reader, but the conventional structure as a whole. This will become clearer, however, and more important, when the structure of Fielding's satire is examined in the following chapter.

According to this cyclic pattern, then, the conventional structure of romance as a unit represents an imaginative movement away from "chaos", "darkness", "dissolution" and "defeat", towards their opposites: order, light, completion and "triumph". The dominant ideal of the convention when viewed in this way might be crudely described as that of 'hope'. The perspicacious reader recognises from the very beginning of the novel that Joseph's quest will be successful and that a conventional pattern will culminate in harmony and marriage, though it may not be known with whom at so early a stage.

Such a pre-ordained pattern can very accurately represent the universal tendency of the human mind to fantasise the gratification of a desire for satisfaction and contentment (the achievement of which is typical of the comic literary genre); and it can at the same time represent the fantasy of overcoming the "chaos" and "darkness" involved in

the "defeat" of those aims. The romance structure thus has, naturally as it were, a foot in the camps of both satire and comedy.

It is unnecessary to describe in detail how the story of Joseph and Fanny conforms to this movement from satire to comedy representative of the hopeful human mind. It has already been shown that their story conforms to the classical model set out by Highet, and it should be readily apparent that this model, in its turn, conforms to the criteria for movement away from frustration and disorder to satisfaction and order described by Frye. It is of paramount importance, however, for the purpose of this thesis, that the general and basic meanings and values of Joseph's quest shown in this chapter are clearly understood.

It has been shown, first, that mythic structures fulfill the requirements of the classicist writer in providing patterns of action and character that represent a kind of timeless general truth of human nature. This representative function may be interpreted in either of the two ways outlined above, but both interpretations emphasise the common and general nature of the human truth embodied by the romance convention.

One of these interpretations highlights the nature and value of growth and education through experience of difficulty and trial; the preservation of the will to struggle and overcome the universal problems of adolescence. The other interpretation highlights the nature and value of human hope as a basic element in our make-up.

Finally, a mythic structure such as the conventional romance pattern not only presents, according to the second interpretation above, certain general truths of human nature, but it also functions as an image

of the human mind. This image, if true in the classicist sense, implies to the reason of the reader the ideal, harmonious balance of elements within the whole human being at the very root of the classicist ethic. The 'ends' highlighted by these two interpretations of the convention are the achievement of satisfaction and full human maturity. Such 'ends', of course, are themselves almost synonymous for the classicist with the achievement of this ideal balance of elements within his own psyche that he seeks through study of both art and nature.

Consequently, it should be apparent that any opposition to the achievement of these essentially ethical ends, symbolised by marriage and the other comic images, is an object of the classicist's satire, even if that opposition itself comes within this conventional pattern. This is so according to either of the two analyses of the conventional structure offered in this chapter.

CHAPTER III

. . . to follow Nature in giving us a draught of human Life, and of the manners of Men . . . is, not to draw after particular Men, who are but Copies and imperfect Copies of the great universal Pattern; but to consult that innate Original, and that universal Idea, which the Creator has fix'd in the minds of ev'ry reasonable Creature.¹

It is as well to recall here the fundamental and limited objective of this thesis: a coherent account of the structure of Joseph Andrews. In the previous chapter the conventional pattern of action found in the general scheme of the hero's journey was seen to be that of romance; and an interpretation of the meaning embodied in such a conventional structure was offered. It was also pointed out that the kind of meaning carried by mythic structures like that of romance corresponds to the 'enduring truths of a general nature' sought by a classicist writer like Fielding.

This kind of analysis tends, admittedly, to focus upon what Joseph Andrews has in common with other literature, rather than upon what makes it unique; and so will any analysis that isolates individual substructures from the overall object of study, the novel as a whole. In a thesis of this length, however, it is impossible to treat with the respect they deserve Fielding's irony and wit; his extraordinary skill in the vivid character sketch and the mock-heroic style; or the function and

¹John Dennis, Reflections upon a Late Rhapsody Called an Essay upon Criticism, (1711), quoted in Walter Jackson Bate, op. cit., p. 10.

tone of the narrator's role. All of these elements modify the overall meaning of the novel somewhat, and all of them combine to make Joseph Andrews a unique personal creation.

The subject-matter of this chapter is, like that of the previous one, a structural element of Joseph Andrews - Fielding's satire. I attempt to show how, both in theory and in practice, his satire is related to the classicist ethic outlined in Chapter 1; and furthermore, how it is intimately related in Joseph Andrews to the conventional structure of romance treated in the last chapter. Again, then, the focus of analysis is upon what is conventional and essentially impersonal in Fielding's art. It is my purpose here to discover first, how these two structures interact with one another so as to express the 'enduring truths of a general nature' that Fielding, as a classicist, presents; and second, what the nature of these truths is. The details of the manner in which Fielding 'fills in' these basic structures are, of course, unique; but if the truths with which he is concerned are genuinely common and universal - so must be the structures he uses to embody them. Thus the figures and their actions are examined in this chapter in terms of the conventional romantic and satiric structures to which a part of each of them belongs; and in terms of the tension, or dynamic, that exists between these two structures. One should, of course, be aware of the fact that each character and action is also a unique fictional creation in its own right. My warrant for taking this general approach to his satire is found in Fielding's own theory of what he calls "the Ridiculous":

The Ridiculous only, as I have before said, falls within my province in the present work. Nor will some explanation of this word be thought

impertinent by the reader, if he considers how wonderfully it hath been mistaken, even by writers who have professed it: for to what but such a mistake can we attribute the many attempts to ridicule the blackest villainies, and, what is yet worse, the most dreadful calamities? What could exceed the absurdity of an author, who should write the comedy of Nero, with the merry incident of ripping up his mother's belly?¹

Just as Fielding wishes to distinguish his work from that of the Renaissance writers of "those voluminous works, commonly called Romances" by using the word "epic", he is equally concerned to distinguish his own special form of satire from that with which his readers might most readily associate the term. Rather than focussing satiric attention on specific examples of villainy and vice, Joseph Andrews concentrates attention upon the frailties and foibles common to every man:

But perhaps it may be objected to me, that I have against my own rules introduced vices, and of a very black kind, into this work. To which I shall answer: first, that it is very difficult to pursue a series of human actions, and keep clear from them. Secondly, that the vices to be found here are rather the accidental consequences of some human frailty or foible, than causes habitually existing in the mind.²

The final phrase here should be emphasised in order to draw attention to Fielding's stated field of interest as a novelist. This field is not that of particular, and perhaps rare, instances of evil, but general and common tendencies of all human beings of every time and place which are, indeed, "habitually existing in the mind". He is interested, in Joseph Andrews, specifically in the general and human tendencies in all of us to allow "vanity" a control over our actions which may, unintentionally, lead to "vices, and of a very black kind".

¹Preface, Joseph Andrews, p. xx-xxi.

²Ibid., p. xxiii.

O Vanity! how little is thy force acknowledged, or thy operations discerned! How wantonly dost thou deceive mankind under different disguises! Sometimes thou dost wear the face of pity, sometimes of generosity: nay, thou hast the assurance even to put on those glorious ornaments which belong only to heroic virtue. Thou odious, deformed monster! whom priests have railed at, philosophers despised, and poets ridiculed; is there a wretch so abandoned as to own thee for an acquaintance in public? - yet, how few will refuse to enjoy thee in private? nay, thou art the pursuit of most men through their lives. The greatest villanies are daily practised to please thee; nor is the meanest thief below, or the greatest hero above thy notice. Thy embraces are often the sole aim and sole reward, of the private robbery and the plundered province. It is to pamper up thee, thou harlot, that we attempt to withdraw from others what we do not want, or to withhold from them what they do. All our passions are thy slaves. Avarice itself is often no more than thy handmaid, and even Lust thy pimp. The bully Fear, like a coward flies before thee, and Joy and Grief hide their heads in thy presence.¹

The imperative of the classicist aesthetic is constantly present, urging the portrayal of what is common to, and true of, all men, especially his readers. "The only source of the true Ridiculous," argues Fielding, "is affectation."² Moreover, of the two possible sources of "affectation", Fielding prefers to portray vanity rather than outright "hypocrisy" (which he defines as "nearly allied to deceit"). This distinction shows even more clearly that the concern of Joseph Andrews is first with frailty common to all men rather than the exposure of particular evil, and second, with a sympathetic view of man in general: Fielding's view of man is not harsh and splenetic, seeing his fellows as inevitably bound to viciousness and evil. Both aspects of this attitude remain classicist in spirit: the first reflects the focus on generality; the

¹Joseph Andrews, p. 55.

²Preface, Joseph Andrews, p. xxi..

second conveys a belief in the possible educative function of fiction whereby the reader may better come to know himself, and hence act better to achieve the ideal harmony of elements implied by a true vision of his own overall nature.

As a classicist, Fielding takes as his model a tradition of satire distinct from the better known mode that stemmed from Horace:

Dryden, whose views will be taken as those of the critical majority, describes a satiric tradition distinct from and collateral to the more familiar Horatian. Known variously as "Menippean" or "Varronian", this tradition appears to have been characterized by its use of the dialogue form and a medley of verse and prose, mirth and seriousness. In the early commentaries both Menippus and Varro are conventionally referred to as practitioners of the spoudaiogeloion. Although little or nothing remains of their work, classicists generally agree that a fair conception of it can be got from the 'Dialogues of the Dead' by Fielding's acknowledged master in the comic, Lucian.¹

The operation of these two modes would seem to be entirely different. The object of satire in the Horatian mode seems to have been particular and blatant evil in society. As I understand it, Horatian satire ridicules particularly vicious social behaviour, where the fictional characters and actions might be seen to have their concrete counterparts in society itself. Fielding's own most successful plays were constructed according to this pattern. The ridicule involved is directed at certain types of people and actions outside the work, in society; and the reader, consequently, is rarely laughing at himself when presented with satirised figures.²

¹William B. Coley, op. cit., p. 241.

²This is not to say that Horatian satire concentrated on particular societies and men to the extent that Fielding did in his plays. This mode of satire, however, is noticeably more splenetic, and relies

This type of satiric structure does not exist in Joseph Andrews, unless a point is stretched to admit the symbolic, interpolated tales of Wilson and Leonora.

The second mode, which might for the purposes of this chapter, be called the 'Lucianic', is far more general in its scope and less splenetic in its view of man, than the first, and better known, Horatian. Lucian's satire is characterised by Hightet in the following terms: "His tone is one of amused disillusionment. 'Lord!' he says, 'what fools these mortals be!' -- but there is more gentleness in his voice and kindness in his heart than we feel in his Roman predecessors."¹ It is this Lucianic mode of satire that Fielding names "The Ridiculous . . . in the present work [Joseph Andrews]." The object of Lucian's satire is "these mortals", all of them, including his readers. The reader, thus, laughs at something in himself when he laughs at a figure in the fiction. Although Fielding has, as a classicist, "copied from the book of nature,"² as the source of character and truth in his work, he wishes to make it clear that his satire is not Horatian in the sense of presenting exemplars identifiable with particular contemporary evil, or even with genuine evil at all:

I question not but several of my readers will know the lawyer in the stage-coach the moment they hear his voice. It is likewise odds but the wit

upon presenting examples of evil towards which all men may indeed feel themselves drawn, in an attempt to prevent and eradicate such evil by exposure to public "detestation".

¹Gilbert Hightet, op. cit., p. 304.

²Preface, Joseph Andrews, p. xxiii.

and the prude meet with some of their acquaintance, as well as all the rest of my characters. To prevent therefore any such malicious applications, I declare here once for all, I describe not men, but manners; not an individual, but a species. Perhaps it will be answered, Are not the characters then taken from life? To which I answer in the affirmative; nay, I believe I might aver, that I have writ little more than I have seen. The lawyer is not only alive, but hath been so these four thousand years; and I hope G-- will indulge his life as many yet to come. He hath not indeed confined himself to one profession, one religion, or one country; but when the first mean selfish creature appeared on the human stage, who made self the centre of the whole creation, would give himself no pain, incur no danger, advance no money, to assist or preserve his fellow-creatures; then was our lawyer born; and whilst such a person as I have described exists on earth, so long shall he remain upon it. It is therefore doing him little honour to imagine he endeavours to mimic some little obscure fellow, because he happens to resemble him in one particular feature, or perhaps in his profession; whereas his appearance in the world is calculated for much more general and noble purposes; nor to expose one pitiful wretch to the small and contemptible circle of his acquaintance; but to hold the glass to thousands in their closets, that they may contemplate their deformity, and endeavour to reduce it, and thus by suffering private mortification may avoid public shame. This places the boundary between, and distinguishes the satirist from the libeller; for the former privately corrects the fault for the benefit of the person, like a parent; the latter publicly exposes the person himself, as an example to others, like an executioner.¹

The last sentence here distinguishes perfectly between Horatian and Lucianic satire in terms of tone. The Horatian is "like an executioner" where the Lucianic is "like a parent". Having understood the basic differences between these two satiric modes, however, it is now more important to note how the Lucianic tradition may be related to the interpretations of the romance convention offered towards the close of the previous chapter. From this critical viewpoint, the most important phrases in the passage last quoted are not only those in which Fielding repeats the classicist claim for 'truth to nature' but those in which he makes it clear that the objects of his satire are universal tendencies

¹Joseph Andrews, p. 180.

or characteristics possessed by every human being.

The "thousands in their closets" clearly refers to all his readers; while his attitude towards the lawyer, whom he wishes "G-- will indulge his life as many yet to come", is not only Lucianic in its parental warm-heartedness, it also indicates the essential indestructability of the forces opposing Joseph and Fanny in their conventionally romantic movement towards marriage. Such indestructability confirms the conclusion arrived at in the previous chapter: that all characters like the lawyer and Mrs. Tow-wouse may be structurally regarded, just like Joseph and Fanny, as acting roles in a predetermined pattern of action; and that this pattern may itself be regarded as a general reflection of human nature, or the human psyche.

Fielding, as a classicist, recognises that we all have selfish tendencies like those found in the lawyer: it is human to do so. He points out, therefore, that although such figures as the lawyer may oppose the progress of Joseph and Fanny towards the symbolic harmony of marriage, they must, if the conventional pattern of action is genuinely to represent the human mind, survive, as it were, to fight again another day. If serious damage is done to the lawyer, or to the prude (to our selfish and vain inclinations, if you will) the pattern loses its property of reflecting the general nature of human beings. If the lawyer in us is lost, we lose part of our humanity. The duty of a classicist is not, as Lemuel Gulliver might think, to destroy or despise our passions and desires, but to harmonise them under the auspices of the rational faculty.

The ideal that the eighteenth-century classicist wished to inculcate through his literature was a harmonious balance of elements controlled by the reason: "The men and women of that period felt the dangers of passion, and sought every proper means of controlling it." It was noted in the conclusion of the previous chapter that the movement of the romance structure from chaos and danger towards harmony and resolution reflected this ideal classicist image of a man. It was also noted that those figures within the conventional structure who opposed the achievement of these ends belonged to the satiric part of the cycle outlined by Frye, from which the romance hero and heroine must make their escape. It should, therefore, be apparent that where the reader is presented with a figure in opposition to the ideal of harmony sought by Joseph and Fanny, he is presented with a symbol for some passion or inclination within himself that is not sufficiently under the control of his rational faculty. The genuinely satiric structures in Joseph Andrews will be found, in fact, to focus upon just such symbols for passion, inclination or social conditioning: "Much of the satire with which the eighteenth century abounds has as its purpose the illustration of the chasm between universal nature and transient social custom."¹

Again, however, it should be emphasised that the classicist takes what might be called a 'broad' view of human nature to which the Lucianic mode of satire is especially appropriate. Satiric attack in this mode is upon lack of order among psychic elements, and not upon vices that are

¹Walter Jackson Bate, op. cit., p. 66.

"causes habitually existing in the mind" and which ought to be destroyed.¹

Before entering upon an examination of the actual satiric structures in the body of Joseph Andrews, it should be pointed out that Fielding draws one more, very important distinction between two kinds of satiric attack within the generally Lucianic form - the objects of detestation and the objects of ridicule. He distinguishes "affectation" produced by the universal characteristic of vanity as the object of ridicule (no one is to be exempt in Joseph Andrews from ridicule) and vices "of a very black kind . . . that . . . are never set forth as the objects of ridicule, but detestation."² It is not perfectly clear whether Fielding means to say that no figure in Joseph Andrews is to be detested, or that only a particular group in the novel is to be so regarded. It is possible, however, to make a distinction within the body of the novel itself between Joseph and Fanny, who may be the objects of occasional ridicule due to their affectation, and those other figures who are not only affected but also opposed in some sense to the progress of the young couple towards the discovery of their rightful places in the world. It is easier

¹It is unnecessary to point out in detail how important is the continually implied comparison between Joseph Andrews and Pamela as a source of satire. It is sufficient to note here that, to the classicist, the ethical beliefs expressed in Pamela must have seemed intensely 'narrow'. Pamela's preservation of her "virtue" was solely determined by social convention, while her employer was viewed with extreme distaste. There was no recognition of the latter's essential humanity, or of Pamela's real desire for social advancement.

²Preface, Joseph Andrews, p. xxiii.

to illustrate this difference in satiric structures by examining one or two examples in greater detail, than by attempting to define it in a vacuum. Both forms, however, derive their satiric impact from the presence of the conventional romance pattern of action centred on Joseph's quest as the fundamental structural unit of the work as a whole.

There is more than one type of character in Joseph Andrews, and each of them may be the object of satire when acting or speaking in some way in 'opposition' to the ideal of harmony embodied by the romance convention. The first category of character is formed by the figures that Joseph encounters briefly on his journey, and who might be described as 'humour' or 'vice' characters. Sheldon Sacks implicitly recognises the function of figures like the lawyer in the stage-coach and Mrs. Tow-wouse as representatives for tendencies within every human being when he uses the word "traits":

These characters - rough approximations of those E.M. Forster calls "flat characters" - are invariably self-explanatory: since they represent only one trait or possibly two, their actions and words, limited to the situation that called forth their creation, simply display the traits they embody. We meet them only once and usually they exhaust their usefulness in conveying appropriate judgments of institutions, manners, people of the world in which the action takes place.¹

Perhaps the most memorable sequence of such characters is found in the famous stage-coach episode² in which our lawyer friend plays his part. This chapter is, of course, basically a parody of the parable of

¹Sheldon Sacks, Fiction and the Shape of Belief: a Study of Henry Fielding with Glances at Swift, Johnson and Richardson, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964, p. 96.

²Joseph Andrews, Book I, Ch. 12.

the Good Samaritan, where a number of characters like the lawyer are presented who represent our own tendencies to selfishness and lack of compassion in a number of different disguises. Although some of the satiric force obviously does derive from the association with the biblical story, the fact that the wounded man is Joseph on his journey towards Fanny, adulthood and restoration to his rightful place as Wilson's son, adds a further important dimension to the satirical meaning of the incident.

Primarily, it 'places' all these characters except the postillion as fundamentally opposed to the success of Joseph's quest - all of them would be more or less content to leave Joseph dying. Such opponents, within the structure of the romance convention, must belong to the sphere of satire as representatives of the chaos and disorder from which the romance hero must make his escape. Such a position (opposed to the success of the romance hero) would not, of itself, however, be sufficient to generate the kind of satire that Fielding outlined in his Preface as the "Ridiculous".

In order to produce satire aimed at "affectation" Fielding does not have to demonstrate that the figures representing "one trait or possibly two" are opposed to Joseph's quest, although this does indeed 'place' them as the objects of "detestation" when the actions they perform are designed to hinder progress towards the ideal union of Joseph and Fanny. He must, in fact, show that a gap exists between the real nature of a character and the appearance which that character presents to the world:

Much less are natural imperfections the object of derision; but when ugliness aims at the applause of beauty, or lameness endeavours to display

agility, it is then that these unfortunate circumstances, which at first moved our compassion, tend only to raise our mirth.

The poet carries this very far:

None are for being what they are in fault,
But for not being what they would be thought.

Where if the metre would suffer the word Ridiculous to close the first line, the thought would be rather more proper. Great vices are the proper objects of our detestation, smaller faults, of our pity; but affectation appears to me the only true source of the Ridiculous.¹

When the lawyer in the stage-coach masks his selfishness with a fear of legal consequences he is not opposed to the successful continuance of Joseph's quest - his arguments will help to save Joseph - but he is clearly affected: there is a distinct gap between the appearance he presents, of respect for the law, and his real nature of selfish fear and lack of compassion: "From the discovery of this affectation arises the Ridiculous, which always strikes the reader with surprise and pleasure".²

In this context the following observations of Martin Price are valuable:

The central theme in Fielding's work is the opposition between the flow of soul - of selfless generosity - and the structures - screens, defences, moats of indifference - that people build around themselves The flow is the active energy of virtuous feeling; the structures are those forms that are a frozen travesty of authentic order

Like the Augustan satirists, Fielding sees the preposterousness of this evasion of goodness. And the methods of evasion are his constant objects of scrutiny: the withdrawal into legality and dogma, the sophistry of bad faith, the careful preservation of a code too exalted to use.³

¹Preface, Joseph Andrews, pp. xxii-xxiii.

²Ibid., p. xxii.

³Martin Price, To the Palace of Wisdom, New York: Doubleday, 1964, pp. 286-288.

Such insight is useful as long as the "opposition between the flow of soul . . . and the structures . . . that people build around themselves" is interpreted as referring to tendencies within the mind of every individual reader. That is, Price's remarks should be understood in the Lucianic rather than the Horatian sense. Fielding is concerned not to "vilify or asperse any one"¹ in particular, but to show how everybody tends to mask his selfishness and lack of compassion under the stimulus of vanity in ways that will be socially acceptable. It is here that satire upon affectation and vanity may be seen as inextricably connected with the classicist ethic in general. Vanity, although a permanent and inevitable part of our make-up, is associated by its very nature with the "transient social custom" abhorred by the classicist when it acts as a guide to action.

The prudish lady is presented by Fielding as totally dominated in her actions by such custom. She really does carry alcohol, and she is not genuinely offended by the presence of a naked man in the coach with her. Yet "transient social custom", acting through her vanity, stimulates her to adopt a mask, and not to act in accord with the ideal of compassion. She is thus the object of two levels of satiric attack.

First, she is selfish and lacking compassion; she passes by the wounded traveller. She is thus placed as opposed to the success of Joseph's quest, being prepared to leave him dying. This opposition to the ideal of the conventional romance structure makes her action the object

¹Preface, Joseph Andrews, p. xxiii.

of "detestation", while her affectation of social rectitude makes her the object of ridicule when we discover, for example, that she really does carry alcohol.

The affectation may, just as Fielding states in the Preface, lead to "vices, and of the blackest kind". This will be true of every reader who allows his action to be guided by vanity acting in perfect accord with "transient social custom", and this, in its turn, must mean all of us from time to time. The structure of romance defines the objects of "detestation" as actions which oppose Joseph's movement towards union with Fanny, and it is thus only through the interaction between the romance and satiric structures that the reader learns that vanity causing affectation in accord with "transient social custom" may lead him to act viciously.¹ The affectation is not vicious, although opposition to Joseph is.

If the distinction between these two levels of ridicule and outright satire is remembered, it is possible to elucidate one of the most persistent problems for commentators like Martin Battestin, who reads the novel as primarily an ethical system composed of precepts embodied in the

¹Without the presence of the overall pattern of the romance structure such characters as the figure of the prudish lady might be interpreted solely as a representative for eighteenth-century English prudery with no general function as representing vanity, selfishness and "transient social custom". She would arrive on the scene, and disappear from it, having no recognisable connection with the other figures of the same ilk. As a symbol for a "trait" or tendency in the mind of every reader, a function given her, according to the interpretation offered at the close of the previous chapter, by the mythic pattern of the romance convention in which she plays a part, she is intimately related structurally with all the other 'humour' characters who also have the same function.

persons and speech of the central characters. The problem is simple: it consists of the apparent contradiction involved in having Joseph, who should be purely a heroic figure, made the obvious object of ridicule in the early stages of the work.

Professor Battestin argues that Joseph is the archetype of "chastity . . . with respect to himself"¹ advocated by the Latitudinarian preachers like Isaac Barrow as one of the two cardinal moral precepts a man should follow in his daily life. But no reader can take the passages in which Joseph verbally defends his "virtue" against the onslaughts of his employer, Lady Booby, with any seriousness. And yet, of course, it is this very chastity that, according to Professor Battestin, Fielding ought to be recommending to his reader as worthy of emulation.

The structural analysis of satire offered in this chapter (dependent as it is upon an understanding of the classicist ethic outlined in Chapter 1, and the parallel analysis of the romance structure given in the second chapter) makes it possible to offer a coherent explanation

¹Martin C. Battestin, *op. cit.*, p. 26-27, offers the following resumé of his position: "The true origin of Fielding's twin protagonists in their capacity as moral exemplars in this low-life epic of the road may be traced with confidence to the homilies, and in particular, it would seem, to Isaac Barrow's sermon 'Of Being Imitators of Christ.' The sermons present four points of special significance: (1) the depiction of the good man as hero; (2) the notion that the sum of his goodness is chastity (or virtue or temperance, the control of reason over the passions) with respect to himself, and charity with respect to society; (3) the choice of Joseph and his rejection of Potiphar's wife to exemplify the former, and of the pilgrim patriarch Abraham, the epitome of human faith expressed in works, to represent the latter; and (4) the analogy of the good man's life in a world of vanity and vexation to a pilgrimage through strange lands to his true home."

of how the reader can laugh at Joseph while Joseph may also maintain his 'heroic' stature. In fact, like all the other 'humour' characters, Joseph is indeed affected in the early stages of the novel, and consequently the object of the reader's laughter.

The major structural distinction drawn, and seen operating in the stage-coach incident, first isolates the objects of ridicule as those where humour arises from a recognition by the reader of a credibility gap between a figure's underlying nature and a mask of affectation worn in deference to "transient social custom". The objects of detestation are in contrast to this and are found where a figure is actually opposed in some sense, to the success of the romance quest.

According to the analysis offered up to this point, the figure of Joseph is rather a representative for some tendency "habitually existing in the mind" than any symbol or archetype of "chastity . . . with regard to himself", even though it is part of his conventional role that he remain faithful to his sweetheart. His chastity in the instance of attempted seduction by Lady Booby, where the reader laughs at his affected sentiments, becomes, in fact, identical with the fidelity demanded by his role in the conventional pattern. In accord with the distinction outlined above, ridicule is directed at Joseph and aimed at the gap between the facts of his nature (the ardent romantic hero, bound by the conventional ideal to fidelity in his love for Fanny), and the appearance that, as an immature adherent of his 'sister's' moral code, he presents to the outside world. He, like the other humour characters, presents a mask of affectation. The humour characters unlike Joseph, such as Mrs. Tow-wouse

for example, represent general and common psychic tendencies like "temper, avarice, and an insensibility of human misery,"¹ in powerful opposition to the classicist ideal of a harmonious balance, within the individual, under the control of reason embodied in the successful conclusion of Joseph's quest. They are thus both ridiculed and detested, where Joseph is only ridiculed. Such figures, according to the meaning of the romance structure outlined at the close of the previous chapter, belong to the realm of satire, disorder and frustration from which the romance convention as a whole represents the general human desire for escape. Joseph, as the hero of this conventional romance structure, cannot, therefore, possibly be the object of detestation or satire proper, although his affected sentiments like those of Pamela make him the object of ridicule and laughter.

It is therefore possible to account for the humour at Joseph's expense without hazarding his role as romantic hero in the slightest. His affectation may be ridiculed while his actual behaviour remains perfectly consistent with his role as romance hero. In fact, as I indicated in the previous chapter, the answer to this apparent difficulty is that it is not Joseph's chastity per se that is attacked, and made to seem ridiculous, but his affected sentiments paralleling those of his sister, Pamela.

To Fielding, as a classicist, Pamela's claim to genuine virtue divorced from desire for advancement and "transient social custom" must

¹Joseph Andrews, p. 181.

have seemed completely empty and hypocritical; and in fact, it may be argued that whenever Joseph's protestations of "virtue" are presented by Fielding as the clear object of ridicule in the special sense given above, we laugh not only at Joseph, the romantic hero in us all, and his affectation, but at the Pamelas of both Richardson's and Fielding's novels. The discrepancy between Joseph's genuine fidelity to Fanny and his affected emphasis upon his "virtue" leads to ridicule of the figure who has given Joseph this affectation by means of her shining example, as much as to ridicule of Joseph's own affectation.

This oblique attack on Richardson's novel is a further subordinate satiric structure, almost continuously present throughout the novel, due to the relationship between Joseph and Pamela, and Pamela's actual presence. Ridicule is directed at Pamela as much as at Joseph when he points out to Lady Booby that "that boy is the brother of Pamela, and would be ashamed that the chastity of his family, which is preserved in her, should be stained in him."¹

In the following passage Joseph is ridiculed for his verbal adherence to the precepts of his sister when he should be expressing his true role of fidelity to, and love for, Fanny. Pamela, however, cannot escape an equal responsibility for this affectation, as Joseph's words reflect her own emphasis upon chastity as the only virtue: "How ought man to rejoice, that his chastity is always in his own power; that if he hath sufficient strength of mind, he hath always a competent strength of

¹Joseph Andrews, p. 25.

body to defend himself, and cannot, like a poor weak woman, be ravished against his will!"¹ It is unfair to say that the ridicule here is only at the expense of Pamela. It is directed at the general tendency in us all from time to time to defer to "transient social custom" as the giver of ethical guidelines.

Joseph, however, is not affected to the same extent throughout the novel, while Pamela remains devoted to the dictates of society until the very end. When she points out to Joseph that Fanny is too lowly born to be considered a fit wife for him he responds in a manner totally in keeping with his real nature of romantic hero: "'Sure, sister, you are not in earnest; I am sure she is your equal, at least.' - 'She was my equal,' answered Pamela; 'but I am no longer Pamela Andrews, I am now this gentleman's lady, and, as such, am above her. . . .'"²

Close analysis of the interaction between the romance and satiric structures enables us to distinguish, then, the different modes of satire (ridicule and detestation) to which the humour characters are subject. Those who play conventional roles of support for the classical ideal of comic resolution embodied in Joseph and Fanny's successful progress are only ridiculed. Opposition to this ideal leads to vice and therefore, to satiric detestation. It also enables us to distinguish the special satiric substructure produced by the presence of Pamela in the novel.

There is neither space nor necessity here to repeat this analytical process in detail wherever in the novel our hero and heroine encounter

¹Joseph Andrews, p. 73.

²Ibid., p. 300.

further different groups of humour characters. In all cases, the same account is found to apply in principle to the structure of Fielding's satire; although, of course, his irony, wit and brilliance of treatment may 'bring the characters to life' in a way no simple and unimaginative use of conventional patterns alone will ever guarantee or even allow.

Having structurally distinguished two kinds of character up to this point, Pamela, and the humour characters acting defined roles within the romance convention, it is now possible to examine a third. This kind of character is found in the interpolated symbolic tales, always recognised, according to M.O. Johnson, as reflecting the influence of Cervantes.¹ One of these tales, that told by Adams' son when demonstrating his reading ability to his parents' rich guests, is not of major interest. It is almost Sterne-like in its rambling inconsequentiality, and I see no way in which it reflects any of the principal concerns of the novel.

In the case of the other two, such a connection is not difficult to find, and they constitute an important source of support for the meanings of both the detestation and the ridicule directed at the humour characters who act out their roles within the conventional pattern of the romance story.

The figures at the centres of these symbolic tales have no particular role within the conventional pattern of the romance plot structure as outlined by Frye, and thus cannot be seen as mythic representatives for only one or two psychic tendencies or traits² in the mind of the

¹The tales are also, of course, elements within the conventional pattern of romance as described by Hight in Chapter 2 above.

²See the quotation from Sacks above.

reader, or as actors in any ritualistically based overall plot structure representing a "rites de passage" experience. Where the 'flat' characters play a predetermined part in an overall structure that reflects the general human mind, Leonora and Wilson have a kind of personal history placing them as individuals who can, like the reader, be imagined as exercising choice.¹

Leonora's tale is best taken first, as it is considerably less complex than that of Wilson, and because an explication of her story will enable Wilson's to be more easily interpreted. Bearing in mind, then, what has been learnt of Fielding's distinction between detestation and ridicule in connection with the humour characters, including Joseph, Leonora's story is found to serve as an illustration of Fielding's principal object in both forms of satiric attack. She is ruled out as an object of satiric detestation by the fact that she plays no part in the structure of the convention itself, as outlined in the previous chapter, (that is, she does not interact with the other characters). She is not placed in actual opposition to the ideal embodied in Joseph's personal quest. Nevertheless, it is still possible for her to be the object of ridicule, since a gap may exist between her true nature and the mask she presents to the world. This gap undoubtedly exists for Leonora, but in spite of this, she is not made the object of ridicule, as far as I can

¹Adams, of course, is far from being a flat character, and he too has a personal history of sorts that distinguishes him as a unique individual. But, as he does interact with those characters who 'belong' to the conventional form in a way that neither Leonora nor Wilson do, he cannot be seen as an exemplar in quite the same way. But we shall come to this in the final chapter.

see, in the way we have seen ridicule operating up to this point. Her story is really dominated by a tone of pathos rather than one of either satiric detestation or ridicule. The reason for this is, I feel, that Leonora's tale is essentially open-ended in a way that the conventional structure of the romance as a whole is not.

It was argued earlier that the keynote of Fielding's satirical and humorous attacks was, both in theory and in practice, that the human tendencies satirised should be regarded as fundamental to our very nature, and that the figures representing them should consequently be seen as always surviving to 'fight again another day'. Only the figures who interact directly with those in the conventional pattern of action can be thus detested or ridiculed, because both the convention itself, as a representative for the general human mind, and the mock-heroism of the stylistic treatment, imply a resolution in which no one is seriously injured in any way. But Leonora is permanently injured. M.O. Johnson recognises this factor of implied resolution as continually operating where the figures play roles within the romance structure. Speaking of the scene in which Adams gives Joseph cold comfort for his temporary loss of Fanny to possible ravishing by the lustful squire, he says: "The Christian and classical precepts of Adams are inadequate for Joseph's comfort. But we laugh at Joseph's distress; for in a comic romance it is unlikely that the heroine will be violated or killed."¹ It is, in fact, unlikely that anyone within the structure of romance will be violated or killed - even

¹Maurice Johnson, op. cit., p. 70.

the thief.

But as was noted above, Leonora's story conforms to no such pattern of romance, nor does she interact with the other characters in Joseph Andrews. She cannot, therefore, be the object of satiric detestation or ridicule. Her story is an illustration. Her tale is one of failure and disappointment resulting from her desertion of the romantic ideal of fidelity in favour of what the classicist would be bound to regard as the transitory attractions of wealth, social position and physical appearance. These are exactly the same kind of values held by Pamela and exalted by Richardson.¹ Should Fanny succumb to the offers of Beau Didapper we would presumably have a novel with the same kind of unhappy conclusion as that of Leonora's tale. Fanny being what she is, however, an archetypal figure within the structure of romance, makes such an ending impossible. In Richardson's Pamela, there is always the possibility of an unhappy ending to parallel the conclusion of Leonora's story. The feelings of the villagers who rang the church bells on hearing of Pamela's marriage were as much of relief as of joy!

¹For the classicist, the concept of individual freedom is inextricably linked with the acceptance of a set of rationally conceived ideals as guides to action, rather than submission to the dictates of social convention or those of personal inclination. The gap between the ideal, like that embodied in the structure of romance, and "transient social custom" defines the difference between freedom and determinism for the classicist as much as it exposes the difference between a man and a saint. Adherence to the ideal recognised by the rational faculty offers to man the possibility of being both free and good, and still human. Adherence to the dictates of social or personal inclination, as for Leonora, leads a man to determinism and to evil, whether premeditated or not.

Leonora's story helps the author illustrate the alternative to acceptance of the enduring values embodied in the romance convention and so aid in giving the reader a classicist insight into the ordering of his passions and inclinations in day-to-day life. Leonora comes at the extreme end of a scale of characters to the extent that she, as an individual, allows her purely personal drives and inclinations to govern her behaviour and allows social conditioning to become the most important factor in her make-up.

The outcome of Wilson's story is the opposite to the outcome of Leonora's. Fielding, however, uses Wilson indirectly as a part of the romance structure. He is Joseph's father. But Wilson's life story itself has no such part to play, and can ultimately be understood as illustrative in the same way as Leonora's.

Professor Battestin has called Wilson's tale the "synecdochic epitome of the meaning and movement of the novel"¹ and in some ways it is extremely important. From the structural point of view it should not, however, be overemphasised to this extent. Professor Battestin clearly does so because it is, like Leonora's story, a moral fable, and he analyses Joseph Andrews as an "apologue"², or system of ethical recommendations given fictional form.

¹Martin G. Battestin, op. cit., p. 119.

²Sheldon Sacks, op. cit., p. 26, writes: "An apologue is a work organized as a fictional example of the truth of a formulable statement or a series of such statements." Professor Battestin's "formulable statement" is more or less that found on pp. 26-27 of his book, and quoted in my footnote earlier in this chapter.

Wilson's story is that of a man who has seen for himself the nature of the disparity between the classicist's rationally conceived ideal and purely transitory social values, and who has reformed his life in accord with that ideal. The story of his misspent youth is an illustration of a life lived, like Leonora's, according to the empty values of inclination and social custom. It is full of references to vanity and personal inclination:

. . . I know few animals that would not take the place of a coquette; nor indeed hath this company much pretence to any thing beyond instinct; for though sometimes we might imagine it was animated by the passion of vanity, yet far the greater part of its actions fall beneath even that low motive; for instance, several absurd gestures and tricks, infinitely more foolish than what can be observed in the most ridiculous birds and beasts, and which would persuade the beholder that the silly wretch was aiming at our contempt. Indeed its characteristic is affectation, and this led and governed by whim only: for as beauty, wisdom, wit, good-nature, politeness, and health, are sometimes affected by this creature; so are ugliness, nonsense, ill-nature, ill-breeding, and sickness, likewise put on by it in their turn. Its life is one constant lie; and the only rule by which you can form any judgment of them is, that they are never what they seem.¹

Eventually, he recognises an ideal in the person of Harriet Heartfree, and this recognition marks a turning point in his life. He retires to the country to an almost idyllic life with his wife and children, and his happiness and satisfaction are finally to be made complete by the restoration to him of his lost child, Joseph. The moral of this tale is absolutely clear; it serves to illustrate once again what are the real objects of Fielding's attack when he employs the modes of satiric detestation and ridicule on the characters who have a definite place within the romance convention. If there is an exemplary character in

¹Joseph Andrews, p. 201.

Joseph Andrews that the reader is recommended to emulate, it is Wilson, and not, as I hope to demonstrate in the final chapter, Parson Adams.

Before proceeding to the next chapter of the thesis, it is worth repeating that there is a scale of characterisation based upon the manner in which different types of figure exemplify the gap between an underlying real nature and a superficial appearance: the gap between truth and affectation. The first group, the humour characters, act as they must within the conventional pattern, whether their role is, like Joseph's, in conformity with the dominant ideal or in opposition to it. They have no choice in being the pawns of vanity. Leonora is equally consistent in her adherence to the dictates of inclination, but she is, as a character with a distinct personality, like the reader and Wilson, capable of recognising the ideal of fidelity and the order which such an ideal implies. The adoption by Wilson of the ideals of marriage and fidelity as a guide to his actions, in place of inclination and social conditioning, illustrates the very change in attitude that the classicist writer must hope for in his reader if his function as teacher is adequately performed. Wilson, unlike Leonora, recognises the ideal and conducts his life, as a rational man must do, in accord with it; Adams belongs in a separate niche to himself in this scale of character viewed in structural terms, and in the final chapter, an analysis is offered of his unique role in the work.

The analysis of the romance convention undertaken in the previous chapter revealed the manner in which the classicist's concern with general and enduring truths of human nature was expressed in Joseph Andrews

by means of a single overall structure. The parallel analysis given here of the different modes of satire applied to the different types of character in Joseph Andrews, highlights the classicist's concern with his teaching function. The concentration of Fielding's satire remains upon what is general and enduring, upon the universal human tendency to allow vanity an unwarranted influence in guiding our actions. The effect of each satiric structure is, indeed, to demonstrate "the chasm between universal nature and transient social custom."¹ The connection of these structures with that outlined in the previous chapter is found in the fact that, in nearly all cases, it is opposition, in some sense, to the values and meanings carried by the romance convention that defines the chasm. The convention embodies the value and meaning of the comic ideal, while the satirised figures embody the "transient social custom" as vanity moves them to become affected.

¹Walter Jackson Bate, op. cit., p.66.

CHAPTER IV

Yet to whom must we hearken, if not to Abraham the patriarch and archetype of charity and good nature?¹

This chapter offers an examination of the manner in which the figure of Abraham Adams is related to some of the meanings and values embodied in the romance and satiric structures analysed in the previous chapters. It also serves as a concluding chapter to the thesis, because it draws together and illustrates more clearly the precise nature of those meanings and values, as well as completing a coherent account of the novel as a whole.

It has been of the essence of this account that Joseph Andrews is a novel whose basic structures express, in the meanings they carry, what has been called the classicist ethic. At the root of this ethic is found a view of man, or the reader, as capable of regulating his personal inclinations by use of his reason, once he has achieved the necessary, comprehensive degree of insight into his own nature. Such regulation can only occur through true knowledge, and the classicist writer was theoretically capable of giving this form of insight.

Any guidance of action except by the reason through genuine knowledge of human nature is unwarranted. Without such knowledge, one is likely to be guided by transitory social convention or purely personal inclination masquerading as rationality. Vanity is the prime mover within

¹Maurice Johnson, op. cit., p. 79.

every human being, stimulating man to accept as rational, a set of values and a mode of behaviour which, in fact, only makes him appear well in the eyes of his equally unenlightened fellows.

Vanity, and the 'passions' of selfishness and lack of compassion, are some of the objects of Fielding's satiric attack. In order to show the effects of vanity as frequently vicious, he places figures that operate according to the stimulus of vanity as representatives for universal human traits in an overall fictional structure that represents the human mind as a whole - the romance convention. The effects of vanity are defined as vicious when these figures are seen to act as in some way opposed to the successful completion of the conventional romance pattern.

The tone of most of Fielding's satire, however, is not splenetic. The classicist view of man as expressed in Joseph Andrews is a tolerant view. The satirist acts as a parent. Even when he detests the effects of vanity in a man, he recognises it as a human quality and hopes to correct his reader by "holding a glass to thousands in their closets" that they may be privately mortified.

Just as the hero of the romance structure must learn, symbolically, to lose affectation, so must the reader learn to know his inclinations for what they are, and to drop his own mask of affectation, worn in deference to social convention. The values or meanings expressed by the romance and satiric structures are those of the struggle for knowledge of human nature through experience, and the struggle for the order brought by escape from the chaos of personal inclination and social custom.

There is also a consequent emphasis upon tolerance and the inherent value

of all human qualities including, especially, the hope that gives man the will to struggle in these ways. The figure of Abraham Adams is opposed to each of these values carried by the structures examined in the previous chapters, and he is, consequently, a major butt of Fielding's satire.

His opposition to the progress of Joseph and Fanny towards symbolic maturity, and the resolution of all differences found in the comic conclusion of the novel, is not, of course, in his actions themselves, but in the personality and philosophy of life lying behind those actions.

The major feature of Adams' opposition to the values embodied by the novel as a whole is his prodigious myopia. If, as has been argued, knowledge is an essential prerequisite for genuinely moral action or guidance, myopia is a dangerous characteristic, especially when it exists to the extent which it does in Abraham Adams.

The effects of Adams' myopia are expressed in three major and interconnected ways, and all three are in some way opposed to the values outlined above. First, Adams is an example of the classicist's theory that to know oneself, one must first know human nature in general. Adams understands neither himself nor others. Second, and as a complement to the first, his view of education itself is schoolmasterly, and opposed to the value of knowledge gained through experience. Third, and connected with both previous points, Adams' thinking is preceptual rather than rational. He prefers instruction to insight, and his philosophy of life is thus totally in opposition to the classicist ideal of tolerance and understanding.

As these three modes of opposition are so intimately linked, it is perhaps best to examine a number of passages in detail, rather than make any attempt to treat one mode at a time. In this way it is possible to illustrate with greater clarity the manner in which the different modes are interconnected in Joseph Andrews itself.

The narrator's first description of Adams is clearly as important as it is comprehensive:

He had applied many years to the most severe study, and had treasured up a fund of learning rarely to be met with in a university. He was, besides, a man of good sense, good parts, and good nature; but was at the same time as entirely ignorant of the ways of this world as an infant just entered into it could possibly be. As he had never any intention to deceive, so he never suspected such a design in others. He was generous, friendly, and brave, to an excess; but simplicity was his characteristic: he did no more than Mr. Colley Cibber apprehend any such passions as malice and envy to exist in mankind; which was indeed less remarkable in a country parson, than in a gentleman who hath passed his life behind the scenes, - a place which hath been seldom thought the school of innocence, and where a very little observation would have convinced the great Apologist that those passions have a real existence in the human mind.¹

Adams is described as having built up a great fund of book-learning, but this knowledge alone is clearly not enough to give him the insight into human nature demanded by the classicist as a prerequisite for moral action. Adams' "simplicity" is singled out by the classicist writer as his most prominent "characteristic", and this characteristic is significantly attributed equally to a man commonly regarded as little more than a literary buffoon - Colley Cibber.

For Fielding, as a classicist, the "book of nature" was the proper object of study. "Simplicity" combined with "severe" bookishness

¹Joseph Andrews, p. 6.

cannot, therefore, be less than a culpable state. Without a knowledge of human nature, a knowledge of all the passions that exist in a man, it is impossible for a man to conceive of the ideal harmonious balance of elements within himself for which the classicist strives. It is this ideal balance which is implied indirectly in Joseph Andrews by the image of the human make-up embodied in the conventional structure of romance. Adams' simplicity, or myopia, is thus crucially opposed to the classicist ethic of Joseph Andrews as a whole, and will be shown to be so in greater detail as the work progresses:

Not to apprehend the existence of such passions as malice and envy is a considerable imperfection, weakening, as it does, the effectiveness of virtue; the innocence that is unaware of the conflict between its own ideal motives and the resistant reality of the world in which it must act is in a continual state of blind confusion. Adams, moreover, is unaware of the conflict between his ideals and some of his own moral limitations, particularly vanity. And Fielding, whose heart is not so soft as many of his later readers who fell in love with the parson believed, subjects his man to a variety of ignoble, physical punishments to make the lesson quite clear.¹

Adams is, in fact, presented by the narrator from the very outset as a figure who is to be seen in contrast to the predominant ethical outlook, and who may thus dramatise this ethic by his presence as an 'alternative'. It is for this reason that the examination of Adams forms such a fitting conclusion to the kind of analysis offered in this thesis.

The difference that the classicist sees between genuine knowledge learnt from study of life as well as of books, and that learnt from books alone, is perfectly dramatised by Fielding when he has Adams mistake the

¹Stuart M. Tave, The Amiable Humorist, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1960, p. 141.

character of a gentleman who had promised first to house the travellers overnight, and then to lend them horses to help them on their journey. The gentleman, however, fails to keep his promises, offering weak excuses as to his temporary inability to aid them. Adams accepts the excuses for truth, and actually sees the gentleman as good-natured:

"Was ever any thing so unlucky as this poor gentleman? I protest I am more sorry on his account than my own. You see, Joseph, how this good-natured man is treated by his servants; one locks up his linen, another physics his horses; and I suppose, by his being at this house last night, the butler had locked up his cellar. Bless us! how good-nature is used in this world! I protest I am more concerned on his account than my own."¹

When the gentleman is finally found to be 'unavailable' to see the travellers, Adams persists in giving credence to his excuses. Fielding then places an example of knowledge of human nature gained from experience in the mouth of Joseph, and juxtaposes it with Adams' explicit belief in book-learning:

"But surely, Joseph, your suspicions of this gentleman must be unjust, for what a silly fellow must he be, who would do the devil's work for nothing! and canst thou tell me any interest he could possibly propose to himself by deceiving us in his professions?" - "It is not for me," answered Joseph "to give reasons for what men do to a gentleman of your learning." - "You say right," quoth Adams; "knowledge of men is only to be learnt from books; Plato and Seneca for that; and those are authors, I am afraid, child, you never read." - "Not I, sir, truly," answered Joseph; "all I know is, it is a maxim among the gentlemen of our cloth, that those masters who promise the most, perform the least; and I have often heard them say, they have found the largest vails in those families where they were not promised any."²

As usual in Joseph Andrews, the difference between these two positions is not resolved by argument: "Adams was going to answer, when

¹Joseph Andrews, p. 166.

²Ibid., p. 168.

their host came in".¹ The validity of Joseph's position is made clear through the presentation of action, just as Adams' position is vitiated by the facts. It is in this sense that Joseph Andrews is not a specifically didactic work. The truths of human nature are expressed in the fictional structures, not in any explicit statements. Only Adams makes such generalisations within the work itself, and the actions both of the other characters and of himself prove their emptiness.

This juxtaposition of Adams' belief in book-learning as a guide to understanding human nature, and the genuine understanding that comes from experience of life, is continued when Adams confronts a retired seaman. The sailor eventually convinces Adams that the gentleman is not everything he appears to be, but the parson persists in maintaining his initial judgement by recourse once more to his book-learnt knowledge:

"And to confess the truth, notwithstanding the baseness of this character, which he hath too well deserved, he hath in his countenance sufficient symptoms of that bona indoles, that sweetness of disposition, which furnishes out a good Christian." - "Ah, master! master!" says the host, "if you had travelled as far as I have, and conversed with the many nations where I have traded, you would not give any credit to a man's countenance. Symptoms in his countenance, quotha! I would look there, perhaps, to see whether a man had had the smallpox, but for nothing else."²

The image of travelling is clearly used figuratively by Fielding here as a metaphor for experience of life. (It is, after all, a symbolic journey that gives the basic structure to Joseph Andrews as a whole.) Adams responds with a clear statement of his position that once again places him in opposition to the overall ethic of the novel. His

¹Joseph Andrews, p. 169.

²Ibid., p. 173.

application of the book-learnt theory of physiognomy has proved disastrous when put into practice; yet still he persists, and begins his reply with what is again, from the classicist viewpoint, an outrageous statement:

"... the travelling I mean is in books, the only way of travelling by which any knowledge is to be acquired. From them I learn what I asserted just now, that nature generally imprints such a portraiture of the mind in the countenance, that a skilful physiognomist will rarely be deceived. I presume you have never read the story of Socrates to this purpose, and therefore I will tell it you: A certain physiognomist asserted of Socrates that he plainly discovered by his features that he was a rogue in his nature. A character so contrary to the tenour of all this great man's actions, and the generally received opinion concerning him, incensed the boys of Athens so that they threw stones at the physiognomist, and would have demolished him for his ignorance, had not Socrates himself prevented them by confessing the truth of his observations, and acknowledging, that, though he corrected his disposition by philosophy, he was indeed naturally as inclined to vice as had been predicted of him. Now, pray resolve me, - How should a man know this story, if he had not read it?"¹

The conclusion to this section shows Adams continuing to laud the value of learning quite in the face of the seaman's clearly recognisable genuine knowledge of the world as it really is. Where Adams takes the ideal theory of clerical duty for reality, the sailor will offer a comment that shows Adams' myopia as ridiculous and out of keeping with the facts:

"... there is something more necessary than life itself, which is provided by learning; I mean the learning of the clergy. Who clothes you with piety, meekness, humility, charity, patience, and all the other Christian virtues? Who feeds your souls with the milk of brotherly love, and diets them with all the dainty food of holiness, which at once cleanses them of all impure carnal affections, and fattens them with the truly rich spirit of grace? Who doth this?" - "Ay, who indeed!" cries the host; "for I do not remember ever to have seen any such clothing, or such feeding."²

¹Joseph Andrews, p. 174.

²Ibid., p. 175.

Characteristically, this dispute also is never finished on the academic level. Fielding again leaves the reader to draw the obvious conclusion: "Adams was going to answer with some severity, when Joseph and Fanny returned, and pressed his departure so eagerly, that he would not refuse them".¹

In detailed examination of this kind, it is possible to see how the different facets of Adams' opposition to the overall ethic of Joseph Andrews are intimately related one to the other. His emphasis on book-learned knowledge prevents him from seeing human beings for what they really are, and, consequently, from knowing the difference, in the conclusion to this episode, between his ideal theory of his own work as a priest, and the actual practice neatly summarised by the seaman.

Adams' attitudes are heavily ridiculed in this passage, due to the existence of the gap between what he pretends to be - absolutely knowledgeable - and what he really is - absolutely innocent, or simple. *like valid*

If a parallel examination is made of an episode that occurs later in the novel, it is possible first, to locate more specifically the vanity in Adams' character that Fielding describes as his particular satiric object in Joseph Andrews; and consequently to explain the ridicule in terms of both the satiric structure outlined in the previous chapter, and the romance structure analysed in Chapter I.

As was noted in the first chapter, Joseph, as a representative for the reader's hope of escape from the symbolic confusion of adolescence,

¹Joseph Andrews, pp. 175-176.

undertakes a journey of experience from youth to maturity. By the stage in the novel at which the episode to be considered here occurs, Joseph is considerably advanced in his knowledge of human nature, even more so than in his brief dispute with the parson quoted above. This later episode once more places Adams' belief in book-learning against Joseph's genuine knowledge gained from experience. This time, however, their dispute is centred precisely on the nature and value of different educational methods. Adams' attitude to education reveals all three of the ways in which he is opposed to the ideal of knowledge embodied in the journey being undertaken by his young friend.

The episode begins immediately following the departure of the journeying trio from the hospitality and tale-telling of Wilson, the most prominent exemplar in the novel. As Joseph and Adams walk along together, the parson opens the dispute with Joseph by claiming that he has "discovered the cause of all the misfortunes which befell him [Wilson]",¹ and he explains what he means by continuing: "a public school, Joseph, was the cause of all the calamities which he afterwards suffered. Public schools are the nurseries of all vice and immorality." Adams reveals what he considers the function of education to be in the lines that follow: "Joseph, you may thank the Lord you were not bred at a public school: you would never have preserved your virtue as you have. The first care I always take, is of a boy's morals; I had rather he should be a blockhead than an atheist or a presbyterian. What is all the learning of the world compared to his immortal soul? What shall a man take in exchange for his

¹Joseph Andrews, p. 222.

soul? But the masters of great schools trouble themselves about no such thing. I have known a lad of eighteen at the university, who hath not been able to say his catechism; but for my own part, I always scourged a lad sooner for missing that than any other lesson. Believe me, child, all that gentleman's misfortunes arose from his being educated at a public school."¹

This theory of education is flatly in contradiction with the belief, symbolised by Joseph's journey, that a human can only become a moral agent through knowledge of the world. The possibility is non-existent of a man acting morally, in the classicist sense of having a rational basis for his actions, when he is a "blockhead". In fact, Adams is contradicting his own earlier stated beliefs in a number of ways in this passage, as well as speaking in opposition to the classicist ethic of the romance structure.

When arguing with his fellow priest, Barnabas, Adams expressed the view that a "virtuous and good Turk, or Heathen, are more acceptable in the sight of their Creator, than a vicious and wicked Christian, though his faith was as perfectly orthodox as St. Paul himself."² When he speaks to Barnabas he accepts that a "Heathen" can be a moral man. Here, his definition of morality would seem to consist in action according to certain Christian precepts learnt by rote. Joseph, to whom he addresses his remarks, is, in accord with his role as romance hero, struggling precisely to outgrow such a reliance upon precept. The very nature of Joseph Andrews itself is such as to present the reader with a

¹Joseph Andrews, pp. 222-223.

²Ibid., p. 68.

true image of human nature.¹ The purpose of doing so is precisely to enable the reader to escape from precepts as guides to action; and to rely instead upon a genuine understanding of an ideally ordered human make-up towards which end he will be bound, by the same reason, to strive.

Joseph's reply to Adams is totally in accord with this role of hero on a journey of experience. It is based upon experience, and extolls the value of experience. Joseph says:

"you know my late master, Sir Thomas Booby, was bred at a public school, and he was the finest gentleman in all the neighbourhood. And I have often heard him say, if he had a hundred boys he would breed them all at the same place. It was his opinion, and I have often heard him deliver it, that a boy taken from a public school, and carried into the world, will learn more in one year there, than one of a private education will in five. He used to say, the school initiated him a great way (I remember that was his very expression), for great schools are little societies, where a boy of any observation may see in epitome what he will afterwards find in the world at large."²

The parson offers, as a response to this, a statement that, in the context of the meanings and values shown to be carried by the satiric and romance structures, is at least as outrageous as his earlier remarks on travelling:

"I prefer a private school, where boys may be kept in innocence and ignorance; for, according to that fine passage in the play of Cato, the only English tragedy I ever read,

'If knowledge of the world must make men villains,
May Juba ever live in ignorance.'

¹Paradoxically, however, one of the most basic meanings shown to be embodied by the conventional structure of romance is that books are no substitute for experience and knowledge gained from study of the "book of nature".

²Joseph Andrews, p. 223.

Who would not rather preserve the purity of his child than wish him to attain the whole circle of arts and sciences? which, by the by, he may learn in the classics of a private school; for I would not be vain, but I esteem myself to be second to none, nulli secundum, in teaching these things; so that a lad may have as much learning in a private as in a public education."¹

First, he opposes knowledge itself, the prerequisite for the moral man, when he extolls "innocence and ignorance". Second, he claims that "the classics" alone will be sufficient sources of knowledge if, by chance, anybody should require it. He thus praises book-learning at school, as opposed to Joseph's advocacy of a school where "a boy of any observation may see in epitome what he will afterwards find in the world at large." Third, the parson shows his vanity quite clearly and confirms the hint given a little earlier before Joseph began to outline the substance of his argument:

"It doth not become me," answered Joseph, "to dispute any thing, sir, with you, especially a matter of this kind; for to be sure you must be allowed by all the world to be the best teacher of a school in all our county." - "Yes, that," said Adams, "I believe, is granted me; that I may without much vanity pretend to - nay, I believe I may go to the next county too but gloriari non est meum."²

As has been noted in the previous chapter, affectation produced by vanity is Fielding's source of satiric ridicule. Detestation only arises when the affectation leads a figure to become opposed to the actual success of Joseph's quest. Joseph may not notice Adams' vanity, but the narrator suffers from no such deficiency:

¹Joseph Andrews, pp. 223-224.

²Ibid., p. 223.

Indeed, if this good man had an enthusiasm, or what the vulgar call a blind side, it was this; he thought a schoolmaster the greatest character in the world, and himself the greatest of all schoolmasters; neither of which points he would have given up to Alexander the Great at the head of his army.¹

When Joseph replies to the parson's outrageous claims for a private education, that, again from his own experience, he can assure Adams of the absolute inefficacy of any particular educational method as a corrective to an inherently vicious nature, or as a corrupter of the virtuous, Adams loses his temper and elects to miss the main point of Joseph's argument. He thus reveals that all his claims for the value of education stem from a preoccupation with his own greatness as a schoolmaster: "'I say nothing, young man; remember, I say nothing; but if Sir Thomas himself had been educated nearer home, and under the tuition of somebody - remember, I mean nobody - it might have been better for him. . . .'"²

It is worth paying very special attention to the statement above by the narrator. It is central to the reader's whole conception of Parson Adams, and conclusively provides a rebuttal to those commentators who, in the face of Adams' manifest opposition to the dominant structure, and hence ethic, of the novel as a whole, persist in treating Adams as an exemplary character whose attitudes are in most cases those of the author.

James Sutherland has a valuable point to make with special

¹Joseph Andrews, p. 225.

²Ibid., p. 224.

reference to the episode in which Adams nearly loses his youngest child by drowning: by losing control of his emotions, Adams contradicts in his practice his own earlier theoretical advice to Joseph. Mr. Sutherland writes:

What lies behind the episode is partly Fielding's perception (which he shared with Swift) of the way in which a man's profession is apt to become the man himself In his lengthy homily to Joseph, the parson has been behaving professionally, using the jargon of his profession, inculcating principles which are probably impracticable, and which in any case he cannot live up to himself. And then Fielding shows us the real man.¹

The form of this remark is substantially correct. Adams does, in a sense, tend to act professionally when he offers his advice to others, especially to Joseph and Fanny. He is not, however, acting as a clergyman primarily, but as a pedantic and myopic schoolmaster. It is this profession of which he is most vain, of his ability as a teacher. It is this particular form of vanity that leads him to want to publish his sermons, and to place an unjustified emphasis on book-learning as opposed to experience as a source of knowledge. His belief that the key to understanding human nature and to the correct moral code is to be found in books alone, rather than in experience and study of life as well, derives from his own vanity regarding his teaching abilities.

Adams is the archetypal schoolmaster: he is always ready with book-learned precepts and maxims which totally fail to correspond with the experience of his student or to supply any real help with the business of growing towards maturity and the resolution of personal and emotional

¹James Sutherland, English Satire, Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1958, pp. 114-115.

difficulties. The figure of Adams, then, represents quite clearly the outlook and values away from which the conventional pattern of romance leads the reader. The romance convention may be seen as the representation of the actual experience of growth from youth to maturity, or as a true image of a constantly repeated psychic drama in which different human traits contend with one another for control of the individual. In either case, Adams' precepts and maxims are at odds with the meanings of romance. Since they indirectly spring from his overemphasis on the value of book-learning, they belong, furthermore, to the realm of satiric ridicule, to the realm of affectation caused by vanity. In wishing to appear well in the eyes of his contemporaries, he will always offer a precept or maxim learnt from "the most severe study" of books, rather than from human nature.¹

The most important values carried by Joseph on his journey are those of struggle, experience and hope. Whenever Adams' attitudes, stemming ultimately from his myopia, are shown as opposed to these ideals, the parson is the object of Fielding's satiric ridicule. The third episode I wish to examine as an illustration of the ways in which Adams is satirised, occurs following the abduction of Fanny by the henchmen of

¹I do not wish to suggest, of course, that vanity is a dominating force in the personality of Adams. His "characteristic" is simplicity, or myopia. But it is a major belief of the classicist that vanity exists in all men, and may only be adequately controlled through knowledge of human nature. The myopic Adams possesses no such knowledge, and is therefore subject to the universal "blind side" of his vain belief in his own accomplishments as a schoolmaster. In terms of the structure, Adams is ridiculed.

the lustful squire, when Joseph and the parson are tied to a four-poster bed, unable to free themselves:

"O tell me," cries Joseph, "that Fanny will escape back to my arms, that they shall again inclose that lovely creature, with all her sweetness, all her untainted innocence about her!" - "Why, perhaps you may," cries Adams; "but I can't promise you what's to come. You must with perfect resignation wait the event: if she be restored to you again, it is your duty to be thankful, and so it is if she be not. Joseph, if you are wise, and truly know your own interest, you will peaceably and quietly submit to all the dispensations of Providence, being thoroughly assured, that all the misfortunes, how great soever, which happen to the righteous, happen to them for their own good. Nay, it is not your interest only, but your duty, to abstain from immoderate grief; which if you indulge, you are not worthy the name of a Christian."¹

Adams' Christian-Stoicism is in direct opposition to the values of struggle and hope expressed here by Joseph. His advice to Joseph is full of precepts that fail completely to take any account of human nature. His attitude is unsympathetic to Joseph's genuine suffering. No matter how aware the reader is that Joseph will emerge successfully to claim a chaste bride, and that Adams never actually does anything to hinder Joseph's progress, he must recognise here that this philosophy of Adams' is as strongly in opposition to the overall ethic of Joseph Andrews as that of Barnabas, the pedantic hypocrite.

When lying injured, Joseph tells Barnabas that he cannot help feeling the most powerful regret at parting for ever from Fanny, although he cares little for his own life, Barnabas replies,

that any repining at the divine will was one of the greatest sins he could commit; that he ought to forget all carnal affections, and think of better things. Joseph said, that neither in this world nor the next, could he forget his Fanny; and that the thought, however grievous, of

¹Joseph Andrews, p. 260.

parting from her for ever was not half so tormenting, as the fear of what she would suffer, when she knew his misfortune. Barnabas said, that such fears argued a diffidence and despondence very criminal; that he must divest himself of all human passions, and fix his heart above.¹

The advice that Adams and Barnabas respectively give Joseph is extremely similar, to say the least. Mr. Adams' philosophy is thus associated with a man whose hypocrisy is recognised by all readers. This casts aspersions upon Adams' myopia, of course, rather than suggesting that the parson is himself hypocritical. Nevertheless, each of these revelations by Fielding of the huge gap between Adams' true nature, and the mask he wears of specious rationality he has picked up from his copious reading, makes the reader more clearly aware of the tolerant classicist ethic to which Adams' pedantic philosophy is opposed. This gap between philosophy and true nature is most effectively dramatised in the famous episode, mentioned earlier, of his child's near drowning.

Having just delivered a lecture to Joseph on the sinfulness of immoderate grief, Adams shows just such grief himself when told of the drowning of his child. When the child is recovered, alive, Joseph questions the parson:

"Well, sir," cries Joseph, "and if I love a mistress as well as you your child, surely her loss would grieve me equally." - "Yes, but such love is foolishness, and wrong in itself, and ought to be conquered," answered Adams; "it savours too much of the flesh." - "Sure, sir," says Joseph, "it is not sinful to love my wife, no, not even to dote on her to distraction!" - "Indeed but it is," says Adams.²

Adams, then, within minutes of actually having experienced natural

¹Joseph Andrews, p. 45,

²Ibid., p. 309.

human grief and hope springing from genuine love, is incapable of learning from even this experience: his philosophy and his life are almost totally independent units. The ideal of the classicist ethic, of course, is a perfect harmony of the two, where a man's life is controlled by a philosophy based on a genuine knowledge of human nature gained from experience of life itself. As Adams' sterile philosophy is based on no understanding either of others or of himself, it can offer him no aid in guiding his actions. (He symbolically throws his Aeschylus into the fire when Fanny faints.) His obvious and lovable goodness, then, can only be the result of naturally benevolent inclinations: "No matter how implicitly heroic his quixotry at times may be, Adams resides largely in a world which his creator terms one of 'inclinations'; and in Fielding's view inclinations correspond roughly to the inferior element in the work-versus-faith controversy."¹ No bad schooling, as Joseph pointed out to him, will corrupt the naturally benevolent man.

Adams consequently always acts aright, and will always cast his precepts aside when his heart recognises the need of a fellow human being. But even his own philosophy, let alone that of the classicist, will deny him any genuine responsibility for this natural goodness, placing as much emphasis as it does on "Providence". (When he saves Fanny from rape he sees himself as sent by providence to her rescue.)

From the point of view of the classicist, a myopic or simple man guided by his inclinations, no matter how benevolent these may be, is a

¹William B. Coley, op. cit., p. 249.

dangerous mentor for our romance hero. Such a man is always subject to his vanity, and consequently to affectation. Joseph's journey is to take him away from the affected preceptual philosophy of Adams that stems from pride in his own learning, and towards an understanding of life gained through experience, and symbolised by the harmonious conclusion of the conventional romance structure. At the end of the novel the reader feels that Joseph is ethically secure in a way Adams is not, and unlikely ever to be.

Lemuel Gulliver found himself totally unable to relate successfully to his fellow men upon his recognition of man's animal nature for the first time. Adams' myopia is probably too prodigious for such a realisation ever to come to him, but precisely the same danger always exists. Since the whole 'end' of moral action, is to relate successfully to one's fellow men, a 'forgiving' ethic, capable of taking account of human passions and instincts, is essential from any point of view, let alone that of the classicist. Adams has no such view, and his almost deliberate myopia precludes him from ever having one. The gap between the appearance he presents in his words, and his true, underlying, benevolent nature remains a potent source of satiric ridicule from beginning to end, and thus serves to highlight the overall ethic of the novel: "Without blurring the fundamental distinction between the amiable protagonists and the many antipathetic ridiculous persons they meet, he [Fielding] would guide the reader to a progressively more sympathetic view of Joseph and a somewhat less appealing impression of his old

teacher."¹

Before moving towards the conclusion of this chapter and the thesis, I should like to make two more points that illustrate the manner in which Fielding presents the figure of Adams as a contrast to the overall ethic of Joseph Andrews. The first of these points concerns the association between Adams and Pamela.

As was noted earlier, Joseph is the object of satiric ridicule during the early stages of the novel. This is particularly evident during the episode where he refuses the advances of Lady Booby. The reader laughs at him because he is still reliant upon the valueless precepts of his sister, Pamela, in words if not in deeds. He is, in other words, affected. Adams is explicitly associated with Pamela in having given Joseph what little education he has before he begins his symbolic journey of experience:

"Mr. Adams hath often told me that chastity is as great a virtue in a man as in a woman. He says he never knew any more than his wife, and I shall endeavour to follow his example. Indeed, it is owing entirely to his excellent sermons and advice, together with your letters, that I have been able to resist a temptation, which, he says, no man complies with, but he repents in this world, or is damned for it in the next . . ."²

. . . so perfectly modest was this young man; such mighty effects had the spotless example of the amiable Pamela, and the excellent sermons

¹Homer Goldberg, op. cit., p. 90. I am more or less in agreement with Mr. Goldberg, although I should wish to emphasise that Adams does not change, and that there is evidence from the very first to see Adams as the object of the classicist's satire. The effect on the reader, however, is, of course, cumulative.

²Joseph Andrews, p. 31.

of Mr. Adams, wrought upon him.¹

Adams' philosophy is as divorced from a genuine understanding of human nature as is Pamela's. Joseph eventually becomes symbolically capable of rejecting Pamela's values, just as he grows away from those of Adams. If Pamela is a figure in Joseph Andrews whose values are those of "transient social custom", then so are those that Adams expounds in his sermons, no matter how far his actual behaviour may be good-natured. His behaviour belongs, consequently, to the world of "inclinations" as much as do Pamela's, Leonora's, and Wilson's when a young man.

The second point I should like to make here concerns Adams' admission of never having read any English tragedy besides that of Addison. He quotes Addison in support of his argument that knowledge of the world leads to villainy when neither Joseph nor himself are villains in his eyes or in those of the reader. More importantly, Adams' admission of ignorance in this respect is reflected later in the work when Joseph chooses to quote from a tragedy:

They remained some time in silence; and groans and sighs issued from them both; at length Joseph burst out into the following soliloquy:

"Yes, I will bear my sorrows like a man,
But I must also feel them as a man.
I cannot but remember such things were,
And were most dear to me."

Adams asked him what stuff that was he repeated? To which he answered, they were some lines he had gotten by heart out of a play. - "Ay, there is nothing but heathenism to be learned from plays," replied he. "I never heard of any plays fit for a Christian to read, but Cato and the

¹Joseph Andrews, p. 38.

Conscious Lovers"¹

The parson's equation of morality with precepts, rather than with insight and experience, is strongly suggested here. His rejection of Shakespeare as worthy of study is unforgivable. This is especially so since the four lines perfectly express Joseph's natural human feelings during this episode. Joseph's quotation from Shakespeare is quite consistent with the tolerance and understanding of the classicist ethic, especially in its emphasis upon a comprehension of everything that makes up a man, his feelings as well as his fortitude. In opposing the insight into human nature that can be conveyed by means of the drama, Adams opposes the very same aesthetic principles that underlie a classicist work like Joseph Andrews.

Like the drama, Joseph Andrews works by means of representation: we may interpret the meanings of Fielding's novel in innumerable different ways, but all must centre on the fundamental aesthetic principle of giving body to general truths of human nature through the interlocking of fictional structures built of character and action. The classicist writer like Fielding must rely upon the reason of the reader to draw the appropriate conclusions as to how he should act in the light of the insight given him by his reading. Adams prefers philosophers' shallow dictates to the very special kind of poetic truth embodied in fiction, whether Shakespearean tragedy or a novel.

This chapter, and the thesis, may be concluded by summarising

¹Joseph Andrews, p. 261.

the relationship of Adams, first, to the structures examined in the previous chapters, and second, to an overall view of man as expressed by the structure of the novel as a whole.

First, Adams has no conventional role to play within the structure of romance. He does not, therefore, rightly belong to any predetermined symbolic pattern of action. Like Leonora and Wilson, Adams can be imagined as having the capacity to choose how he will act, as far as any fiction allows a character this possibility of freedom. He is, in this sense, like the reader.

Adams is shown as failing to exercise this freedom, found by Wilson. The primary values and meanings embodied by the romance structure are the images of education through experience, and of growth away from reliance upon precept, and the symbolic chaos of adolescence, towards symbolic maturity, security, and understanding of human nature. The ideals of hope and struggle lie behind these images. The opposition of Adams' personality to such values and meanings highlights both the nature of these enduring truths and the shortcomings of this particular 'free' agent.

Second, and related to this opposition, Adams is the object of satiric ridicule. As his benevolent inclinations never prompt him to act in opposition to Joseph and Fanny, he is never vicious, and, therefore, never the object of satiric detestation. But, since Adams is myopic with respect to human nature, he is subject to vanity, and hence, to the indirect dictates of "transient social custom". He pretends to be what he is not. This is immensely funny in his particular case,

because, as he has no part in the conventional pattern, the reader can laugh at him as a unique figure. He is not a reflection of a trait within every reader, but a separate individual. The reader, therefore, does not laugh at himself when he laughs at Adams. He laughs at the antics of a figure who cannot grasp the view of man embodied in the romance and satiric structures amongst which Adams, like the reader, is an intruder.

Adams gropes and stumbles from pillar to post amongst the mass of images of human nature that Fielding assembles to represent an overall view of man for the education and entertainment of the reader. Adams fails to lose his myopia, and is consequently subject to a barrage of satiric ridicule. Through such a presentation, the view of man to which Adams is so opposed, and for the opposition to which he suffers so much ignominy, is more clearly dramatised for the reader.

This overall view is, of course, unstatable. Joseph Andrews is an experience for the reader, and not a set of "isolable statements". If Fielding performs the artistic function of the classicist with any success, as indeed he does in Joseph Andrews, he gives the reader insight into his own nature by giving him an edifying experience of human nature in general. I have offered an interpretation of some broad and general meanings carried by the structures of which the novel is built.

The isolation of these structures from the novel as a whole shows in what ways a fiction written by a man with great respect for the classics as works of art, can embody truth without stating it. From the classicist point of view, values, too, can be embodied and not stated. Some of them can be implied to the reason of the reader solely by means

of the patterns and structures that an author interweaves one with another. These values are not translatable into precepts, but may imply an ideal order in which ethic and aesthetic become one. Andrew Wright makes this same point in an extremely eloquent manner, and I should like to leave these words as the conclusion to the thesis. He writes that Fielding "makes moralizing secondary to art - and art has the wonderfully beneficent motive of idealizing morality by making the actions of men into arrangements that are amusing and sometimes even beautiful."¹

¹Andrew Wright, Henry Fielding: Mask and Feast, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966, p. 30.

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