

**Voices, Identities, and Nations in the Narratives of  
Maria Edgeworth (1767-1849)**

**Yuri Yoshino**

**Goldsmiths College  
University of London**

**PhD  
2004**

## *Abstract*

This thesis argues that Edgeworth's novels are interventions in the debate of her contemporaries about the relationship between individuals and nations. The thesis situates her work in the context of the ideological transition in Europe from Enlightenment cosmopolitanism to Romantic nationalism, which rewrote that relationship. Edgeworth's texts interrogate how individuals should affiliate themselves with nations, often in terms of a particular patriotism which could legitimise individuals' national identities with cultural inclusiveness.

The recent scholarship on Edgeworth has revolved around politicised readings that typically neglect stylistic issues. The thesis proposes that an application of narratology could rectify this imbalance in criticism of Edgeworth and similar problems in criticism of other Irish writings, women's writings, and the Romantic-period novels. The earlier chapters thereby shed new light on the complexity of Edgeworth's national identity, by employing Lanser's narratology. It is argued that Edgeworth's 'authorial voice' and 'personal voice', whether they are considered separately or together, demonstrate the predicament of her narrative authorisation as an Anglo-Irish writer and constitute her national identity as at once problematic and culturally flexible.

The thematic formula of Edgeworth's ideal patriotism offers a solution to such a problem of her national identity, as the later chapters contend. The thesis demonstrates that this formula has ideological underpinnings in the discourse of both Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Romantic nationalism. The formula, moreover, characterises ideal patriots as multilingual/multicultural in the sense that they can appreciate cultural differences without exclusive discrimination. Edgeworth's ideal patriots are thus modelled as overcoming the limitations of universalist Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and differential Romantic nationalism.

The final chapter demonstrates that Edgeworth's novels may not necessarily authorise this formula coherently. It is, however, argued that in such instances, her 'authorial voice' still verifies the viability of the formula, by legitimising her as an ideal patriot of the Irish, and the British nation with the multilingual/multicultural narrative voice crossing the borders between nations, social groups, and genders. The thesis concludes that Edgeworth's novels reproduce a colonial context despite their attempt to resolve that thorny context.

## Contents

<i>Abstract</i> .....	2
<i>Acknowledgements</i> .....	6
<i>List of Abbreviations</i> .....	8
INTRODUCTION .....	9
THE LATE-TWENTIETH CENTURY REVIVAL OF INTEREST IN EDGEWORTH: THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MARILYN BUTLER AND OTHERS	
0.1 Butler's <i>Maria Edgeworth</i> .....	22
0.2 Butler's <i>Jane Austen and the War of Ideas</i> .....	31
0.3 After Butler .....	34
CHAPTER 1 .....	45
A REVIEW OF WORK ON EDGEWORTH AND NARRATIVE MODES	
1.1 Edgeworth and Style .....	45
1.2 Work on Edgeworth and Narrative Modes .....	48
1.3 Lanser's Contextualised Narratology .....	55
CHAPTER 2 .....	59
EDGEWORTH'S NARRATIVE VOICES AND SUSAN SNIADER LANSER'S NARRATOLOGY: THE CONCEPTS OF AUTHORIAL VOICE AND PERSONAL VOICE	
2.1 Introduction to Lanser's Narratology: <i>The Narrative Act</i> .....	59
2.2 Lanser's <i>Fictions of Authority</i> and Edgeworth's Narrative Voices .....	72
CHAPTER 3 .....	86
NARRATIVE AUTHORITY AND IDENTITY: AUTHORIAL VOICE AND PERSONAL VOICE IN EDGEWORTH'S NARRATIVES	
3.1 The Genealogy of Edgeworth's Narrative Voices .....	91
3.2 The Genesis of Authorial Voice: <i>Letters for Literary Ladies to Which is         Added an Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification, The Parent's         Assistant, and Belinda</i> .....	94
3.3 Diversion to Personal Voice: <i>Castle Rackrent</i> and <i>Ennui</i> .....	103
3.4 Narrative Practice and Identity: <i>Ormond</i> .....	106



CHAPTER 4 .....	110
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF EDGEWORTH, JANE AUSTEN, AND FRANCES BURNEY: THE NARRATIVES OF INDIVIDUALS AND NATIONS	
4.1 The Concept of Patriotism in <i>Patronage</i> .....	114
4.2 Patriotism, Professionalism, and Language in <i>Patronage</i> .....	118
4.3 Patriotism, Language, and Professionalism in <i>Mansfield Park</i> .....	139
4.4 Patriotism, Language, and Professionalism in <i>The Wanderer</i> .....	147
 CHAPTER 5 .....	 157
EDGEWORTH'S IDEAL PATRIOTISM AND ITS IDEOLOGICAL STRANDS: ENLIGHTENMENT COSMOPOLITANISM AND ROMANTIC NATIONALISM	
5.1 The Discourses of Enlightenment Cosmopolitanism and Romantic Nationalism: David Hume, Adam Smith, and Edmund Burke .....	158
5.2 Case Studies .....	177
5.2.1 <i>Essay on Irish Bulls</i> .....	177
5.2.2 <i>Harrington</i> .....	185
5.2.3 <i>Helen</i> .....	200
 CHAPTER 6 .....	 219
CONCLUSION: EDGEWORTH'S IDEAL PATRIOTISM, NARRATIVE VOICES, AND IDENTITY	
6.1 Edgeworth's Narrative Mode and Ideal Patriotism .....	223
6.1.1 <i>Castle Rackrent</i> .....	223
6.1.2 <i>Ennui</i> .....	227
6.1.3 <i>Harrington</i> .....	232
6.1.4 <i>Belinda</i> .....	234
6.1.5 <i>Ormond</i> .....	240
6.1.6 <i>Helen</i> .....	250
6.2 <i>The Absentee</i> and <i>Patronage</i> .....	253
 <i>Bibliography</i> .....	 262



The work presented in this thesis is my own.

## *Acknowledgements*

I would like to thank my supervisors, Professor Bill Mc Cormack, Dr Hayley Davis, and Dr Michael Simpson, for their insightful advice and encouragement. I am indebted to Professor Mc Cormack for having strong conviction in the project of this thesis from the beginning and for sharing with me his enthusiasm for Edgeworth's work as well as his expertise in literary scholarship and Irish studies. I am grateful to Dr Davis for assisting with my exploration of narratology, stylistics, and linguistics and also for giving me the wonderful experience of teaching at Goldsmiths. I thank Dr Simpson for helping me to make this thesis more rigid as a 'thesis' and to navigate in the field of Romantic studies. I am also grateful to Professor Chris Baldick for his judicious commentary on the manuscript of the thesis. My thanks to Mrs. Maria Macdonald, the postgraduate secretary for the Department of English and Comparative Literature at Goldsmiths, for her assistance in various occasions, must be recorded here, too. At the Institute of English Studies, University of London, the Irish Studies Seminar provided me with a stimulating forum where I could catch up with the cutting edge of Irish Studies and receive responses to draft manuscripts of the thesis. I am grateful to Professor Warwick Gould at the Institute for his generous support of my doctoral project. I also appreciate Professor David Nokes's commentary on the earliest phase of this thesis. It was fortunate that I had an opportunity to speak with Professor Susan Lanser about narratology and Edgeworth at a conference in 2000. I wish to thank her for the valuable discussion and her encouragement. I am grateful to Professor Kazuhisa Takahashi and Professor George Hughes for supporting my longest journey to Britain. The source of the diverse questions in this thesis, encompassing the conventional dichotomies between language and literature and between form and contents, can be traced back to my studies at the University of Tokyo under their guidance. The prospect of the appointment as a lecturer at Hitotsubashi University was great encouragement, as well.

I am thankful to the following funding bodies for providing financial support to my doctoral research at different stages: the Ishizaka Foundation, University of London Central Research Fund, the British Federation of Women Graduates Charitable Foundation, and the British Association of Irish Studies. My

thanks are also due to the librarians at the British Library, the Bodleian Library, Oxford, the National Library of Ireland, Dublin, and the National Library of Scotland, especially for their aids in my access to the Edgeworth papers.

There are numerous friends and colleagues whose kind support I would like to acknowledge here; special thanks are expressed to those who shared with me the joys and pains of my thesis writing in London. Finally, my deepest gratitude goes to my family, Yoshihiro, Kazuko, Yuki and Sousuke Yoshino, and Kazue Sekiguchi, for their unfailingly warm support, without which this thesis could not have been completed. I also wish to thank my late grandmother, Ishi Yoshino, for teaching me the importance of pen to women through her creative compositions of *haiku*. This thesis is dedicated to my family.



## *Abbreviations of Works by Edgeworth and Textual Note*

<i>A</i>	<i>The Absentee</i> ( <i>Works</i> , v)
<i>B</i>	<i>Belinda</i> (Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin's edition from J. M. Dent)
<i>CR</i>	<i>Castle Rackrent</i> ( <i>Works</i> , i)
<i>E</i>	<i>Ennui</i> ( <i>Works</i> , i)
<i>Ha</i>	<i>Harrington</i> ( <i>Works</i> , III)
<i>He</i>	<i>Helen</i> ( <i>Works</i> , IX)
<i>IB</i>	<i>Essay on Irish Bulls</i> ( <i>Works</i> , i)
<i>LL</i>	<i>Letters for Literary Ladies</i> (Claire Connolly's edition from Everyman)
<i>M</i>	<i>Manœuvring</i> ( <i>Works</i> , IV)
<i>O</i>	<i>Ormond</i> ( <i>Works</i> , VIII)
<i>P</i>	<i>Patronage</i> ( <i>Works</i> , VI & VII)
<i>PA</i>	<i>The Parent's Assistant</i> ( <i>Works</i> , X)
<i>Prac E</i>	<i>Practical Education</i> (co-authored with Richard Lovell Edgeworth; <i>Works</i> , XI)
<i>Prof E</i>	<i>Essays on Professional Education</i> (co-authored with RLE; 1 <sup>st</sup> edition)
<i>SJ</i>	<i>An Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification</i> (Claire Connolly's edition from Everyman)
<i>Works</i>	<i>The Novels and Selected Works of Maria Edgeworth</i> , ed. by Marilyn Butler and others, 12 vols. (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1999-2003). For further details, see Bibliography.

## *Introduction*

### **The Late Twentieth-Century Revival of Interest in Maria Edgeworth: The Contribution of Marilyn Butler and Others**

This thesis argues that Maria Edgeworth's novels are significant interventions in the debates of her contemporaries about the relationship between individuals and nations. Edgeworth's oeuvre was composed when the intellectual and ideological climate in Europe was undergoing a paradigm shift from Enlightenment cosmopolitanism to Romantic nationalism. The transition rewrote the relationship between individuals and nations, opting for the nation as constituted by individuals of common cultural heritage, over the nation as a geopolitical community inhabited by 'the citizens of the world'. The question of individuals and nations had already been a significant issue amid the repercussions of Britain's colonial expansion since the early seventeenth century, when the Union of England and Scotland took effect. For instance, Adam Smith's economic and philosophical treatise the *Wealth of Nations* (1776) interrogates the economic relationship between individuals and nations. In the treatise the nation is conceived as a community bonded by economic ties rather than cultural heritage. On the other hand, Edmund Burke's politico-philosophical discourse, in particular *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), disseminated the notion of 'nation' as defined with vivid 'organicist metaphors' for cultural bonds, across Britain.<sup>1</sup>

The debates about individuals and nations feature in the literary discourse of the period, as well. The poetry of the time often represents the relationship between individuals and nations as the relationship between the 'poet' and the nation. The self-conscious image of the 'poet' modelled by Romantic poets is typically of the chosen 'prophet' or 'legislator' of the nation, whose creative/poetical imagination is expected to envision organic bonds desired within the nation and between humanity and nature. Wordsworth's preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (1800/02), Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* (1817), and Percy Bysshe Shelley's 'A Defense

---

<sup>1</sup> Angela Keane, *Women Writers and the English Nation in the 1790s* (2000), p. 2.



of Poetry' (1821; published 1840) provide prominent examples.<sup>2</sup> Such a self-definition of the 'poet' denotes affinity with Burke's Romantic nationalism in *Reflections* in the sense that it shares the ideological implications of the portrait of 'the ideal patrician class' in *Reflections*.<sup>3</sup>

The discourse about individuals and nations in the novel was fuelled by the 'English Jacobin novels' of the 1790s, which transformed the novel into a politicised medium, or 'a vehicle for ideological communication'.<sup>4</sup> For instance, noting the intertextuality between Wollstonecraft's *Maria; or the Wrongs of Woman* (1798) and Charlotte Smith's *Young Philosopher* (1798), Angela Keane contends that 'the force of Wollstonecraft's unhappy legacy is consistent with Smith's own indictment of the state of the English nation in 1798, which she implies when she sends her young philosopher west, to live by the dictates of reason, not custom'.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, as Cannon Schmitt argues, Radcliffe's novels respond to the question of 'what it means to be a nation' 'by elaborating in their pages a version of English national identity'.<sup>6</sup>

Heightened by the effect of the Union between Ireland and Britain, the articulation of the debates about individuals and nations in the novel 'consolidated' the new genres of 'national tale' and 'historical novel' in the 1810s.<sup>7</sup> Edgeworth's so-called Irish tales after *Castle Rackrent* (1800) pioneered the consolidation of the national tale as a genre and prompted the formation of the historical novel.<sup>8</sup> For instance, Edgeworth's novels of the 1810s share the exploration of individuals' negotiations with the nation as their narrative vehicle with national tales and historical novels of the same decade: Jane Porter's *Scottish Chief* (1810), Sydney Owenson's *The Missionary: An Indian Tale* (1811) and *O'Donnel: A National Tale* (1814), Charles Maturin's *The Milesian Chief* (1812), Jane West's *The Loyalists: An Historical Novel* (1812), and Walter Scott's *Waverley Novels*. It is a literary historical commonplace that Scott acknowledged *Waverley* (1814) was inspired by

---

<sup>2</sup> Marilyn Gaull, *English Romanticism* (1988), pp. 142-43.

<sup>3</sup> Keane, p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Gary Kelly, *English Fiction of the Romantic Period, 1789-1830* (1989), pp. 25, 29-30. See also Katie Trumpener, *Bardic Nationalism* (1997), p. 20. For the influence of the 'English Jacobin novel' and the 'Anti-Jacobin' novel on Edgeworth's work, see Marilyn Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* (1975), pp. 124-57.

<sup>5</sup> Keane, p. 107.

<sup>6</sup> Cannon Schmitt, *Alien Nation* (1997), p. 24.

<sup>7</sup> Trumpener, p. 131.

<sup>8</sup> *Castle Rackrent* defines itself as a 'national tale' as its subtitle 'An Hibernian Tale'



‘the admirable Irish portraits drawn by Miss Edgeworth’.<sup>9</sup>

In the Irish literary context, novels are haunted by the question of individuals’ membership of the nation because of the controversial social status of the privileged minority, the ‘Protestant Ascendancy’. For instance, besides the texts of Owenson and Maturin I have just mentioned, novels by J. Sheridan Le Fanu, Somerville and Ross, James Joyce, and Elizabeth Bowen, all resonate with Edgeworth’s novels in this regard. Since the Protestant Ascendancy occupied ‘ambiguous positions as at once insiders and outsiders’, the ideological shift from universalist cosmopolitanism to cultural nationalism was especially uncongenial to the members of the class.<sup>10</sup> The ethos of cultural nationalism would, in theory, exclude the Protestant Ascendancy from the Irish nation since the Protestant Ascendancy was aligned more closely with the English nation in terms of cultural and religious inheritance than with the indigenous Irish people. In the Ireland of Edgeworth’s time, individuals’ religious affiliation was interpreted as a fundamental index of political allegiance. The political allegiance and national identity of the Protestant Ascendancy were thus seen as dubiously suspended or hyphenated between the English nation and the Irish nation. Edgeworth’s national identity has been dubbed as ‘Anglo-Irish’, and its ambiguity along with the elusiveness of her political allegiance have been the focus of recent scholarship on her work.

This thesis argues that there is a discrepancy in Edgeworth’s narrative modes and that this discrepancy points to a tension between her narrative authorisation and her national identity. The discrepancy is, more specifically, the discrepancy between the narrative authority in English tales, which is a ‘third-person’ narrator, and the narrative authorities in the two early Irish tales, which are ‘first-person’ narrators. I view the former narrative authority as contingent on Edgeworth’s name, more precisely her social identities conveyed by the name, in the title page. On the contrary, blood ties with the indigenous Irish nation are central to the latter narrative authority. This discrepancy marks the predicament of Edgeworth’s construction of narrative authority, and furthermore, the question of her legitimacy as a member of the Irish nation. I contend that the

---

indicates.

<sup>9</sup> Walter Scott, *Waverley*, ed. by Claire Lamont (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 341.

discrepancy in narrative modes constructs Edgeworth's Anglo-Irish identity as problematic. The thesis, moreover, elucidates the blurred boundaries between the imaginative consciousness of Edgeworth and 'first-person' narrators, including those descending from the indigenous Irish nation, in her literary sketches. It is reasonable to understand that such writing practice rewrites Edgeworth's national identity as culturally flexible and provides a solution to the problem of her narrative authorisation, and, moreover, her identity. Since the cultural flexibility is elusive to the reader unless Edgeworth's literary sketches are taken into account, I argue that the cultural flexibility observed at that level of her narrative practice is not a viable solution.

The thesis, furthermore, enquires how Edgeworth's texts negotiate with such a troubled and culturally flexible national identity specifically in light of the paradigm shift towards Burkean nationalism. My contention is that Edgeworth's novels formulate a particular ideal patriotism which could legitimise the kind of national identity or relationship between an individual and the nation. This contention postulates that the notion of ideal patriotism is bound up with the question of what sort of individuals should be regarded as legitimate members of the nation. For instance, the rhetoric of ideal patriotism often provides such phrases as 'a true Briton' and prompts the question of who are 'true' members of the nation. The thesis identifies the ideological underpinnings of Edgeworth's ideal patriotism in the politico-philosophical discourse of both Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Romantic nationalism, specifically as expressed in the work of David Hume, Adam Smith, and Edmund Burke. Even when contrasting Enlightenment cosmopolitanism as a universalist ideology and Romantic nationalism as a culturally differential ideology, I will note the continuities between them, as well. For example, Burke's assumption that the application of what he considers as English virtues such as the spirit of chivalry could redeem some of the shortcomings of the French nation is considered as similar to the universalist understanding of Enlightenment philosophers. It will thus be emphasised that the co-existent affinities with both Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Romantic nationalism in Edgeworth's works are comprehensible given such a mutual affinity between the ideologies themselves.

---

<sup>10</sup> Robert Tracy, *The Unappeasable Host* (1998), p. 3.



The thesis suggests that Edgeworth's ideal patriotism is creative in its attempt to overcome the limitations of these ideologies. Her fictional alliance of the landed class with a professional meritocracy envisions ideal patriots endowed with what I will call 'multilingualism'. Sufficient multilingual competence in the figures of ideal patriots is shown to enable the characters to hold communication across national and social groups and extend benevolence beyond their own social and national groups. Sufficient multilingual competence is, furthermore, conceived in Edgeworth's novels as a synonym of 'multiculturalism', in the sense that her ideal patriots are depicted as appreciative of cultural differences while keeping a broad cosmopolitan perspective. The formula is thus a solution to the shortcomings of universalist cosmopolitanism and differential nationalism alike. What seems to be innovative in Edgeworth's formula of ideal patriotism is her emphasis on a professional meritocracy as an educational institution of multilingualism/multiculturalism. Her novels often portray characters with professional experience as ideal patriots. These characters are shown to acquire multilingual ability in their professional life. Such multilingual ability and self-exertion are conceived to be fundamental to success in a professional meritocracy and furthermore to the welfare of the nation. While Edgeworth's novels appear to advocate social mobility by granting a significant social role and status to a professional meritocracy, they reveal that a professional meritocracy is not accessible to every character. Illustrating that family connections and financial support are indispensable for success in a professional meritocracy, the texts take traditional landed order for granted. Women's inability to enter a professional meritocracy is also noted in her fiction.

I argue that such limitations of Edgeworth's ideal patriotism in terms of class and gender roles are inconsistent with the notion of inclusive national membership and may therefore not solve the identity problem of her as an Anglo-Irish woman writer. It will be noted that her novels do not necessarily authorise the thematic formula coherently. In my view, the potential incoherence in the novels' dissemination of ideal patriotism signals, not the theoretical failure of the formula, but the sheer difficulty entailed in the novel's negotiation of Edgeworth's national identity. I will contend that the negotiation urges mediation at different levels of the text, such as the thematic level and the level of narrative authorisation. In particular, I will emphasise the significance of Edgeworth's



'third-person' narration as facilitating the negotiation in accordance with the formula of ideal patriotism. Edgeworth's 'third-person' narration reconciles her landed-class femininity with the male-oriented professional meritocracy, since it is the narrative voice of a professional writer belonging to the meritocracy of letters while the writer is a woman from the landed class. My contention is therefore that despite its ideological liabilities, the thematic formula of ideal patriotism enables Edgeworth's 'third-person' narrator to prescribe, demonstrate, and disseminate the ideal, as the multilingual/multicultural voice of an ideal patriot who can cross the borders between nations, classes, and genders.

Given these functions of the authorial voice, novels which have the cooperation of the authorial voice as narrative authority and the thematic formula of the ideal patriotism may well offer the most viable solution to Edgeworth's identity problem. Taking *Patronage* and *The Absentee* as examples to demonstrate this cooperation, I will note the discrepancy between the version of ideal patriotism for English society and the version of ideal patriotism for Irish society. The discrepancy is in terms of the text's recommendation of a professional meritocracy to the protagonist and implies that more social mobility is prescribed to English society than to Irish society. I will also point out that although the formula can reward successful professionals with social mobility the institution of professional meritocracy is usually uncongenial to most of the indigenous Irish population since it is aligned with the British Empire. My conclusion will therefore be that Edgeworth's novels inevitably reproduce a colonial context, for all the innovative formula of ideal patriotism and employment of narrative voices. Although they are thus unable to offer a fundamental solution to the problem of the Anglo-Irish identity, it is necessary to acknowledge that her novels contribute not only ideological inspirations but also artistic means to her contemporaries' debates about individuals and nations, in proposing a solution to harmonise the relationship between individuals and the nation.

Perhaps it is not too much of an exaggeration to state that the literary criticism devoted to the Romantic period has usually been the criticism of so-called Romantic poetry. Yet the past three decades have witnessed stimulating studies about the novel of the period. Marilyn Butler's *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas*

(1975)<sup>11</sup> has mapped the novel onto the political partisanship of the revolutionary context and provided an illuminating account of the repercussions of the politics in the novelistic genre. Gary Kelly's *English Fiction of the Romantic Period 1789-1830* (1989) has presented a comprehensive survey of the English fiction of the period and contributed to raise the profile of the novel as an area of Romantic studies. Kelly has developed Butler's approach to connect ideologies and literary discourse, in particular by exploring the class politics of the texts. It was Katie Trumpener's *Bardic Nationalism* (1997) which situated the novel of the period in an even wider context. Trumpener has presented a panoramic view of the literary network across the British Empire with emphasis on the centrality of Anglo-Celtic literature to the making of 'English literature'. In these studies, Edgeworth's oeuvre is recognised as a literary landmark for its social and intellectual awareness and its launching of national tale. These studies largely apply thematic, contextual, and intertextual approaches, while looking at some basic generic and formal aspects of the text. Nicola Watson's *Revolution and the Form of the British Novel 1790-1825* (1994) is more strategically focused on tracing relations between the form of the novel and the politics of the time than Butler, Kelly, and Trumpener, while acknowledging its indebtedness to Butler's approach. Watson's enquiry concentrates on the exploration of the thematic motif of letters as an ideological index of the text in the revolutionary context. Her approach is thus heavily thematic, contextual, and intertextual rather than rigorously stylistic. Keane's *Women Writers and the English Nation in the 1790s* (2000) uncovers women writers' contribution of the representation of Englishness to the debates about the nation. Miranda J. Burgess's *British Fiction and the Production of Social Order* (2000) grapples with the 'romance' of the period and examines the genre's interaction with the discourse of political economy. By elaborating the politico-literary chart drawn by their predecessors, Keane and Burgess have helped to maintain the topicality of the novel from the Romantic period in English studies. The recent studies have thus contributed the reconstruction of the intertextuality between the novel and politics in the British Empire of the period, but their approaches have not availed themselves of a narratological method. This thesis aims to complement such politicised readings of the novel of the period with a narratological approach, by using

---

<sup>11</sup> Hereafter referred to as *War of Ideas*.



Edgeworth's texts as case studies. As the following paragraphs will indicate, the criticism of her work seems to typify the unbalanced dependence on politicised readings at the expense of stylistic aspects of the text in the criticism of not only the novel of the Romantic period but also Irish writings and women's writings.

Butler's *Maria Edgeworth* and *War of Ideas* contributed to the revival of interest in Edgeworth.<sup>12</sup> Some problems in the recent studies on Edgeworth seem to be generated from their conscious or subconscious endorsement of the methodology and findings in the two studies. The inclination towards broad psychological analysis and the indifference to stylistic features are two representative symptoms. Indeed, the two problems appear to be interlinked. The psychological analysis usually engages with Edgeworth's female gender and/or Anglo-Irish identity. The issues of gender and national identity are inevitably political and invite politicised readings. When politicised readings establish links between the text and their theoretical perspectives, it is often at the cost of stylistic analysis. I do not mean to attribute these two problems of Edgeworth's criticism directly to *Maria Edgeworth* and the *War of Ideas*. Rather, my emphasis lies with the influence of these books. In my perspective, modern scholarship on Edgeworth evolved from these two studies, by elaborating both their potentially beneficial and deficient implications. Politicised readings of her texts have contributed riveting interpretations which are provoked by the two studies' illumination of gender politics between daughter and father, on the one hand, and of the political turbulences in the Ireland of the time on the other. At the same time, these politicised readings have replicated the two studies' tendency to omit any detailed narrative analysis. The recent scholarship on Edgeworth's works has thus been dominated by politicised readings that typically apply postcolonial and/or feminist theories. Whatever their virtues, these readings often appear as somewhat reductive due to the lack of attention to matters of form, such as narrative mode. The methodological proposal in this thesis is that an application of narratology could rectify both this imbalance in criticism of Edgeworth's work and a similar problem in criticism of other Irish writings and/or women's writings, and moreover the novel of the Romantic period. The three genres have generally attracted politicised interpretations. Situated at the junction of these three bodies of work,

---

<sup>12</sup> Butler, *Maria Edgeworth* (1972). Hereafter referred to as *ME* in bibliographical information.



Edgeworth's texts are triply vulnerable to the risk of a reductive tendency in politicised readings.

The methodology of this thesis combines the application of Susan Sniader Lanser's narratology and more traditional approaches such as thematic, contextual, and intertextual analyses. The priority of the thesis is to fill the methodological gap in the criticism of Edgeworth by introducing the application of narratology rather than to contest existing historically contextualising studies. My historical contextualisation may appear quite minimal, but it is intended to give a sufficient space for the combination of narratological and thematic queries. The narratological notions this thesis employs will be discussed in detail in Chapters 2 and 3. It should be mentioned here, however, that Lanser's narratology takes the notion of narrative authority into serious account and links the author's social identities and narrative form. Her narratology identifies three kinds of narrative voices as major narrative modes available for women writers. This thesis applies her notions of 'authorial voice' and 'personal voice', which roughly correspond to 'third-person' narration and 'first-person' narration respectively. The advantage of Lanser's definitions of authorial voice and personal voice is that they acknowledge a commonality between the two narrative modes, which have conventionally been regarded as contrasting. In particular, she notes the two narrative modes' drive for self-authorisation. The employment of Lanser's theory enables me to see the commonality between Edgeworth's authorial voice and personal voice in terms of their narrative acts to authorise narratives of individuals and nations. Such a perspective enables me to detect a discrepancy in Edgeworth's narrative authorisations of English tales and Irish tales and to account for the discrepancy more systematically than previously attempted. The application of narratology will then be integrated with thematic analysis that includes emphasis on the ideological implications of the text. The significance of the methodology becomes evident when we discover that due to the occasional incompatibility between the thematic formula of ideal patriotism and the narrative authority, Edgeworth's texts do not necessarily authorise the formula coherently. The contradiction can be illuminated only when thematic analysis is contextualised by a narratological approach.

The scope of this thesis is designed to cover a wide range of Edgeworth's narratives. Particular emphasis is made to reduce the conventional critical tendency

to confine readings of her works within ‘mutually exclusive categories’.<sup>13</sup> For example, her Irish tales tend to be discussed within the Irish and British contexts with little reference to the English and British contexts. W. J. Mc Cormack has alerted critics to the problem of such a critical practice and demonstrated a more comprehensive approach to encompass her Irish works and non-Irish works.<sup>14</sup> Cliona Ó Gallchoir and Jacqueline E. Belanger have recently applied Mc Cormack’s approach and testified to its benefit.<sup>15</sup> The selection of the texts for discussion in the thesis is thus made to include relevant major works by Edgeworth and various narrative genres and materials: Irish tales, English tales, educational writings, essays, stories for children, and literary sketches.<sup>16</sup> The focus of the overall scope is the novel as a politicised medium to disseminate the author’s ideology. In particular, *Patronage* is considered as a text central to the questions of the thesis, for it is the most articulate in plotting ideal patriotism to legitimise individuals’ national identity.

To add historical and intertextual dimensions, my argument about Edgeworth’s ideal patriotism incorporates a comparison with novels by Frances Burney and Jane Austen. My extensive citation from the writings of David Hume, Adam Smith, and Edmund Burke is designed to add historical and philosophical depth to the thesis. The choice of these two discourses is strategic in the sense that the first group represents the prominent novelistic discourse produced by Edgeworth’s female contemporaries, whereas the second group represents the more elevated ‘male’ discourse of political philosophy in the period.

The first part of this thesis, from the Introduction to Chapter 3, is intended to shed new light on the intricate textual construction of Edgeworth’s national identity. Narratology is mainly applied to analyse the articulations of Edgeworth’s national identity at the level of narrative mode. With emphasis on the concepts of narrative authority and narrative authorisation, the thesis will elucidate contrasts and

---

<sup>13</sup> W. J. Mc Cormack, ‘The Tedium of History’ in *Ideology and the Historians*, ed. by Ciaran Brady (1991), p. 84.

<sup>14</sup> ‘Tedium’, p. 84.

<sup>15</sup> Ó Gallchoir, ‘Maria Edgeworth and the Rise of National Literature’ (1998); Belanger, ‘Educating the Reading Public: British Critical Reception of the Irish Fiction of Maria Edgeworth and Lady Morgan, 1800-1830’ (1999). See also Ó Gallchoir, “‘The Whole Fabric Must Be Perfect’”, in *Gender Perspectives in Nineteenth-Century Ireland*, ed. by Margaret Kelleher and James H. Murphy, (1997), p. 104.

<sup>16</sup> Edgeworth’s French oeuvre is not discussed since other works seem to serve as more viable samples for the questions of the thesis.



commonalities between her authorial voices and personal voices. I will argue that the complex composition of Edgeworth's narrative authority is instrumental in the construction of her ambiguous Anglo-Irish identity as troubled and culturally flexible at once.

The second part of the thesis, from Chapter 4 to Chapter 6, inquires into how Edgeworth's texts attempt to resolve such a troubled and culturally flexible national identity. It will be suggested that her narratives formulate a certain ideal patriotism which could legitimise such a national identity. Methodologically, thematic analysis is mainly employed to clarify the formula of ideal patriotism illustrated in the narratives. The ideological analysis of the formula is then conducted by a comparative discussion of the writings of Hume, Smith, and Burke. The end of the second part enhances the combination of the narratological approach and the thematic analysis. The enhanced methodological junction will elucidate incoherence in the dissemination of ideal patriotism by Edgeworth's novels. My discussion on this matter will be that the incoherence points to the viability, rather than the theoretical failure, of the formula of ideal patriotism. At the thematic level, the ideological liabilities of the formula in terms of class and gender are incompatible with Edgeworth's identity problem as an Anglo-Irish woman writer. At the level of narrative authority, the formula could solve the problem, in theory, by allowing her authorial voice to resolve the incompatibility between the formula and Edgeworth's identity.

Chapter 1 will introduce Edgeworth's interest in narrative strategies, especially stylistic devices, in her private correspondence, literary sketches, and published works. Existing studies of her narrative modes will then be reviewed. I will argue that these few works are commonly lacking in the contextualisation of their otherwise stimulating narrative analysis. To overcome this methodological defect, I will propose that an application of Lanser's narratology can be legitimately applied to Edgeworth's narratives. The rest of the chapter will justify why Lanser's theory is more suitable for the purpose of the thesis than other theories of narrative. The crucial feature of Lanser's model in this regard is its recognition of text as context-bound, via the philosophical understanding of the text in speech act theory. In particular, Lanser's model stresses the impact of the social identity of the author as defined by gender and class, on the construction of narrative authority, especially the self-authorisation of the narrative voices. My contention is that Lanser's



emphasis on the concept of narrative authority and narrative authorisation makes her model the most appropriate to the discussion of the narrative authorisation of Edgeworth's ideal patriotism.

Further details of Lanser's narratology will be explored in Chapter 2. I will start by discussing Lanser's *The Narrative Act*, which gives foundation to *Fictions of Authority*.<sup>17</sup> The merits and limitations of the theories in the two books will be addressed and coordinated with the purpose of the thesis. In particular, the application of speech act theory in *The Narrative Act* will be investigated since the application of speech act theory to literary discourse is controversial. *The Narrative Act* is influenced by Mary Louise Pratt's coordination of speech act theory and literary discourse, but attempts to correct its theoretical flaws. I will argue that this attempt by Lanser is not an entirely convincing solution, since it is entrapped within the framework of speech act theory. As Lanser acknowledges, speech act theory is founded on a certain theoretical incoherence, especially in linguistic terms. On the other hand, I will contend that the theory of *Fictions of Authority* seems to tackle successfully the theoretical problem by its translation of linguistic concepts into her original concepts oriented towards rhetorical properties.

Having thus negotiated the potential weakness of Lanser's narratology, the thesis will apply the key concepts in *Fictions of Authority* to Edgeworth's narrative modes in Chapter 3. Some modifications of Lanser's model will be made here to adapt it to the specific examples of Edgeworth's narrative modes. Among the categories of narrative voices in Lanser's model, 'authorial voice' and 'personal voice' will be utilised as relevant to Edgeworth's narratives. This chapter thereupon contends that the way Edgeworth employs the authorial voice and the personal voice in her novels constructs her national identity as problematic. It is, moreover, observed that the making of the personal voice in Edgeworth's writing practice implies cultural flexibility that could offer a solution to the problem of the tense Anglo-Irish identity. My argument about this matter is that the cultural flexibility recognisable at this level of narrative practice is elusive unless literary sketches are included in the reader's scope and therefore that it is not so valid a solution.

---

<sup>17</sup> Susan Sniader Lanser, *The Narrative Act* (1981), hereafter referred to as *NA* in bibliographical information; Lanser, *Fictions of Authority* (1992), hereafter referred to as *FA* in bibliographical information.

Chapter 4 will move on to discussing the more viable solution to the problem of the Anglo-Irish identity, that is, Edgeworth's thematic formula of ideal patriotism that could license national membership to individuals without any cultural screenings. This chapter identifies the major feature of the formula by a reading of *Patronage*. *Patronage* will be discussed along with Austen's *Mansfield Park* and Burney's *The Wanderer*. It will be demonstrated that *Patronage*'s engagement with the notion of multilingualism concentrates on male-oriented professional meritocracy in contrast with *Mansfield Park* and *The Wanderer*, which engage with the notion in terms of 'proper' femininity.

The first section of Chapter 5 will explain the major ideological underpinnings of Edgeworth's ideal patriotism and its definition of the nation by referring to works by Hume, Smith, and Burke. The definition of the nation and its implicit conditions for ideal patriots in terms of class, linguistic abilities, and gender roles in the writings of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Romantic nationalism will be highlighted. The second section of the chapter will analyse how such ideological parameters are recycled with innovative modifications within Edgeworth's illustrations of ideal patriotism and its legitimisation of individuals' national membership. The texts selected for case studies are *Irish Bulls*, *Harrington*, and *Helen*. These texts not only serve as examples of what the thesis has hitherto identified as the major ideological underpinnings of Edgeworth's ideal patriotism but also as textual sources to develop the thesis's conceptualisation of her ideal patriotism. I will argue that the interest in preserving the traditional landed order in her ideal patriotism undermines its claim on cosmopolitan ideals. *Harrington* is read as a crucial example to reveal more sharply the class prejudice which is implicit in *Patronage*. I will also contend that Edgeworth's work upholds 'proper' femininity at the expense of multilingualism in female characters at the thematic level. The ideological limitations in terms of class and gender relations in her ideal patriotism, and the incompatibility between such limitations and her social identities are thereby addressed.

Chapter 6 concludes the thesis by examining how thematic contents and narrative form do, and do not, cooperate in Edgeworth's novel in disseminating the ideal patriotism. For this investigation, the combination of the two methodological strands in the thesis will be enhanced: narratological analysis and thematic analysis. Major texts discussed in the thesis will be revisited. I will observe that Edgeworth's



texts do not necessarily authorise ideal patriotism coherently, given the occasional contradiction between thematic contents and narrative authority. My elaboration on the observation will be that the contradiction symbolises the difficulty of the text's negotiation with the Anglo-Irish identity and that the negotiation requires mediation at more than one level of the text. I will furthermore contend that the authorial voice is the most effective narrative mode to conduct the negotiation, and moreover demonstrates the viability of the formula of ideal patriotism. A comparative reading of *Patronage* and *The Absentee* is then conducted as case studies of such cooperation between the authorial voice and the thematic formula that could solve the problem of the Anglo-Irish identity. The comparative study will elucidate a discrepancy between the version of ideal patriotism for English society and the version for Irish society and thereupon suggest that the discrepancy would reproduce the colonial context, which generates the very problem of the Anglo-Irish identity. Such a mutual dependence with the colonial context would, I will propose, render Edgeworth's novels relevant to the historical liability of the Union between Ireland and Britain.

### 0.1 Butler's *Maria Edgeworth*

Butler's *Maria Edgeworth* is taken as the foundation of modern scholarship on the author. This book remains the most comprehensive study on Edgeworth to date. This study and the *War of Ideas* moreover hold a strong spell over studies by post-Butler scholars, for both their merits and demerits. It thus seems appropriate to start the thesis by offering a critical survey of the two master works by Butler. Given its substantial contents, it is inevitable to focus on selected benefits and limitations of *Maria Edgeworth*. It is not my intention here, either, to propose a new biographical or comprehensive study to challenge the book.

*Maria Edgeworth* conflates a new version of Edgeworth's biography and studies of her work. The contents are structured to discuss her life and work mainly in chronological order. Due to the biographical orientation, the study may appear to have somewhat chaotic organisation as a critical assessment. The study is, nevertheless, rich and remains a point of reference for Edgeworth's critics. My discussion in what follows owes a great deal to the findings and arguments in this



study. The study discusses Edgeworth's writing career in diverse contexts, in particular the psychological context as a daughter in a large family which comprises 3 stepmothers and 21 (half-)sisters and (half-)brothers. One of the principal benefits of this book is its excellent composition history of Edgeworth's work, based on exhaustive research into the sizeable corpus of her correspondence and literary sketches. This study is also valuable for its drawing of an intertextual web between Edgeworth's work and her extensive readings. Butler's reading of Edgeworth's texts against the political and social contexts of the period has far-reaching repercussions, as we shall see in Section 3 of this chapter.

Butler revises in *Maria Edgeworth* the image of Edgeworth as an 'attractively feminine' author, established by preceding commentators (p. 6). Butler's starting point is to challenge their reliance on *A Memoir of Maria Edgeworth with a Selection from Her Letters* (1867), which was written by Frances Edgeworth. In particular, Butler criticises her predecessors' lack of first-hand examination of Edgeworth's correspondence (p. 4).<sup>18</sup> Butler's study aims to overcome such limitations by including the 'unselected evidence' in its scope (p. 4).

The study pursues the question of *how* Edgeworth's novels 'originated' rather than the question of *what* she 'did' (p. 9). This pursuit is consistent with Butler's justification for studying Edgeworth that it would give us 'a clearer insight into the conditions that brought the major Victorian novels into existence' (p. 9). The study thus provides a thoroughly informative composition history and contextualises the birth of Edgeworth's realism fluently within the history of English literature (pp. 236-70). Particularly valuable is Butler's examination of Edgeworth's notebooks, along with letters. Furthermore, Butler probes deeply into Edgeworth's motivation behind writing, didacticism in her work, and her literary partnership with her father. All of these efforts enables *Maria Edgeworth* to exceed previous studies.

One salient proposal advanced by the study is that rather than simply a 'feminine' writer, Edgeworth was a serious writer authoring novels which are intellectually 'much more ambitious' than the letters (p. 3). This proposal is underpinned by the discussion of Edgeworth's educational background, especially

---

<sup>18</sup> For instance, Augustus J. C. Hare's *The Life and Letters of Maria Edgeworth* (1894), which used to be taken as a standard version. See also Christina Colvin, ed., *Maria Edgeworth* (1971), p. xxx.

her intellectual inheritance from her father Richard Lovell Edgeworth, such as Enlightenment ideas and Lunar Society values. Butler contends that Edgeworth's writing reflects such Lunar values as 'objective precision' and pioneering realism (p. 270).

While displaying Edgeworth's intellectual strength, Butler does not entirely negate Edgeworth's 'feminine' side. Edgeworth's attachment to her family, Butler argues, brought about an idealised picture of the Edgeworths as the model family in her fictional world, and criticism of fashionable society.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, this ardent partiality towards the domestic circle in Edgeworthstown, combined with her father's bitter political experience in Dublin, led to 'biased' depictions of political life in her work.<sup>20</sup> In such a domestic context, Butler's interpretation of Edgeworth's filial psychology is placed. Edgeworth's loss of her mother during her childhood is thought to render her emotional life thereafter insecure. We are persuaded to see that her aspiration to secure a stable position in the family, especially with her father, was intense. Butler moreover identifies such an aspiration as Edgeworth's chief motivation for writing; writing for publication could engage Richard Lovell's and others' attention to her (p. 159). On the one hand, this observation sounds penetrating. On the other hand, it seems debatable to make the psychological interpretation central to the critical assessment of Edgeworth's work, as the study elaborates. I will discuss this matter further in what follows.

Although highlighting Richard Lovell's strong influence over his daughter, Butler contests the established view that the latter's fiction writing was subject to the former's interference.<sup>21</sup> Butler's account is that, in fact, Edgeworth herself was responsible for didacticism in her fiction.<sup>22</sup> The didactic tone in Edgeworth's fiction is considered to be formed, instead, from her familiarity with the writings of Voltaire and Marmontel and from her 'obsessive desire to promote her father's opinions' through her works.<sup>23</sup> The didactic tone is, furthermore, attributed to her intention to make her writings suitable companions to her father's educational

---

<sup>19</sup> *ME*, p. 123.

<sup>20</sup> *ME*, pp. 123-24.

<sup>21</sup> For example, see Donald Davie, *The Heyday of Sir Walter Scott* (1961), pp. 67-68 and W. L. Renwick, *English Literature, 1789-1815* (1963), pp. 70-71. See also *ME*, pp. 6-7, 273, 282-84.

<sup>22</sup> *ME*, pp. 274, 281-85, 278-81, 296.

<sup>23</sup> *ME*, p. 303.



works as ‘instructive tales’ beyond ‘mere novels’.<sup>24</sup> This attribution is another major example of Butler’s psychological interpretation that Edgeworth’s filial anxiety essentially determined the orientation of her writings.

Butler elaborates that it was Edgeworth rather than her father who emphasised their literary partnership (pp. 287-88). As Butler repeats, Edgeworth’s writing may have served as an essential means to engage her father’s attention (p. 288). Butler’s insistence on the filial motivation, however, seems excessive for critical inquiry. This tendency is particularly notable in her observation that Edgeworth thought ‘the fiction must be seen as part of his [Richard Edgeworth’s] work, so that it would contribute to his greater glory’ (p. 288). This claim typically reduces Edgeworth’s authorship to a filial devotion and thereby contradicts another main thesis in the study that her authorship is basically independent of her father’s influence (pp. 277-81). If Edgeworth’s authorship is ‘independent’ and serious, as Butler reasonably justifies elsewhere in the book, how can it be regarded as subject to such a naive intention to achieve her father’s ‘greater glory’?

Therefore we may well agree with Butler’s view that Edgeworth valued her educational writing more highly than her successful fiction (pp. 174, 185), provided that the filial-psychology interpretation is toned down. It seems, indeed, not so plausible to argue that the filial anxiety is the main cause for Edgeworth to maintain the centrality of educational writing in her career. The eighteenth century’s anti-novel mood and bias against women’s fiction writing need to be taken into account.<sup>25</sup> The ‘Advertisement’ for *Belinda* (1801), which is attributed to Edgeworth, expresses criticism of ‘Novels’ and distinguishes *Belinda* from them, naming the work as a ‘Moral Tale’. This announcement seems to be after the fashion of the preface to *Evelina* (1778) by Burney, who is praised in the advertisement. Like the preface to *Evelina*, the advertisement for *Belinda* contrives to detach the following narrative from ‘the supposedly corrupting and enervating effects of the novel upon young women’.<sup>26</sup> Including the word ‘moral’ in defining the genre of *Belinda*, the advertisement underlines the educational implications of the work.

---

<sup>24</sup> *ME*, pp. 303-4.

<sup>25</sup> *Maria Edgeworth* mentions the anti-novel climate of the period briefly (p. 307). For the restraint on women’s fiction writing in the period, see Mary Poovey, *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer* (1984), pp. 36-40, and Cheryl Turner, *Living by the Pen* (1992), p. 111. For the anti-novel atmosphere, see also Turner, pp. 130-31.

One could argue that this anti-novel attitude would have originated from Edgeworth's filial wish to comply with her father's opinion. However, the narrative acts of the advertisement, which may be read as a literary manifesto to define the genre of the work published under her name, are in tension with the norm of 'proper' femininity, no matter how far the message of the advertisement may endorse that norm. As Dale Spender notes, Edgeworth herself 'knew what writing women were up against and it is no coincidence that in the first tale, in her first published book (*Letters for Literary Ladies*, 1795), two gentlemen debate the issue of whether women should be authors'.<sup>27</sup> In *Letters for Literary Ladies*, the 'Gentleman' voices the public disapproval of women's authorship: 'How will you, along with all the pride of knowledge, give her that "retiring modesty", which is supposed to have more charms for our sex than the fullest display of wit and beauty?' (*LL*, p. 12).<sup>28</sup> This passage anticipates that the advertisement of *Belinda* could be considered to transgress the boundaries of 'feminine modesty'.

Given this context, the daring tone of the advertisement becomes obvious. Concerning women authors in Edgeworth's period, Mary Poovey observes, 'Women who did publish under their own names almost always sought to justify their efforts as financially necessary [...] as thoroughly didactic [...] or as absolutely commonplace' (pp. 39-40). The advertisement for *Belinda* lacks these sorts of apologies. Instead, the text opens with a challenging and 'unfeminine' tone: 'Every author has a right to give what appellation he may think proper to his works. The public have also a right to accept or refuse the classification that is presented' (*B*, p. xxix). The preface to *Evelina* might sound as awesome as the advertisement: 'In the republic of letters, there is no member of such inferior rank, or who is so much disdained by his brethren of the quill, as the humble Novelist' (*sic*; *Evelina*, p. 7).<sup>29</sup> Their use of such legal and political terms as 'right', 'republic', and 'inferior rank' may probably have been taken as 'unfeminine'. What is important here is that *Belinda* was published under Edgeworth's name

<sup>26</sup> Turner, p. 130. Part of the preface to *Evelina* is quoted in this book.

<sup>27</sup> Dale Spender, *Mothers of the Novel* (1986), p. 287.

<sup>28</sup> Maria Edgeworth, *Letters for Literary Ladies to Which is Added an Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification*, 1795 (London: J. M. Dent, 1993).

<sup>29</sup> Fanny Burney, *Evelina: Or the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World*, 1778 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982). In this thesis, Burney is usually referred to as Frances Burney, but where necessary such as in citation of other scholars' reference to her, the alternative names used by the scholars such as 'Fanny' Burney will be used.



whereas *Evelina* was published anonymously. The advertisement's literary manifesto can thus be seen as an independent and public act which Edgeworth was expected to be liable for. Her previous fictional publications for adults, such as *Letters for Literary Ladies* and *Castle Rackrent*, had been originally anonymous. As the first publication with her authorial signature, *Belinda* engages in a risky challenge. It seems quite doubtful that Edgeworth had such an advertisement published simply from a filial anxiety to obtain her father's approval. Rather, it seems more probable that she constructed her authorship around educational writing at any risk in order to avoid more serious consequences of being dubbed as one of the 'Novelists'. Both her defence of her professional career and femininity, rather than filial desire, seem to be more direct causes for the construction of her authorship around educational writing. This observation is not meant to deny the momentousness of her filial commitment completely, however.

The discussion of the Edgeworths' estates management is another important item of the agenda. Butler's account of Richard Lovell's improvement of the family property is useful to understand Edgeworth's idea about the model role for the landed class and her political views. It is argued that Richard Lovell was liberal and progressive in the sense that he removed 'feudal' burdens from his rural poor.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, Butler makes a feasible analogy between his paternal attitude towards his rural poor and the attitudes of the Lunar 'entrepreneurs' and suggests that his attitude towards his rural poor was not necessarily egalitarian (p. 86). Butler also states that Edgeworth's novels are imbued with 'her father's loyalty to the wider community and to its institutions (however corrupt in practice they might be)', but that her view was 'more conservative' than Richard Lovell's (pp. 122, 124).<sup>31</sup> It is therefore argued that 'To some extent the whole class bias of Maria's Irish writing, its appearance of being directed against the landlords and their agents, is an accident' (p. 125). In other words, Edgeworth's filial anxiety to promote her father's example of 'an enlightened landlord' caused the accidental birth of 'progressive, at times even radical, studies of the Anglo-Irish in Ireland' (p. 125). Given the restraints on women's publishing career in this period, which I have noted above, we may, however, argue that criticising the landed system in Ireland, even via a fictional medium, meant a defiant act of stepping into a 'male' sphere. It

---

<sup>30</sup> *ME*, pp. 81-86.

<sup>31</sup> See also *ME*, pp. 96, 111-12, 122, 124.

is not therefore so reasonable to see that Edgeworth ‘happened to’ do it, driven by her loyal attachment to her father. Here too, the psychological approach seems to obscure important political and cultural dimensions of Edgeworth’s authorial achievements.

Overall, according to Butler, Edgeworth’s literary achievement lies primarily in her pioneering realism (p. 270), as an important bridge between eighteenth-century novelists such as Daniel Defoe and Laurence Sterne, and Victorian novelists such as Charles Dickens, William Thackeray, Elizabeth Gaskell, George Eliot, and Thomas Hardy. In particular, the ‘economic connection of an individual and his wider social context’ in her narratives is considered as an important contribution (pp. 335, 398). Butler does not, however, recognise so much creativity in Edgeworth’s writing, partly because she considers that Edgeworth’s work pursues realism too rigidly; partly because she contends that, like Dr Johnson, Edgeworth lacked an art-for-art’s-sake attitude; and partly because she maintains that Edgeworth’s novel writing was ‘a means to a personal end’, that is, a filial devotion (pp. 270, 272). While commenting that Edgeworth is ‘important in literary history’, Butler rates her as a ‘transitional figure’ (p. 397), after all.

With such analysis and argument, *Maria Edgeworth* succeeds in clarifying Edgeworth’s contribution to English literature. It also contains some controversial aspects, however. Firstly, despite Butler’s intention, the documentation of Edgeworth’s letters in the study seems unbalanced in a sense. For example, the study lacks attention to Edgeworth’s correspondence with Rachel Mordecai Lazarus, a Jewish American reader. Concerning Edgeworth’s published letters including those in Christina Colvin’s *Maria Edgeworth: Letters from England, 1813-1844* (1971), Butler remarks that they have a ‘disadvantage for the student of literature’ because they were written in 1813 onwards after ‘the peak of her literary influence’.<sup>32</sup> This view may explain the few citations of the Edgeworth-Lazarus correspondence in the study; the first letter of the correspondence dates back to 1815. The correspondence has, however, significance that Edgeworth scholars should not neglect, since it commenced with Lazarus’s challenge to her intellectual and literary authority. Lazarus criticised Edgeworth’s stereotypical characterisation of Jewish characters, and Edgeworth showed ‘atonement’ and ‘reparation’ by way

---

<sup>32</sup> *ME*, p. 8.



of writing *Harrington*.<sup>33</sup> Edgeworth and Lazarus thereafter enjoyed exchanging opinions on a wide range of topics such as books, education, social issues, and politics, besides domestic matters. Like Edgeworth, Lazarus was well-read and insightful. Due probably to these contexts, Edgeworth's letters to Lazarus sound intellectually eloquent and at the same time careful. Those letters were exchanged between an intelligent author and an intelligent reader, representing tension between an author and a reader. The significance of the correspondence is recognised by Michael Hurst's study.<sup>34</sup> This study, published before *Maria Edgeworth*, cites some letters from Edgeworth to Lazarus that express Edgeworth's political sentiments and ideas about social reforms. Butler's study might have deliberately prioritised the documentation of unpublished letters. Hurst's treatment of the correspondence is not extensive, and it was hardly utilised before, however.<sup>35</sup> It would still have been beneficial for Butler to invest in the further documentation of the correspondence. In what follows, the Edgeworth-Lazarus correspondence will be cited as a useful supplementary source for understanding Edgeworth's world.

Another contestable dimension of *Maria Edgeworth*, from a viewpoint in the 2000s, is its tendency to account for Edgeworth's writing career as an emotional filial exertion, with emphasis on her anxious psychology. I have discussed some potential problems of this tendency. Since the study is presented as a 'literary biography', it may be consistent that the study is oriented towards the question of the psychological dimension of Edgeworth's life. Such an orientation would have surely been considered as viable in the 1970s, when the study was published, and it is true that some commentators in literary studies today still invest in the question of the writer's psychology. One recent example is Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace's study.<sup>36</sup> Kowaleski-Wallace's study augments the potential risk of Butler's emphasis on Edgeworth's psychology in assessing Edgeworth's writing career, as I shall note in the third section of this chapter.

It is relevant here to recall Butler's determination against taking Edgeworth's letters 'at face value, as undesigned revelations of character' (p. 127).

---

<sup>33</sup> Edgar E. MacDonald, ed., *The Education of the Heart* (1977), p. 8.

<sup>34</sup> Michael Hurst, *Maria Edgeworth and the Public Scene* (1969), pp. 42-43, 66-67, 100.

<sup>35</sup> For example, there is no quotation of the Edgeworth-Lazarus correspondence in Frances Edgeworth's biography of Edgeworth, although its existence is mentioned there.

<sup>36</sup> Kowaleski-Wallace, *Their Father's Daughters* (1991).

Butler practises an amplifying interpretation of Edgeworth's words, expecting them to conceal the novelist's 'contrasts' and 'anxiety' (p. 3). If those letters are 'artefacts' (pp. 127-28), the reverse interpretation may also be applied. That is, while applying the sort of amplifying interpretation, we may also need to filter out Edgeworth's verbal gestures which appear to satisfy the conventional code set for 'proper' femininity. For instance, in order to argue that Edgeworth's filial anxiety was a major motive for her insistence on the centrality of educational writing for her authorship, Butler cites the following letter from Edgeworth to Sophy Ruxton:

he [Richard Lovell] has pointed out to me that to be a mere writer of pretty stories & novellettes would be unworthy of his partner, pupil & daughter & I have been so touched by his reason or his eloquence or his kindness or all together, that I have thrown aside all thoughts of pretty stories, & put myself into a course of solid reading. Now Sophy, dear Sophy! mixed with all this filial piety & obedience, & goodness, &c, which I see you ready primed to praise [...].<sup>37</sup>

This citation can be interpreted as an outburst of filial loyalty, if taken 'at face value'. Yet, it can also be read as an exaggeration. The extract indicates Edgeworth's sly expectation that filial sentiments would be 'praised' as virtues by Sophy. It is therefore necessary to discount the filial enthusiasm displayed in the letter to a certain extent. Furthermore, this letter may be read as tinged with a contradictory and even rebellious tone. Although Edgeworth says she gives up 'all thoughts of pretty stories' in accordance with her father's advice, she admits within several lines after the extract that her motivation for writing 'a useful essay' is the same as her motivation for writing *Leonora*, one of the 'pretty stories', which had a problematic delay in its publication due to Richard Lovell's low opinion. We may therefore not necessarily share Butler's emphasis on Edgeworth's ardent attachment to her father; the attachment may be recognised, but perhaps to a more restricted extent. Indeed, it is possible to argue that *Maria Edgeworth* remoulds Edgeworth's image into an elaborated version of 'an attractively feminine' author while emphasising the seriousness and intellectual depth of the author.<sup>38</sup> The study could simplify the 'contrasts' in Edgeworth's authorship, which it aims to investigate. In this sense, Butler could be seen to follow her predecessors' pattern in spite of her criticism of it.

Thirdly, despite its inspiring commentary, Butler's analysis of Edgeworth's

---

<sup>37</sup> 26 February 1805, cited in *ME*, pp. 209-10.

<sup>38</sup> See also Kowaleski-Wallace, p. 22.



style seems not to be so extensive and systematic as to do it justice. For instance, Edgeworth's experiments with various narrative voices are acknowledged but without full discussion. This lack of sufficient attention to Edgeworth's stylistic strategies seems to be consistent with Butler's scepticism towards Edgeworth's artistic creativity. While introducing Edgeworth's important experimental achievement,<sup>39</sup> Butler concludes that Edgeworth was not so innovative after all. This conclusion largely depends on the biographical approach to Edgeworth's attitude towards writing rather than on stylistic analysis. Since Edgeworth's stylistic sophistication is obvious to Butler, it seems not plausible to reach such a conclusion without presenting more coherent stylistic analysis.

Finally but not least, Butler's assessment underestimates the complexity of Anglo-Irish cultural relations, by locating Edgeworth among 'English' authors without sufficiently questioning the impacts of her work on the (Anglo-)Irish literary tradition. This tendency appears to be rather intentional, given that Butler's bibliography includes Thomas Flanagan's contribution.<sup>40</sup> Flanagan conceives *Castle Rackrent* as 'the first Irish novel' (pp. 6-7) and situates Edgeworth's Irish tales in the Irish literary history (pp. viii-ix). We may thus argue that Butler's placement of Edgeworth's work in the tradition of English literature is strategic and contests the viewpoint of including Edgeworth in the (Anglo)-Irish literary tradition. Such a standpoint has made *Maria Edgeworth* controversial, and perhaps it is the most provocative dimension of the work.

## 0.2 Butler's *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas*

The *War of Ideas* underscores that 'at the period when Jane Austen began to write, literature as a whole was partisan, in England as well as on the Continent', and moreover extracts politico-literary partisanship from Austen's novels alongside her contemporaries' (p. 3). From the outset, the study provides a useful account of the two partisan camps, the 'Jacobins' and the 'Anti-Jacobins'. Butler's politicisation of Edgeworth in the binary politico-literary map of the period starts by deeming that Edgeworth is 'unquestionably a jacobin' (p. 124). This verdict is

---

<sup>39</sup> For instance, Edgeworth's use of dialogue. See *ME*, pp. 311, 322, 327.

<sup>40</sup> Thomas Flanagan, *The Irish Novelists, 1800-1850* (1958).

based on Butler's perception of Edgeworth's strong belief in individualism and the power of reason (if developed) in individuals.

Meanwhile, Butler states that the 'jacobin' aspects of Edgeworth's writings hardly received acrimonious criticism from the conservatives of the time as expected (pp. 153-54). Such critical reception is attributed to Edgeworth's 'sober realism of presentation', since empiricism is the 'anti-jacobin' novelists' 'true philosophic answer to the abstract idealism of the revolutionaries' (p. 155). Judging that Edgeworth's ideal picture is drawn within the existing system of order, Butler considers her as 'far more nearly bi-partisan than Jane Austen' (p. 124). This political bi-partisanship is identified in Edgeworth's artistic innovations, too. Butler points out that she developed the themes and narrative devices of both the Jacobin and the Anti-Jacobin novels (p. 143).

The study furthermore corrects the critical tendency to claim Edgeworth's artistic innovation as Austen's, by arguing that it was Edgeworth's technique which anticipated Austen's (pp. 132, 145). *Maria Edgeworth* has touched on the issue (pp. 311, 322, 327), but the *War of Ideas* reinforces the re-assessment with a closer look into works by Edgeworth and Austen and, moreover, Burney. As a result, it is argued more clearly and convincingly that Edgeworth served as an important bridge between Burney and Austen in English literary history. Edgeworth is also praised as having 'a far sounder literary instinct than any other contemporary writer of prose fiction, until Scott' (p. 155).

The strength of the *War of Ideas* is, primarily, its lucid presentation of the politico-literary context of the period, with emphasis on partisan contests between the 'Jacobins' and the 'Anti-Jacobins'. Situated in this context, Edgeworth's belief in individualism is discussed in more incisive political terms. The political connotation of her individualism is highlighted, whereby the political mapping of her oeuvre is refined. Secondly, the literary location of Edgeworth among her contemporaries is better designated than in *Maria Edgeworth*. This improvement seems due to the perspicuous presentation of the associations between the political partisanship of the period and literary allegiance. Butler's dependence on intertextuality rather than biographical connections is none the less prerequisite to the coherence of the argument in the *War of Ideas*.

One controversial aspect of *Maria Edgeworth* remains, however. Edgeworth's work is again isolated from the tradition of (Anglo-)Irish literature.



More fundamentally, it seems arguable to try to restrict her position to the frame of the binary partisan grouping. Although the polarisation may provide a useful perspective to understand her writing, a subtler perspective needs to be maintained at the same time. In particular, it is necessary to note that her writings often criticise ‘party spirit’. Her indictment of partisanship was conditioned by her own experience of ‘the evil of mob feelings’ in Ireland, more specifically, in her neighbourhood (p. 126). For example, we can find the criticism repeatedly in her correspondence with Lazarus. Edgeworth’s letter about the revolutionary atmosphere of 1831 articulates the criticism: ‘Party spirit is one of the worst signs of bad times, alternately cause and effect’.<sup>41</sup>

Edgeworth’s disapproval of partisanship is observable in her discussion of literature, too. She recommends Comte Philippe Paul Ségur’s *Histoire de Napoléon et de la Grande Armée pendant l’Année 1812* (1824), in the sense that ‘it bears the stamp of truth and is as free from party spirit as we can expect human nature to be’.<sup>42</sup> ‘Party spirit’ among literary critics is also blamed by her for its distorting nature.<sup>43</sup> Her fiction, too, repudiates party spirit and upholds individualistic detachment, as we will see in the second part of the thesis. In other words, her fiction refuses being included into the partisan mapping of the period.

The *War of Ideas* seems to show shifts in Butler’s view of Edgeworth’s work since the publication of *Maria Edgeworth*. The most important aspect is that Butler’s emphasis switches from Edgeworth’s conservative tendency to ‘bi-partisanship’. This view may have been consequential to Butler’s refinement of the politico-literary mapping of Edgeworth’s oeuvre, and probably also through reading her texts alongside Austen’s work, which is more politically conservative. Another significant shift is Butler’s tendency to underline Edgeworth’s innovative achievements rather than her lack of creativity. It suggests Butler’s higher valuation of Edgeworth’s writing career than before.

---

<sup>41</sup> ME’s letter to Lazarus, 4 November 1831, in MacDonald (ed.), p. 215.

<sup>42</sup> ME’s letter to Lazarus, 9 January 1826, in MacDonald (ed.), p. 96.

<sup>43</sup> ME’s letter to Lazarus, 2 May 1825, in MacDonald, (ed.), p. 73.

### 0.3 After Butler

This section briefly introduces selected studies to show how the scholarship on Edgeworth has expanded since Butler's reassessment. Detailed discussion on specific commentators will be deferred to later chapters where it is pertinent to my argument. I will commence with scholars with a strong interest in Irish Studies, since they seem to conduct the most intense debates with Butler's detachment of Edgeworth's oeuvre from the tradition of (Anglo-)Irish literature. Those scholars have argued that Edgeworth's work should be read against the (Anglo-)Irish literary tradition as well as the English one, while reconstructing the complex cultural relations surrounding her literary achievements. I will then look at studies by feminist scholars. The end of the section will discuss recent works that have demonstrated more cautious politicised readings with emphasis on textual analysis in a stricter sense. While aligning my approach with this final group of studies, I will highlight that criticism on Edgeworth is yet to bridge politicised readings and stylistic analysis.

By the time W. J. Mc Cormack's *Ascendancy and Tradition in Anglo-Irish Literary History from 1789-1939* (1985) was published, Irish scholarship had made it an 'unremarkable truism' that Edgeworth is the founder of the Anglo-Irish novel (p. 20). In this rigorously critical study, Mc Cormack calls for due attention to Edmund Burke's 'contribution to the aesthetics of Anglo-Irish fiction' (p. 20). According to Mc Cormack, Burke's concept of 'fragmentary union', which is compatible with the 'romantic' notion of incompleteness aspiring for wholeness, underlies what he defines 'Anglo-Irish literature'. Edgeworth's novels are linked with other Anglo-Irish writers' works, through their intertextuality with Burke's writings in terms of not only political concerns about the Union but also aesthetic orientation and metaphor. Such retrieval of the cultural dialogue between Edgeworth's oeuvre and Anglo-Irish literature seems to be a more comprehensive approach. Two Irish tales, *Castle Rackrent*, published amidst the escalating Union debate, and *The Absentee*, set in the post-Union period, are chosen for major discussion. Mc Cormack argues that *Castle Rackrent* demythologises the idealised picture of the 'Big House' associated with the feudal aristocracy 'before 1782' (p. 108). Mainly by an astute spatial analysis of the 'castle' in the novel, Mc Cormack argues that the text may imply 'bourgeois expansion, and bourgeois colonization of



the past as an ideological bulwark', and the plot allows 'both the tensions and bonds of Catholic/Protestant relations' (pp. 114, 120). As for *The Absentee*, its 'allegoric and schematic, rather than narrative and ironic' mode is linked with 'the doubleness which lies at the heart of Anglo-Irish literature' (p. 122). To decode this 'allegoric and schematic' narrative, Mc Cormack retrieves the Irish historical context, specifically in connection with Grace Nugent and Count O'Halloran.<sup>44</sup> By such enriching contextualization, Mc Cormack addresses the theme of 'reconciliation' as submerged 'Burkean longing': the reconciliation between Catholic and Protestant, between Jacobite and Williamite, between place and personality which would redress 'past offence' and resist 'drastic change' but be difficult to achieve.<sup>45</sup>

Another leading figure in Irish criticism, Seamus Deane shares with Mc Cormack the standpoint to connect Edgeworth's writings and the (Anglo-)Irish literary tradition. Like Mc Cormack, Deane regards Edgeworth as a key figure in the tradition and calls her a 'foundational' author.<sup>46</sup> Deane's comments on Edgeworth are often embedded in broader topics revolving around modernity and Irish literary tradition, and may appear rather abstract and limited to thematic analysis. Nevertheless, his commentary offers sharp-sighted interpretations, especially on philosophical aspects such as Edgeworth's view of the mutual relationship between history and national character.<sup>47</sup> His reading of the continuity or developments of political themes in Edgeworth's four Irish tales challenges Butler's earlier assessment, which understates the political implications of *Castle Rackrent*.<sup>48</sup> In particular, Deane addresses Edgeworth's 'preoccupation' with the leadership of Irish society, along with Lady Morgan's, and plots the typology of landowners in Edgeworth's Irish tales.<sup>49</sup> It is moreover observed that Edgeworth's fusion of 'moral tale' and antiquarian approach to Ireland survived well into the modern Irish short story via the 'national novel'.<sup>50</sup> While so establishing Edgeworth in Irish literary tradition, Deane discerns that in a sense her fiction 'is

---

<sup>44</sup> Previous studies, including Butler, hardly recognised Grace Nugent's 'central' role in the novel. See Mc Cormack, *Ascendancy and Tradition*, p. 140.

<sup>45</sup> *Ascendancy and Tradition*, pp. 161-65.

<sup>46</sup> Deane, *Strange Country* (1997), pp. 1-2. Deane differs from Mc Cormack in seeing that the name of 'Anglo-Irish literature' is 'anachronistic' and that the literary tradition should be included in what he defines as 'Irish literature' (Deane, *A Short History of Irish Literature* (1986), p. 7).

<sup>47</sup> *Strange Country*, p. 36.

<sup>48</sup> *Short History*, pp. 90-97.

<sup>49</sup> *Short History*, pp. 96-97.

not an analysis but a symptom of the colonial problem the country presented'.<sup>51</sup> This thesis will address the limitations of her social and cultural prescription for the future of Britain and Ireland as not only a 'symptom' but also a reproducing seedbed of 'the colonial problem'.

In fact, it was Tom Dunne who drew our attention to the 'continuations' of political theme between *Castle Rackrent* and the later Irish tales. Being an Irish historian, he is an important pioneer of the postcolonial reading of Edgeworth. His *Maria Edgeworth and the Colonial Mind* ([1984]) elucidates 'greater ambiguities' in Edgeworth's 'colonial mind' than his predecessor Sheeran has admitted (p. 6).<sup>52</sup> Dunne proposes in this study that we should understand all the four Irish tales are more politically deliberate and recognise more 'continuities' in this sense, between *Castle Rackrent* and the later Irish tales, than Butler has claimed (p. 6). Edgeworth is counted as one of the Irish authors who 'wrote intensely *political* fiction, in terms of ambition as much as of content' (p. 4). Although it seems questionable whether Edgeworth's fiction is so 'intensely political' as Dunne insists, his analysis has intrigued her critics. Dunne argues that by representing the 'richly varied' yet 'servile', 'flattering' and 'deceiving' language of 'the colonised', Edgeworth's Irish fiction indicts the depriving colonial system, which engendered such an unhappy example of surviving language and its undercurrent mentality, and advocates a 'benevolent/paternalist' colonial landlordism.<sup>53</sup>

Terry Eagleton has launched himself on Irish literary criticism proper in *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger* (1995). As in his other studies, Irish literature is discussed with thought-provoking analysis of the socio-political context in 'the language of contemporary cultural theory' (pp. ix-x). His ambition is not only to 'insert Irish history into cultural theory' but also to 'challenge the current repressions and evasions of the latter' (p. x). Among other topics, Eagleton questions Thady's characterisation, which is almost compulsory for commentary on Edgeworth. Providing a double reading of Thady, Eagleton points out that it 'places Catholic masses in a convenient double bind' (p. 166). That is, if 'Catholic

---

<sup>50</sup> *Short History*, pp. 94-95.

<sup>51</sup> *Strange Country*, pp. 32-33.

<sup>52</sup> See also Dunne, 'Haunted by History', in *Romanticism in a National Context*, ed. by Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich (1989), pp. 68-91, and "'A Gentleman's Estate Should be a Moral School": Edgeworthstown in Fact and Fiction, 1760-1840', in *Longford*, ed. by Raymond Gillespie and Gerard Moran (1991), pp. 95-121.

<sup>53</sup> *Colonial Mind*, pp. 6, 17-21.



masses' are blindly faithful to their degenerate masters, as Thady appears to be, they are not proper for the new 'hegemony'; if they take advantage of these masters, as many critics see Thady doing, they are labelled as 'rebels'. Marxist criticism is applied here, too. For instance, on the one hand, Thady's 'self-deceived' psychology is equated with that of 'Gramsci's typical proletarian', trapped between an 'official' set of beliefs which he is 'formally supposed to hold', and an 'unofficial' perspective 'which provides the unconscious subtext to his piously proclaimed allegiance' (p. 167). Such an approach sounds fascinating. However, when Eagleton goes on to recognise a parallel between Edgeworth and Thady as 'domestic servants' and to identifying her fictions with 'the predatory aristocracy', the need is strongly felt for further explanation about the obvious gap between Edgeworth and Thady in terms of their cultural, class, and gender backgrounds (pp. 167, 169).<sup>54</sup> On the other hand, Eagleton's scope connects the politicised 'contents' with 'form'. Although his concerns with 'form' often appear localised to the generic aspect such as the 'novel', without reaching further stylistic detail, the mediation between 'form' and 'content' in this study echoes his earlier approaches which have assisted Lanser to 'understand form as content and ideology as form' and to establish links between her narrative theory and gender concerns.<sup>55</sup> The stylistic analysis of Edgeworth's work in this thesis applies Lanser's contextualised narratology.

Two American critics, Julian Moynahan (1995) and Robert Tracy (1998) have focused on the issue of Anglo-Irish identity.<sup>56</sup> They perceive Anglo-Irish identity as tragically split and discuss its ambiguity in Edgeworth as well as other writers. The two critics interrogate cultural and political dimensions of her allegiance. Moynahan concurs with Mc Cormack and Deane so far as to regard her work as fundamental to the Irish literary tradition, though Moynahan's concept of fundamental text is broader than Deane's. Moynahan's understanding of what he calls 'Anglo-Irish literature' is, though, more rigid and thus susceptible to refutation. For instance, Moynahan indicates an insular approach by writing that: 'In the case of a writer who writes both England-centered and Ireland-centered works—Maria

---

<sup>54</sup> For Connolly, 'the differences of language, class and culture that divide the Gaelic retainer from the Anglo-Irish, English and Jewish ladies he serves' are more serious obstacles to such an alliance. See Connolly, 'Reading Responsibility in *Castle Rackrent*', in *Ireland and Cultural Theory*, ed. by Colin Graham and Richard Kirkland (1999), p. 145.

<sup>55</sup> Lanser, *NA*, pp. 7, 100-106.

Edgeworth herself being such a writer—the latter works alone constitute that writer’s contribution to the Anglo-Irish literary heritage’ (p. 39). The exclusion of England-centred work seems to undermine Moynahan’s aim to inspect the ambiguity of the Anglo-Irish, since that ambiguity results precisely from the intricate cultural relations surrounding the Anglo-Irish, including the one between the Anglo-Irish and the English. Another shortfall in his study is its neglect of the complex features of the Protestant Ascendancy. As Mc Cormack and Deane have illuminated, the Protestant Ascendancy should be seen to consist of the landed class in the countryside as well as the bourgeoisie in urban areas.<sup>57</sup> Not really responding to these important recent studies, Moynahan’s discussion is unreliable. In fact, this defect is quite common among studies featuring Edgeworth as a case figure in broader topics; they contest Butler’s contribution in the 1970s without acknowledging recent debates.<sup>58</sup>

Tracy’s book is a collection of papers, two of which discuss Edgeworth’s Irish tales. His reading is often sharp as demonstrated in his concerns with the notion of legitimacy and the representation of motherhood in Edgeworth’s fiction. At the same time, his conscious flirtation with feminist and postcolonial approaches in his commentary about *Castle Rackrent* falls into the same trap as Eagleton’s Marxist interpretation does (p. 11). Tracy contends that Edgeworth shows her allegiance with Thady by giving him subversive narrative authority, including the power to plot ‘the future of Ireland’, since she shares his frustration as the oppressed in the patriarchal colonial system (pp. 17, 21-22). Like Eagleton’s interpretation, this contention causes us to doubt whether Edgeworth could ally herself so easily with the indigenous Irish servant.

The difficulty of such an alliance is illuminated by Brian Hollingworth’s informative study about Edgeworth’s Irish writings.<sup>59</sup> Hollingworth draws attention to her ‘virtual avoidance of references to the Gaelic language in her Irish writing’ and attributes it to ‘Edgeworth’s limitations in her commitment to Ireland’ (p. 44). Trumpener’s contribution to the contextualisation of Anglo-Celtic literature has been acknowledged in the beginning of this chapter. These studies with their focus on the Irish context help modern readers to appreciate the complex

---

<sup>56</sup> Moynahan, *Anglo-Irish* (1995); Tracy, *The Unappeasable Host* (1998).

<sup>57</sup> For example, see Tracy, p. 3.

<sup>58</sup> A recent example is T. O. McLoughlin’s *Contesting Ireland* (1999).



cultural location where Edgeworth's texts stood and stand.

Meanwhile, Edgeworth's literary partnership with her father has invited discussions from feminist criticism, notably from Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar (1979), Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace (1991), Caroline Gonda (1996), and Audrey Bilger (1998).<sup>60</sup> Their question of whether Edgeworth is a proto-feminist and their question of how independent her discourse is from her father's are still disputable. Kowaleski-Wallace's *Their Fathers' Daughters* deals in detail with Edgeworth's novels, both English tales and Irish tales, and claims that she is a 'daddy's girl' who is 'empowered from' but also entrapped within 'patriarchal discourse' (pp. ix, 12, 96-8). Despite this flexible scope, integrating both English tales and Irish tales in its argument, Kowaleski-Wallace's study represents a problematic reductionism in feminist approaches. For instance, hunting for the representation of 'monstrous' or 'wild' women who embody deviations from patriarchal norms, Kowaleski-Wallace concludes that Edgeworth defines herself in opposition to such 'Other' women as represented by Harriet Freke and Ellinor O'Donoghoe (p. 198). This binary opposition seems as untenable as the kinds of binary oppositions in the politicised readings by Eagleton and Tracy, for a similar reason. It is crude to categorise those female characters together into the single group of 'Other' women, without accounting for the obvious disparity between them in terms of class and cultural backgrounds, for example, the one between Harriet Freke and Ellinor.

Like Kowaleski-Wallace, Catherine Gallagher (1994) has underscored the 'indebtedness' of Edgeworth's authorship to her father, but in a much more sophisticated way by probing into the context of literary and economic exchange in the eighteenth century.<sup>61</sup> Gallagher identifies Edgeworth's sense of identity as Humean and argues that in Edgeworth's vision claiming an individual's identity means 'to construct a fiction, but a fiction that both is [the individual's] property and legitimizes [the individual's] property' (p. 281). With such understanding of Edgeworth's fiction writing, Gallagher furthermore argues that 'femaleness' and 'Anglo-Irishness' are 'both opportunities for self-production', since the identities of women and the Anglo-Irish are subject to changes through marriage and

---

<sup>59</sup> Hollingworth, *Maria Edgeworth's Irish Writing* (1997).

<sup>60</sup> Gilbert and Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979); Gonda, *Reading Daughters' Fictions 1709-1834* (1996); Bilger, *Laughing Feminism* (1998).

“adopting” another nation’ respectively (p. 287). Although my approach does not seek to establish such a parallel between Edgeworth’s biography and fictional plots as Gallagher’s approach does, I endorse her reading in the sense that I understand Edgeworth’s narrative modes as producing her ambiguous Anglo-Irish identity.

Gonda challenges Kowaleski-Wallace’s interpretation by warning that ‘[f]eminist criticism in particular needs to be wary of seeing reason as a patriarchal possession or attribute, of reproducing those binary oppositions it is concerned to dismantle’.<sup>62</sup> Gonda rightly urges the reader not to render Edgeworth’s fiction into ‘symbolistic’ or ‘schematic’ readings for the convenience of finding the ‘myth’ of her biography in the text. Recognising more independence in Edgeworth’s authorship than Kowaleski-Wallace and Gallagher admit, Gonda demands due attention to Edgeworth’s ‘artistic and political achievements’.<sup>63</sup> Bilger’s *Laughing Feminism* meets such a request, by arguing that Edgeworth used comedy for the ‘radical and subversive ends’ (pp. 61-62, 89-90, 119-22). This thesis endorses Gonda’s cautious approach to the use of biographical sources and does not take Edgeworth’s psychology itself as its primary concern.

Mitzi Myers published a great deal on Edgeworth, although she did not present a book-length study on the author. Myers’ scholarship has dissected Edgeworth’s concerns with gender issues and generic forms, especially those in stories for children. Myers’ studies demonstrate the possibilities of various approaches to Edgeworth’s texts across politicised readings and stylistic concerns. Claire Connolly, too, is a leading Edgeworth critic. In her study of *Castle Rackrent* (1999), Connolly criticises the lasting controversy over the interpretation of Thady and proposes a fresh perspective.<sup>64</sup> Her suggestion is that we should discuss his ‘narrative function’ rather than be obsessed with the analysis of his characterisation, which aims to answer the commonplace question of whether he is subversive or not (p. 139). Further details of this argument will be introduced in Chapter 1. Connolly’s attention to the narrative structure seems to be in a sound balance with her interest in gender issues and postcolonial theory. Kathryn Kirkpatrick’s study also has a close look at the textual politics of *Castle Rackrent*.<sup>65</sup> Attentive to the

---

<sup>61</sup> Gallagher, *Nobody’s Story* (1994), pp. 257-327.

<sup>62</sup> Gonda, p. 237. See also pp. 206-36.

<sup>63</sup> Gonda, p. 233.

<sup>64</sup> ‘Reading Responsibility’, pp. 136-61.

<sup>65</sup> Kirkpatrick, ‘Putting Down the Rebellion’, *Éire-Ireland*, 30 (1995), 77-90.



tension between Thady's narration in Hiberno-English and the Editor's framing discourse in standard English, Connolly and Kirkpatrick discuss Edgeworth's attitudes to the indigenous Irish more convincingly than Eagleton and Tracy among other critics. This thesis endorses such critical awareness, represented by Connolly and Kirkpatrick, of the need to integrate into the criticism of Edgeworth textual analysis in a more rigorous sense and aims to give further expressions to such critical awareness.

There are also stimulating studies among the latest contributions. Clíona Ó Gallchoir's study contests the critical trend to embed Edgeworth in the national literature of Ireland. Following Mc Cormack's criticism of the nationalist reception of Edgeworth's work, Ó Gallchoir substantiates Edgeworth's affinity with cosmopolitan ideals by exploring the resonance between Edgeworth and Madame de Staël. Jaqueline E. Belanger's study should be acknowledged as the first extensive discussion of Edgeworth's work with the application of reception theory. Belanger's study aids our understanding of the cultural relations surrounding Edgeworth's text from another angle. Meanwhile, Butler remains an important contributor in the field, publishing repeatedly on Edgeworth. Her later publications on Edgeworth came mainly in the form of editorial introductions; the introduction to the Penguin edition of *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui* (1992) and the 'General Introduction' to the Pickering edition of the collected works of Edgeworth (1999-2003) are the cornerstones.<sup>66</sup>

In the introduction to the Penguin *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui*, Butler adjusts her earlier approach by embedding more Irish contextualization. Certainly, this shift shows that to a certain extent she has adapted to the criticism of her earlier approach. In particular, she acknowledges contributions by those who have supplied Irish contextualization. For instance, Butler has come to admit a continuance between *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui*, a development of social and postcolonial themes in Irish tales, as Dunne and Deane proposed.<sup>67</sup> These novels are no longer considered as coincidental products of Edgeworth's filial devotion. They are understood to 'have the best claim to pioneer the nineteenth-century social novel which, more self-consciously and more precisely than its eighteenth-century

---

<sup>66</sup> Marilyn Butler, 'Introduction', in *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui* by Maria Edgeworth (London: Penguin Books, 1992); Butler, 'General Introduction', in *Works*, I: VII-LXXX.

<sup>67</sup> Butler, 'Introduction', *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui*, p. 1.

predecessor, criticizes and remoulds the reader's perception of modern social life'.<sup>68</sup> Many more Irish historical backgrounds are incorporated into the discussion. This procedure is partly observable in her linking Lady Geraldine in *Ennui* and the Fitzgeralds in the Irish Midlands, which seems to be influenced by Mc Cormack's decoding of Irish names.<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, Butler transplants Edgeworth into Irish literary tradition. Edgeworth's debt to Spenser and Swift is noted, and her 'detached' attitude towards Irish social/political issues is considered to be shared with by Bernard Shaw, Oscar Wilde, James Joyce, and Samuel Beckett.<sup>70</sup> On the other hand, Butler also stresses Edgeworth's inheritance of the French and Scottish Enlightenment. She fortifies the intertextuality between Edgeworth and Marmontel and focuses on the resonance between Edgeworth's text and Adam Smith's political economy, philosophy, and scepticism. Limiting Godwin and Paine's influence over Edgeworth to 'passing affinities', she emphasises a stronger bond between Edgeworth and Adam Smith.<sup>71</sup> This approach not only goes beyond the limitations of her earlier interpretation of Edgeworth's politico-literary partisanship against the poles of the 'Jacobin' and the 'Anti-Jacobin' in the *War of Ideas* but also serves as a sort of counterattack against commentators on Edgeworth's Irish interests. Highlighting Edgeworth's French and Scottish Enlightenment inheritance more than ever, Butler seems to suggest that Edgeworth should be established as a cosmopolitan author rather than a simply (Anglo)-Irish one. Indeed, Butler criticises the trend, implicitly among commentators from Irish Studies, to situate Edgeworth's Irish tales in 'the narrow context of Irish *realpolitik*', and stresses that the works raise European issues, relevant to 'every Western European polity since 1790'.<sup>72</sup> Another remarkable aspect of this introduction is that it shows an increasing interest in language and narrative voice. Chapter 1 will refer to this aspect in further detail.

Butler basically maintains these views in her 'General Introduction' to the Pickering & Chatto series. More specifically, while exploring the Irish dimension

---

<sup>68</sup> Butler, 'Introduction', *Castle Rackrent and Ennui*, p. 1.

<sup>69</sup> Butler, 'Introduction', *Castle Rackrent and Ennui*, p. 43. In fact, this introduction (p. 51) refers to Mc Cormack's discussion of Grace Nugent and Count O'Halloran in *Ascendancy and Tradition*. See also Mc Cormack's appendix 'The Tradition of Grace Nugent' to his edition (co-edited by Kim Walker) of *The Absentee* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

<sup>70</sup> Butler, 'Introduction', in *Castle Rackrent and Ennui*, pp. 26, 36-37.

<sup>71</sup> Butler, 'Introduction', in *Castle Rackrent and Ennui*, pp. 28-31, 34, 38-39.



of Edgeworth's work, Butler reconfirms that Edgeworth is 'cosmopolitan' with close ties with the French and Scottish Enlightenment.<sup>73</sup> Among 'some excellent new specialist scholarship' on Edgeworth in the 1990s, Myers' contribution is especially welcomed in that the study links Edgeworth's unsatisfied early days with her writing for children.<sup>74</sup> Here we can find the echo of Butler's earlier traits, the biographical approach with emphasis on psychological interpretation. As a response to the recent criticism, Butler questions the 'fashionable reading' of Thady in *Castle Rackrent*, the overwhelming argument that he is 'a colonial subversive and super-subtle manipulator'.<sup>75</sup> Her 'warning' reads that Edgeworth cannot be easily fit into 'a social and ideological grouping' since she was such a versatile and experienced writer operating in diverse genres.<sup>76</sup>

The revival of interest in Edgeworth culminated in the publication of the Pickering & Chatto edition (1999-2003), which is the first scholarly edition of the collected works. The publication has made her works much more accessible to readers; until then only a few major novels were in print. There are some difficulties left for the Edgeworth scholar, however. Most of her letters are still unpublished. In particular, those written from Ireland have not been put into print whereas those from England, France, and Switzerland have been published. In this sense too, as well as in those senses I have mentioned earlier in this thesis, the published Edgeworth-Lazarus correspondence is important; almost all the letters by Edgeworth in the correspondence are from Ireland. Another problem for Edgeworth scholars is that Butler's literary biography, which is the most comprehensive study of Edgeworth to date, has never been reissued and may not be within their easy access.

Although Edgeworth's work has attracted diverse approaches, there are few studies that discuss its stylistic aspects systematically and to a full extent, as we have observed. This phenomenon emerges as a curious omission, when we consider the fact that her rival, Austen, has commanded great attention to the stylistic aspects of her work. For example, in the 1970s, Norman Page devoted a book to analysing Austen's vocabulary and style, especially conversations and

---

<sup>72</sup> Butler, 'Introduction', in *Castle Rackrent and Ennui*, pp. 28, 31.

<sup>73</sup> Butler, 'General Introduction', *Works*, 1, pp. VIII, XXXVIII.

<sup>74</sup> Butler, 'General Introduction', *Works*, 1, pp. VII, XIV-XV.

<sup>75</sup> Butler, 'General Introduction', *Works*, 1, pp. XXXIX-XI.

<sup>76</sup> Butler, 'General Introduction', *Works*, 1, pp. VII-VIII.

epistolary devices, and Roy Pascal has examined Austen's use of free indirect discourse.<sup>77</sup> The reason for such a gap may be partly because Edgeworth's text is more open to politicised readings, which would be immediately tempting to post-Butler critics; and partly because those critics have not challenged Butler's early assessment that Edgeworth's writing is not so creative or artistically accomplished. The latter reason may in turn be relevant to the fact that Edgeworth has not been so well established as a canonical writer as Austen has been. Accepting Butler's low valuation of Edgeworth's creativity and artistic accomplishments, one might not find so much significance in analysing the stylistic dimension of Edgeworth's narrative. Accordingly, it is necessary to justify the significance of my systematic examination into Edgeworth's narrative modes. The next chapter will open by reading her letters and fiction to commence such a justification.

---

<sup>77</sup> Norman Page, *The Language of Jane Austen* (1972); Roy Pascal, *The Dual Voice* (1977).



## *Chapter 1*

### A Review of Work on Edgeworth and Narrative Modes

#### 1.1 Edgeworth and Style

Edgeworth's private correspondence indicates that her reading was often conducted with attention to the style of the text. A letter of hers comments on books by the Ségurs, as follows:

I have read two French books lately which are excessively interesting, written by a father and son in very different styles, both excellent in their way, the one polished and perfect French of *l'ancien régime*, the other less polished in style with many expressions not in the dictionnaire de l'Académie but all strong, expressive, fit for the business of various life, but not for Court. The first work describing the polished yet degenerate Court and times of France before the Revolution and the causes that led to that Revolution, the other work shewing *some* of the consequences during the reign of Napoleon. The two works are by le Comte de Ségur and le Comte Philip, General de Ségur, his son. The title of the first, *Mémoires et Souvenirs par le Comte de Ségur*, the title of the other, *Histoire de Napoléon et de la Grande Armée l'An 1812*.<sup>78</sup>

A more detailed description of the content from each book and commentaries are given after these remarks. Suggestively, Edgeworth starts her comment on these 'excessively interesting' books by noting their styles before their themes or even the authors' names and the titles. The format of this commentary designates style as the most important. It informs us that Edgeworth has certain ideas about various styles: 'polished' style, 'less polished' style, and the 'perfect French' style 'of *l'ancien régime*'. She does not dismiss the text merely because it lacks stylistic elaboration. What matters to her seems to be how the style and the thematic contents do, and do not, cooperate. Her comment on Burney's memoirs of Dr Burney shows a more specific interest in narrative mode:

[U]nfortunately she [Fanny Burney] who wrote so well formerly in painting characters humorous and serious has whenever she speaks of herself some false shame, some affectation of humility or timidity, or I know not what, which spoils her style. She has a strange notion that it is more humble or prettier or better taste to call herself the *Recluse of West Hamble* or *your unworthy humble servant* or *the present memorialist* than simply to use the short pronoun *I*. The false theory leads to much circumlocution, awkwardness, and an appearance of pedantry and

---

<sup>78</sup> ME to Lazarus, 9 January, 1826, cited in McDonald (ed.), pp. 95-6.

affectation. It becomes tiresome and ridiculous; the whole style of the book is *stilted*. [Edgeworth's italics]<sup>79</sup>

This comment spurns Burney's rhetoric of self-reference.<sup>80</sup> The scope of Edgeworth's analysis covers both the local and the global levels of 'book'; she examines Burney's phrasings for self-reference and their effect on the 'whole' text. For Edgeworth, Burney's evasion of 'the short pronoun *I*' is pretentious and undercuts the text. Given Edgeworth's own difficulty in applying the self-referential 'I' in public writing, her criticism here may not sound so reasonable.<sup>81</sup> This citation, nevertheless, evinces her strong concerns with the self-referential 'I'. Moreover, her reference to Burney's rhetoric of self-reference as a 'theory' points to the understanding that the mode of self-reference systematically affects the whole text. The narrative mode in terms of the narrator's self-reference, is perceived as a systematic strategy. Such perception hints at parallel concerns with narrative mode in Edgeworth's work.

Some textual evidence from Edgeworth's work, too, needs to be introduced to reinforce this view. Chapter XXVI of *Belinda* signals a keen awareness of effects of narrative modes, in disclosing Clarence Hervey's secret relationship with Virginia. This chapter opens with so-called third-person narration,<sup>82</sup> which is the main narrative frame of the text:

Clarence Hervey's packet contained a history of his connexion with Virginia St Pierre.

To save our hero from the charge of egotism, we shall relate the principal circumstances in the third person.

It was about a year before he had seen Belinda, that Clarence Hervey returned from his travels; he had been in France just before the revolution, when luxury and dissipation were at their height in Paris, and when a universal spirit of licentious gallantry prevailed. (*B*, p. 343)

Rather than letting the hero narrate the 'history' in an epistolary form, which is the

<sup>79</sup> ME to Lazarus, 27 June, 1833, cited in McDonald (ed.), pp. 246-47.

<sup>80</sup> 'Self-reference' is meant as a narrator's referring to him/herself in his/her narration.

<sup>81</sup> For instance, Edgeworth writes, 'Till now, I have never on any occasion addressed myself to the public alone, and speaking in the first person' in her preface to the second volume of *Memoirs of Richard Lovell Edgeworth* (1809), p. vii.

<sup>82</sup> More precisely, 'extradiegetic-heterodiegetic' as Gérard Genette defines it. See Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin (1980), p. 248. This extract from *Belinda* points to the shortcomings of the conventional definitions of the 'third-person' and the 'first-person' narrations. The narrator of *Belinda* stands in a sphere outside the fictional world (heterodiegetic), 'addressing the actual public' (extradiegetic). In this sense, the narrative mode is considered to be the 'third person'. The pronoun used by the narrator for self-reference is, however, the first-person plural, 'we', and destabilises the conventional distinction between the 'first-person' narration and the 'third-person' narration.



so-called first person, the narrator decides to tell it on his behalf to ‘save’ him ‘from the charge of egotism’. Intriguingly, it is foreseen that the character’s first person is likely to be received as subjective and unreliable by the reader. The ‘third person’, which is introduced as the alternative mode, is characterised as an objective and more reliable mode in contrast to the first person here. Another salient aspect of the citation is that it proves Edgeworth’s pedagogical interest in narrative modes through such a technical term as ‘the third person’.

In fact, Edgeworth’s writing offers a rich variety of narrative modes. The most complex narrative mode can be found in her first novel *Castle Rackrent*. In this text, she has Thady Quirk relate the history of the Rackrents. While calling this indigenous Irish servant ‘the author’, Edgeworth frames his first-person narration in Hiberno-English, with editorial devices in standard English embodied by the fictional ‘Editor’. In the second Irish tale *Ennui*, Edgeworth lets the Anglo-Irish protagonist Lord Glenthorn recite his story in the first person. As he turns out to be his indigenous Irish nurse’s son at a later stage of the story, we realise that Edgeworth again employs a first person voice which has a natural bond with the traditional Ireland for the narration of an Irish tale.<sup>83</sup> Nearly all the tales of England and the later tales of Ireland (*The Absentee* and *Ormond*) are narrated in the third person, however. It is particularly enigmatic that Edgeworth applies the third person in her second novel *Belinda* (an English tale), which was published one year after *Castle Rackrent* but returns to the first person in *Ennui* (1809). It was not until the writing of *The Absentee* (1812) that Edgeworth applied the third person to her narrative of Ireland; the next and the last major Irish tale *Ormond* is in the third person. Meanwhile, almost all the English tales were written in the third person with the very few exceptions of those written in the first person or epistolary form. Some of the English tales in the third person (e.g. *Patronage*) embed epistolary form (and hence, an inner or subordinate first person) far more extensively than Irish tales do. Such diverse narrative modes seem to serve as the textual articulation of Edgeworth’s ‘ambiguous’ Anglo-Irish identity, and will be investigated in Chapter 3.

---

<sup>83</sup> I will have a subtler examination into Lord Glenthorn’s voice in Chapter 6 below because his identity is made complex by the changeling plot.

## 1.2 Work on Edgeworth and Narrative Modes

As I mentioned in my introduction, few commentators have made a close and extensive study of the stylistic aspects of Edgeworth's work. Joanne Altieri's study (1968) is one of the rare examples and presents a most detailed syntactic analysis.<sup>84</sup> Altieri explores Edgeworth's 'alterations' in her narrative modes, regarding them as 'a decline, a drop' from *Castle Rackrent*'s 'well-manipulated first person rhetoric and robust Irish vernacular into the smooth, flaccid banalities of the polite popular novel' (p. 265). This 'decline' in Edgeworth's narrative strategy is discussed with a comparison between Thady's narrative voice in *Castle Rackrent* and that of the omniscient narrator in *The Absentee*. Altieri argues that Edgeworth's discontinuation of using an 'unreliable narrator' who speaks Hiberno-English such as Thady is for the sake of 'didactic moralism' (pp. 274, 277). In other words, the omniscient third person is preferred to the first person because the former narrator can deliver Edgeworth's moral message more efficiently without confusing the reader. Regrettably, Altieri omits a close look at the omniscient narrator's narrative voice in *The Absentee*, whereas her analysis of Thady and other characters' syntax is thoroughly done.

One of the points Altieri has raised is that those of Edgeworth's characters who personify moral virtue and exemplary roles (e.g. Colambre and Grace Nugent in *The Absentee*) are granted the omniscient narrator's 'perfect syntactical patterns' and vocabulary, whereas less promising characters (e.g. Thady and Judy in *Castle Rackrent*) are left to speak in a more relaxed syntax and in colourful idioms (pp. 269, 278). Altieri traces the roots of this manipulation of characters' verbal behaviour to 'the Renaissance separation of high and low characters by their forms of speech' via eighteenth-century fiction such as Ann Radcliffe's and Charlotte Smith's (pp. 270-73, 276-77). She links the style of characters' verbal behaviour with their 'social position' and 'moral worth' (p. 276). The gender and cultural dimension of their language is not her concern. This indifference may be because her interest often lies in the question of how far the characters' language deviates from the 'ultimate speech [with accurate and balanced syntax], the idiom of the people of sense [according to Altieri, these people are usually found among those characters

---

<sup>84</sup> Joanne Altieri, 'Style and Purpose in Maria Edgeworth's Fiction', *Nineteenth Century Fiction*, 23.3 (1968), 265-78.



with socially privileged status]’ (p. 278). Consequently, Altieri’s argument sounds one-sided. An instance of such methodological shortcomings is found in her comment on *The Absentee*’s narrator. She emphasises verbal universality shared by Edgeworth’s omniscient narrator and other omniscient narrators of the contemporary ‘polite novels’, without attempting to find distinctions between these narrators (p. 266).<sup>85</sup> Her approach thereby ignores the awkward cultural position of Edgeworth’s narratives among the ‘polite novels’, and moreover in English literature.

Vivienne Mylne (1987) has developed Altieri’s study, by situating Edgeworth’s narrative modes in the wider context of European fiction. Mylne observes that Edgeworth’s hesitation over applying a regional dialect speaker as narrator in *Castle Rackrent*, which Altieri perceived, is shared by other European authors of the period.<sup>86</sup> Mylne’s approach, based on an examination of the syntax and idioms of narrators and characters in *Castle Rackrent* and *The Absentee*, is quite similar to Altieri’s. But the originality of Mylne’s reading is its view that the first person in regional dialect became attractive to Edgeworth again and even won a virtually authoritative status by the time Edgeworth wrote *The Absentee*. In Larry Brady’s letter, which concludes the third person of *The Absentee*, Mylne detects ‘a far greater concentration of dialect indicators’ than in Thady’s narrative voice (p. 328). Even though her density measurement of Hiberno-English in the two Irish characters’ remarks may be right, it disregards the important factor that Thady’s voice is given much more narrative authority than Larry’s. That is, Thady is given authority to speak to the reading public outside the fictional world, whereas Larry’s letter is addressed to a character in the fictional world. Lanser’s narratology makes strict distinction between a ‘public’ narration which is addressed to the historical reading public outside the fictional world and a ‘private’ narration which is addressed to (a) character(s) in the fictional world. ‘Public’ narration (or narrator) and ‘private’ narration (or narrator) are endowed with different degrees of narrative authority in Lanser’s paradigm.

There is no noteworthy work that specifically scrutinises Edgeworth’s narrative modes after these two studies. Yet, some scholars have contributed useful

---

<sup>85</sup> For instance, Altieri does not refer to Henry Fielding, whose ‘third-person’ omniscient narrator is distinguished.

<sup>86</sup> Vivienne Mylne, ‘Dialect and the Narrator in Maria Edgeworth, John Galt, and George

remarks about Edgeworth's narrative voices. Dunne's reading of *Castle Rackrent* [1984] notes that there is 'a dialogue between voices in the text, that of the narrator, Thady, and of the author in the guise of editor'.<sup>87</sup> The observation is remarkable since the Editor's voice, which is located in the textual margins, was hardly discussed with due attention before. Dunne identifies the Editor's voice as Edgeworth's and provides a postcolonial reading of it: the Editor's voice is 'the more reliable and authoritative one', where 'the voice at least of the colonist class, or rather, of its liberal minority *is present*'.<sup>88</sup> The convenience of framing Thady's voice within the Editor's is noticed, too: 'By thus omitting the Ascendancy from the narrative, while insinuating its perspective as dominant through the commentary, Edgeworth was able to distance it from the patent evils of the system she described'.<sup>89</sup> What is more, Dunne suggests that '[t]he chaotic nature of Irish society and the young Edgeworth's awareness of her limitations and vulnerability made it unlikely that she could write with a confident and authoritative voice, like Jane Austen, for example'.<sup>90</sup> Although Dunne has not developed these penetrating comments further, his contribution should be acknowledged in that it has contextualised Edgeworth's narrative modes from a postcolonial perspective, and that it attributes her problem with narrative authority to her national identity rather than her gender through the comparison with Austen, the representative of the woman writers in the period.

Kowaleski-Wallace's study (1991) comments on the Editor's voice in *Castle Rackrent*, too. However, only one entry of the Glossary that has been attributed to Richard Lovell Edgeworth is dealt with. Like Dunne, she considers the Editor to voice the Edgeworths' outlook. She is quick in grasping the class dimension of the Editor's voice and proposes that through this editorial apparatus the Edgeworths 'defined themselves as a class' in terms of 'a particular awareness of how the body was to be lived—a knowledge that was thought to be the product of a superior culture and education' (pp. 154-59). Kowaleski-Wallace is also alert in noticing that 'Edgeworth's voice is less expressive of her gender than it is of her class' (p. 140). Regrettably, her discussion of the Editor's voice in *Castle Rackrent*

---

Sand', *Rivista di Letterature Moderne e Comparate*, 40 (1987), 323-41.

<sup>87</sup> *Colonial Mind*, p. 8.

<sup>88</sup> *Colonial Mind*, p. 8.

<sup>89</sup> *Colonial Mind*, p. 8.

<sup>90</sup> *Colonial Mind*, p. 7.



is localized in her study.

Butler's introduction to the Penguin *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui* (1992) offers a more substantial examination of the Editor's voice in *Castle Rackrent*. While indebted to Dunne's postcolonial reading of Thady's and the Editor's narrative voices, Butler elaborates that the Editor is characterised as English'.<sup>91</sup> This characterisation is significant since Butler gives a specific national identity to the Editor rather than categorising him (grammatically marked as male in the text) simply as 'the colonizer'. Butler is also right in conceiving Edgeworth's difficulty over cross-dressing as Glenthorn, who is the 'sexually experienced and moderately dissolute young male narrator' of *Ennui*.<sup>92</sup> This commentary adds nationality, gender, and sexuality into the parameters of Edgeworth's narrative voices. Butler approaches narrative voices with less scepticism than Kowaleski-Wallace, who has found the gender in Edgeworth's authoritative narrative mode to be slippery (e.g. as the Editor in *Castle Rackrent* and as the writer concluding *Memoirs of RLE*).

Due in part to the potentially restricted nature of an editorial introduction, Butler does not allow sufficient space for developing her intriguing comments. An example is observable in her following comment: 'We may see in the schizophrenic quality of the narration – one half warmly and humorously Irish, the other half coolly and rationally English – the split cultural personality of the colonizer'.<sup>93</sup> One would be curious to know whether the 'cultural personality of the colonizer' can be 'split' in a tidy way and question whether the two co-existing cultures in the 'colonizer' can be in conflict or interaction rather than in clear cut separation. Further accounts of the cultural relations between the 'warmly and humorously Irish' and the 'coolly and rationally English' seem to be necessary.

Despite such loose ends, Butler's commentaries provide us insights. For instance, it is observed that 'Edgeworth's fondness for male narrators, and her tendency to divide herself among diverse characters, male and female, illustrates this penchant for invisibility [shared by women writers]'.<sup>94</sup> It is fair to detect Edgeworth's anxiety over the choice of the narrative modes, but it seems hasty to negate her pursuit of 'visibility', which may be broadly interpreted as narrative authority. As I contended in the Introduction above, it is unreasonable to see

---

<sup>91</sup> 'Introduction', *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui*, p. 18.

<sup>92</sup> 'Introduction', *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui*, p. 41.

<sup>93</sup> 'Introduction', *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui*, p. 16.

Edgeworth's narrative acts as self-effacement. The advertisement for *Belinda* distinguishes Edgeworth from 'Novelists' and objectifies her as a strongly-opinionated writer in the reader's eye. Such textual evidence challenges the imagined 'penchant for invisibility'. I argue that Edgeworth's narrative modes do not necessarily indicate the 'feminine' abandonment of 'visibility' or narrative authority. As I will develop this argument in the next few chapters, Edgeworth's first person in the voices of Thady and Glenthorn and third person in *Patronage* among others all serve for her to establish narrative authority rather than renounce it. Butler's commentary also points to the discrepancy in Edgeworth's narrative devices for Irish tales and English tales (p. 84). My concerns in this thesis are not really to clarify the question of how coincidentally Edgeworth made such a strategic discrepancy, but to approach the discrepancy as the textual articulation of her problem in establishing narrative authority as a woman writer from the Anglo-Irish Protestant Ascendancy.

By the time Butler wrote the 'General Introduction' to the Pickering edition of Edgeworth's collected works (1999), she raised her evaluation of Edgeworth's stylistic strategies, calling Edgeworth a 'stylish writer'.<sup>95</sup> This valuation is a long way from her verdict in *Maria Edgeworth* and may well justify my concern with Edgeworth's narrative modes.

Claire Connolly (1999) and Kathryn Kirkpatrick (1995) have presented subtler accounts of the textual politics of *Castle Rackrent* than previous politicised readings. Connolly suggests that the reader should concentrate on Thady's 'narrative function' rather than characterisation.<sup>96</sup> For her, Thady's narrative function is 'in part a function of the first-person narrated text' (p. 139). Thady, as the narrator of 'the first-person narrated text', is 'paradoxically absent' and therefore not an appropriate object for a character-based analysis (p. 139). Accordingly, it is hardly fruitful to decide whether he is a subversive character or not. Connolly's enquiry focuses on what is meant by the juxtaposition of Thady's voice and the Editor's voice (p. 154). The relationship between the two narrative voices is discussed with postcolonial theories about translation and metaphor (pp. 147-54). The cultural tension Connolly detects in the juxtaposition of the two

---

<sup>94</sup> 'Introduction', *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui*, p. 53.

<sup>95</sup> Butler, 'General Introduction', *Works*, I, p. XII.

<sup>96</sup> 'Reading Responsibility', p. 139.



narrative voices is the very location where I read Edgeworth's struggle for narrative authority.

Kirkpatrick shares with Connolly a minute attention to the two narrative voices in *Castle Rackrent* and conducts perhaps the most thorough examination of those matters ever. In Kirkpatrick's interpretation, the first part of the text 'CASTLE RACKRENT' and the additional part 'CONTINUATION OF THE MEMOIRS OF THE RACKRENT FAMILY' present distinguishable political tension between Thady's narration and the Editor's notes and glossary. It is argued that the first part conveys Edgeworth's allegiance with the indigenous Irish more than the added part:

Her [Edgeworth's] identification with Thady's dispossessed voice [in the first part of the text] brought her face to face with the contradiction of her own marginal status as a woman in a dominant class. At this impasse, perhaps not coincidentally, Edgeworth laid the manuscript aside for two years. [...] When Edgeworth returned to her novel, her notes took on a new relation to the narrative and that narrative had itself changed.<sup>97</sup>

Kirkpatrick's reading of the first part seems aligned with Tracy's and Eagleton's perspectives, for its relaxed approach to the conceivable gaps between Edgeworth and Thady, in terms of cultural, class, and gender backgrounds. Her study of the additional part, however, recognises the cultural and class gap in the textual gestures of the Editor in dissociating himself from the indigenous Irish. Her interpretation of the text as a whole thus shares Connolly's scepticism of the critical practice of establishing easy identification between Thady and Edgeworth.

Brian Hollingworth's study of Edgeworth's Irish writing (1997) recognises the cultural tension between the indigenous Irish and the English in Edgeworth's narrative modes. For example, he argues that Edgeworth never applied the narrative mode of *Castle Rackrent* again because her hierarchic view of language and society prevented her from recycling the first person in Hiberno-English: a third person linked with 'firm morality' was much preferable to her (p. 87). His scope fairly encompasses both Irish tales and English tales and succeeds in situating Edgeworth's narrative strategies in a wider context than other critics (p. 108). The discrepancy in her narrative modes between Irish tales and English tales receives only a passing notice from him, however. His attention is engaged with Edgeworth's treatment of Hiberno-English in her Irish writing. In his discussion of

the later three Irish tales, whose narrators speak standard English, his attention is focused on dialect speakers. Nor is his discussion structured as a substantial examination of Edgeworth's narrative modes.

Hollingworth's analysis of the narrators of *Castle Rackrent* seems less nuanced than Connolly's and Kirkpatrick's. For instance, Hollingworth imagines a simple and stable relationship between Thady's voice and the Editor's voice, where the Editor's voice defines and almost completely controls Thady's voice in a one-way direction (p. 100). It may be right to see that the Editor simultaneously 'legitimizes' and degrades Thady's 'vernacular' narration, as Hollingworth suggests (pp. 100-106). However, we need careful consideration that there is a mutual dependence between the two voices, as Connolly argues (pp. 152-54); Thady's voice in dialect is indispensable for the definition of the Editor's voice as standard English and belonging to the colonist's culture.

In summary, no commentators have attempted a systematic analysis of Edgeworth's narrative modes. Those who have provided stylistic analyses in a strict sense, such as Altieri and Mylne, have insufficient contextualisation of their stylistic findings, which would exclude important issues raised by the thematic construction of the text such as the ambiguity of Anglo-Irish identity. In fact, this sort of limitation seems a common defect of stylistic approaches in general rather than being exclusive to Altieri and Mylne. In the next section I will discuss the effort in the stylistic studies of the 1990s to overcome such limitations. Some critics have contextualised Edgeworth's narrative modes, for example with reference to political history and feminist perspectives. But most of them look exclusively at *Castle Rackrent*. As a result, their arguments tend to be held back within the boundaries of *Castle Rackrent*, without connecting to Edgeworth's other texts. There is thus a need for a systematic and more comprehensive study of the narrative modes, across the generic border between her English tales and Irish tales. To understand her narrative strategies in her Irish tales fully, it is essential to look at those in English tales, and vice versa. Such a comparative viewpoint is also imperative to our understanding of her ambiguous national identity.

---

<sup>97</sup> Kirkpatrick, p. 84.



### 1.3 Lanser's Contextualised Narratology

The previous section reviewed existing work on Edgeworth's narrative modes. What seems to be a niche in stylistic approaches to her work, according to the review, is an application of contextualised narratology to mediate between the stylistic strategies and the thematic construction of the text. Such a methodology is intended as contrary to the self-contained making of a technical narrative typology.

My systematic inspection of Edgeworth's narrative modes employs Lanser's paradigm of women writers' narrative voice in her *Fictions of Authority* (1992). The year of the publication of the book is to be remembered for witnessing a major move to contextualised stylistics among narratologists. *Language, Text and Context*, edited by Michael Toolan, was published in this year, too. The reprinting of Toolan's own study *Narrative*, which briefly adds the dimensions of class and gender to stylistic approaches, in 1991 and 1992 can be regarded as part of the phenomenon.<sup>98</sup> According to Monika Fludernik, the tendency to integrate stylistic analysis and thematic interpretation reached fruition in *Fictions of Authority* among others.<sup>99</sup> Lanser positions *Fictions of Authority* as an attempt at feminist narratology, trying to find a good balance between narratologists and feminist critics. According to her, narratologists tend to focus on the formal structures without being concerned with 'the causes, ideologies, or social implications' behind them.<sup>100</sup> On the contrary, feminist critics tend to concentrate on the thematic motifs without considering the stylistic aspects. Lanser had already shown a great concern with the intersection of style and context in *The Narrative Act* (1981). Based in North America, she describes her standpoint as follows:

My training is deeply formalist and my perspective as deeply feminist. [sic] This uneasy union has led me beyond traditional formalism without diminishing my interest in form. I have come to conceive the notion of form more broadly, to understand form as content and ideology as form, and to recognize relationships between textual and extratextual structures much as critics like Lucien Goldmann, Fredric Jameson, and Terry Eagleton conceive them.<sup>101</sup>

Yet, because '[f]eminist "content" appears only infrequently on the surface of this book' as Lanser herself admits, *The Narrative Act* has been remembered almost

<sup>98</sup> Toolan, *Narrative* (1988; repr. 1991, 1992).

<sup>99</sup> Monika Fludernik, *Towards a 'Natural' Narratology* (1996), pp. 358-59.

<sup>100</sup> *FA*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>101</sup> *NA*, p. 7.

only for its technical discussion of formalist-structuralist poetics even by narratologists (*NA*, p. 10). For instance, her attention to ‘the relation between ideology and technique’ in the book is acknowledged neither by the contributors to *Language, Text and Context* nor by Paul Simpson, who shares with her interest in the relation between ‘point of view’ and textual form.<sup>102</sup>

Lanser’s ‘linking social identity and narrative form’, which is fundamental to her model in *The Narrative Act*, is central to her argument in *Fictions of Authority*, and she emphasises the link even more than before.<sup>103</sup> *Fictions of Authority* aims to ‘explore through specifically formal evidence the intersection of social identity and textual form, reading certain aspects of narrative voice as a critical locus of ideology’ (p. 15). Applying Lanser’s approach, this thesis reads the diversity and discrepancy of Edgeworth’s narrative modes as the textual construction of her identity. The thesis simultaneously serves to test the potentiality of Lanser’s narratology by putting more emphasis on national and cultural identities as parameters of narrative authority than she has demonstrated. National and cultural identities are firmly interlinked with socio-political identities in the colonial situation of Ireland, where Edgeworth’s oeuvre was written.

One virtue of *Fictions of Authority* is that the study is based on Lanser’s readings of women’s writing between the mid-eighteenth century and the mid-twentieth century. This wide range of women’s writing indicates her sagacious recognition that previous narratological theories have easy reliance on the ‘canon’ written by male authors (p. 6). My application of Lanser’s theory does not necessarily mean that we should separate writings into two categories contingent on the sex of the author (i.e. men’s writings and women’s writings) and apply specific theories exclusively to each of the categories.<sup>104</sup> Rather, my choice of Lanser’s theory is due to its preoccupation with the notion of authority and its perception of difficulty in the achievement of narrative authority by certain social identities such as women, and conceivably the Anglo-Irish Protestant Ascendancy, both the social categories crucial to Edgeworth’s profile.

There are other significant contributions to the narratology informed by gender issues. For instance, Sara Mills has published on ‘Marxist feminist

---

<sup>102</sup> Paul Simpson, *Language, Ideology and Point of View* (1993). For Lanser’s discussion of ‘the relation between ideology and technique’, see *NA*, pp. 6, 17-8, 55-63, 101, 241.

<sup>103</sup> *FA*, p. 6.



contextualized stylistics'.<sup>105</sup> Since her paradigm is heavily oriented towards 'the positioning of the readers', it is not so appropriate to my primary concerns with Edgeworth's textual positioning of herself.<sup>106</sup> Edgeworth's self-positioning can be investigated through the analysis of her narrative voices as means to establish narrative authority. Marie Paule Hastert and Jean Jacques Weber also have written their study of *Middlemarch* from the perspective of 'feminist narratology'.<sup>107</sup> The study interprets a 'power struggle fought out by the characters on the diegetic level of the plot' by focusing on the characters' verbal behaviour. This power struggle on the diegetic level is, furthermore, understood to be 'reflected on the extradiegetic level of the narrator' (p. 177). The study however devotes little space to dissect the extradiegetic level of the text and the relationship between the narrator and 'George Eliot'. Hastert and Weber's approach is thus not so useful to mine as Lanser's.

The next ground-breaking work in narratology after contextualised stylistics is Monika Fludernik's *Towards a 'Natural' Narratology* (1996). This is an ambitious redefinition of 'narrativity' 'in terms of cognitive ("natural") parameters, moving beyond formal narratology into the realm of pragmatics, reception theory and constructivism' (p. xi). Fludernik's revised typology of narrative modes is based on the narrator's functions such as 'experiencing', 'telling', 'reflecting', and 'viewing' (pp. 50-51). Innovative as this typology may be, it seems to distract the reader's attention from the difficulty in the author's negotiation between his/her identity and narrative authority. It would be uncongenial to the purpose of my thesis, if the model causes Edgeworth's narrative acts to be overshadowed by the reader's reading 'activity'. Accordingly, although Fludernik's model seems more flexible than previous narrative theories, it does not seem directly useful to the questions of this thesis.

Given those gaps between the aims of the thesis and the orientations of the theories mentioned above, Lanser's paradigm may well be regarded as the most appropriate to the methodology of the thesis. My methodology does not borrow her paradigm uncritically, however. Her model will be revised and modified to meet the idiosyncratic textuality of Edgeworth's narrative voices and the questions of my

---

<sup>104</sup> See also Lanser, *FA*, p. 8.

<sup>105</sup> Sara Mills, 'Knowing Your Place', in Toolan (ed.), pp. 182-205. See also her *Feminist Stylistics* (1995).

<sup>106</sup> Mills, 'Knowing Your Place', p. 185.

<sup>107</sup> Marie Paule Hastert and Jean Jacques Weber, 'Power and Mutuality in *Middlemarch*', in

thesis. The next chapter will sift further features of Lanser's narratology, particularly its theoretical strengths and shortcomings, and go on to apply her model to Edgeworth's narratives.



## *Chapter 2*

### **Edgeworth's Narrative Voice and Lanser's Narratology: The Concepts of Authorial Voice and Personal Voice**

The first section of this chapter will survey Lanser's theory in *The Narrative Act* and locate its position among other narrative theories. As she herself acknowledges, *The Narrative Act* provides a groundwork for *Fictions of Authority*.<sup>108</sup> In the second section the relevant details of her model in *Fictions of Authority* will be introduced. In particular, the definitions of 'authorial voice' and 'personal voice' are to be discussed. Her unconventional accounts of commonalities between these two narrative modes will be highlighted for the purpose of my thesis. Some modifications of her model will be proposed to reconcile the gap between its orientation and Edgeworth's specific texts. Further characterisation of Edgeworth's narrative voices will also be discussed. This procedure is designed to prepare the ground for the next chapter. The next chapter will illuminate contrasts and commonalities between authorial voices and personal voices in Edgeworth's narrative practice intertextually and investigate how such narrative practice contributes to the construction of her identity.

#### **2.1 Introduction to Lanser's Narratology: *The Narrative Act***

*The Narrative Act* recalls the popularity in the previous two decades of applying speech act theory to 'literary' discourse.<sup>109</sup> Although Lanser's later model in *Fictions of Authority* is more directly relevant to the methodology of this thesis, it seems necessary to examine the narratology in *The Narrative Act* since the latter study provides a foundational framework for the former study. *The Narrative Act* proposes an 'eclectic theory' which utilises concepts and conceptualisations from diverse paradigms such as formalism, Marxist criticism, and speech act theory (p. 277). This section, therefore, focuses on major issues and, in particular, those

---

<sup>108</sup> *FA*, p. 23.

relevant to *Fictions of Authority* and evaluates the coherence of the theory as a whole. The valuation will be structured around Lanser's application of speech act theory, since it seems not only pivotal to her theorisation but also the most controversial.

*The Narrative Act* investigates, as its primary concern, 'the fictionalization of point of view, the relationships between consciousness, discourse strategy, and aesthetic form', by postulating 'connections between narrative voice and the material, social, and psychological context of the writing act, connections between ideology and technique' (p. 5). The 'inquiry into the relationship between social identity and textual form' in this study (p. 277) is to find its mature expression in *Fictions of Authority*. The ultimate aim of *The Narrative Act* is not to create a narratology 'correct' or 'definitive' model but to propose a 'both more comprehensive and more flexible' (pp. 5-7, 277). This narratology is meant to be 'a concrete poetics of narrative voice' based on readings of a specific body of texts (p. 8). Such an empirical basis of Lanser's theorisation reflects her censure of previous studies for plying intricate and rigid typologies and failing to explain 'what Robert Weimann calls the "infinite particularity" of individual texts' (p. 13). Lanser contends that the previous narratological models, which aim to be 'comprehensive' through obsessive abstraction and generalisation by means of sets of tidy typologies, can be quite reductive precisely because they seek universal applicability. Her attempt to correct this imbalance in existing narratology is successfully made by recovering the context within the scope of her model through the application of speech act theory. *The Narrative Act*, moreover, incorporates a 'deeply feminist' perspective, which constitutes with her 'formalist training' the two loci of her approach (pp. 7, 10). The study intertwines gender perspectives and narratology ambitiously, if not so extensively as *Fictions of Authority* does. These theoretical innovations make the narratology in *The Narrative Act* well-balanced as well as appreciative of the social and cultural context.

The departure point of *The Narrative Act* is to curtail the gap between 'underestimated and underexplored' implications of the concept of 'point of view' and excessively technical analyses which rely on the 'underexplored' concept in previous studies (p. 13). While admitting that the complex nature of the notion has

---

<sup>109</sup> Raman Selden, ed., *From Formalism to Poststructuralism* (1995), p. 354.



caused difficulties in the study of 'point of view', Lanser criticises the predominant tendency of the existing studies to conceive of the concept as 'a single, surface-structure relationship between narrator and narrated event' (pp. 13-14). Her contention is that 'point of view' needs to be understood as 'essentially a relationship' situated in 'a complex network of interactions between author, narrator(s), characters, and audiences both real and implied' (p. 13). Emphasising the aspect of the concept as attitude and ideology, Lanser then rightly calls for attention to the following neglected elements of 'point of view': 'the gender of the narrator, the speaker's basis for authority, the narrator's "personality" and values, and the relationship between the writer's circumstances and beliefs and the narrative structure of the text' (pp. 5, 16-19). This contribution is important to the conceptualisation of 'point of view' since Lanser renders the concept more enriched and value-laden than before.

The reaction against what Lanser calls formalist or formalist-structuralist approaches to 'point of view' is fundamental to *The Narrative Act*. Lanser detects serious shortcomings in their 'detachment of narrative voice and mode from a concept of narrative function and goal, from attention to value or ideology, and from a notion of the text-as-process in its context as a social, communicative act' (pp. 32, 43). The detected shortcomings include exclusive interest in the narrator and the text. Lanser also contests the zeal of these approaches for classifications, with a 'scientific spirit' seeking 'to set forth precise, quantifiable distinctions of the "binary pair" or "multiple choice" variety', in that those classifications are, after all, arbitrary and reductive (pp. 36, 39-41). Gérard Genette's model is counted as a major example (pp. 36-39). Such criticism is not meant to deny Lanser's indebtedness to Genette and other formalists' contributions. She acknowledges that they provide *The Narrative Act* with some important definitions such as Genette's notions of 'heterodiegetic' and 'extradiegetic' narrations (pp. 132-35, 157-59).

To recover the notion of the author and to include authorial ideology within the scope of narratology are therefore Lanser's primary concerns. She excavates theoretical aids for these concerns in the works of Wayne C. Booth, Russian Formalists (Mikhail Bakhtin, V. N. Volosinov, Boris Uspenskii, and Juri Lotman) and their followers, Tzvetan Todorov, Robert Weimann, Roger Fowler, and Käte

Friedemann.<sup>110</sup> According to Lanser, Booth's *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961) not only revived the notion of the author, which had been overshadowed by the notion of the autonomy of the text by the 1960s,<sup>111</sup> but also assisted her theorisation with the awareness that 'point of view' needs to be discussed in terms of 'the communication of values and attitudes from author to reader' rather than 'simply the transmission of a story'.<sup>112</sup> Bakhtin and/or Volosinov's approaches, especially in their reading of authorial consciousness in the text/discourse also helped her to justify the inclusion of the historical author and his/her perspective into her model.<sup>113</sup> It should be mentioned, in passing, that Lanser seems to overlook Bakhtin and/or Volosinov's designation of authorial consciousness as the implied author's, not as the historical author's.<sup>114</sup> This does not, however, seem to cause major problems in her theorisation since its reference to Bakhtin and/or Volosinov's works is brief. Lanser's model is much more influenced by their followers. The expansion of the perspective 'from the intra- and intertextual to the text-in-context' by the French critic Todorov supports her attempt to link textual surface and ideology.<sup>115</sup> So does Uspenskii and Lotman's willingness to include the author and his/her ideology extensively in the dynamics of 'point of view'.<sup>116</sup>

Lanser's theoretical union of technique with ideology is formulated with ideas from the work of Robert Weimann, a Marxist critic from the German Democratic Republic. She supports his vision that the reader needs to note the ideological intention behind the choice of technique and to analyse 'point of view' for better understanding of both the value system in the fictional world and the relationship between the author and society.<sup>117</sup> The theorisation of 'point of view' by Roger Fowler, the promoter of 'critical linguistics', is found by her to share 'not only Weimann's understanding of the connection between ideology and technique

---

<sup>110</sup> It has been debatable whether the work by the Bakhtin Group (Bakhtin, Volosinov, and P. N. Medvedev) should be considered as Russian Formalist. See Selden (ed.), pp. 14-16. In this thesis, the broader definition of Russian Formalism is taken, and accordingly the Bakhtin Group is counted as Russian Formalist.

<sup>111</sup> For example, New Criticism's approaches and Roland Barthes's 'The Death of the Author' in *Image, Music, Text*, translated by Stephen Heath (1977).

<sup>112</sup> *NA*, pp. 45-46.

<sup>113</sup> *NA*, pp. 47, 48, 146-47. The authorship of the work attributed to Bakhtin and Volosinov has been controversial. See *The Bakhtin Reader*, ed. by Pam Morris (1994), pp. 1-4. See also Selden (ed.), p. 95.

<sup>114</sup> For instance see *NA*, pp.47-48. See also Morris, p. 169.

<sup>115</sup> *NA*, pp. 54-55.

<sup>116</sup> *NA*, pp. 55-57.

<sup>117</sup> *NA*, pp. 57-59.



but also his awareness of the social dimensions of literary discourse' (p. 60). She recognises the validity of Fowler's sociolinguistic approach influenced by implications of Chomsky's transformational grammar. Fowler reads the text at two levels, the surface level and the deep level, for the purpose of understanding the ideology and/or the value the author is (un)consciously communicating to the reader. His view that the transformation of the deep structure of the text to the surface structure is governed by authorial perspective is compatible with Lanser's interpretation of the function of 'point of view'.<sup>118</sup> Lanser develops his theory, arguing that it is reasonable to bring gender issues into the discussion of 'point of view' because, as he contends, the analyses of 'point of view' can encompass both the cultural norms and the linguistic conventions of social community.<sup>119</sup> She rates Fowler's and Weimann's studies highly as 'a comprehensive theory of point of view' with the awareness of multiple relations among the author, the reader, and the text.<sup>120</sup> Their works are thereby extensively applied to her conceptualisation of 'point of view'. She acknowledges their contribution to her 'framing and validating a theory of point of view that differs in scope and emphasis from the formalist-structuralist inquiries on which it is based'.<sup>121</sup>

The discourse situation for such a concept of 'point of view' is modelled by Lanser's understanding of text as 'literary act'.<sup>122</sup> To develop this notion of 'literary act', she links structural approaches to narrative with a Marxist conception of the text as 'an ideological as well as aesthetic act', by adapting the ideas of speech act theorists, such as J. L. Austin and John R. Searle.<sup>123</sup> Speech act theory was postulated and advocated by Austin, the Oxford 'ordinary language' philosopher, in the 1950s. His representative work, *How to Do Things with Words* (1962), was originally delivered as his William James Lectures at Harvard in 1955, and posthumously reconstructed from notes by J. O. Urmson after his premature death.<sup>124</sup> Searle, the professor of philosophy at the University of California,

---

<sup>118</sup> NA, pp. 59-60.

<sup>119</sup> NA, p. 61.

<sup>120</sup> NA, p. 62.

<sup>121</sup> NA, p. 7.

<sup>122</sup> NA, p. 64.

<sup>123</sup> NA, p. 8.

<sup>124</sup> J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, ed. by J. O. Urmson and Marina Sbisa (1962).

Berkeley, is ‘the most visible’ of Austin’s heirs.<sup>125</sup> Most notably through his *Speech Acts* (1969) Searle diffused the impact of speech act theory well into the 1970s. Lanser’s *The Narrative Act*, published in the beginning of the following decade, finds in speech act theory ‘a philosophical basis for understanding literature as communicative act and text as message-in-context’ (p. 7). She endorses the sensitivity of Austin’s and Searle’s theories to the dynamics of verbal activity.<sup>126</sup> Their theories reflect the revolutionary recognition that the functions and effects of spoken verbal communication, more precisely, speech acts of an utterance, depend on the situational contexts including the relationship between the speaker and the receiver, the linguistic, cultural, and social conventions of the relevant society. And this aspect inspires Lanser’s model to ‘situat[e] fictional writing within the framework of all language use’.<sup>127</sup> She argues that such a methodology is viable since literature is ‘communicative both in usage and intent’ like other modes of verbal behaviour.<sup>128</sup> This is not meant to collapse literature into general language use, however. Lanser cautiously adds that ‘we must confront both the rules governing verbal production in general and the rules that constitute the production of literature in particular’.<sup>129</sup> While such reasoning sounds plausible, the potential difficulty of her attempt is predictable. I will discuss the difficulty in detail below where I examine the validity of her application of speech act theory.

Lanser’s narrative model takes full account of the communicative aspect of ‘literary discourse’ and integrates the dynamic interactions between author, narrator, (narratee), and reader(s), which have been neglected by narratologists. She refers mainly to the speech act theories of Austin and Searle, but it is both Mary Louise Pratt’s and Richard Ohmann’s applications to ‘literary discourse’ that have facilitated her modelling. Ohmann and Pratt pioneered the application of speech act theory to ‘literary discourse’ in the 1970s. Placing ‘literary discourse’ against the framework of speech act theory as one form of language use, Pratt and Ohmann have suggested that ‘literary discourse’ should be considered as a dynamic site of the communication situated in specific social and cultural contexts where the author

---

<sup>125</sup> Selden (ed.), p. 350.

<sup>126</sup> *NA*, p. 67.

<sup>127</sup> *NA*, p. 64.

<sup>128</sup> *NA*, p. 64.

<sup>129</sup> *NA*, p. 66.



and the reader(s) would interact with each other.<sup>130</sup> This is an important move in the perception of ‘literary discourse’, away from the formalist notion of the text as ‘a static object’ sent by the author to the reader(s).

Lanser belongs to the second generation of literary scholars applying speech act theory after Ohmann and Pratt. Lanser’s model successfully captures the interactive relationship between the author and the reader(s) with the implication that the author could manipulate his/her ‘literary discourse’ according to his/her awareness of potential responses.<sup>131</sup> This interactive relationship between the author’s narrative strategy and the readers’ reception is to be rendered central to her later model in *Fictions of Authority*. The interactive aspect of literary communication becomes the more important to my study of Edgeworth since her novels constantly address the concept of narrative authority and her personal correspondence registers strong concerns about the reception of her works. Some of Edgeworth’s alterations in revised editions of her novels, for instance *Patronage* (1814), reflect the criticism of her reviewers.

In fact, speech act theory is pivotal to *The Narrative Act*. Lanser’s theory in the study ‘affirms this understanding of form [Marxist literary critics’ view that all form is content, all content is form] by perceiving all verbal activity as an indissoluble forging of abstract conventional structures, the “raw materials” of social life, words, and the contexts of their performance and use’ (pp. 99-100). She elaborates, ‘Dissolving the polarities of form and content also allows us to recognize that aesthetic structure, like all content, is constrained and determined by ideology’ (p. 100). Fredric Jameson and Terry Eagleton are the Marxist literary critics she relies on here. By referring to their work, she sophisticates her articulation that the form of text is as ideology-charged as the content and successfully justifies the significance of exploring the authorial ideology of texts in terms of formal features as well as thematic issues.<sup>132</sup>

Speech act theory also enables Lanser to apply Fernando Ferrara’s model for the analysis of the fictional character to her exploration of narrative voice. Ferrara’s model theorises how readers could retrieve the personality of a character

---

<sup>130</sup> Mary Louise Pratt, *Toward a Speech Act Theory of Literary Discourse* (1977), p. 86, cited in *NA*, p. 69. Richard Ohmann, ‘Literature as Act’, in *Approaches to Poetics*, ed. by Seymour Chatman (1974), pp. 81-107 (pp. 98-99, 102), cited in *NA*, pp. 81, 85.

<sup>131</sup> *NA*, p. 116.

<sup>132</sup> Fredric Jameson, *Marxism and Form* (1971); Terry Eagleton, *Criticism and Ideology*

and the author's set of values or ideology underlying that personality, by applying Chomskian transformational structuralism: the surface level of the story, where the character has actions, the middle structure, where the character's personality is characterised by conventions, not only those of fiction but also those in social and cultural contexts, and the deep structure, where the author's ideology is identified. Lanser replaces the character with the narrator in Ferrara's model through speech act theory, arguing that 'speech act theory provides the framework for adapting Ferrara's model by its recognition that discourse is *action* that can be analysed like all human acts'.<sup>133</sup> Her theorisation proposes that 'The model that Ferrara posits allows a deep structural analysis of narrative speech activity and also provides a framework for a more full understanding of the homology (which includes the opposition) between cultural communication and the behavior of the narrative voice'.<sup>134</sup> Lanser thus succeeds in making the scope of her narratology more extensive; it enables us to examine not only the surface structures of the text but also 'the cultural communication that is at the textual base'.<sup>135</sup> The underlying cultural communication here includes the transmission of authorial ideology.

In addition to the theoretical features hinged by the application of speech act theory that we have observed, Lanser's narratology introduces the concepts of 'public' narration and 'private' narration and enhances Genette's highly technical definitions of narrative levels such as 'heterodiegetic' and 'extradiegetic'.<sup>136</sup> Lanser defines a 'public' narration as a narration presented to 'a reader-figure or audience "outside" the text' and a 'private' narration as a narration presented to 'a fictional character or group' within the fictional world.<sup>137</sup> By addressing the different kinds of narrative authority the 'public' narrator and the 'private' narrator would evoke, she presents more context-conscious characterisations of narrative levels. The notion of narrative authority is regarded as one of the most important narrative elements by her and is to play a prominent role in her model in *Fictions of Authority*.

The adaptation of Seymour Chatman's notion of spectrum also needs to be mentioned as another feature of Lanser's narratology in *The Narrative Act*:

---

(1976).

<sup>133</sup> *NA*, p. 227.

<sup>134</sup> *NA*, p. 227.

<sup>135</sup> *NA*, p. 225.

<sup>136</sup> *NA*, pp. 133, 137-48.



[A] narrative element need not be either A or –A. Rather, it may be somewhere along a spectrum of possibilities from A to –A such that it is in some sense both A and –A, or neither A nor –A. In other words, a text or portion of text may inhabit a mid-point on the axis or even change positions during the course of a single narration, just as some voices may stably inhabit the extremes [...].<sup>138</sup>

On the one hand, this employment of the spectrum would be a more flexible way to deal with narrative elements than categorising them in a set of separate and exclusive groups that would obscure the relations between them. On the other hand, it seems debatable whether it is possible to sort narrative elements in such a tidy and accurate linear order as Lanser attempts.<sup>139</sup> Lanser herself carefully admits, ‘I concur with Uspenskii that in making systems “a degree of arbitrariness seems unavoidable”’.<sup>140</sup> Her awareness of some possible overlapping of narrative elements in a single narrative seems useful in our approach to novelistic discourse, to the extent that the relationships of those elements may not necessarily be placed in such a strictly linear order as in her paradigm.

Overall, Lanser’s theory in *The Narrative Act* seems more comprehensive than previous narrative theories in the sense that it captures the complex relationships between author, narrator, narrative, narratee, and reader in a refined way which entails the characterisation of narrative voices with the notion of ‘authority’ and the concepts of ‘public’ and ‘private’ narrations. More comprehensive than preceding narrative theories as it seems, her theory manages to avoid their heavily reductive tendency since it remains sufficiently contextualised. Moreover, she introduces the concept of ‘extrafictional voice’ and proposes an explanation for the thorny relationship between the author and the ‘implied author’.<sup>141</sup> This notion is path-breaking in the sense that it sheds a new light on the way readers would construct the image of the ‘implied author’; the way the reader would form a certain picture of the ‘implied author’ based on the information acquired via the extrafictional voice. The notion also connects the historical author and the implied author more smoothly through textual validation than before. Finally but not the least, the gender-conscious aspect of Lanser’s model also makes it more robust than its predecessors.

Nonetheless, the model in *The Narrative Act* does not seem entirely

---

<sup>137</sup> *NA*, p. 138.

<sup>138</sup> *NA*, p. 156.

<sup>139</sup> *NA*, pp. 155-222.

<sup>140</sup> *NA*, p. 223.

extricated from shortcomings. I have already mentioned some of them above. In what follows, I focus on the most debatable one, the application of speech act theory. As mentioned above, Lanser's application of speech act theory employs key concepts and conceptualisations from Pratt's *Toward a Speech Act Theory of Literary Discourse*. This work has been received with controversial interest. Its reviewers have acknowledged the break-through significance of Pratt's suggestion that 'literary discourse' should be seen as a part of 'natural discourse'.<sup>142</sup> However, those from the discipline of linguistics and philosophy have criticised her approach, contending that it fails to apply speech act theory in a rigorous sense. They rate her application of speech act theories as unbalanced or 'incomplete'.<sup>143</sup> It is also found to 'dilute' Austin's and Searle's speech act theories.<sup>144</sup> For instance, Pratt's application of speech act theory at the level of discourse is regarded as unreasonable; Austin's and Searle's hypotheses, which she principally applies, are situated at the sentence level.<sup>145</sup> Contradiction is also found in her attempt to blur the distinction between 'literary discourse' and 'non-literary discourse'.<sup>146</sup>

Lanser's application of Pratt's theory is aware of some of these contestable components in Pratt's theorisation, and attempts to clear some of them.<sup>147</sup> One of the most significant examples is Lanser's addition of another category of illocutionary acts, labelled as 'hypothetical', to Austin's model in order to have novelistic discourse more compatible with speech act theory.<sup>148</sup> These attempts do not seem fully persuasive, as I will discuss below. Lanser's conclusive view is that 'the problem is not deficiency in the status of fiction, but a deficiency in speech act theory itself'.<sup>149</sup> The fairness of this view can be indirectly confirmed by Sandy Petrey's study; Petrey refutes Austin's distinction between the 'constative' and the 'performative'.<sup>150</sup> Meanwhile, despite these controversial factors, the application of speech act theory to 'literary discourse' remains tempting among some literary

---

<sup>141</sup> *NA*, pp. 122-32, 143-47.

<sup>142</sup> W. N. Francis's review article, *Style*, 12 (1978), 406.

<sup>143</sup> Ronald Carter's review article, *Journal of Literary Semantics*, 8 (1979), 45-46; William O. Hendricks's review article, *Language*, 55 (1979), 475-76.

<sup>144</sup> Michael Hancher's review article, 'Beyond a Speech-Act Theory of Literary Discourse', *MLN*, 92 (1977), 1085-88.

<sup>145</sup> Hancher, p. 1087; Hendricks, p. 475.

<sup>146</sup> W. N. Francis, pp. 405-6; Hendricks, p. 476.

<sup>147</sup> For example, see Lanser, *NA*, p. 65.

<sup>148</sup> *NA*, pp. 283-94.

<sup>149</sup> *NA*, p. 280.

<sup>150</sup> Sandy Petrey, *Speech Acts and Literary Theory* (1990), pp. 22-41.



critics. After a positive reception in the literary field during the 1970s and 1980s, there was a decline of interest in the following decade. J. Hillis Miller's *Speech Acts in Literature* (2001), however, reclaims the significance of its use in literature. Speech act theories thus seem to retain their value in literary studies today.

My basic view on the theoretical predicament of Lanser's narratology is that it is useful to apply some concepts and conceptualisations of speech act theories to 'literary discourse', but that it may not be necessary to do it so rigidly as she attempts. It may well be sufficient to apply speech act theories' philosophical interpretation of verbal message in 'literary discourse' without being entrapped in their original linguistic conditioning or other rules. Speech act theories are regarded as lacking in precision or refinement inherently within their own frameworks, as mentioned above. If these deficiencies require much theoretical rectification, the attempt to solve them would be linguists' and philosophers' immediate concern rather than literary critics'. This is not meant to suggest that literary critics should not attempt to rectify the deficiencies of speech act theories. My suggestion is that literary critics may not have to try to correct the deficiencies as their primary concern. Moreover, if we expand our scope from the application of speech act theory to the application of theories in general, it is often necessary for literary critics to revise or modify relevant theories for their use so that those theories can be more suitable for the text of their discussion and the questions of their investigation. Sometimes critics apply concepts or conceptualisations of certain theories in a very broad sense. Critics might also become inspired by some theorists' philosophical insights but create their own paradigms that may not be necessarily restricted by the rules or conditionings of the original theories. As long as their paradigms are coherent, such broad applications of theoretical perspectives seem valid and, in fact, have been accepted in literary criticism.

The theoretical problems in *The Narrative Act* seem to have arisen from Lanser's pursuit, after Pratt's manner, of the linguistic conditionings of speech act theories. *The Narrative Act* might have reduced the problems, if it gave less emphasis to the linguistic conditionings, as *Fictions of Authority* does. Even though we may apply the same theory to 'natural discourse' and 'literary discourse' with the perception that the latter is a kind of the former, we need to be cautious about the distinction between the former and the latter, the distinction which Pratt has tried to renounce as far as possible. My approach to discourse weighs the



distinction between ‘natural discourse’ and ‘literary discourse’ much more heavily than Pratt’s. For example, one cannot replace any words without affecting the artistic value of ‘literary discourse’. This artistic value makes the ‘literary discourse’ ‘literary’. When one paraphrases some parts of an utterance of ‘natural discourse’, s/he could also change its artistic value, if there is any. However, in this case, it does not generate a critical problem as long as the message can be received successfully. Here the communicative use of the utterance is prioritised, and the artistic value of the utterance can be overlooked. On the contrary, in ‘literary discourse’, both the communicative use and the artistic value of the discourse matter seriously.

Susan Ehrlich’s study provides a clue to tackle our question at a specific and manageable level.<sup>151</sup> This study demonstrates that the same linguistic feature can have different functions and effects in ‘literary’ and ‘oral’/‘natural’ narratives. The linguistic feature Ehrlich’s discussion focuses on is ‘the repetition of events that are initially represented by achievement and accomplishment predicates in simple past tense’ (p. 83). According to Ehrlich, ‘What is noteworthy about these repetitions is that they do not represent the events as being anterior to the narrative present, even though the initial mention of the event indicates (through the simple past tense and achievement or accomplishment predicate-type) that the event is completed’ (p. 83). Ehrlich argues that the kind of repetitions in ‘literary’ narrative can cause the reader to interpret them as shifts in perspective, whereas the same linguistic feature in spoken narrative cannot have the same effect so easily:

Because of the other functions associated with repetition in spoken discourse, the mere repetition of a narrative event in spoken language is not in itself enough to introduce a different point of view into the discourse. [...] On the other hand, the repetition of a narrative event in literary texts can invoke a shift in perspective, due to the significance attached to each and every structure in highly crafted, literary texts. So significant are linguistic structures in literary contexts that readers are driven to make sense of them, often in spite of a superficial lack of coherence. [...] [S]uch attempts to restore coherence to superficially incoherent texts can be the source of stylistic and rhetorical effects. (p. 91)

---

<sup>151</sup> Susan Ehrlich, ‘Narrative Iconicity and Repetition in Oral and Literary Narratives’, in *Twentieth Century Fiction*, ed. by Peter Verdonk and Jean Jacques Weber (1995), pp. 78-95. Ehrlich uses Virginia Woolf’s novels *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs Dalloway* for case studies. Works by Woolf and Edgeworth share concerns with the narrative authority and professional status of women writers. Lanser’s *FA* also refers to *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs Dalloway* in its discussion of authorial voice (pp. 113-19). Given these factors, Ehrlich’s argument becomes the more relevant to my justification for the application of Lanser’s narratology to Edgeworth’s texts.



If the same linguistic feature has different functions and effects in ‘natural discourse’ and ‘literary discourse’, as Ehrlich illustrates, it may not be necessary to pursue linguistic precision when we apply a certain theory originally designed for ‘natural discourse’ (here our example is speech act theory) to ‘literary discourse’. In the case of the application of speech act theory to ‘literary discourse’, even if we may apply speech act theory rigidly at the linguistic level, the property of ‘literary discourse’ would cause the application to have implications deviant from those expected within the original framework of speech act theory. The property of ‘literary discourse’ here is what Ehrlich calls ‘the source of stylistic and rhetorical effects’. It is not completely safe, it would follow, to try to apply speech act theory rigidly to ‘literary discourse’. We would thus need to have a more flexible application of speech act theory rather than persisting in its original linguistic conditionings, if we are to employ it.

In fact, while Lanser occasionally applies speech act theory’s terms such as ‘illocutionary force’, she also presents a paradigm which is based on speech act theory but has become her own theory. The tripartite relationships (status, contact, and stance) incorporated in her narrative model are one of those examples.<sup>152</sup> These additional modifications manage to free part of her theory from the original linguistic restrictions of speech act theory.

One might claim that Lanser’s model may not need to depend on speech act theories at all and that it could substitute speech act theories with receptionist approaches. Receptionist approaches recognise the dynamism between the text and the readers, like speech act theories, but have been more compatible with literary criticism. That recognition of reception theory, however, owes a great deal to speech act theories. More critically, reception theory often draws attention away from the author. As the notion of the author is connected with some key issues such as the concept of authority by Lanser, it is reasonable that she turns to speech act theory rather than reception studies. She notices that speech act theory would bridge linguistics and poetics, and also, poetics and rhetorical study.<sup>153</sup> If *The Narrative Act* oriented its approach more towards rhetorical study<sup>154</sup> rather than

---

<sup>152</sup> *NA*, pp. 85-96, 149-225.

<sup>153</sup> *NA*, p. 68.

<sup>154</sup> By rhetoric, I mean those aspects of a ‘literary’ work ‘that persuade or otherwise guide the responses of readers’. See Chris Baldick, *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Literary Terms*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (2001). Rhetorical study is thus meant to be the study of such dimensions of the

grappling with the meticulous but not so refined linguistic conditionings of speech act theorists, its model might not have so many theoretical difficulties.<sup>155</sup> And this solution is to be demonstrated by *Fictions of Authority*.

## 2.2 Lanser's *Fictions of Authority* and Edgeworth's Narrative Voices

*Fictions of Authority* has immediate significance for the methodology of this thesis, providing the key notions of 'authorial voice' and 'personal voice'. This section therefore discusses the study in a closer relation to Edgeworth's narrative voices than the previous section. The procedure is designed to introduce more coherently my application of the model in the book.

*Fictions of Authority* emphasises gender and class in developing the inquiry of *The Narrative Act* into the relationship between textual form and social identity. *Fictions of Authority* revolves around the question of 'what forms of voice have been available to women, and to which women, at particular moments' (p. 15). The study formulates a model categorising salient narrative modes in novels by women writers on the basis of an extensive reading of women's writing from Britain, France, and the United States between the mid-eighteenth century and the mid-twentieth century. The methodology bears out Lanser's criticism that preceding narrative theories rely almost exclusively on 'canonical' works by male writers (p. 6). As mentioned in the previous chapter, this critical recognition amplifies the value of *Fictions of Authority*. Lanser is, however, careful in proposing her gender-informed methodology:

When I describe these complexities in some women's writings I am not, however, suggesting any kind of 'authentic' female voice or arguing that women necessarily write differently from men. Rather, I believe that disavowed writers of both sexes have engaged in various strategies of adaptation and critique that make their work 'dialogical' in ways that Bakhtin's formulation, which posits heteroglossia as a general modern condition, may obscure.<sup>156</sup>

The passage indicates that Lanser's methodology intends to preclude the

---

'literary' work.

<sup>155</sup> In fact, Michael Kearns has recently attempted to integrate narratology and rhetoric via speech act theory. Since his theorisation, likewise, relies considerably on the rules of speech act theory, it does not seem to solve the problem I have addressed. See his *Rhetorical Narratology* (1999).

<sup>156</sup> *FA*, p. 8.



essentialist approach to which feminist critics are prone. She addresses the gender of women writers as an example of ‘disavowed’ social identities rather than presuming a crystal clear boundary between ‘female’ writing and ‘male’ writing. She interprets ‘complexities in some women’s writings’ into a set of specific situational contexts conditioned by historical, social, literary, cultural, political, or biographical backgrounds, and designates the contexts as parameters of women writers’ construction of narrative voice and authority. Such a formulation is underpinned by her application of the speech act theory that a text is context-bound:

I maintain that both narrative structures and women’s writing are determined not by essential properties or isolated aesthetic imperatives but by complex and changing conventions that are themselves produced in and by the relations of power that implicate writer, reader, and text. In modern Western societies during the centuries of ‘print culture’ with which I am concerned, these constituents of power must include, at the very least, race, gender, class, nationality, education, sexuality and marital status, interacting with and within a given social formation.<sup>157</sup>

Among ‘these constituents of power’, *Fictions of Authority* concentrates on gender and class. Besides the social identities of gender and class, my thesis explores national and cultural identities in Edgeworth’s construction of narrative voices and narrative authority. This exploration would serve to demonstrate the potentiality of Lanser’s model, since her own evaluation of the model is of ‘a preliminary and speculative project’ (p. 23).

*Fictions of Authority* recycles the application of speech act theory to the concept of narrative in *The Narrative Act*. The recycling is, however, undertaken in terms of Lanser’s own notions such as ‘status’, ‘contact’, and ‘stance’ rather than in the technical terms of speech act theory.<sup>158</sup> *Fictions of Authority* thus seems to be detached from the controversial attempt in *The Narrative Act* to rectify the deficiencies of speech act theory linguistically. A shift of emphasis from linguistic properties to ‘rhetorical properties’ is observable, for instance in the opening of *Fictions of Authority* (p. 6).

*Fictions of Authority* defines three major narrative voices important to women authors: ‘authorial voice’, ‘personal voice’, and ‘communal voice’. The first two, ‘authorial voice’ and ‘personal voice’, are applicable to Edgeworth’s narrative practice, and my discussion here focuses on them. Lanser finds the notion

---

<sup>157</sup> *FA*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>158</sup> For example, see *FA*, p. 13.

of authority plays a vital role in women authors' construction of narrative voices. She defines discursive authority as 'the intellectual credibility, ideological validity, and aesthetic value claimed by or conferred upon a work, author, narrator, character, or textual practice' and considers it to be 'characterised with respect to specific receiving communities'.<sup>159</sup> The pursuit of authority is, Lanser reasonably argues, 'implicit in the very act of authorship' regardless of the authors' attitudes towards authority: 'I assume [...] that every writer who publishes a novel wants it to be authoritative for her readers, even if authoritatively antiauthoritarian, within the sphere and for the receiving community that the work carves out'.<sup>160</sup> To her, the three narrative voices for women's writing she discusses seem

to represent three distinct kinds of authority that women have needed to constitute in order to make their place in Western literary history: respectively, the authority, to establish alternative 'worlds' and the 'maxims' by which they will operate, to construct and publicly represent female subjectivity and redefine the 'feminine,' and to constitute as a discursive subject a female body politic.<sup>161</sup>

Accordingly, Lanser introduces 'two aspects of narration that I consider of greater significance in the construction of textual authority than narrative poetics has traditionally allowed' (p. 15). The first is the distinction between 'private' narration and 'public' narration, which *The Narrative Act* has already addressed.<sup>162</sup> The second is 'the distinction between narrative situations that do and those that do not permit narrative self-reference [i.e. "explicit attention to the act of narration itself"]' (p. 15). These aspects are brought in by Lanser's hypothesis that 'gendered conventions of public voice and of narrative self-reference serve important roles in regulating women's access to discursive authority' (p. 15). Such a theoretical orientation is useful to the study of Edgeworth's narratives since it grapples with the question of narrative authority and signals the negotiation of women's publishing careers and 'proper femininity'. The social climate of Edgeworth's period designated the public sphere as a 'male' domain; women's publishing activities were predominantly discouraged as an invasion into the male-oriented public sphere, hence, a transgression of 'proper femininity'.

'Authorial voice' is defined, in *Fictions of Authority*, as 'heterodiegetic,

---

<sup>159</sup> *FA*, p. 6.

<sup>160</sup> *FA*, p. 7.

<sup>161</sup> *FA*, p. 22.

<sup>162</sup> *FA*, p. 15.



public, and potentially self-referential' narrations (p. 15).<sup>163</sup> It is also characterised as 'extradiegetic' with a narrator who exists in the first narrative layer framing the fictional world (p. 16). Lanser has chosen the term 'authorial' 'not to imply an ontological equivalence between narrator and author but to suggest that such a voice (re)produces the structural and functional situation of authorship' (p. 16). Lanser also observes that the discourse situation (re)produced by authorial voice would invite readers 'to equate the narrator with the author and the narratee with themselves (or their historical equivalents)' provided that 'a distinction between the (implied) author and a public, heterodiegetic narrator is not textually marked' (p. 16). Authorial voice is thus often understood as contingent on the historical author's identity. Furthermore, Lanser's model characterises authorial voice with 'extrarepresentational acts', which are defined to be 'not strictly required for telling a tale', such as 'reflections, judgments, generalizations about the world "beyond" the fiction, direct addresses to the narratee, comments on the narrative process, allusions to other writers and texts' (pp. 16-17). Lanser speculates that the extrarepresentational acts could enable novelists, especially 'ideologically oppositional writers' including some women writers, to have a closer 'claim to discursive authority' and thereby to intervene in 'contemporary debates' outside the fictional world 'through' their 'authorial narrator-equivalent, as a significant participant', 'all the more during the periods when the novel was one of the few accepted means for women to intervene in public life' (p. 17). She calls the authorial voice's extrarepresentational acts 'overt authoriality', and notes that 'women writers' adoption of overt authority has usually meant transgressing gendered rhetorical codes' (pp. 17-18). 'Overt authoriality', moreover, seems to her to have been 'a mark for these women of the writer's status as serious literary professional' such as 'Burney, Smith, Edgeworth, Radcliffe, Reeve' (pp. 66-67). Her inclusion of Edgeworth within the group of the women writers with prominent authorial voice further legitimises my application of her model to Edgeworth's narratives.

Among Edgeworth's novels, *Belinda* (1801), *The Absentee* (1812), *Patronage* (1814), and *Ormond* (1817) provide representative examples of authorial voice. In fact, Lanser refers to the 'gratuitous displays of authoriality' by

---

<sup>163</sup> Lanser also refers to a narrator of an authorial voice as an 'authorial narrator'. My thesis follows this usage.

the authorial voice in *Patronage*, as an example of the narrative mode (*FA*, p. 66). I consider the authorial voice of *Belinda* as a proto-type of Edgeworth's authorial voice:

She [Belinda] had not been at Oakly-park a week, before she forgot that it was within a few miles of Harrowgate, and she never once recollected her vicinity to this fashionable water-drinking place for a month afterward.

‘Impossible!’ some young ladies will exclaim. We hope others will feel, that it was perfectly natural. But to deal fairly with our readers, we must not omit to mention a certain Mr Vincent, who came to Oakly-park during the first week of Belinda's visit, and who stayed there during the whole succeeding month of felicity. (*B*, pp. 204-205)

The authorial narrator, who stands outside the fictional world (i.e. heterodiegetic) at a narrative level framing the story level (i.e. extradiegetic), relates Belinda's indifference to Harrowgate after her arrival at Oakly-park. Both the chronological and the local orientation are given to the reader; in less than ‘a week’ (i.e. the chronological information) Belinda forgot Harrowgate was ‘within a few miles’ (i.e. the locational relationship between Oakly-park and Harrowgate). The reader is then carried away along the chronological scale, to ‘a month afterward’. The local character of Harrowgate (‘this fashionable water-drinking place’) is then introduced. In the next sentence, the authorial voice commences extrarepresentational acts. Deviating from the simple relation of the events, the narrator predicts that ‘some young ladies will’ be too enthusiastic about fashionable water-drinking places to believe Belinda's indifference. This prediction is accompanied by the mimicry of their possible remark (‘Impossible!’) and shows the narrator's familiarity with their mentality and language. With the self-reference of ‘we’, the narrator hopes that, unlike those ‘ladies’, the reader will share with Belinda (and the narrator) the discreet prioritisation of the domestic circle over the fashionable resort. While emphasising the contrasts between Belinda's discretion and some young women's superficial obsession with fashion, the narrator reveals another reason that attracts her to Oakly-park. The rationale for the revelation is ‘to deal fairly with our readers’. The narrator's self-characterisation as a ‘fair’ or reliable narrator attempts to consolidate his/her narrative authority. It is also notable that the reader is directly addressed (i.e. ‘public’ narration) as the narrator's possession, ‘our readers’. This ‘fair’ narrator determines the course of his/her narration in front of the reader, telling which information ‘must’ be mentioned. The authorial voice in this example may thus be regarded as self-assertive with ‘overt



authoriality’, despite its apparently timid preference of ‘we’ over ‘I’ for self-reference.<sup>164</sup> The narrator understands how ‘some young ladies’ would feel or think, and poses as their mentor, like the narrators of Edgeworth’s work of an overtly educational nature such as *An Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification* (hereafter referred to as *Self-Justification*), which was published with *Letters for Literary Ladies* in 1795. Curiously enough, the authorial voice of *Belinda* appears to overlap with the narrative voice of *Self-Justification* to a considerable degree not only in terms of their norms but also in terms of their rhetorical properties, which are conditioned by their educational/moral mission. The first section of the next chapter will argue that the narrative voices in *Self-Justification* and *The Parent’s Assistant* can be understood as precursors to authorial voice, whose narrative authority is contingent on Edgeworth’s identity, and demonstrate that the formation of authorial voice was predominant in her early publishing career apart from some diversions to the deployment of personal voice in her early Irish tales.

Before moving on to the discussion of ‘personal voice’, it seems appropriate to mention the narrative voice of the fictional Editor in *Castle Rackrent*. Edgeworth’s novels, both authorial-voiced ones and personal-voiced ones, often have footnotes and/or other editorial devices. Most cases offer few clues for the reader to identify who is the narrator in these devices. Sometimes the narrative ‘we’ in footnotes can be attributed to the authorial voice in the text, as observable in the second edition of *Belinda*: ‘We spare the public the journal of lady Delacour’s recovery. After what has already been said, the intelligent reader will suppose it to be gradual, but effectual’.<sup>165</sup> Novels in authorial voice may have the textual presence of an editor in the editorial frame. For example, the ‘Editor’ of the authorial-voiced *Manœuvring* makes intrusive and authoritative narrative acts by regretting the obsolete status of the title word ‘manœuvring’ and by confiding that ‘the original papers’ which belong to an important correspondence in the story ‘are irrecoverably lost to the world’ (*M*, pp. 6, 110). Personal-voiced novels which are not common among Edgeworth’s work also have editorial devices, sometimes with a self-referential editor. Among these examples, the Editor of *Castle Rackrent*

---

<sup>164</sup> *EA*, p. 17.

<sup>165</sup> *Belinda*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (1802), quoted in the section of ‘Textual Variants’ in Siobhán Kilfeather’s edition of *Belinda* in *Works*, II, p. 410. A revised version of this footnote is kept

provides the most notoriously intrusive narration. This editor is self-referential, applying male grammatical gender to himself. ‘His’ (*CR*, p. 6) textual marks often overshadow the principal narration by Thady, through the lengthy preface to introduce and patronise Thady, substantial footnotes to give often pedantic background information about Ireland and the customs of her people, and a glossary of Hiberno-English for the ‘*ignorant* English reader’ (*CR*, p. 6). In his ‘preface’ to Thady’s narrative, the Editor hints at his own authority over the publication of Thady’s narrative:

For the information of the *ignorant* English reader, a few notes have been subjoined by the editor, and he had it once in contemplation to translate the language of Thady into plain English; but Thady’s idiom is incapable of translation, and besides, the authenticity of his story would have been more exposed to doubt if it were not told in his own characteristic manner. (*CR*, p. 6)

The implication here seems that the published form of Thady’s original narration depends heavily on the Editor’s judgement and that the Editor could have stripped Thady’s narration of his ‘idiom’, which makes the narration captivatingly idiosyncratic. Besides such a strong claim on authority, the Editor shows the principal narrative properties of Lanser’s authorial narrator, since his narration is heterodiegetic, extradiegetic, public, and self-referential with commentary. In short, the Editor’s narrative voice performs narrative acts similar to ‘overt authoriality’, which is a feature of authorial voice:

This part of the history of the Rackrent family can scarcely be thought credible; but in justice to honest Thady, it is hoped the reader will recollect the history of the celebrated lady Cathcart’s conjugal imprisonment. – The editor was acquainted with colonel M’Guire, lady M’Guire during the time of lady Cathcart’s imprisonment. (*CR*, p. 20)

The quotation shows a further common feature between the editor’s voice in *Castle Rackrent* and the authorial voice of *Belinda*. Informing the reader of his intention to do ‘justice’ to Thady, the Editor aims to enhance his narrative authority like the authorial voice of *Belinda*. One might propose to include this editor’s voice in the category of authorial voice since such an editorial voice was often designed as a guise of authorial voice by women novelists of Edgeworth’s period. It seems, however, necessary to distinguish the Editor’s voice in *Castle Rackrent* from authorial voices in Edgeworth’s other works, chiefly because the respective

---

in the 1832 edition whereas the first edition and the third edition (1810) omit it.



narrative authorities they would claim and achieve seem to have different natures. For example, in terms of textual geography, the Editor's voice in *Castle Rackrent* is often limited to textual peripherals such as footnotes, preface, and postscript, whereas authorial voice is a principal constituent of narrative. What is more, the Editor declares in the 'preface' that 'the author of the following Memoirs' (*CR*, p. 6) is Thady. This acknowledgement apparently positions the Editor's own narrative authority as secondary to Thady's narrative authority, while their claims to narrative authority are competitive.<sup>166</sup> Given such distinctions between the two narrative voices, this thesis calls the Editor's voice in *Castle Rackrent* a 'pseudo-authorial voice'. Moreover, the Editor's voice does not allow the reader to equate him with Edgeworth as her authorial voice does, due to the clear gender boundary between the male editor and the female novelist. Further discussion of the narrative voices in the text will be given in the next chapter.

The second narrative mode from *Fictions of Authority*, relevant to this thesis, is 'personal voice'.<sup>167</sup> This narrative voice is defined as 'narrators who are self-consciously telling their own histories' (p. 18). 'Personal voice' is limited to 'autodiegetic' narrations by protagonist-narrators; for instance 'homodiegetic' narration by a character-narrator and the interior monologue are excluded (pp. 18-19). According to Lanser, 'personal voice' may have been more accessible to women authors because its narrative authority is conditioned by the characterisation of the protagonist-narrator, and is thus not omniscient or 'superhuman' as the authorial voice tended to be regarded (pp. 18-19). One important constituent of such conditioning is recognised as gender (pp. 18-19). In most of the cases, where the author's intention is not to blur the gender identity of the personal voice, a personal voice is given a specific gender. On the contrary, the gender of an authorial voice can be left mysterious more easily (p. 19). Lanser focuses on female personal voices, but this thesis will discuss male personal voices since Edgeworth's practice of personal voices is predominantly through male personal narrators.

*Ennui* (1809) provides a prime example of personal voice. The text has the

---

<sup>166</sup> Butler comments that 'Thady's Irish voice dominates the book for most readers, but never without competition' with the Editor's narrative voice in the editorial frame ('Introduction', *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui*, p. 15).

<sup>167</sup> Lanser refers to the narrator in personal voice as a 'personal narrator'. This usage is followed in the thesis.

subtitle 'Memoirs of the Earl of Glenthorn' and confirms that the protagonist is the personal narrator Lord Glenthorn. Glenthorn narrates his 'history' self-consciously:

I had an immense fortune, and I was the earl of Glenthorn: my title and wealth were sufficient distinctions; how could I be anxious about my boots, or the cape of my coat, or any of those trifles which so happily interest and occupy the lives of fashionable young men, who have not the misfortune to possess large estates? (*E*, p. 165)

If, among those who may be tempted to peruse my history, there should be any mere novel readers, let me advise them to throw the book aside at the commencement of this chapter; for I have no more wonderful incidents to relate, no more changes at nurse, no more sudden turns of fortune. I am now become a plodding man of business [...]. (*E*, p. 294)

The first passage is from Chapter 1 and is typical of a conventional format of the opening of an autobiography. The autodiegetic narrator relates his past social status in a highly self-centred way, through the sentences regulated with the nominative and possessive of the self-referential 'I'. From the outset he tries to establish in the reader's vision how unique he and his history are. The major concern of the passage is the question of who he is. He distinguishes himself from 'fashionable young men' who can be easily contented by trivial details of fashion. While his rhetorical question in the passage may signal a kind of elite haughtiness, the apparently arrogant remark invites the reader to wonder what he means by 'the misfortune to possess large estates', and thus to keep reading his narrative. The second passage above from Chapter 21 towards the end of the novel demonstrates that his narrative voice is 'public' through his direct address to the reader outside the fiction world. This passage is important in the sense that he calls his narrative 'my history', and in the additional sense that he demonstrates his considerable concerns about his narrative acts. Here he appears to be modest, assuming only some people, if not all, 'may be tempted' to follow his narration. At the same time, he registers his contempt for novel readers, calling them 'mere novel readers'. In such reference, we may detect his expectation that his readers should be more than 'mere novel readers'. He is also conscious of the chapter organisation of his memoirs and appears responsible for the structure of the text.<sup>168</sup> He moreover warns the reader not to expect exciting incidents. These extrarepresentational acts point to a strong tendency of self-authorisation. Those aspects of Glenthorn's

---

<sup>168</sup> For example, see *E*, p. 294.



narrative voice we have observed above are shared by Harrington's narration in *Harrington*, which is the other major example of personal voice in Edgeworth's work. The instances of personal voice are 'public' and self-conscious with frequent extrarepresentational acts and denote commonalities with authorial voice.

While characterising personal voice with considerable self-authorisation and claim on its narrative authority, Edgeworth implicitly associates the narrative voice with 'egotism': 'To save our hero from the charge of egotism, we shall relate the principal circumstances in the third person' (*B*, p. 343). The notion of 'egotism' is considered as a 'charge' and thus rated negatively. It is implied here that the authorial voice (i.e. what Edgeworth calls 'the third person') is more objective, therefore probably more appropriate for disclosing the hero's past secret relationship with Virginia than the so-called first-person narration by the hero's 'private voice' in his packet to Lady Delacour. Strictly speaking, what I refer to as personal voice does not cover the implied narration by the hero, since the former is 'public voice' directly addressing the reading public whereas the latter addresses characters within the fiction world. Despite this difference at the narrative level, these two narrative voices share potentially strong subjectivity or 'egotism' since both narrate about the narrators themselves. Their narrative authorities are furthermore conditioned by the characterisations of the narrators. This example shows us that Edgeworth's characterisation of personal voice as subjective and authorial voice as objective incorporates conventional contrasts between them.

We have looked at the commonalities and contrasts between the personal voice of *Ennui* and the authorial voice of *Belinda*. The commonalities are usually overshadowed by the contrasts in the paradigm of conventional narratology. A beneficial aspect of Lanser's model is to foreground the commonalities and recognise that authorial voice and personal voice may not necessarily be oppositional as conventions have them:

[T]he opposition [of authorial voice and personal voice emphasised by conventional narratology] is far from definite: the eyewitness narrator used, for example, in Aphra Behn's *Oronooko* (1688) and George Eliot's *Scenes of Clerical Life* transgresses the polarities of 'third-person' and 'first-person' narration that are usually assumed to be formally unbridgeable.

The tendency to oppose these modes also conceals similarities between them. Both forms bear the potential for public, self-referential narration and thus for enacting a relationship between 'writer' and audience and indeed an entire 'story' that is the story of the narration itself. Moreover, the narratological tendency to

oppose authorial and personal voices conceals the degree to which both forms are invested in singularity—in the presupposition that narration is individual.<sup>169</sup>

This recognition provides a vital clue to the reading of Edgeworth's texts. For instance, only by means of this perspective, may the reader notice common engagements with narrative self-authorisation in the authorial voice in *Belinda* and in Glenthorn's personal voice in *Ennui*, despite the conventional contrasts made between the two narrative voices. The next chapter will explore the implications of the common pursuit of self-authorisation in authorial voice and personal voice, in terms of the textual formation of Edgeworth's national identity.

One may as well question if Thady's narration in *Castle Rackrent* may be relevant to the notion of personal voice; the indigenous Irish retainer to the Rackrent family is provided with the most idiosyncratic narrative voice among Edgeworth's narrators. I argue that his narrative voice may be considered as very close to personal voice, while emphasising its difference from Glenthorn's personal voice in *Ennui*. Thady's narration is framed by the fictional Editor's pseudo-authorial voice, which is assigned intensely intellectual authority in tension with Thady's narrative authority as a witness/protagonist of the story. Glenthorn's personal voice is also accompanied by the commentary of the 'editor' or 'Editor', but this editor's narrative voice is rarely so intrusive or self-referential as the one in *Castle Rackrent*. Strictly speaking, Thady's narrative voice might not exactly fit into Lanser's definition since the title *Castle Rackrent: An Hibernian Tale Taken from Facts, and from the Manners of the Irish Squires, Before the Year 1782* stipulates that the protagonists are the Rackrents and Thady is simply a witness-narrator.<sup>170</sup> Sometimes a narrative by a witness-narrator can be read as the (his)story of him/her and that of the protagonist(s) at the same time, however.<sup>171</sup> If a witness-narrator claims the credibility or authenticity of his/her (his)story of the protagonist(s), his/her share in the story would become the more prominent, since his/her narrative would need to justify his/her character. The witness-narrator's self-conscious narration about the protagonists would also involve some extrarepresentational acts. It is then reasonable to expect such a character-narrator to achieve narrative authorisation similar to that of personal voice. Just as a

<sup>169</sup> *FA*, pp. 20-21.

<sup>170</sup> For example, Thady is said to 'tell the history of the Rackrent family' in the preface. See *CR*, p. 6.

<sup>171</sup> The classic example is Nick Carraway in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*.



personal narrator would authorise his/her version of his/her history by self-conscious narration with extrarepresentational acts, a witness-narrator's self-conscious narration with extrarepresentational acts could authorise his/her version of the history of the protagonist(s), which has become the history of him/herself at the same time.

Such a narrative situation seems exactly the case with Thady's narration. As the following extracts show, it is marked with frequent self-reference, sharp awareness of his readers, acknowledgement of his narrative authority, and his great share in the story as a character, like the personal voice of *Ennui*:

Having, out of friendship for the family, upon whose estate, praised be Heaven! I and mine have lived rent-free, time out of mind, voluntarily undertaken to publish the MEMOIRS of the RACKRENT FAMILY, I think it my duty to say a few words, in the first place, concerning myself. My real name is Thady Quirk, though in the family I have always been known by no other than '*honest Thady*' – afterwards, in the time of sir Murtagh, deceased, I remember to hear them calling me '*old Thady*,' and now I'm come to '*poor Thady*;' for I wear a long great coat winter and summer, which is very handy, as I never put my arms into the sleeves; they are as good as new, though come Holantide next I've had it these seven years; it holds on by a single button round my neck, cloak fashion. (CR, p. 9)

This extract is from the beginning of Thady's narration and predominantly punctuated with the variations of self-referential 'I'. After acknowledging his responsibility to 'publish the MEMOIRS of the RACKRENT FAMILY', thus addressing his narrative authority, he judges that it is his 'duty' to introduce himself to his imagined readers. This first sentence thus immediately establishes his voice as public narration packed with extrarepresentational acts, such as the attempts to consolidate his narrative authority and the meta-narrative judgement to justify his self-introduction. While his identity may appear subject to the Rackrents' definition, which calls him '*honest Thady*', '*old Thady*', or '*poor Thady*' at their whim,<sup>172</sup> the reader may sense that the story is going to be about both the family and him, since his narration appears liable to drift away from the family towards himself, as the anecdote about his coat in the extract above implies. Furthermore, when he enters the details of the Rackrent's lineage, his narration sounds evaluative rather than simply descriptive:

The family of the Rackrents is, I am proud to say, one of the most ancient in the kingdom. Every body knows this is not the old family name, which was

---

<sup>172</sup> P. F. Sheeran, 'Colonists and Colonized', *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 13 (1985), p. 104. Cited in Butler, 'Introduction', *Castle Rackrent and Ennui*, p. 9.

O'Shaughlin, related to the kings of Ireland – but that was before my time. [...] Poor gentleman! he [Sir Tallyhoo Rackrent] lost a fine hunter and his life, at last, by it, all in one day's hunt. But I ought to bless that day, for the estate came straight into *the* family, upon one condition, which Sir Patrick O'Shaughlin at the time took sadly to heart, they say, but though better of it afterwards, seeing how large a stake depended upon it, that he should by act of parliament, take and bear the surname and arms of Rackrent. (*CR*, p. 10)

Thady refers to his being 'proud' in introducing the ancient lineage of the family. He feels sorry for Sir Tallyhoo's misfortune but judges that he 'ought to bless that day' when 'the family' acquired 'the estate'. The narration of the family's further succession is hardly free from Thady's judgemental opinions, which may be categorised as extrarepresentational acts. In narrating Sir Kit's death, Thady expresses his sentiments for the widow: 'Had she meant to make any stay in Ireland, I stood a great chance of being a great favourite with her' (*CR*, p. 23). In the juncture between the first part of the text covering the Rackrents' three patriarchs and the second part featuring Sir Conolly, Thady again manifests with whom his favour lies: 'Here let me pause for breath in my story, for though I had a great regard for every member of the family, yet without compare sir Conolly, commonly called, for short, amongst his friends, sir Condy Rackrent, was ever my great favourite, and, indeed, the most universally beloved man I had ever seen or heard of' (*CR*, p. 24).

If we return to Lanser's narratology, she questions the conventional separation between a protagonist-narrator and a witness-narrator, with reference to Christa Wolf's *Nachdenken über Christa T* (1967), in which 'the narrator is reconstructing the life of another woman but is also in some sense a protagonist herself, not simply an eyewitness or biographer'.<sup>173</sup> This narrator is regarded by Lanser as one of the 'intermediate forms' between a witness-narrator and a protagonist-narrator. Also situated between the poles of the witness-narrator and the protagonist-narrator, Thady is much closer to the protagonist-narrator. Given such a narrative status and his self-referential public voice with extrarepresentational acts, we may consider Thady's narrative voice as quasi-personal voice.

We have observed some examples of Edgeworth's authorial voice and personal voice. Lanser's unconventional emphasis on the commonalities between authorial voice and personal voice helps one to understand how women writers



employ these two narrative modes to construct their narrative authority. Through such a perspective, both commonalities and contrasts between authorial voice and personal voice in Edgeworth's work have been detected above. Most importantly, Lanser's emphasis on the notion of narrative authority illuminates the previously neglected common interest and rhetorical properties of authorial voice and personal voice in their self-authorisation. We have also noted Lanser's contention that authorial voice was a most convenient means for women writers to intervene in contemporary controversies in Edgeworth's time. The following chapter will open with a further important observation by Lanser on the meaning of authorial voice to the professional career of women writers.

---

<sup>173</sup> *EA*, p. 21.

### *Chapter 3*

#### **Narrative Authority and Identity: Authorial Voice and Personal Voice in Edgeworth's Narratives**

The previous chapter introduced representative examples of Edgeworth's narrative voices by applying Lanser's narratology. Lanser's model takes the relationship between the social identity of the author and his/her narrative authority into serious account. Conventional classifications such as 'first-person narrator' and 'third-person narrator' and revisionist classifications such as Genette's 'homodiegetic narrator' and 'heterodiegetic narrator' obscure the tension between the social identity of the author and his/her construction of narrative authority, by situating the construction of narrative voice in a social and cultural vacuum. As this thesis strategically assumes and argues, that tension is crucial to Edgeworth's writing career, and so it is inappropriate to discuss her narrative voice without addressing certain contexts, such as social and cultural ones. Lanser's theory convincingly demonstrates that the enquiry into a woman writer's construction of narrative authority should not be limited to the conventional hunt for the narrative 'I' in the text. In Edgeworth's published work, the textual distribution of the narrative 'I' is sparse. Only through such a subtler approach is it possible to see the construction of different kinds of narrative authority by alternative means in her narratives.

On Edgeworth's use of male narrators, Butler has suggested that:

In current feminist work on autobiography it is often observed that women writers generally seem to have experienced difficulty in using the first person. Edgeworth's fondness for male narrators, and her tendency to divide herself among diverse characters, male and female, illustrates this penchant for invisibility; nowhere more than in *Castle Rackrent*, that best sustained of masquerades.<sup>174</sup>

On the one hand, such a 'penchant for invisibility' may be observed in Edgeworth's work at one level. On the other hand, her work is often narrated in authorial voice, which is characterised with occasional self-reference and 'overt authoriality'. Such

---

<sup>174</sup> 'Introduction', *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui*, p. 53.



narrative acts are inconsistent with the notion of invisibility. As Chapter 2 stated, the authorial voice is conventionally equated, in Lanser's narrative theory, with the historical author, where there are no obvious textual marks and contextual matters to separate them (*FA*, p. 16). Edgeworth's novels allow such an equation between the authorial voice and the historical author, in other words, the 'extrafictional voice', due to the lack of the obvious textual inscriptions and contextual factors that refute the equation. The notion of 'extrafictional voice' is introduced by Lanser in order to refine the discussion about the relationship of the historical author, the 'implied author', and the narrator. 'Extrafictional voice' is defined as 'an authorial presence, traditionally overlooked, that is situated *within* the text itself' (*NA*, p. 8). This voice is 'an *extrafictional* entity whose presence accounts, for example, for organizing, titling, and introducing the fictional work' (*NA*, p. 122). Thus the voice, as 'the most direct textual counterpart for the historical author' in the fictional text, carries 'all the *diegetic authority* of its (publicly authorized) creator and has the ontological status of historical truth' (*NA*, p. 122). The reader can 'construct an image of the author's identity, beliefs and attitudes, intentions and goals, and implied audience' (*NA*, p. 124) through exploring the extrafictional voice. The extrafictional voice in the 'Advertisement' of *Belinda* (1801), the first novel published under Edgeworth's full name, contests the notion of 'invisibility', between the title page and the main text:

Every author has a right to give what appellation he may think proper to his works. The public have also a right to accept or refuse the classification that is presented.

The following work is offered to the public as a Moral Tale – the author not wishing to acknowledge a Novel. Were all novels like those of madame de Crousaz, Mrs Inchbald, Miss Burney, or Dr Moore, she would adopt the name of novel with delight: But so much folly, error, and vice are disseminated in books classed under this denomination, that it is hoped the wish to assume another title will be attributed to feelings that are laudable, and not fastidious.

April 20, 1801. (*B*, p. xxix)<sup>175</sup>

As critics have maintained,<sup>176</sup> this extrafictional voice probably belongs to Edgeworth rather than her father, who often wrote prefaces to her work. The question of whose voice it really is in the composition history is, however, not our

---

<sup>175</sup> In the first edition, 'Advertisement' is placed just after the title page. My citation of *Belinda* in the thesis uses the J. M. Dent edition (1993) by Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin, unless otherwise stated. This edition is based on the first edition.

<sup>176</sup> For example, in her Everyman edition of *Belinda*, Chuilleanáin names the advertisement 'Author's Advertisement'.



concern here. Rather, it is important to note that the conventional equation of the authorial voice and the extrafictional voice invites the reader to attribute the generic manifesto to Edgeworth's direct responsibility rather than Richard Lovell's. The extrafictional voice of the cited advertisement authoritatively defines the genre of *Belinda* as a 'Moral Tale' in opposition to the 'Novel'. As mentioned, the beginning of this advertisement seems to respond to Frances Burney's preface to *Evelina*, above and beyond the fact that Burney is among those writers named with approval in the advertisement. The preface to *Evelina* opens with the following statement by the 'editor' of the letters, which constitute the epistolary novel:

*In the republic of letters, there is no member of such inferior rank, or who is so much disdained by his brethren of the quill, as the humble Novelist: nor is his fate less hard in the world at large, since, among the whole class of writers, perhaps not one can be named, of whom the votaries are more numerous, but less respectable.*

*Yet, while in the annals of those few of our predecessors, to whom this species of writing is indebted for being saved from contempt, and rescued from depravity, we can trace such names as Rousseau, Johnson, Marivaux, Fielding, Richardson, and Smollet, no man need blush at starting from the same post, though many, nay, most men, may sigh at finding themselves distanced.*

*The following letters are presented to the public—for such, by novel writers, novel readers will be called,—with a very singular mixture of timidity and confidence, resulting from the peculiar situation of the editor; who, though trembling for their success from a consciousness of their imperfections, yet fears not being involved in their disgrace, while happily wrapped up in a mantle of impenetrable obscurity. (*Evelina*, p. 7)*

The advertisement of *Belinda* introduces the notion of 'author' by means of the same analogy with the political sphere as does the preface to *Evelina*. The former implies some sort of democratic equality between the 'author' and the 'public', allowing 'rights' in both sides; the latter situates the novelists in 'the republic of letters', although the 'republic' is not necessarily conceived as free from social hierarchy. Both the extracts bespeak a cautious detachment from the notorious aspect of the novelistic genre and try to justify the succeeding novelistic main texts by aligning them with those writers whose novelistic texts they judge as respectable. Owing to Burney's pioneering contribution to creating a public sphere for women's novelistic publication, the advertisement of *Belinda* seems more at ease with making the figure of the historical author visible than the preface to *Evelina* does. The advertisement of *Belinda*, nevertheless, provides some textual marks that offset any excessive assertiveness. In the quotation of the advertisement above, some sentences are rendered in the passive voice to make the presence of 'the author',



who is supposedly the subject of the sentences, less conspicuous. Such hesitation in the advertisement of *Belinda* echoes the apparent retreat of *Evelina*'s 'editor' into 'a mantle of impenetrable obscurity' and induces the reader to attribute the extrafictional voice of the advertisement to Edgeworth rather than her father. Regardless of whose voice it is, the extrafictional voice of the advertisement renders the historical author Edgeworth visible, with the referential terms 'the author' and 'she', to a considerable extent. Moreover, the advertisement should have needed Edgeworth's authorisation, if its writer was not herself, and the authorisation is, in itself, contrary to the notion of 'invisibility'. At the opening of every chapter in *Belinda*, the extrafictional voice reminds the reader of authorial intervention by announcing the chapter title. For instance, the first chapter opens with the extrafictional voice inscribing 'CHAPTER I' and then the chapter title 'Characters' before the main text. These instances of the extrafictional voice's intervention in the narrative would also contest the claim that Edgeworth's narrative practice demonstrates a propensity for elusiveness.

This chapter continues to engage with the insights of Lanser's theory. The first section of the chapter traces the genealogy of Edgeworth's narrative voices in the light of Lanser's observation about the meaning of the formation of authorial voice in the professional career of women writers. My analysis will demonstrate that Edgeworth's early narrative strategies can be seen as two currents. The first current is the construction of authorial voice observable between the narrative voices in *An Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification* (1795), *The Parent's Assistant* (1798), and *Belinda* (1801).<sup>177</sup> I consider this series of narrative configuration as the mainstream of Edgeworth's early narrative practice. The

---

<sup>177</sup> I refer to the voice of the persona in an essay as one form of 'narrative voice'. The predominant definition of 'narrative' and 'narrator' today makes it imperative that the narrative or narration should relate (an) event(s). My position is to revisit the etymological root of the word 'narrate', which is Latin *narrāt-* 'stem of *narrāre* to relate, recount supposed to be for *gnārāre*, related to *gnārus* knowing, skilled, and thus ultimately allied to KNOW v.' (the *OED* 1.). I consider that narrative or narrator's narration may not be contingent on a 'story' consisting in a series of events. In other words, I propose that a philosophical 'account of' a notion may be considered as a narrative. The personae's voices in Edgeworth's essays are thus considered in this thesis as variations of Edgeworth's narrative voices, like the narrative voices in her novels. In fact, it is observable that commentators on the essayist genre discuss the essay in terms of 'narrative'. For example, see *The Politics of the Essay*, ed. by Ruth-Ellen Boetcher Joeres and Elizabeth Mittman (1993), pp. 95, 96, 99, 132. It should be also noted here that the predominant definition of 'narrative' and 'narrator', which excludes the narrative voice of an essay, would preclude us from making smooth connections between the textual voices of an author's personae across



narrative voice of *Self-Justification* and the authorial voice of *The Parent's Assistant* are consistent with the authorial voice in *Belinda* at the levels of norms, rhetorical properties, and educational/moral mission, and contribute to Edgeworth's formation of authorial voice in the novelistic genre. As mentioned above, *Belinda* provides the first instance of her authorial voice in a novel published under her full name. The narrative voices of *Self-Justification* and *The Parent's Assistant* are bound up with Edgeworth's authorial identity; designed as educational writings for young women and children, the texts authorise a moral view for which she is expected to be liable. Continuities with the narrative voices of *Self-Justification* and *The Parent's Assistant* characterise *Belinda*'s authorial voice as contingent on her identity as a respected educational/moral writer. I will argue on this basis that authorial voice may be understood as the most readily effective means for Edgeworth to authorise narratives during her early publishing career. In contrast with the majority of Edgeworth's novels for adults, *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui* are not narrated with this mainstream narrative authority. I regard the diversion to personal voice in the two early Irish tales as the second and alternative current of Edgeworth's early narrative strategies.

Based upon such an analysis, this chapter will contend that the absence of the authorisation of Edgeworth's early narratives about Ireland by authorial voice is symptomatic of the fraught relationship between the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy and the Irish nation and constructs her national identity as so problematic. The alternative narrative authorities of personal voices are validated by the personal narrators' 'natural' or blood ties with Gaelic Ireland, and in the case of *Castle Rackrent*, additionally by the intellectual male pseudo-authorial voice, 'as the unassailable representative of more advanced culture'.<sup>178</sup> The textual presence of the personal voice as alternative to authorial voice thus seems to demonstrate a tension between Edgeworth's construction of narrative authority and her national identity, or claim on membership of the Irish nation.

Until that stage of this chapter, the thesis conceives a critical gap in terms of gender, culture, language, and/or class between Edgeworth's early authorial narrators, whose authority is contingent on her identity, and the two personal narrators, whose authority derives from their natural bonds with Ireland. The final

---

genres, as my study of Edgeworth's writings has encountered.  
<sup>178</sup> Butler, 'Introduction', *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui*, p. 15.



part of this chapter will, however, expose some instances of Edgeworth's writing practice to blur the boundaries between her extrafictional voice and personal voices. I will argue that the blurred textual boundaries work to ease the textual construction of Edgeworth's national identity culturally but not really to offer a solution to the problem of the Anglo-Irish identity. This deepened understanding of the textual crystallisation of Edgeworth's national identity concludes the first part of the thesis. The understanding, furthermore, serves to account for the thematic formula of Edgeworth's culturally accommodating ideal patriotism and its definition of the nation and national membership, which is to be explored in the second part of the thesis.

### 3.1 The Genealogy of Edgeworth's Narrative Voices

Lanser's study observes that women authors active between 1780 and 1815 started their novelistic careers with 'private forms of narrative voice that seem to have served as a testing ground' and came to produce novels written 'almost exclusively' in authorial voice after their 'successful reception'.<sup>179</sup> Edgeworth's novelistic career likewise started with *Letters for Literary Ladies*, a prose epistle in private narrative voices, and ended with *Helen* in authorial voice. However, her formation of authorial voice does not seem so chronologically linear as those of her contemporary women novelists, as Lanser suggests. My interpretation is that the complex aspect of Edgeworth's narrative strategies marks concerns about national identity as well as 'proper' femininity. To her contemporary women writers, 'proper' femininity may have been the chief issue to be reconciled with authorship. In Edgeworth's agenda, Anglo-Irish identity and 'proper' femininity would have equally necessitated negotiations with authorship.

The genealogy of Edgeworth's narrative voices may be traced from her first publication, *Letters for Literary Ladies to Which is Added an Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification* (1795). The first two pieces of this volume, *Letters for Literary Ladies* (hereafter referred to as *Literary Ladies*) feature two sets of correspondence in private voices: the correspondence between 'a Gentleman' and

---

<sup>179</sup> *EA*, p. 64.

‘His Friend’, and the correspondence of Julia and Caroline. The third and final piece is *Self-Justification*, which provides an extensive presence of the narrative ‘I’. The volume as a whole vindicates women’s intellectual capacity and right to education. It cautiously attempts to mediate rational education and ‘proper femininity’, by confining woman’s reason to a domestic sphere.<sup>180</sup> The thematic elements in the text would later be recycled in *Belinda*, which portrays ‘a young woman’s entry into the world’ in the tradition of Burney’s novels. The next publication, *The Parent’s Assistant* (1796) is a collection of stories for children with the purpose of moral education.<sup>181</sup> The collection evolved; the third edition features additional stories. Edgeworth also transferred some stories in the first edition to *Early Lessons* (1801), which was designed for a younger readership than *The Parent’s Assistant*’s: ‘Rosamond and the Purple Jar’, ‘The Little Dog Trusty’ and ‘The Orange Man and the Thief’. Except for a few dramas such as ‘Old Poz’ and ‘Eaton Montem’, the stories in the first three editions of *The Parent’s Assistant* are narrated in authorial voice which has self-referential ‘we’ in most of the cases, or ‘I’ in some cases such as ‘The Barring Out’. *Self-Justification* and *The Parent’s Assistant* share an educational interest, addressing young women and children respectively. Ireland is not obviously within the focus of *Self-Justification*, whereas the country is sometimes visible in *The Parent’s Assistant*, for instance in ‘The Orphans’ and ‘The White Pigeon’.<sup>182</sup> Edgeworth’s co-authored educational writing, *Practical Education* (1798) also appeared in the 1790s. While its preface clarifies which co-author wrote which chapter individually, the standard self-referential term for the narrative voice is ‘we’. Indeed, in the chapters attributed to Edgeworth, the narrative ‘we’ seems more intrusive than the narrative ‘we’ in her solo works.<sup>183</sup> Although *Practical Education* is not taken as a major sample in my discussion below due to its co-authorship, it seems appropriate to mention that the work allowed her to practice the narrative ‘we’, which often speaks in the names of her and her father within the text.

In 1800, *Castle Rackrent*, Edgeworth’s first Irish tale, was published. This novel features complex narrative frames in the forms of Thady’s personal voice in

<sup>180</sup> See Ó Gallchoir, ‘Maria Edgeworth’, pp. 32-33, 37.

<sup>181</sup> For the year of the publication, see Elizabeth Eger, ‘Introductory Note’, in *Works*, x, p. ix.

<sup>182</sup> Eger refers to these two texts as ‘Irish tales’ (p. ix).

<sup>183</sup> For example, see the first chapter ‘Toys’.



Hiberno-English and the fictional editor's intrusive pseudo-authorial voice in standard English. Thady, an indigenous Irishman, is a retainer of the Rackrents and gives vivid accounts of the family, as the 'author' of the 'Memoirs' (CR, p. 6). The work is intended to rectify English readers' ignorance of life and culture in Ireland at the dawn of the Union. The project of the text may thus be characterised as educational as well as political.<sup>184</sup> In the same decade, Edgeworth published another Irish tale, *Ennui* (1809), with more or less the same project. It is narrated in the personal voice of the Anglo-Irish protagonist Lord Glenthorn. As he turns out to be the son of an indigenous Irish nurse, the main narrative authority of her Irish tale turns out to hold a 'natural' bond with Gaelic or traditional Ireland again, although Thady and Glenthorn do not share educational backgrounds.

Curiously, Edgeworth wrote her second novel, *Belinda*, an English tale which was published just one year after *Castle Rackrent*, in authorial voice, but returned to a personal voice in *Ennui*. It was not until the publication of *The Absentee* (1812) that she applied authorial voice to her narrative about Ireland. *The Absentee* was conceived as an episode of *Patronage* and later a play.<sup>185</sup> Since *Patronage* is in authorial voice and the stage direction of the play may be attributed to an authorial perspective, it may have been convenient for her to frame the final form of *The Absentee* in authorial voice. As I have mentioned above, *The Parent's Assistant* includes some pieces of drama along with stories in authorial voice and testifies to the ease with which Edgeworth moves between drama and authorial voiced narratives. The next and the last major Irish tale *Ormond* (1817) is in authorial voice, but it was in the personal voice of the protagonist narrator in draft versions. *Ormond* is an orphan, whose national identity is ambiguous like that of Glenthorn in *Ennui*. Meanwhile, almost all the English tales and tales that are not so obviously related to Ireland, are written in authorial voice, with the very few exceptions of personal voice (e.g. *Harrington*) or epistolary form (e.g. *Leonora*). These contrasts between Edgeworth's narrative strategies have hardly attracted detailed examination, but it seems important to explore their implications, since they contribute to the construction of her national identity. The following two sections investigate the unbalanced distribution of authorial voice and personal

---

<sup>184</sup> For the education of the reader about Ireland in Edgeworth's Irish tales, see Belanger.

<sup>185</sup> Marilyn Butler, Heidi Van de Veire, and Kim Walker, 'Introductory Note', in *Works*, v, pp. xv-xix.

voice in her early narratives.

### 3.2 The Genesis of Authorial Voice: *Letters for Literary Ladies to Which is Added an Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification, The Parent's Assistant, and Belinda*

While Edgeworth was writing *Castle Rackrent* with a personal voice as its primary narrative vehicle, she was simultaneously pursuing the construction of authorial voice through the composition of *Self-Justification* and of *The Parent's Assistant*.<sup>186</sup> My analysis below seeks to illuminate how the authorial voice of *Belinda*, which I consider as a prototype of authorial voice in Edgeworth's novels for adults, entails some properties of the narrative voices of *Self-Justification* and *The Parent's Assistant*.<sup>187</sup> The narrative voices in *Self-Justification* and *The Parent's Assistant* are self-referential and characterised by self-authorising narrative acts; *Self-Justification* is narrated by a narrative 'I', while *The Parent's Assistant* is narrated by a combination of the narrative 'we' and 'I'. These narrative features seem to be propelled by the object of the texts to educate or enlighten children and young women in the form of essay or children's story. The generic object of educational writing often compels a narrator to enhance self-authorising narrative acts. The first editions of *Self-Justification* and *The Parent's Assistant* were published without Edgeworth's full name: *Self-Justification* was anonymously released to the public, and *The Parent's Assistant* with the initials 'E. M.'.<sup>188</sup> Their authorship came to be identified as Edgeworth's in the title page of the first edition of *Practical Education* (1798), where her name is inscribed as 'MARIA EDGEWORTH, AUTHOR OF LETTERS FOR LITERARY LADIES, AND THE PARENT'S ASSISTANT'. The narrative voices in *Self-Justification* and *The Parent's Assistant*, which effect self-reference with the first person

<sup>186</sup> According to Butler and Tim McLoughlin, 'The parameters for the date of writing [of *Castle Rackrent*] are [...] 1794-6 for the first section, 1796-8 for the second' ('Introductory Note', *Works*, I, p. ix).

<sup>187</sup> Connolly observes that 'Maria Edgeworth's distinctive fictional voice begins to emerge here [*The Parent's Assistant*]: *Simple Susan*, *Lazy Lawrence* and, most of all, the "Rosamond" stories capture much of the openness and curiosity of childhood, and only rarely make style subject to a moral' (*LL*, p. xix).

<sup>188</sup> Eger sees that the initials 'E. M.' are 'conceivably a printer's error but more likely to be a



(singular and plural) are arguably contingent on Edgeworth's identity, since they were originally published without her full name. It is reasonable to suppose that the narrative voice in an anonymous publication is less contingent on the author's (hidden) identity than is the narrative voice published with the author's name. In the instance of *Self-Justification*, the generic characterisation of the essay, however, encourages the reader to attribute the narrative voice to the anonymous historical author.<sup>189</sup> *The Parent's Assistant* is even more explicit that the narrative voice is contingent on the historical author under the suggestive initials 'E. M.', as demonstrated by a footnote in 'The Orphans'. This footnote to 'a pair of cloth shoes, with soles of platted hemp' is supposed to enforce the credibility of the narration by authorial voice through the invocation of the historical experience of 'the author': 'The author has seen a pair of shoes, such as here described, made in a few hours' (*PA*, p. 136). There is insufficient information to establish who speaks in this particular footnote: it could be a self-referential comment by authorial voice merged with Edgeworth's extrafictional voice as a historical 'author'; it could be Edgeworth's extrafictional voice as a historical 'author', which is meant to be separate from authorial voice; or it could be an extrafictional voice belonging to Richard Lovell, who often edited her work. Rather than trying to establish who speaks in this particular footnote, it seems important to note this ambiguous range and concentrate on the narrative act to affiliate the authority of authorial voice so closely with the historical author.

Furthermore, significant continuities in terms of norms, rhetorical properties, and educational/moral mission are detectable between the narrative voices of *Self-Justification*, *The Parent's Assistant*, and *Belinda*. To the authorial voice of *Belinda*, *Self-Justification*'s narrative voice lends its rhetoric of addressing, patronising, and defining the reader and of witty satire, but not the intrusive use of 'I' for self-reference. *The Parent's Assistant* contributes patterns of narrative acts performing 'overt authoriality' with self-referential 'we'. Due to its generic orientation as fiction and its instances of first person plural for the narrative self-reference, *The Parent's Assistant* and its authorial voice may appear far more

---

veiled indication of authorial identity' (p. ix).

<sup>189</sup> For the relationship between the narrative authority of the essay and the author, see Mittman, 'Christa Wolf's Signature in and on the Essay', in Joeres and Mittman (eds), pp. 95-96. Although *Self-Justification* was published anonymously, the anonymous author's presence may be understood as pivotal to the essay's narrative structure by her

relevant to *Belinda* than does the narrative voice of *Self-Justification*. It might seem sufficient to compare only *The Parent's Assistant* with *Belinda*. However, as its preface notes, *The Parent's Assistant* has intentionally reduced vocabulary and subtle rhetoric such as 'poetical allusions' (*PA*, p. 3) for the level of children's understanding; on the contrary, *Self-Justification* provides precursors of the tinge of satire, which often hints at Edgeworth's political view, in *Belinda*'s authorial voice.

*Literary Ladies* consists of two sets of correspondence. *Self-Justification* is attached to the epistolary pieces as though to serve as postscript to them.<sup>190</sup> The first set of correspondence is between a 'Gentleman' and his friend, debating whether women should be allowed access to literature and education. The correspondence comprises only two letters in private voices, one each from the two characters: 'Letter from a Gentleman to His Friend, upon the Birth of a Daughter' and 'Answer to the Preceding Letter'. The correspondence is regarded as based on the letters between Richard Lovell and his friend Thomas Day, who was an enthusiastic follower of Rousseau's gender prescription for women. Like the original model, this set of fictional letters may be understood to juxtapose opposing opinions about women's intellectual capacity and right to education, rather than developing a plot. Significantly, *Literary Ladies* introduces the topic at the outset through male narrative voices belonging to the rank of 'gentleman'. These male narrative voices are, however, woven into private correspondence, which is not so 'masculine' a form as an essay addressed to a public. The form of the essay is subsequently adopted in *Self-Justification* along with the narrative 'I', which is more contingent on Edgeworth's authorial identity than the private voices in the first two parts of the book. The second set of correspondence provides illustrations for the debate of the first correspondence. The second correspondence consists of seven letters by two characters named Julia and Caroline, delivering female private voices. This piece, which is said to be based on Edgeworth's correspondence with her school friend Fanny Hoare (née Robinson),<sup>191</sup> demonstrates the necessity of education for women through the episode of Julia. Indulgence in sensibility at the expense of rationality leads Julia to adultery and finally a degenerate and remorseful death. Grounded on the vindication of women's intellectual capacity

---

contemporary reader.

<sup>190</sup> Ó Gallchoir emphasises the structural and ideological gap between *Literary Ladies* and *Self-Justification* ('Maria Edgeworth', p. 18).



and right to education, which *Literary Ladies* has painstakingly advanced, *Self-Justification* develops its theme. Given such thematic contents of the entire volume, *Self-Justification* seems strategically situated in the grand discursive narrative of the entire book. It seems true in terms of the stylistic structure of the book, as well. The first piece of the book is in the private voices of gentlemen. The second piece is in the private voices of young female characters. These two pieces in private voices constituting *Literary Ladies* localise in the book the release of a public narrative voice with the self-referential 'I' in the final piece. The localised presence of the public voice suggests tension between public voice and the gender of Edgeworth as its anonymous historical author and implies the incompatibility between public voice and 'proper femininity'.

*Self-Justification* provides wives or would-be wives with practical tips in exercising rationality in domestic scenes. The commendation of the tips is not really that a wife should impress her husband as a speaker of reason, but that she should make use of reason to take advantage in her gender power game with him. Some tips might be understood to make the female practitioners appear irrational, but Edgeworth's emphasis lies with the use of reason in employing even such apparently irrational techniques. For example, as a defensive technique for women's argument with their husbands, the narrative voice suggests that a wife should provoke her husband during the course of their argument by giving her attention to 'a butterfly, or the figure in a carpet' 'in preference to him' (*SJ*, p. 70). This advice may appear to encourage the wife to take unreasonable actions. The actions are, however, calculated and reasonable, as the narrative voice indicates; the 'rage' so caused in the husband is expected to win all the by-standers on to the wife's side (*SJ*, p. 70). The actions are thus irrational tactics within a rational strategy.

In guiding the reader in these ways, the narrative 'I' emerges. This narrative voice takes women's rationality, which *Literary Ladies* sets to defend, for granted and conveys an even more progressive view on men and women. Its implicit presumption of equal rights possessed by men and women is revealed, for instance, in the following quotation from the beginning of the text:

---

<sup>191</sup> Butler, *ME*, p. 173.

[I]f man was allowed to be infallible, I see no reason why the same privilege should not be extended to woman. (*SJ*, pp. 63-64)

The narrative voice also elucidates the intersection between the notion of authority and ‘moral tales’ in Edgeworth’s paradigm:

[E]ndeavour to enforce implicit submission to your authority. This will give you infinitely less trouble, and will answer your purpose as well.

Right and wrong, if we go to the foundation of things, are, as casuists tell us, really words of very dubious signification, perpetually varying with custom and fashion, and to be adjusted ultimately by no other standards but opinion and force. Obtain power, then, by all means: power is the law of man; make it yours. (*SJ*, p. 64)

What seems the most important in this extract is the awareness that ‘words’ for moral categories are ‘perpetually varying with custom and fashion’ and, after all, subject to ‘opinion and force’. The narrative voice urges women readers to ‘enforce’ ‘implicit’ self-authorisation or empowerment since moral categories are the arbitrary products of ‘power’. Women’s self-justification is regarded here as the core part of a self-authorisation whereby women may survive in a patriarchal society, where ‘power’ and authority basically belong to men. I argue that this call for women’s self-authorisation is fundamental to the characteristics of Edgeworth’s authorial voice and what she termed ‘Moral Tales’. It would follow that the generic characterisation of Edgeworth’s ‘Moral Tales’ does not really conform to the prescription of ‘proper femininity’ by patriarchal authority, despite the intended generic detachment from the notorious novelistic genre. Far from being apolitical, Edgeworth’s ‘Moral Tales’ empower their narrative authorities to justify their moral values. Edgeworth’s ‘Moral Tales’, which encompass stories for children such as *The Parent’s Assistant* and novels for adults such as *Belinda*, are thus textual sites of a political struggle for authority. For instance, I have already mentioned that *Belinda* recycles the political prescription of femininity in *Literary Ladies*. In addition, while the preface to *The Parent’s Assistant* in the name of Richard Lovell emphasises that it is outside the scope of the book to question the necessity of class divisions, the collected stories present ‘different’ educational programmes for ‘different ranks’ except for the advancement of some universal virtues such as ‘justice, truth, and humanity’ that ‘are confined to no particular rank’ (*PA*, p. 3).<sup>192</sup>

---

<sup>192</sup> According to Myers, ‘Some prefaces bearing Richard Lovell’s initials were written by Maria from his notes; some prefaces for her adult fiction he clearly wrote himself’. See Myers, ‘Romancing the Moral Tale’, in *Romanticism and Children’s Literature in Nineteenth-Century England*, ed. by James Holt McGavran, Jr. (1991), p. 115.



*The Parent's Assistant* thus takes the existing class system for granted, with occasional support for the argument in favour of transcending class boundaries. Since the text effectively reproduces or maintains class hierarchy in this way, its narrative voice cannot eschew liability for the political implication of the text.<sup>193</sup> These implicit political engagements by authorial voice in Edgeworth's 'Moral Tales' constitute the political dimension of her female gender and Anglo-Irish identity. This generic implication of political struggle may provide an additional account for the extrafictional voice's political vocabulary in the advertisement to *Belinda*, which I have discussed in the beginning of this chapter. Edgeworth's authorial voice was developed as a crucial means towards such narrative genres as educational writing and 'moral tale'.

At the outset, the narrative voice of *Self-Justification* avoids an intrusive and didactic tone. The starting sentence of the text after an epigraph from Thomas Parnell marks this tendency: 'Endowed as the fair sex indisputably are, with a natural genius for the invariable art of self-justification, it may not be displeasing to them to see its rising perfection evinced by an attempt to reduce it to a science' (*SJ*, p. 63). The sentence is started by a cautious concession and is punctuated with the modal 'may'. The use of double negation 'not [...] displeasing' also expresses the evasion of decisiveness. This indirect rhetoric resonates with the advertisement of *Belinda*, which I have quoted above. The tendency is also consistent with the avoidance of 'overt authoriality' by the authorial voice in the early part of *Belinda*. For instance, Chapter 1 of *Belinda* commences as follows:

Mrs Stanhope, a well-bred woman, accomplished in that branch of knowledge, which is called the art of rising in the world, had, with but a small fortune, contrived to live in the highest company. She prided herself upon having established half a dozen nieces most happily; that is to say, upon having married them to men of fortunes far superior to their own. One niece still remained unmarried – Belinda Portman, of whom she was determined to get rid with all convenient expedition. (*B*, p. 3).

In this passage, the authorial voice appears to achieve an objective tone by avoiding intrusive self-reference or address to the readers. Indeed, the authorial voice's self-reference and address to the reader remain rare in the first volume. Even the stories in *The Parent's Assistant*, which are marked with more 'overt authoriality', tend to restrain the authorial voice from extrarepresentational acts.

---

<sup>193</sup> Myers notes the importance of exploring 'class relations' in approaching 'moral tales' for

The narrative voice of *Self-Justification* develops authoritative rhetoric gradually. In the second paragraph, the voice addresses the reader directly: ‘Candid pupil, you will readily accede to my first and fundamental axiom—that a lady can do no wrong’ (*SJ*, p. 63). Calling the reader ‘candid pupil’ here is suggestive. The narrative voice not only designates the reader as a ‘pupil’ who is about to receive its lesson but also compels the reader to be ‘candid’. The reader is expected to follow the instructions of *Self-Justification*. A more intimate relationship between the narrator as ‘I’ and the reader as ‘you’ is also introduced here. The instructive tone of the narrative voice becomes stronger as the essay develops, with more commanding rhetoric such as the following proliferation of imperatives: ‘Prepare for the time when you shall again become mortal. Take the alarm at the first approach of blame; at the first hint of a discovery that you are any thing less than infallible; — contradict, debate, justify, recriminate, rage, weep, swoon, do any thing but yield to conviction’ (*SJ*, p. 64). Skilful ways of persuading the reader are also observable. In the course of the instructive narrative, the narrative voice changes ways of addressing the reader from ‘candid pupil’ to ‘reasonable pupils’ (p. 68) and onto ‘happy pupils’ (p. 74). The reader is therefore expected to be enlightened from being a ‘candid pupil’ to become ‘reasonable’ and then ‘happy’. This method of defining the ideal reader is part of the authoritative strategy of the narrative voice. An imperative tone is also observable in a passage by the authorial voice of *Belinda*: ‘Vincent’s answer must be supposed: the enraptured acknowledgments of a lover are scarcely interesting upon the stage, where action and the theatre support the sympathy of the audience. Narration feebly supports enthusiasm, without these advantages’ (*B*, p. 317). In this instance, the command for the reader to imagine Vincent’s answer is combined with a meta-narrative comment, demonstrating ‘overt authoriality’. An analogous tactful definition of the ideal reader is notable in *Belinda*: ‘The only interest, that honest people can take in the fate of rogues, is in their detection and punishment; the reader then will be so far interested in the fate of Mr Champfort, as to feel some satisfaction at his being safely lodged in gaol’ (*B*, p. 324). In this extract, ‘the reader’ is supposed to be one of the ‘honest people’ since s/he is expected to have the same reaction against ‘the fate of rogues’ as theirs. The ‘overt authoriality’ of the authorial voice here consists



of providing observation about ‘honest people’, addressing ‘the reader’ and making meta-narrative comments.

In the extract about Mrs Stanhope from *Belinda*, quoted above, a satiric tone is detectable. The incompatibility between elegance evoked by the notion of a ‘well-bred woman’ and social climbing as Mrs Stanhope’s ‘accomplishment’ anticipates the satirical contrast between her ‘small fortune’ and ‘the highest company’. The verbal irony of the phrase ‘most happily’ in the description of mercenary marriages rings true when the authorial voice discloses that Mrs Stanhope treats her nieces as commodities to be ‘got rid’ of without true attachments. Similar wry irony is noticeable again later in the text and suggests the inheritance of the strong satire in *Self-Justification*:

Miss Portman was not one of those young ladies who fancy that every gentleman who converses freely with them will inevitably fall a victim to the power of their charms, and who see in every man a lover, or nothing. (*B*, p. 221)

Timid brides, you have, probably, hitherto been addressed as angels. Prepare for the time when you shall again become mortal. (*SJ*, p. 64)

In the first quotation from *Belinda* above, the authorial voice criticises young women whose vanity has been swollen by the patriarchal idolisation of women. The young women’s tendency to evaluate their male acquaintance solely by love-interest is censured with the contrast between ‘a lover’ and ‘nothing’. In the second quotation from *Self-Justification*, the narrative voice mocks and demolishes the idolisation of women by the patriarchal rhetoric, reminding ‘brides’ of the reality that they were originally earthly ‘mortals’. Harsher phrasings are detectable in the following examples:

[T]here was more of ignorance and timidity, perhaps, than of sound sense or philosophy, in Virginia’s indifference to diamonds [...]. [D]iamonds were consequently as useless to her, as guineas were to Robinson Crusoe, on his desert island. It would not justly be said, that he was free from avarice, because he set no value on the gold; or that she was free from vanity, because she rejected the diamonds. (*B*, p. 352)

Fair idiots! Let women of sense, wit, feeling, triumph in their various arts: yours are superior. [...] With them, a man has some chance of equal sway: with a fool he has none. (*SJ*, p. 75)

The authorial voice in the first quotation from *Belinda* reveals its cutting edge. Even with the concessive phrase ‘perhaps’, the observation on Virginia is sharp. The authorial voice delivers criticism against her not only by the choice of such

severe words as ‘ignorance’ and ‘timidity’ but also by opposing them to ‘sound sense’ and ‘philosophy’. The comparison of Virginia and diamonds with Robinson Crusoe and guineas is also thorny; the former case is shown as extreme as the latter case on a ‘desert island’. In the second quotation from *Self-Justification*, the narrative voice’s address ‘Fair idiots!’ sounds too harsh to be merely playful, although it is meant to advocate the advantage of women without ‘sense, wit, feeling’ in self-justification. The reference to ‘a fool’ compounds the bitter tone, as well.

*The Parent’s Assistant* moulds the pattern of ‘overt authoriality’, especially meta-narrative commentary in the authorial voice of *Belinda*:

Here let us pause in our story – we are almost afraid to go on – the rest is very shocking – our little readers will shudder as they read. But it is better that they should know the truth, and see what the idle boy came to at last. (*PA*, p. 18)

We shall spare the reader a journal of a lady’s doubts and scruples, and of a lover’s hopes and fears; it will be sufficient to relate, that the lover’s hopes at last rose to expectations; and that the scrupulous lady acknowledged them to be reasonable. (*B*, p. 326)

The first quotation above is from ‘Lazy Lawrence’. The authorial voice with the self-referential ‘we’ affords a precaution to the young ‘readers’ when the narrative moves to the punishment of the ‘idle boy’ Lawrence. The narrator not only warns but also judges on behalf of the readers that such a narrative process will be good for them. The second quotation is from Chapter 25 in *Belinda*, where Belinda accepts Mr Vincent’s courtship. The authorial voice here is also self-referential as the narrative ‘we’ addresses ‘the reader’. The narrator announces the act of narrative economy, implying that it is not worth sparing much textual space for supposedly romantic courting which tends to be a repetitive series of ‘doubts’, ‘scruples’, ‘hopes’, and ‘fears’. The narrator also decides on behalf of the ‘reader’ that ‘it will be sufficient’ to summarise the outcome. Such an act of ‘overt authoriality’ is an index of the narrative authority conferred by the authorial voice in *Belinda* as well as Edgeworth’s later authorial voices.

In these ways, the authorial voice of *Belinda* reveals significant continuities with the narrative voices in *Self-Justification* and *The Parent’s Assistant*, in terms of norms, rhetorical properties, and the educational/moral project to authorise the texts’ morals and politics. Furthermore, in the terms of Lanser’s theory, authorial voice and its narrative authority are conventionally assumed to be contingent on the



author's identity unless s/he makes a clear distinction between the author and the narrator in the text. If there is no such indication in a given instance, and especially where the text is published under the author's name, this absence would encourage the reader to identify the narrator with the author. Edgeworth's authorial voice usually lacks textual marks to separate authorial voice from the inscribed author 'Maria Edgeworth' in the title page or extrafictional voice published under her name. This condition in cooperation with the noted continuities between the narrative voices in *Belinda*, *Self-Justification*, and *The Parent's Assistant*, invites the reader to equate the authorial voice and the extrafictional voice in Edgeworth's text. In the context of such narrative practice, her authorial voice may have appeared to lack legitimacy in its authorisation of the early Irish tales. Such a flaw in legitimacy could be avoided by dependence on a localised authority that can be conferred by and attributed to the blood ties between Gaelic Ireland and the personal voice, as in the cases of Thady and Glenthorn.

### 3.3 Diversion to Personal Voice: *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui*

In the previous chapter, I contended that Thady's narration in *Castle Rackrent* may be categorised as one form of personal voice. According to Lanser's theory, personal voice shares with authorial voice the inclination for self-authorising narrative acts. Besides extrarepresentational acts to establish his narrative authority during the course of his narration, Thady ends his narration with a further attempt to authorise his narrative: 'As for all I have here set down from memory and hearsay of the family, there's nothing but truth in it from beginning to end: that you may depend upon; for where's the use of telling lies about the things which every body knows as well as I do?' (*CR*, p. 54). The fictional editor also takes excessive pains in supporting the credibility of Thady's narrative, by claiming the reliability of a narrative by a narrator whose intellectual profile appears low. But this editor's attempted defence of Thady's narrative authority inevitably sounds too contrived and seems to undermine his objective. The more he denies the credibility of intellectual narrative authority, the more he weakens his own narrative authority to vouch for Thady's narrative authority:

The talents of a biographer are often fatal to his reader. For these reasons the public often judiciously countenance those, who, without sagacity to discriminate character, without elegance of style to relieve the tediousness of narrative, without enlargement of mind to draw any conclusions from the facts they relate, simply pour forth anecdotes, and retail conversations, with all the minute prolixity of a gossip in a country town. (*CR*, p. 6)

This insistence on Thady's narrative authority proceeds to an almost artificial extent. If the narrative of the Rackrents (and the Quirks) needs so much authorisation, the following question arises. Why is *Castle Rackrent* not narrated in authorial voice, which has Edgeworth's established format of self-authorisation to achieve narrative authority?

Since authorial voice is contingent on Edgeworth's identity and supposed to demonstrate 'proper femininity', it is possible to see that the absence of authorial voice signifies a potential incompatibility between authorial voice and the explicitly political mission of *Castle Rackrent*. As I have pointed out, *Self-Justification*, *The Parent's Assistant*, and *Belinda*, which were written in the same period as *Castle Rackrent*, effectively enter political topics such as gender and class relations; the authorial voices of the texts serve to authorise the political message or implications of the texts. The political topics in *Self-Justification*, *The Parent's Assistant*, and *Belinda*, however, concentrate on the issues of women and children, even though the political backdrop of these issues is recognised by the texts. *Castle Rackrent* engages with more polemical political issues such as the degenerate landlord in Ireland, the rise of a Catholic meritocracy, and the Union of Ireland and Great Britain. Such a stronger political profile of *Castle Rackrent* may well necessitate the intrusive narrative voice of the fictional editor, who situates the text in the debates about the Union.<sup>194</sup> The pseudo-authorial voice of the Editor is, however, insufficient in authorising the narrative. The text depends on Thady's narrative authority, designating him as the 'author' of the Rackrents' memoirs. I therefore argue that the employment of Thady as the principal narrator is not only to foreground Hiberno-English but also to have the narrative authorised more securely by a figure of narrative authority who holds legitimate relationship with traditional Ireland.

There could be alternative narrative strategies with authorial voice, if the

---

<sup>194</sup> The Editor's preface is concluded with the following statement: 'When Ireland loses her identity by an union with Great Britain, she will look back with a smile of good-humoured complacency on the sir Kits and sir Condys of her former existence' (*CR*, p. 7).



aim of the text was merely to highlight Thady's dialect. It would be possible, for example, to devote the majority of the textual space for his narration as a private voice barely framed with authorial voice. Such a narrative strategy is indeed parallel to Lady Delacour's private narration in Chapter 3 'Lady Delacour's History' and Chapter 4 'Lady Delacour's History Continued' in *Belinda*. Chapter 3 designates the majority of its space for Lady Delacour's accounts of her 'life and opinions' in her direct speech, which is commenced as follows:

After dinner, Lady Delacour [...] began the history of her life and opinions in the following manner:

'I do nothing by halves, my dear – I shall not tell you my adventures, as Gil Blas told his to the archbishop of Grenada – skipping over the *useful* passages – because you are not an archbishop, and I should not have the grace to put on a sanctified face, if you were.' (*B*, p. 30)

Lady Delacour's narration continues to the end of Chapter 4 with only few interruptions when she becomes so emotional that she needs to break off (*B*, pp. 44-45, 57-58). This narrative device seems effective enough to spotlight her idiolect and character, since it gives the reader an opportunity to hear her narrative voice directly. This same device could have been applied to foreground Thady's dialect and cultural background. If the aim of *Castle Rackrent* was simply to foreground the language and culture of the indigenous Irish, this device could achieve similar effects in the text.

Sole dependence on the authority of an authorial voice contingent on Edgeworth's identity, or the authority of a male member from her social group in the form of the fictional editor, would undercut the narrative authorisation of the novel, given the historically controversial status of the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy. More effective authorisation of the text may be achieved by the delegation of the principal narrative authority to a narrator from the indigenous stock and the placement of his authority in tension with the Anglo-Irish or colonial authority of a supplementary narrator. Such a problematisation of the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy's relationship with the Irish nation at the level of narrative mode characterises Edgeworth's national identity as tense and troubled.

While authorial voice is employed as the major narrative mode of Edgeworth's fiction after *Belinda*, a personal voice bonded with Gaelic Ireland is again chosen for the narrative mode of *Ennui*, the second Irish tale. The personal narrator Glenthorn is a descendant of the indigenous Irish but was brought up as an

Anglo-Irish aristocrat. After he discovers that he is the son of his nurse, he takes up legal apprenticeship. His life evolves from his early days in an Irish cabin, through the decadent aristocratic life in England, to experiments with feudal landlordship back in Ireland, and professional life. The diverse backgrounds make his national identity hybrid. What is important in Edgeworth's characterisation of Glenthorn is that such a hybrid identity is united with his self-authorising narrative acts. This characterisation seems significant not in the simple sense that a hybrid identity is embodied by the protagonist narrator but in the more subtle sense that it is embodied by a personal narrator *with* conspicuous narrative acts to authorise the narrative about Ireland. Glenthorn not only becomes a legitimate landlord appreciative of traditional Ireland, as a protagonist, but also enables the norms of Anglo-Irish or English culture, such as professional norms, to be part of the legitimate narrative authority, as a personal narrator.

### 3.4 Narrative Practice and Identity: *Ormond*

When Edgeworth takes up personal voice in the two early 'Irish tales', there are borders transgressed in terms of gender, nationality, class, language, culture, and education. In principle, these borders would have distanced her as the extrafictional voice from Thady and Glenthorn, respectively. Ironically, however, Edgeworth's attempt through personal voice to avoid the direct authorisation of narratives of Ireland seems to necessitate her identification with those alternative narrative authorities, which are the 'other'. This practical complication is traceable to the three sets of surviving sketches for *Ormond*, a *bildungsroman* portraying the maturation of a hero from a wild boy with strong sensibility to a more rational being with social concerns and the prospect of benevolent landlordship. The first two sketches 'Vesey' and 'Vesay' are in personal voice, and the final one 'Ormond' is in authorial voice.<sup>195</sup>

'Vesey' and 'Vesay' incorporate fragmentary narratives and notes. According to Connolly, these sketches of 1816 'feature recognisable aspects of the plot of *Ormond* and most of the main characters are there (Harry, Sir Ulick and his

---

<sup>195</sup> As I have been unable to gain access to 'Ormond', I discuss only 'Vesey' and 'Vesay' here. A partial facsimile of 'Ormond' is shown in Butler's *ME* (plate 5).



son Marcus and the Annalys). [...] Quite a few names are changed, although some, notably Annaly, O'Shane and O'Carroll, are consistent with the published tale. The fate of the name Vesey is unclear' (*O*, pp. viii-ix). One of the most important aspects of these sketches is that they provide textual marks of Edgeworth's strong identification with the protagonist-narrator, who is to be named Harry Ormond in *Ormond*. Like Ormond, the personal narrator of 'Vesey' and 'Vesay' is an orphan brought up by an entrepreneur and political 'jobber' called Sir Josseline (Sir Ulick O'Shane in *Ormond*). As I have mentioned in the beginning of the current chapter, Ormond is characterised with a national identity that is as hybrid as that of Glenthorn in *Ennui*. Notes of matters to be narrated are sometimes inserted in the fragmentary narratives like the phrase 'Sir Josseline's character' as in the following example from the beginning of the sketch:

While my father went to make a fortune in India I was left when a child under the care of Sir Josseline Oshane—who had been married, early in life, to a relation of my fathers a very amiable woman—She dying he had married again in English lady for connexion & fortune—thought a great match for him—Sir Josseline had an only Son Chartres Marcus, about my own age—I was brought Up with him [...] —*Sir Josseline's character*—schemes in a mine—a canal—public money— [...] A jovial jobber [...] courtier with Lord Lieutenants—popular with people—with humor avowed political profligacy [...] —A popular character 40 year ago—*What he appeared to me while I was a boy*—Now his character developed [...]. [italics mine] ('Vesay')<sup>196</sup>

These notes are projected from the narrator's imaginative consciousness rather than the author's. A most invaluable example is found in the eighth line 'What he appeared to me while I was a boy'. Even at this early stage of drafting the novel, Edgeworth frames the narrative consistently from the protagonist-narrator's imaginative consciousness and blurs the border between the author as the extrafictional voice and the personal voice.

A similar example is observable in the beginning of Edgeworth's manuscript sketch entitled 'The Life & Death of a Divorcée':

I shall throw a veil over history of my fall—Much mischief done to innocent minds Under pretence of given moral lessons—Examples of vice—Create the idea that love is the greatest blessing of life [...] Create contempt for those who have a taste for simple pleasures [...] Shall begin my life where my Misery begun—I left my husbands house—death an adulterer...<sup>197</sup>

The narrative proper seems to start from the sentence 'I left my husbands house'.

<sup>196</sup> Bod: MS. Eng. misc. c. 896.

Before this sentence, there is seemingly a set of plans for the narration written in the personal voice of the heroine-narrator. She plans to ‘throw a veil’ over the history of her fall, to ‘create the idea that love is the greatest blessing of life’, and to start her narrative of her life where her ‘Misery begun’. This almost sounds like a plan written by the author. As this narrator addresses her narration to her daughter, not directly to the reading public, its narrative function as a private personal voice may be slightly different from that of the public personal voice of ‘Vesay’. Nevertheless, this quotation provides another remarkable example of the blurred boundary between Edgeworth’s personal voice and extrafictional voice.

If we return to the quotation from ‘Vesay’, the narrator often refers to himself with the pronoun ‘I’ and expresses his emotions, and with the possessive pronoun ‘my’ as in the frequent phrase ‘my sorrow’: ‘my sorrow at being refused by Florence or rather by her mother’, ‘my sorrow—because now no hope of Florence’, ‘My sorrow for the distress absorbed my sense of my own loss’, ‘My sorrow chiefly on account of Florence—No hopes of her now’.<sup>198</sup> Given the proximity between the imaginative consciousnesses of the historical author and the personal narrator, this rhetoric of the personal narrator implies the emotional proximity between the extrafictional voice and the personal voice. Probably, the proximity was a necessary basis for a vivid narrative quality.<sup>199</sup> An examination of the final sketch entitled ‘Ormond’ in authorial voice would surely shed further light on the matter.

Given this observation, it is reasonable to understand that the composition of *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui* similarly involve Edgeworth’s close identification with the personal voices of Thady and Glenthorn respectively. The creation of alternative narrative authorities in avoidance of authorial voice should, in principle, detach the historical Edgeworth from controversial Irish issues. Edgeworth’s writing practice, however, involves her identification, through the extrafictional voice, with the imaginative consciousnesses of Gaelic Ireland in *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui*, and counteracts the theoretical detachment. This dimension to Edgeworth’s narrative devices seems to make an additional contribution to the construction of her ‘ambiguous’ identity, as the configuration of narrative mode would define her identity. The evasion of authorial voice in *Castle Rackrent* and

---

<sup>197</sup> Bod: MS. Eng. misc. c. 897.

<sup>198</sup> ‘Vesey’, Bod: MS. Eng. misc. c. 896.

<sup>199</sup> Some critics share a view that Edgeworth’s representation of Ormond as a man of



*Ennui* puts strain on Edgeworth's relationship with the Irish nation. Simultaneously, her national identity is constructed as complex and culturally flexible through the inferred textual proximity between Edgeworth's extrafictional voice and personal voices which are 'naturally' connected to the indigenous Irish. This implicit cultural flexibility could be regarded as a solution to mitigate the strain on the problematic Anglo-Irish identity, but it is not until the reader examines literary sketches that the solution emerges as valid. I conclude this chapter by contending that this solution is far less effective than the thematic formula of ideal patriotism in Edgeworth's narratives, which will be discussed in the following chapters.

## *Chapter 4*

### **The Narratives of Individuals and Nations:**

#### **A Comparative Study of Maria Edgeworth, Jane Austen, and Frances Burney**

Part 1 of this thesis argued that the narrative modes of Edgeworth's novels construct her national identity as at once problematic and culturally flexible. The discrepancy in the narrative modes—in other words, the complex construction of Edgeworth's narrative authority—was understood to demonstrate the predicament of her narrative authorisation. My contention was that this predicament addresses the problem of Edgeworth's national identity, which is the issue of her legitimacy as a member of the Irish, and moreover, the British nation. The articulation of Edgeworth's national identity in her narrative modes thus exemplifies a tense relationship between an individual and the nation in face of the ideological transition to Romantic nationalism.

Part 2 will move on to the investigation of Edgeworth's ideal patriotism.<sup>200</sup> My argument here will be that her novels formulate an ideal patriotism which could legitimise such a troubled and culturally flexible national identity as hers. The rhetoric of patriotism in Edgeworth's period often employs the term 'true Briton', no matter whether the notion is applied in a literal or ironic sense.<sup>201</sup> The notion of ideal patriotism would have therefore involved the question of what sort of individuals should be considered as 'true' or legitimate members of the nation. The legitimisation of individuals' national membership was what the Anglo-Irish in Edgeworth's period were obsessed with, both as a class and as individuals. An investigation into her ideal of patriotism would therefore shed light on her view of relationship between individuals and nations, and, moreover, her concept of the nation. The investigation in the following chapters unearths the elements of her ideal patriotism by looking at the illustrations of the ideal in her major works.

This chapter reads *Patronage* alongside Frances Burney's *The Wanderer*

---

<sup>200</sup> The definition of 'patriotism' will be given in Section 4.1 below.

<sup>201</sup> For instance, see Edgeworth's *Essay on Irish Bulls* (*IB*, p. 73) and Burney's *The Wanderer* (*W*, p. 12). The traditional adjacency of the term 'patriot' and adjectives such as 'good', 'true', and 'worthy' is noted in the *OED*. See Joep Leerssen, *Remembrance and*



and Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*, all published in 1814.<sup>202</sup> The aim of the comparative approach is to situate Edgeworth's ideal patriotism in the historical and literary contexts. Commonalities and discrepancies in the three novels are explored to characterise Edgeworth's ideal patriotism. The next chapter will scrutinise ideological underpinnings of her ideal patriotism by looking at the intertextuality between her narratives and the writings of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Romantic nationalism. This process is intended to add historical and philosophical depth to the thesis. Chapters 4 and 5 are basically ideological analyses of the thematic field, while drawing on stylistic analyses at a preliminary level. Chapter 6 will enhance the junction of ideological analyses and stylistic approach.

This chapter argues that *Patronage* characterises ideal patriots by professionalism and a sufficient level of what I will call multilingualism. Appropriate multilingualism will be understood as a token of multiculturalism in the sense that the linguistic competence enables individuals to overcome the borders between political, social, and national groups with different cultural backgrounds. In the text, ideal patriots' professionalism is designated to rectify the degeneracy of upper classes. I contend that Edgeworth's texts conceive multilingualism as a by-product of professional life and a potential to promote social or international harmony. Her ideal patriotism is thereupon understood to be culturally inclusive and to be capable of legitimising individuals' identification with the nation without cultural screenings. This understanding will be developed by further enquiries about the gender and class components of the ideal. The ideal of *Patronage* appears to advocate social mobility, since compared with *The Wanderer* and *Mansfield Park*, *Patronage* seems to uphold a professional meritocracy more enthusiastically. My argument, however, notes that the ideal in *Patronage* takes the traditional landed system for granted and is not so flexible in class as in cultural relations. The ideal patriotism of *Patronage* may also appear a male-oriented formula by endowing male characters with more extensive multilingualism/multiculturalism than female characters and thereby limiting women's patriotic role more than the ideals of *The Wanderer* and *Mansfield Park*. I

---

*Memories* (1996), p. 14.

<sup>202</sup> The official date for the publication of *Patronage* was rendered 1814 by the publisher, while it was circulated in late 1813.

argue that the narrative acts of the authorial voice in *Patronage* contradict the thematic construction of ‘proper femininity’ and generate tension in Edgeworth’s prescription of gender roles. The conclusion of this chapter will be that Edgeworth’s ideal patriotism claims to pursue cosmopolitan ideals but not so inclusive in terms of class, and that the ideal also reveals the tense position of women in its composition of the nation.

The year 1814 witnessed prospects of the awaited ‘Peace’ in the European political situation, notably the abdication of Napoleon. In the literary context as well as in the historical context, the year is important. It may be considered as the focal year in the consolidation of the new genres of ‘national tales’ and ‘historical novels’, which crystallise concerns with individuals and nations, in the 1810s. *Patronage*, *The Wanderer*, and *Mansfield Park*, which can be regarded as ‘national tales’ in a sense, and Owenson’s self-claimed ‘national tale’ *O’Donnel* shared their moments with the launch of the Waverley novels by Scott.<sup>203</sup> The conjunction of the two new novelistic genres thus became highly visible in 1814. The literary calendar of the year also featured the publication of William Wordsworth’s masterpiece *The Excursion*; the poem celebrates the victory of the war against France and praises the English virtues (in particular, Anglican morals) in a ‘pointedly polemical and controversial’ manner, besides the publication of those prose works.<sup>204</sup> Moreover, according to Butler, ‘Between 1814 and 1819 the major poets and novelists virtually all made some kind of appearance on the public stage, often to comment on the political implications of the work of other writers’.<sup>205</sup>

Burney and Austen not only shared with Edgeworth a prominent position among women novelists of the period but also present significantly comparable viewpoints. Burney (1752-1840) commenced her publishing career two decades earlier than Edgeworth (1767-1849), and Burney’s career covered the period from the pre-French Revolution era to the post-French Revolution era. Two decades after Edgeworth’s first publication, during the Regency period, Austen (1775-1817) commenced her publishing career. Burney and Austen thus represent an earlier and

---

<sup>203</sup> *Patronage*, *The Wanderer*, and *Mansfield Park* are considered here as ‘national tales’ in the sense that they portray the state of a nation or nations in a specific historical setting, and not in the narrower sense that they set to advance cultural nationalism.

<sup>204</sup> Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries* (1981), p. 140.

<sup>205</sup> Butler, *Romantics*, p. 138.



a later literary generation respectively in relation to Edgeworth's moment. Furthermore, Burney, from an international family background, lived in post-revolutionary France between 1802 and 1812 after her marriage to the royalist French aristocrat Alexandre d'Arblay.<sup>206</sup> Edgeworth moved from England to Ireland in 1782 with her family. The majority of her life was spent on the family estates in Co. Longford where her father exercised progressive and benevolent landlordship. Meanwhile, she visited Edinburgh, London, Paris, and Geneva, where she was lionised among cosmopolitan intellectuals. Austen was born into a very Anglican family and stayed mostly in England. She had family members and relatives who went to sea or lived in foreign countries, for example, France and India, and the international family network was kept by correspondence.<sup>207</sup> *The Wanderer*, *Patronage*, and *Mansfield Park* deal with inter- and intra-national themes across England, Ireland, Britain, Continental Europe, and outside Europe as far as the West Indies. *The Wanderer* and *Mansfield Park* thus provide historically and culturally relevant perspectives and contexts for the study of *Patronage*. On the phenomenon of British patriotism between 1707 and 1837, the British historian Linda Colley writes: 'For all classes and for both sexes, patriotism was more often than not a highly rational response and a creative one as well'.<sup>208</sup> In what follows, I view the three women writers' ideal patriotisms as such 'rational' and 'creative' responses to the construction of the British nation and its national identity under the ideological transition from Enlightenment cosmopolitanism to Romantic nationalism, concurrent with Britain's wars with revolutionary and Napoleonic France.

In Edgeworth's major works, ideal patriotism is a recurrent concept as the following chapters will demonstrate. *Patronage* achieves the most articulate and systematic expression of Edgeworth's ideal patriotism among her works through its explicit reference to patriotism and schematic representation. The novel conceptualises ideal patriotism as antithetical to the novel's central concept

---

<sup>206</sup> Her father Charles Burney was originally known as Charles MacBurney. His grandfather is said to be a Scottish or Irish descendant, and it was his father who decided to anglicise the family name. Burney also had a Huguenot great grandfather on her mother's side. See Claire Harman, *Fanny Burney* (2000), pp. 1-5, 8-11.

<sup>207</sup> Recent biographies of Austen are apt to highlight the family connections and colonial interests abroad. For example, see Claire Tomalin, *Jane Austen* (1997) and David Nokes, *Jane Austen* (1997).

<sup>208</sup> Linda Colley, *Britons* (1992), p. 5.

‘patronage’, as we shall see in Mr Percy’s words later. The novel also formulates an ideal patriotism on a greater scale than Edgeworth’s other novels. *Patronage* was originally designed to interlink socio-political issues in England and Ireland in a more self-conscious way. The novel initially included an episode of an Irish absentee family. The episode was subsequently removed and developed into *The Absentee* (1812), Edgeworth’s eventual Irish tale addressing social-economic issues in post-Union Ireland.<sup>209</sup> Despite this genealogical omission of the Irish episode and the novel’s predominant engagement with England and English people, *Patronage* signals the broad historical context of the international relationships among England, Ireland, Britain, and Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The text thus provides a broader platform for the discussion of individuals and nations, transcending the conventional categorisation dividing Edgeworth’s English tales and Irish tales.

#### 4.1 The Concept of Ideal Patriotism in *Patronage*

The term ‘patriotism’ is used in this thesis to refer to ‘love of or zealous devotion to one’s country’ and fellow countrymen/women.<sup>210</sup> The term is often modified by an adjective or noun phrase so that it could provide more precise meaning within the relevant context. Such rhetoric reflects the awareness of Patrick O’Nally and Dustin H. Griffin among others that ‘the word “patriotism” meant different things in different contexts’.<sup>211</sup> For instance, O’Nally views ‘Anglo-Irish patriotism’ or ‘Protestant patriotism’ in eighteenth-century Ireland in terms of three layers:

The first layer represented the broad and non-political definition which referred to the desire to improve the state of the country, economically in particular. The second, although still representing a broad definition of patriotism, was more political in nature in that it reflected a consensus among the Protestant community on issues such as Ireland’s relationship with Britain, the nature of the religious establishment, and the rights of the Irish parliament. The final layer

---

<sup>209</sup> For the composition history of *Patronage*, see Butler, *ME*, pp. 211, 212, 276-7, 290. See also Butler, ‘Introductory Note’, *Patronage*, VI, pp. vii-xxx.

<sup>210</sup> This definition applies the following *OED*’s definition: ‘love of or zealous devotion to one’s country’. It is also relevant to the notion of ‘civic humanism’.

<sup>211</sup> O’Nally, *Parties, Patriots and Undertakers* (1997), p. 174. See also Griffin, *Patriotism and Poetry in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (2002), pp.1-6. The *OED* also notes the ironical use of the terms ‘patriotism’ and ‘patriot’, as Dr. Johnson’s dictionary has.



represented the patriotism of the parliamentary opposition and related to the specific motivation of individual or groups of politicians in opposing an administration. The motivation (as opposed to the rhetoric) behind this activity might have little or no connection with the philosophy of patriotism in general. (p. 175)

Although this paradigm by O’Nally deals with an earlier period of Ireland than the scope of this thesis, it nevertheless illuminates the problem with the broad usage of the concept. What is referred to as ‘Edgeworth’s ideal patriotism’ in the thesis may be located between the first two layers of O’Nally’s paradigm, since it is understood to plot political programmes concerning class and gender roles for public interests but may not necessarily reflect a ‘consensus’ within the social group to which she belonged. This thesis concentrates on Edgeworth’s individual vision of ideal patriotism, and the question of whether or not it represents the consensus of Protestant Ascendancy will be answered to the extent that it may not, at least in the sense that her ideal does not fully comply with patriarchal assumptions.

The Dutch literary historian Joep Leerssen has emphasised the ideological proximity of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism to ‘Anglo-Irish patriotism’, distinguishing the latter from the nineteenth-century cultural nationalism in Ireland. Leerssen’s argument is situated in the wide European context of the period with scrupulous attention to the usage of the term ‘patriotism’ and equivalent terms in European languages of the period. According to this argument, ‘Anglo-Irish patriotism’ is characterised by liberal attitudes and a philanthropic contribution to the society, in particular, to the indigenous lower classes. It is therefore one’s love for and allegiance with one’s ‘society of fellow-citizens’ rather than for one’s ethno-cultural group and differs from essentialist or cultural nationalism in this regard.<sup>212</sup> ‘Patriotism’, Leerssen writes, ‘looks to a society consisting of the pragmatic association of individuals with common interests, whereas nationalism looks to a nation tied by the natural bonds of common descent and a common cultural heritage’ (p. 24). The absence of an exclusive commitment to a national group defined by ethno-cultural bonds makes the pre-Union ‘Anglo-Irish patriotism’ closer to Enlightenment cosmopolitanism, which imagined a republic of rational individuals united beyond national and class boundaries as the ideal

---

<sup>212</sup>Leerssen, *Remembrance*, p. 14. The Irish historian R. F. Foster emphasises the colonial aspect of the phenomenon more than Leerssen and calls the phenomenon ‘colonial nationalism’. See Foster, *Modern Ireland, 1600-1972* (1988), pp. 173, 178, 181, 236-39, 242-43, 248, 283.

community.<sup>213</sup> While distinguishing Edgeworth's ideal patriotism, which is mainly formulated in the texts published after the Union, from the pre-Union phenomenon of 'Anglo-Irish patriotism', the thesis takes into account such resonance of the eighteenth-century usage of the term 'patriotism'.

*Patronage* was composed when Europe was experiencing an ideological transition from Enlightenment cosmopolitanism to Romantic nationalism in the aftermath of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars.<sup>214</sup> From the outset, the text seems to illustrate a creative formula of ideal patriotism. The formula overlaps in a complex manner with Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Romantic nationalism. In the novel, the exemplary Percy family's individualistic or independent stance repudiates partisanship and chauvinism. For instance, Mr Percy warns Godfrey against 'party-spirit, or what the French call *esprit-de-corps*' on Godfrey's departure for his first military service (*P*, VI, p. 56). The Percys cherish the patriotic virtue of committing oneself to the welfare of one's fellow countrymen/women regardless of their ethno-cultural backgrounds. At the opening of the novel such benevolence of the Percys is shown to transcend the boundaries of the British nation. Their warm hospitality generously accommodates shipwrecked foreigners including a French diplomat and Dutch merchants.<sup>215</sup> These representations appear to align the text with Enlightenment cosmopolitanism, away from the exclusive tendency of Romantic nationalism.

The novel's affinity with Enlightenment cosmopolitanism may be accounted for by the intertextuality between the text and *Memoirs of RLE*. Richard Lovell Edgeworth's intellectual inheritance was predominantly of Enlightenment values. After enjoying the intellectual network of the Lunar Society during his residence in England, he became a progressive landlord operating within and outside the family landed estates.<sup>216</sup> He was elected the Member of the Irish Parliament for the pocket borough of St. John's Town in 1798. His ideas and practice of social reforms showed remarkable tolerance towards the indigenous

---

<sup>213</sup> The universalism of the Enlightenment has double standards. Women and the 'colonised' are not fully considered as rational beings. See Dorinda Outram, *The Enlightenment* (1995), pp. 74, 94-95.

<sup>214</sup> See *ME*, p. 211; Butler, 'Introductory Note', *P*, VI, p. viii.

<sup>215</sup> In defining cosmopolitanism, Jacques Derrida employs hospitality as a focal concept for the definition. See Jacques Derrida, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, trans. by Mark Dooley and Michael Hughes (2001).

<sup>216</sup> For Richard Lovell and the Lunar Society, see Jenny Uglow, *The Lunar Men* (2002), pp.



Catholic peasantry.<sup>217</sup> These dimensions to his intellectual inheritance, ideas, and practice are related respectfully by Edgeworth in the memoirs.<sup>218</sup> Her narrative in the memoirs also enthusiastically describes the family's acquaintance with men of letters and science in Edinburgh through the intellectual circle of Dugald Stewart in 1803.<sup>219</sup>

Edgeworth's texts, however, seem to indicate caution against the universalist drive of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and to be attracted to the differential approach of Burkean cultural nationalism.<sup>220</sup> In *Patronage* among other works, some French expressions are used untranslated since they are regarded as 'untranslatable'. For instance, the authorial voice refers to 'that undefinable, untranslatable French love of *succès de société*' (*P*, VII, p. 52). The narrative authority thereby reveals its scepticism about universalism and its appreciation of cultural differences. Moreover, the theme of the Percys' 'shipwreck'—their displacement from their ancestral landed property, Percy Hall, and bankruptcy—appears to resonate with Burke's *Reflections*. *Patronage's* conclusion to reward the Percys with their retrieval of the family landed estates nods towards Burkean Romantic nationalism, which employs landed estates as its major institution to disseminate its ideology. The benefit of Mr Percy's benevolent landlordship is contrasted with the mismanagement of Percy Hall by his contender, Sir Robert Percy, to imply the immediate cause-and-effect relationship between failed landlordship and the degeneration of the nation.

The affinity between Edgeworth's ideal and Burkean Romantic nationalism is also observable in her other novels, as the next chapter will demonstrate. Besides them, *Essays on Professional Education* (1817), co-authored by Edgeworth and her father, emphasises an appreciation of cultural difference.<sup>221</sup> The treatise recommends that prospective 'statesmen' should learn modern languages in order to appreciate cultural differences (*Prof Ed*, p. 388). Edgeworth's narrative in *Memoirs of RLE* denotes affinity with Burkean Romantic nationalism in the sense

---

181-93.

<sup>217</sup> For example, see Butler, *ME*, pp. 86, 112, 136-37, 183-84.

<sup>218</sup> See Chapters I, II, and III, vol. II of *Memoirs of RLE*, in particular.

<sup>219</sup> *Memoirs of RLE*, vol. II, pp. 293-95.

<sup>220</sup> For the interpretation of Burke's nationalism as cultural nationalism, see Tom Furniss, 'Cementing the Nation' in *Edmund Burke's Reflections on the Revolution in France*, ed. by John Whale (2000).

<sup>221</sup> Hereafter referred to as *Professional Education* or *Prof Ed*.

that it praises the social and political consequences of Richard Lovell's improvement of the family estates. It seems therefore unreasonable to argue that Edgeworth's texts fully embrace universalism.

These co-existing affinities with Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Romantic nationalism in Edgeworth's vision of ideal patriotism have been recently discussed by critics within the context of her Irish tales.<sup>222</sup> Exploring *Patronage*, which provides a broader platform for the discussion of individuals and nations, this chapter argues that Edgeworth's concern with professionalism and language is pivotal to the complex composition of her ideal patriotism.<sup>223</sup>

#### 4.2 Patriotism, Professionalism, and Language in *Patronage*

The principal composition of *Patronage* started in 1809 when Britain was conducting the Peninsula War against Napoleonic France.<sup>224</sup> Set in wartime England after 1805,<sup>225</sup> the novel contrasts two English families from the landed class, the Percys and the Falconers. The text is preoccupied with the notion of 'legitimacy' as well as its central notion of 'patronage'. In particular, the question of the Percys' legitimacy as landowners synchronises with the question of their legitimacy as patriots or guardians of the English, and moreover the British nation in the text. The protagonist Mr Percy is a benevolent country gentleman and man of letters, managing the Percy estates with conscientious landlordship. The legitimacy of his tenure is challenged when the deed of the family estates goes missing. Exploiting the situation, Sir Robert takes over Percy Hall. He has ruined his own ancestral estates by degeneracy and repeats mismanagement in Percy Hall. While Mr Percy is toiling away during the family adversity, his three sons exert themselves in pursuing professional careers within the meritocracies of the army, law, and medicine respectively, and perform patriotic service. In the meantime, the

---

<sup>222</sup> For example, Esther Wohlgenut, 'Maria Edgeworth and the Question of National Identity', *Studies in English Literature*, 39 (1999), 645-58.

<sup>223</sup> 'Professionalism' is referred to in this thesis as an attitude and practice in accordance with norms required for professional careers such as the mastery of relevant knowledge and/or skills, exertion, and disinterestedness.

<sup>224</sup> Butler, 'Introductory Note', *P*, vi, p. vii.

<sup>225</sup> Caroline Percy refers to Scott's *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805) in the novel (*P*, vii, p. 43).



Falconers succeed in, or at least so it appears, climbing up the social ladder by means of patronage rather than self-exertion. Towards the end of the novel Mr Percy is rewarded with the retrieval of the tenure from Sir Robert and returns to Percy Hall with his family. In contrast, the conceited Falconers are rewarded with the loss of their social status as the consequence of their abuse of patronage. The Percys' permanent return to Percy Hall symbolises that they are more legitimate landowners and patriots than Sir Robert and the Falconers, who depend on and misuse hereditary privileges and/or patronage.

If we trace *Patronage's* emphasis on professionalism back to *Professional Education*, the significance of the treatise is not only to respond to the contemporary demands for well-trained professionals under the pressure of the wars with France, but also to revise the definition of profession. The preface to the text announces:

The term Profession is usually confined to the Church, the Law, Physic, and Arms; but in fact, Gentlemen, Statesmen, and Princes, exercise functions of the highest consequence in the state: and no words seems more proper to designate their occupations than the term Profession. (Advertisement for *Prof Edu*)

The redefinition expands the conventional definition of 'profession', which is confined to clergy, lawyers, physicians, and soldiers in order to include 'Gentlemen', 'Statesmen', and 'Princes'. The aim of the inclusion seems to enhance the production and maintenance of patriots who would 'exercise functions' for the public interest. Within this framework, country gentlemen, who were often considered as a leisured class, are incorporated into the programme of the national defence in a broadened sense. Country gentlemen are expected to manage their estates with the norms of professionalism so that they can be of use to the prosperity of Britain and no longer indulge in their hereditary privileges and leisure. Mr Percy is shown to satisfy the criteria for the country gentleman as a professional. His benevolent and conscientious landlordship is backed by rich legal knowledge and is characterised as fundamental to the organic community around Percy Hall. The strong ties between the Percys and the villagers are observable, for instance, in the scene where the poor villagers express their regret of the landlord family's imposed departure from Percy Hall (*P*, VI, p. 102). The scene of shipwreck where Mr Percy leads rescue operations with the villagers' full support features him as a guard of the local community, and furthermore the British coast (*P*, VI, p. 8). His professional

landlordship is thus represented as crucial to the well-being of the British nation, and hence as patriotic. His decoding service, which will be discussed later in this section, associates him with patriotic professionalism in the additional sense that the service is analogous to that of military officers such as George Scovell (1774-1861) during the Napoleonic Wars.<sup>226</sup>

Mr Percy's affinity for professionalism is shared by his sons. They distinguish themselves with discipline and exertion in their respective professional careers and provide patriotic service. Godfrey, the eldest son and heir of Percy Hall, serves in a military campaign in the West Indies, defending the interest of the British Empire. This service aims to gain 'means of becoming a really respectable, enlightened, and useful *country gentleman*' (*P*, VI, p. 55) and epitomises the proposal of *Professional Education* that the heir of a landed family should undertake military service after university education in war times, in order to share patriotic duties (*Prof Edu*, pp. 263-64). Godfrey's '*zeal for the interests of the service [sic]*' (*P*, VI, p. 55) is more than the educational treatise expects. He wishes to pursue the career in the meritocracy as a long-term profession and almost regrets his hereditary privilege. Alfred, the second son, is a barrister. He, too, is shown to protect Britain's colonial interests by succeeding in representing the East India Company when the company had 'one of the greatest causes ever brought before our courts of law, relative to the demand of some native bankers in Hindostan against the Company for upwards of four millions of money' (*P*, VI, p. 229). His legal career, furthermore, saves his father from a charge brought by Sir Robert. After mismanaging Percy Hall, Sir Robert brings a lawsuit, with the assistance of a malicious solicitor, against Mr Percy in order to improve his finance. Since it rectifies such disturbance in landed order, Alfred's achievement to have Mr Percy's landownership restored can be interpreted as a great contribution not only to the private cause of his family's well-being but also to the public interest of landed order. The youngest son Erasmus is a physician struggling to build up his career despite partisan rivalry among his colleagues and tough working conditions. His professional pride is grounded on his belief that his medical career would be for 'the good of mankind' (*P*, VI, p. 65).

The Percy brothers' professional ethos, which produces patriotic

---

<sup>226</sup> For Scovell's commitments to code-breaking during the Napoleonic Wars, see Mark Urban, *The Man Who Broke Napoleon's Code* (2001).



contributions, is practised with transnational benevolence. Such benevolence is influenced by their father's scepticism of 'party-spirit' and national chauvinism. Erasmus's compassionate care of the Irishman O'Brien against his potential patron's instruction exemplifies the dimension of the Percy brothers' professionalism. The brothers mark a strong contrast with other characters in the same professions who pursue self-interest through patronage at the expense of public interests. For example, John and Cunningham Falconer, who are promoted by patronage, are only attentive to their self-interest and neglect their respective professional duties as military officer and diplomat. Their neglect of the professional duties, which are crucial to national defence, symbolises their irresponsibility as members of the British nation, and hence, the text disqualifies them as reliable patriots. As Mr Percy's following remark indicates, the notion of patronage is defined as antithetical to the notion of ideal patriotism in the text:

I believe it [patronage] to be ruinous to my country. Whenever the honors of professions, civil, military, or ecclesiastical, are bestowed by favor, not earned by merit; whenever the places of trust and dignity in a state are to be gained by intrigue and solicitation, there is an end of generous emulation, and consequently of exertion. Talents and integrity, in losing their reward of glory, lose their vigour, and often their very existence. If the affairs of this nation were guided, and if her battles were fought by the corrupt, imbecile creatures of patronage, how would they be guided?—how fought?—Woe be to the country, that trusts to such rulers and such defenders! Woe has been to every country, that has so trusted. (*P*, VI, pp. 108-9.)

In the passage, professionalism is conceived as a patriotic virtue rather than as personal merit. Mr Percy supports the system of professional meritocracy because the system is vital, primarily, to the interests of 'my country' or 'this nation' rather than because the system rewards individuals' personal merits duly regardless of their backgrounds.

Through the characterisation of the Percy men, we have observed that professionalism and transnational benevolence are combined as two key constituents in the formula of Edgeworth's ideal patriotism. I argue that the formula, moreover, links rich multilingual competence with those two key constituents. *Patronage* is 'metatextual' in the sense that it 'concerns the fate of certain texts within the fiction – diplomatic papers, code-words, philosophical dictionaries, leases'.<sup>227</sup> This 'metatextual' dimension is further elaborated by

---

<sup>227</sup> Mc Cormack, 'Tedium', p. 93.



Edgeworth's grand linguistic theme.<sup>228</sup> I am going to highlight the novel's concern with language, which can be identified beyond as well as within its 'metatextual' dimension, and furthermore to link it, together with professionalism, to Edgeworth's ideal patriotism.

The text represents both the tension between nations and the tension between social groups in the era of the Napoleonic Wars, by introducing a wide variety of languages and language groups. The representation seems relevant to what the British historian Eric Hobsbawm called 'the dual nature' of the Napoleonic Wars 'as a conflict, both between states and between social systems'.<sup>229</sup> This linguistic theme is analysed at the following four levels of language: 'tongue', 'dialect', 'idiolect', and coded languages. 'Tongue' is referred to as 'the whole body of words and of methods of combination of words used by a nation, people, or race; a "tongue"' (the *OED*'s definition for 'language', 1.a). For example, the novel represents the confrontations between the English, the French, and the Dutch nations during Napoleonic wars in the scene of the shipwreck at the beginning of the novel. 'Dialect' is referred to as a variation of a language differing in vocabulary, grammar, or pronunciation'.<sup>230</sup> Reflecting the recent tendency of dialectology, my reference to the term 'dialect' here covers social dialects as well as regional ones.<sup>231</sup> According to the *OED*, 'dialect' meant social ones and regional ones in Edgeworth's period.<sup>232</sup> Although she sometimes means a dialect by the term 'language', she was familiar with the notion of 'dialect' like her

---

<sup>228</sup> See also Butler, 'Introductory Note', *P*, VI, p. xix.

<sup>229</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution, Europe 1789-1848* (1962), p. 102.

<sup>230</sup> The definition of 'dialect' is much more debatable than a student of literature would imagine. The delimitation of varieties has been considered to be arbitrary and thus problematic by linguists. For example, see K. M. Petyt, *The Study of Dialect* (1980), pp. 11-36, and R. A. Hudson, *Sociolinguistics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (1996), pp. 20-69. The most appropriate approach to 'dialects' for my purpose seems to employ the broad definition given above and to conduct discussion at the relevant and specified levels, in accordance with Petyt's view (p. 12). This approach is compatible with the predominant trend among the leading commentators such as J. K. Chambers, Peter Trudgill, and Suzanne Romaine. See Chambers and Trudgill, *Dialectology* (1980), pp. 3-12; and Romaine, *Language in Society*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (2000), pp. 1-31.

<sup>231</sup> Some linguists prefer keeping the 'dialect' for geographical varieties and using the term 'sociolect' for social dialects. For example, see Geoffrey Finch, *Linguistic Terms and Concepts* (2000), p. 216. However, since social dialects and regional ones sometimes overlap, I will refer to 'dialects' to cover both, as most of dialectologists do.

<sup>232</sup> The *OED* refers to social dialects such as 'the Lawyer's Dialect' (1740) and 'the theological dialect' (1805) in the definition of 'dialect' in the sense of 'Manner of speaking, language, speech; *esp.* a manner of speech peculiar to, or characteristic of, a particular person or class; phraseology, idiom' (entry 1).



contemporaries. They enjoyed William Falconer's best-seller poem *Shipwreck* (1762), which includes extensive footnotes explaining the sailors' dialect.<sup>233</sup> Falconer's introduction of the nautical dialect in the text was developed into the publication of *An Universal Dictionary of the Marine* (1796).<sup>234</sup> Most of the dialects addressed in *Patronage* are social rather than regional, such as 'the language of the market' and the lawyers' professional dialect. 'Idiolect' is referred to as a variation of a language at the individual level or individuals' speech/writing. One of the touchstones of morality for some characters in *Patronage* is whether their idiolects conform to the dialect of the fashionable 'world'. The examples of coded languages in the text are the cipher of the Tourville papers and the seventeenth-century 'universal language', which shall be discussed in detail later in this section.<sup>235</sup>

The dramatic scene of the shipwreck in the beginning of the novel hints at the tension of international politics among Britain, France, and Holland during the Napoleonic Wars. The shipwrecked vessel is a commercial one from Holland. Carrying the French diplomat Monsieur de Tourville with a dispatch about 'state intrigues' (*P*, VI, p. 261) and other passengers, this Dutch vessel symbolises the alliance between Napoleonic France and Holland: a threat to the British nation. This international tension becomes more explicit later when Godfrey becomes a war prisoner of Holland.

The international tension of the scene is represented mainly in terms of language as 'tongue'. The communication between the rescue boats operated under the Percys' guidance and the Dutch wrecked ship, probably by way of international nautical protocol, is translated by the authorial voice. If nautical protocol here is seen as a kind of coded language (thus relevant to the fourth level of the linguistic theme), the communication by means of this international coded language of the sea is represented as efficient and clear by the authorial voice's concise and rhythmic delivery:

---

<sup>233</sup> William Falconer, *Shipwreck* (1762). By 1800 the poem had ten editions, and further editions were published throughout the nineteenth century.

<sup>234</sup> William Falconer, *An Universal Dictionary of the Marine* (1796).

<sup>235</sup> My reference to 'cryptography' covers 'cryptology' in modern usage. See the entries of 'cryptography' and 'cryptology' in David E. Newton, *Encyclopedia of Cryptology* (1997).

The boats hailed her [the wrecked ship], and she answered that she was Dutch, homeward bound – had mistaken the lights upon the coast – had struck on a rock – was filling with water – and must go down in half an hour. (*P*, VI, p. 8)

An untranslated foreign language is placed several lines after this passage where M. de Tourville asks for help. His first appearance is made through his voice:

But just as he [Mr Percy] gave the order for his boatmen to *push off*, a French voice called out—

‘Monsieur!—Monsieur l’Anglois!—one moment.’

Mr Percy looked back and saw, as the moon shone full upon the wreck, a figure standing at the poop, leaning over with outstretched arms.

‘I am Monsieur de Tourville, Monsieur—a chargé d’affaires—with papers of the greatest importance—dispatches.’ (*P*, VI, p. 9)

The authorial voice identifies the voice of this invisible foreigner as ‘a French voice’ before relating the content of its communication, and creates a certain kind of linguistic tension. It is important to note that the English characters’ encounter with this foreigner/Frenchman is initially registered in terms of language. Linguistic rather than visual or other information is selected to represent the foreign. M. de Tourville’s French is limited to phrases which educated readers would understand without difficulty, such as ‘Monsieur l’Anglois’ and ‘chargé d’affaires’. Moreover, his reference to the French term ‘chargé d’affaires’ in the original form without translation implies his assumption that such a terminology should be international, on the basis of the fact that the French language was a lingua franca for European diplomacy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>236</sup>

This representation of the French language in the scene makes an interesting contrast with the opening scene of Frances Burney’s *The Wanderer*, where the English language meets the French language likewise on a vessel ashore:

During the dire reign of the terrific Robespierre, and in the dead of night, braving the cold, the darkness and the damps of December, some English passengers, in a small vessel, were preparing to glide silently from the coast of France, when a voice of keen distress resounded from the shore, imploring, in the French language, pity and admission.

The pilot quickened his arrangements for sailing; the passengers sought deeper concealment; but no answer was returned.

‘O hear me!’ cried the same voice, ‘for the love of Heaven, hear me!’ (*W*, p. 11)<sup>237</sup>

At this very beginning of Burney’s novel, the authorial voice ensures that the ‘English’ identity of passengers is objectified rather than starting the narrative with

<sup>236</sup> See John Edwards, *Multilingualism* (1994), p. 41.

<sup>237</sup> Frances Burney, *The Wanderer*, 1814 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).



the conventional assumption that the characters are by default English or British. Here, as in the example from *Patronage* just above, the foreignness of the French-speaking character, who is actually the heroine Juliet Granville/Ellis/L.S., is initially marked in terms of language rather than other attributes. Like M. de Tourville, she is invisible, and only her voice is perceived in the beginning. Like its counterpart in *Patronage*, the authorial voice specifies that this voice of the invisible character speaks in ‘the French language’, before relating its message. However, the French dialogue between this character and the pilot is rendered in English, and the English translation of the implied French conversation continues until another character speaks ‘in English’: “‘Be lured by no tricks;” said an elderly man, in English; “put off immediately, pilot”” (*W*, p. 11). In this rather blunt manner, it is signalled that the language mode in the fictional world has reverted from French to English. Burney does not, however, always render French dialogues in English in the narrative proper, as Section 4.4 below will demonstrate.

Even though *Patronage* has much less French dialogue than in *The Wanderer*, *Patronage* tends to insert them without translation. The French language is therefore given effective presence in the text. The occasional extensive insertions of untranslated French words would require a certain level of education/cultivation in the reader. While the untranslated French words might appear exclusive, they may motivate the reader to learn or improve their French. The devices therefore appear to be consistent with the advancement of multilingualism in the text.

The shipwrecked Dutch merchants’ communication with Mr Percy on their leave is delivered in the English translation of ‘their speaking partner’ with their implied speech in Dutch omitted. Here the foreignness of a foreign language is foregrounded in another way, through the existence of the translator-character. In other words, a language barrier is marked, unlike the case of M. de Tourville’s French. As Dutch merchants are obsessed with their merchandise in the scene of the morning after the shipwreck, the Dutch language is characterised as a commercial language.<sup>238</sup> In the opening of the novel a rough sketch of linguistic hierarchy thus emerges. The French language appears as positioned in a high rank, possessing the status of a lingua franca, especially for the purpose of diplomacy.

---

<sup>238</sup> Connolly points out that *Letters for Literary Ladies* (1795) and *Professional Education* (1809) refer to Dutch commercialism (*LL*, p. 86, n. 38).

Although M. de Tourville speaks in English to English characters, he retains some French phrases, assuming that they are intelligible to Mr Percy. The Dutch language appears to be positioned lower in the hierarchy than the French language since the Dutch merchants' commercialism appears less prestigious than diplomacy and since the implied Dutch remarks are never transcribed in its original language in the text. Given M. de Tourville's familiarity with and the Dutch merchants' ignorance of the English language, the English language figures as acquiring an international status but yet to become such a lingua franca as the French language. In the historical context, the status of the French language was being questioned in the repercussions of the French Revolution since the language was considered to have been corrupt by the Revolution. The Dutch was losing its status as a commercial lingua franca due to the decline of Holland's hegemony in world commerce during the eighteenth century. Meanwhile, the English language was being diffused through Britain's expanding colonialism, which was competing with France's and Holland's. The representation of the English, the French, and the Dutch languages in the scene reproduces linguistic tension generated by European politics and colonialisms in the historical context.

In the scene, the linguistic tension extends even between English speaking characters, signifying social tension. The tension is relevant to the levels of 'dialect' and 'idiolect' in the linguistic theme. The dialogue about 'happy marriage' between Lady Jane Granville, Mrs Percy, and her daughter Caroline, is an excellent example:

'But,' said Mrs Percy, 'allow me to ask, what you mean by happily married?'

'What do I mean? Just what you mean . . . what every body means at the bottom of their hearts – in the first place, married to men who have some fortune.'

'What does your Ladyship mean by *some* fortune?'

'Why . . . . you have such a strange way of not understanding.—We who live in the world must speak as the world speaks....' (*P*, VI, p. 125)

'*Pretty well married* you know implies £2,000 a year, and *very well married*, nothing under £10,000.' [Lady Jane]

'Is that the language of the market? I did not understand the exact meaning of *very well married* . . . did you Caroline? I own I expect something more than £10,000. a year.' [Mrs Percy]

'More!—you unconscionable wretch! how much more?' said Lady Jane. (*P*, VI, p. 129)

The comedy in this dialogue lies in some sort of language barrier between the English speaking characters; Mrs Percy and Caroline do not share with Lady Jane



the dialect of ‘the world’. Lady Jane presupposes the universality and prestige of the dialect used by the fashionable world and expects the others to adopt this as standard English. Mrs Percy refuses to regard this social dialect and values underlying it as standard. She therefore continues to question what Lady Jane has meant by certain idioms. Moreover, Mrs Percy’s insight penetrates into the mercenary attitude of the fashionable society towards matrimony. Lady Jane explains that ‘very well married’ means ‘nothing under £10,000. a year’. Calling the phraseology of the fashionable dialect ‘the language of the market’, Mrs Percy identifies the supposedly genteel dialect as commercial. She draws a line between her idiolect and value system and Lady Jane’s conformist idiolect and value system. This detachment is important in the sense that Mrs Percy performs such a linguistic resistance against social pressure in front of Caroline as an example to be followed. The role of the mother in women’s education is crucial in *Patronage*.<sup>239</sup> This linguistic lesson is part of Mrs Percy’s education for her daughters. Further comedy is that Lady Jane seems to remain unaware of the linguistic boundary drawn by Mrs Percy. Exclaiming ‘More!—you unconscionable wretch! How much more?’, Lady Jane is still trapped within the logic of the fashionable dialect and the mercenary value system underlying it. She is unable to imagine that Mrs Percy is talking about ‘more’ in spiritual or moral terms rather than monetary terms. A sharp contrast in attitudes to the dialect and value system of fashionable society is made between the sensitive and sensible Mrs Percy’s idiolect and the conformist Lady Jane’s idiolect throughout the scene.

Mrs Percy’s sensitivity to dialects is analogous to her sons’. Erasmus refers to the dialect of ‘the market’: ‘I should never be, in the language of the market, one shilling the better for her’ (*P*, VI, p. 185). Alfred laments his compulsory use of the legal dialect: ‘I begin to feel it difficult to write, speak, or think, in any but professional language. Tell my father, that I shall soon come to talking law Latin and law French’ (*P*, VI, p. 193). Like the legal dialect tormenting Alfred, the medical dialect familiar to Erasmus is a professional dialect. Professional dialects would differ from the social dialect of ‘the market’ in the sense that they would have extensive interactions with foreign languages as in the example of Alfred’s ‘law Latin’ and ‘law French’. In his preface to *An Universal Dictionary of the*

---

<sup>239</sup> Tracy, p. 32.

*Marine*, William Falconer explains why he attached ‘a Translation of the French sea-terms and phrases’: ‘Many reasons may be alledged [*sic*] for introducing the French sea-terms and phrases, particularly that obvious one, of understanding their pilots, when we may have occasion for their assistance’. Besides this appendix of the French-English glossary, quite a few English entries are accompanied by French equivalences in the dictionary. Nelson, who is referred to as ‘our naval hero’ (*P*, VI, p. 13) by the authorial voice in *Patronage*, also considered the competence in French as ‘absolutely necessary’ to the naval career.<sup>240</sup> Likewise, *Patronage* suggests that one of the essential conditions for successful professional life should be to master the relevant dialect(s) and/or foreign language(s). Seen from another angle, this suggestion implies that men could have opportunities to enhance linguistic competence during their professional training and career. Alfred’s complaint demonstrates that his linguistic competence is getting trained during his professional education; this training is eventually rewarded by professional success in the conclusion of the novel.

If we shift our scope to coded languages, the novel’s preoccupation with them is reminiscent of seventeenth-century linguistics, in particular, the work of John Wilkins (1614-1672), the Bishop of Chester and co-first secretary of the Royal Society.<sup>241</sup> The influence of eighteenth-century linguistics on Edgeworth’s ‘Irish tales’ has been discussed by critics such as Hollingworth. The intertextuality between seventeenth-century linguistics and Edgeworth’s novels has, however, hardly been investigated in detail.<sup>242</sup> Set against the historical context of the seventeenth century, the persistent interest in the linguistics of the century in *Patronage* is suggestive. Noting the demand for and development of cryptography in the century, Vivian Salmon attributes them to the need for ‘methods of communication in secret’ strongly felt during the political upheavals of the Civil

---

<sup>240</sup> Horatio Nelson, Letter of 22 July 1878, quoted in Brian Southam, *Jane Austen and the Navy* (2000), p. 23.

<sup>241</sup> For Wilkins’s life and work, see James Knowlson, *Universal Language Schemes in England and France 1600-1800* (1975); Vivian Salmon, *The Study of Language in Seventeenth-Century England* (1979) among her numerous works on the topic; Barbara Shapiro, *John Wilkins 1614-1672* (1969); M. M. Slaughter, *Universal Languages and Scientific Taxonomy in the Seventeenth Century* (1982). Wilkins is referred to in a positive sense in the Edgeworths’ non-fictional writing such as *Practical Education* and *Irish Bulls*.

<sup>242</sup> Pearson’s brief account of universal language in *Patronage* is an exception. See Jacqueline Pearson, “‘Arts of Appropriation’”, *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 28 (1998), pp. 223-25.



War.<sup>243</sup> Constructed during such an immense political crisis, Wilkins's language scheme is marked with a strong concern about national affairs. *Mercury* (1641) emphasises the benefit of 'secret' or 'swift' intelligence conveyances for 'Statesmen and Soldiers', thus the political and defence functions of the nation as well as for individuals (pp. 4-5).

While *Mercury* focuses on closed or private codes, Wilkins's 'universal language' scheme published in *An Essay towards a Real Character; and a Philosophical Language* (1668) explores an open or public code. His 'universal language' is an artificial language designed to be understandable to speakers of any tongue. It is also a 'philosophical language' constructed from a universalist perspective in the sense that it was 'invented on the basis of what [Wilkins] believed to be the correct model of nature'.<sup>244</sup> Wilkins's universal language scheme was commissioned by the Royal Society and was designed to replace Latin with a kind of super code that would promote commerce, arts, and science worldwide. The period witnessed rapid development in science, technology, and international trade, along with some doubt about the practicality of the existing international language, Latin.

Wilkins's linguistic philosophy, which encompasses cryptography and the 'universal language', thus in principle, aims to enhance public interests. But the public interests meant by Wilkins are arguably the interests of the Restoration monarchy and the Royal Society. Robert E. Stillman's recent study underscores Wilkins's strong political inclination, ambitiously extensive political connections, and allegiance to the interest of the Restoration monarchy.<sup>245</sup> According to Stillman, Wilkins and the Royal Society were agents for Charles II's conservative politics in forging the 'Fiscal-Military State' through their development of the 'universal language'. Edgeworth's association of Wilkins's 'universal language' with Lord Oldborough's idiolect may hint at such a controversial political colouring of Wilkins's linguistic scheme, which would facilitate political networking.

<sup>243</sup> Salmon, *The Works of Francis Lodwick* (1966), p. 64.

<sup>244</sup> Brigitte Asbach-Schnitker, 'Introduction', in *Mercury* by John Wilkins (1984), p. xxii.

<sup>245</sup> Wilkins's political connection was ambivalent as well as far-reaching. Claiming to be a royalist, he had some affiliation with Cromwell's republicanism through his marriage to Cromwell's sister. Stillman's study complements existing works that concentrate on the linguistic and philosophical aspects of Wilkins's universal language project by addressing its political nature, although his argument sometimes appears monotonous. See Robert E. Stillman, *The New Philosophy and Universal Languages in Seventeenth-Century England*

Richard Lovell Edgeworth's papers of the 1790s on what he named 'tellograph' manifest intertextuality with Wilkins's works and propose that the 'tellograph' would enhance the security of Ireland.<sup>246</sup> In the threatening state of Ireland when the invasion of France and the insurrection of peasants were imminent, it seems only reasonable for him to turn to a Wilkinsian language scheme, since Wilkins's *Mercury* and *Essay towards a Real Character* were apparently intended to tackle with a similarly unstable political climate.<sup>247</sup> Moreover, Richard Lovell's 'tellograph' owes a great deal to Wilkins's 'real character'<sup>248</sup> in the sense that the 'tellograph' sends 'words instead of letters'.<sup>249</sup>

Edgeworth's narrative of her father's 'tellograph' scheme and interest in international communication<sup>250</sup> in *Memoirs of RLE* proudly recounts the development of the scheme.<sup>251</sup> It is plausible that she appreciated its potential use to national defence after her first-hand experience of the 1798 Rebellion.<sup>252</sup> The system would be of good use in the communication of simple or technical messages which defence intelligence and commercial correspondence would require. Nonetheless, it is conceivable that the function of the system may be limited when applied to cultural communications because its universalist orientation would reduce subtle cultural differences. In fact, this reductive universalism is identified as a major limitation of the universal language movements in the seventeenth century.<sup>253</sup> Obviously, such a shortcoming is incompatible with Edgeworth's professional career since her writing career consisted of cultural communication rather than such technical communication as defence or commercial correspondence. As the affinity with the culturally differential approach of Romantic nationalism in *Patronage* demonstrates, it is doubtful that the novel invests in the potential of the Wilkinsian scheme so much as Richard Lovell's

(1995), pp. 179-262.

<sup>246</sup> Richard Lovell Edgeworth, 'An Essay on the Art of Conveying Secret and Swift Intelligence', in *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, VI (1797); *A Letter to the Right Hon. The Earl of Charlemont, on the Tellograph, And on the Defence of Ireland* (1797).

<sup>247</sup> For the affinity between Richard Lovell and Wilkins, see Butler, 'Introductory Note', *P*, VI, p. xix.

<sup>248</sup> Wilkins's 'real character' was invented as a rational writing system for his 'universal language'. See Roy Harris and Talbot J. Taylor, *Landmarks in Linguistic Thought I*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (1997), pp. 110-25.

<sup>249</sup> Richard Lovell Edgeworth, *A Letter to the Earl of Charlemont*, p. 6.

<sup>250</sup> Butler, *P*, VI, p. XIX.

<sup>251</sup> For example, see *Memoirs of RLE*, II, p. 168.

<sup>252</sup> See Butler, *ME*, pp. 137-41.

<sup>253</sup> Asbach-Schnitker, p. xxxii.



writings.

The first half of *Patronage*'s plot revolves around the decoding of the Tourville papers. The Napoleonic Wars, to which the novel makes indirect but constant reference, were in a sense wars of encoding/decoding, typically fought between Napoleon and Wellington, as Mark Urban has recently investigated. The coded Tourville papers represent an international treachery against the prime minister, Lord Oldborough. The Falconers, who have intercepted the papers, attempt to decode the papers together with him, but it is only Mr Percy who can complete the 'deciphering'.<sup>254</sup> Mr Percy's decoding service saves the government from crisis. The novel refers to Wilkins's cryptography as the source for Mr Percy's 'art of deciphering' (*P*, VI, pp. 246, 256). Mr Percy was asked for the decoding of the papers because Alfred mentioned to Lord Oldborough Mr Percy's interest in 'Wilkins and Leibnitz's scheme of a universal language' and 'an old book on my father's on the *arte* of deciphering' (*P*, VI, p. 246). This book has been borrowed by the Falconers and enabled them to offer deciphering to Lord Oldborough. As Carville and Butler suggest (*P*, VI, p. 286, n. 219), this book is probably *Mercury* rather than *Essay towards a Real Character*, since *Mercury* is a study of cryptography whereas *Real Character* focuses on the 'universal language'. In the scene, Lord Oldborough repeats the words 'Universal Language' and appears to pay more attention to the universal language rather than *Mercury* (*P*, VI, p. 246). The irony of this episode is sharp; although Lord Oldborough is represented as a speaker of a 'universal language' (*P*, VI, p. 25), he is unable to decode the papers on his own.

As Carville and Butler point out, the association between Lord Oldborough's idiolect and Wilkins's universal language is obvious, in particular, in the scene where Commissioner Falconer offers to decode the Tourville papers for him (*P*, VI, p. 274, n. 21). The Falconers are hoping to gain the prime minister's patronage. Lord Oldborough accepts their offer 'for the security of political power': 'Waving all delicacy, Lord Oldborough now, as in most other cases, made it his chief object to be understood and obeyed, therefore he applied directly to the universal motive, and spoke the universal language of interest' (*P*, VI, pp. 24-25).

---

<sup>254</sup> My reference to 'decoding' covers what Edgeworth means by 'deciphering', since '[t]here is no sharp theoretical dividing line between codes and ciphers', and 'from about 1400 to 1850, a system that was half a code and half a cipher dominated cryptography',

Like Wilkins's universal language, the prime minister's idiolect is situated in a cultural vacuum where his idiolect penetrates mutual interests efficiently. The efficiency of Lord Oldborough's idiolect is observable in his following words to Commissioner Falconer: 'In one word then—Let Cornet Falconer be married elsewhere, within a fortnight, and I prophesy, that within a year he shall be a field officer—within two years a Lieutenant-Colonel' (*P*, VI, p. 90). While Wilkins's universal language is arguably oriented towards the interests of the Restoration monarchy and the Royal Society in the name of universal benefit, Lord Oldborough's idiolect is represented as a vital medium to facilitate his political negotiations to pursue his own self-interest under the apparent name of public interests. His patronage undermines the British nation's welfare, as the examples of John and Cunningham Falconer, whom his patronage has promoted, reiterate. Lord Oldborough's idiolect is therefore characterised as the medium of political corruptions endangering the nation. His lack of literary cultivation is consistent with this linguistic defect.

We have briefly seen the linguistic theme of *Patronage* at four levels. Exemplary or favourable characters in the novel demonstrate remarkable linguistic sensitivity and/or competence at more than one of these levels. This ability may be called 'multilingualism'.<sup>255</sup> For example, it is observable in Mrs Percy, who reacts sensitively to the fashionable dialect, as we have seen above. Notably, the male characters who demonstrate proficient multilingualism are or have been professionals. I have cited Alfred's linguistic training during his legal apprenticeship. His multilingual competence establishes him in the professional meritocracy of law: 'He [Alfred] went on, and spoke so ably, and with such comprehensive knowledge of the case, and of the law, that he obtained a decision in favor of his client and established his own reputation as a man of business and of talents, who was *always prepared [sic]*' (*P*, VI, p. 228). Mr Percy understands the legal dialect well, too: 'This explanation [about Sir Robert's litigation against him

---

according to David Kahn, *The Codebreakers*, rev. ed. (1996), p. xvi.

<sup>255</sup> Edwards and Romaine employ a broad definition of multilingualism as an ability to understand more than one language at some level (according to this definition, the terms 'bilingualism' and 'multilingualism' can be used interchangeably) and substantiate it by more specific modifiers to be more precise. This careful approach is also supported by Bernard Spolsky and applied to this thesis. See Edwards, pp. 33, 55-88; Romaine, *Language in Society*, p. 33; Romaine, *Bilingualism*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (1995), pp. 11-12; and Spolsky, *Sociolinguistic* (1998), p. 45.



in ‘technical language’ by Alfred], unintelligible as it will be to many of our readers, and, as such, incapable of communicating either pain or pleasure, was, alas, too clear to poor Mr Percy’ (*P*, VII, pp. 214). Proficient multilingualism in a more conventional sense can be found in Mr Henry and Count Altenberg. Mr Henry, who is forced to give up his military career and takes the commercial line thereafter, is characterised as fluent in French, Italian, Spanish, and Dutch (*P*, VI, p. 86). Count Altenberg, born of a German father and an English mother, proves the high standard of multilingualism by his proficiency in German, English, and French. One of the novel’s satirical moments is that when Count Altenberg’s objection to French Clay’s interpretation of patriotism is made in French, the latter is incapable of responding in French and reveals how superficial his self-stylised affinity to French culture really is (*P*, VII, pp. 40-41). Godfrey even understands the distinction between Dutch dialects, which he apparently picked up while he was a prisoner of war in Holland: ‘high Dutch’ and ‘low Dutch’ (*P*, VII, p. 227). Situated in the historical context, multilingualism, however, has a negative connotation, due in particular to potential disloyalty concurrent with the ability to cross language and country borders freely, as well.<sup>256</sup> The ubiquitous and slippery multilingual diplomat M. de Tourville can be regarded as a typical example. His double-dealings, for instance, his intrigue against Count Altenberg, point to strong disloyalty. *Patronage* recommends multilingualism provided that it is complemented by benevolence, as the episode of Alfred’s success in defending Lady Harriot’s husband: ‘In this cause, where strong feelings of indignation were justly roused, and where there was room for oratory, Alfred spoke with such force and pathos, that every honest heart was touched’ (*P*, VI, p. 229). His friend says to him, ‘Bear it always in mind, that a mere man of words at the bar . . . or indeed any where else . . . is a man of straw [*sic*]’ (*P*, VI, p. 230). Although Alfred’s fluency in professional dialect has already brought some success, this episode reminds the reader that mere multilingual competence without benevolence is insufficient for a man in and outside his professional sphere.

Curiously, the end of the novel is concluded with Mr Henry’s reunion with his father, Lord Oldborough, and recovery of the missing part of his identity, following the event that the Percys move back to Percy Hall. Given the rather

---

<sup>256</sup> Edwards, p. 5.

marginal treatment of Mr Henry hitherto (for he is absent for most of the story), Edgeworth's inclusion of him in the coda appears artificial although his father Lord Oldborough is a principal character. This artificial treatment seems to be meant not only as the correction of the wronged relationship of Lord Oldborough and his natural son, but also as part of the grand linguistic theme of the text. Lord Oldborough's linguistic defects, in other words, his 'universal language of interest' as the medium of political corruption and his neglect of literature, need to be cured by his son's rich multilingualism. The separation and union of the father and the son is indeed coded from the name of Henry Oldenburg (1615[?]-1677), a founding member and co-first secretary of the Royal Society. Born and educated in Germany, Oldenburg taught and studied in London and Oxford and became involved in the foundation and management of the Society. A natural philosopher and man of letters, he corresponded with the Czech humanist John Amos Comenius (1592-1670) on the latter's 'universal language' scheme.<sup>257</sup> Oldenburg's duty as a co-first secretary of the Society, for instance, the supervision of the society's records and 'the correspondence that ultimately resulted in his publishing the *Philosophical transactions*', required a high level of multilingualism.<sup>258</sup> He was also involved in the diplomatic negotiation during the naval war between England and Holland and the war between Bremen and Sweden. Given the cosmopolitan careers, he may be regarded as a real-life example of the combination of proficient multilingualism with professionalism. Mc Cormack has highlighted the allegorical link between Lord Oldborough and Oldenburg.<sup>259</sup> It may be added that Mr Henry is an additional part of the allegory; he embodies Oldenburg's international careers and outstanding multilingualism, while Lord Oldborough personifies Oldenburg's political/diplomatic careers and association with seventeenth-century universal languages.

The paradigm of seventeenth-century linguistics provides further historical and intellectual depth to the theme of multilingualism in *Patronage*. Accomplished decoding skills were equated with multilingualism in seventeenth-century cryptography. In a book on cryptography entitled *Cryptomenysis Patefacta* (1685),

---

<sup>257</sup> See Benjamin Demott 'Comenius and the Real Character in England', in *John Wilkins and 17<sup>th</sup>-Century British Linguistics*, ed. by Joseph L. Subbiondo (1992), p. 173. Comenius's work includes the renowned *Via Lucis* (manuscript circulation in England by 1641).

<sup>258</sup> Dorothy Stimson, 'Dr. Wilkins and the Royal Society', in Subbiondo, p. 81.



Wilkins's contemporary John Falconer states:

[I]f you once understand the Rules for *Decyphering*, in *one* Language, you may really, and without any Reservation, in a few hours, understand as much of *any* Language, as is needful to reduce it out of *Cypher*.<sup>260</sup>

Falconer's observation here presents an important linguistic framework which links the decoding of cryptography with proficient multilingualism. If he can be identified as the model for the Falconers, as Butler and Carville suggest, *Cryptomenysis Patefacta* was probably known to Edgeworth (*P*, VI, p. 284). Situated in this context, the decoding plot would imply that Mr Percy is gifted with real multilingualism overwhelming the Falconers and Lord Oldborough.

From a twentieth-century perspective, multilingualism is often identified with multiculturalism, or in other words, the stance of recognising cultural differences, as 'language contact' is equated with 'cultural contact'.<sup>261</sup> *Professional Education* shares this understanding: 'Modern languages are absolutely necessary to a statesman, not only as the keys of books, but of minds' (*Prof Edu*, p. 388). The cited statement may be read as a call for multiculturalism that appreciates foreign value systems and viewpoints through multilingualism. Multilingual/multicultural stances are addressed here for the benefit of direct communications with people from different cultural backgrounds ('the keys of minds') as well as reading experience of different culture ('the keys of book'). As mentioned above, in *Patronage* some French expressions are used untranslated because they are 'untranslatable'; universalism is denied, and cultural differences underlying specific languages are appreciated. Since multilingualism and multiculturalism are regarded as two sides of the same coin, multilingual speakers are thought to be able to overcome language barriers and appreciate different (language) cultures and foreign values. The multilingual speakers can conduct subtler international communication without resorting a universalist medium like Wilkins's universal language or Lord Oldborough's super efficient political idiolect.

<sup>259</sup> 'Tedium', p. 87.

<sup>260</sup> Quoted in Salmon, *Lodwick*, p. 65. Kahn names the works by Falconer and Wilkins as the only two worthy English works on cryptography in the period (p. 155). Carville and Butler identify this historical John Falconer as the model for the Falconers in *Patronage*. Falconer's biography is hardly discovered, but, according to Kahn, he 'was a distant relative of the Scottish philosopher David Hume, was reportedly entrusted with the private cipher of the future King James II, and died in France while following James into temporary exile there' (p. 155).

<sup>261</sup> For example, see Edwards, pp. 22, 176.

*Patronage* conceives such multilingual people as ideal patriots and tackles with the ideological transition from universalist cosmopolitanism to differential nationalism. The Percys are characterised by these qualities and represented as legitimate patriots who could connect with foreign people as well as their fellow countrymen/women from diverse cultural and social backgrounds. Populated with such ideal patriots as the Percys, the British nation is represented as a culturally accommodating body which could allow individuals its membership without cultural discrimination.

I, moreover, argue that *Patronage* suggests that professionalism could enable professionals to be multilingual and develop cultural flexibility. Professional careers would give professionals opportunities to enhance their linguistic competence and equip them with at least one new dialect—a professional dialect accompanied by a relevant value system rather than just a collection of technical terms—and quite often foreign languages, and therefore multilingualism/multiculturalism. Alfred's legal training is a principal illustration. In this sense, professionalism is doubly crucial to Edgeworth's ideal of patriotism. Professionals can protect the interest of the English, and moreover the British, nation by their professional duties and promote an outlook negotiating with universalist cosmopolitanism and differential nationalism. The exemplary characters in *Patronage* such as the Percys, Count Altenberg, and Mr Henry, are multilingual to a great extent, and have strong affinities with professionalism.

*Patronage*, furthermore, illustrates that professionalism would bring social mobility. The social climate under which the text was written witnessed successful professionals with patriotic contributions such as Nelson, whom the authorial voice refers to as 'our naval hero', awarded with peerages for their achievements. The publication date of Robert Southey's *Life of Nelson* (1813) was close to that of *Patronage*. Suggestively, a copy of 'the Life of Lord Nelson' is placed on a table in Percy Hall. According to Brian Southam, Southey's biography appreciates the professional dimension of Nelson's life 'seriously' and succeeds in 'reclaiming Nelson as a patriot and national hero'.<sup>262</sup> The awareness is registered in the authorial voice accounting for Mr Percy's concern about his daughters after he is deprived of Percy Hall:

---

<sup>262</sup> Southam, p. 227.



A man who has received a liberal education may maintain himself with honor by the exertion of his abilities in respectable professions, and in a variety of employments, which are allowed to be gentlemanlike. In doing this he continues to be on a footing with his equals in birth; his personal merit and mental qualifications ensure him admission into the first societies; but a woman, by the caprice, the cruelty of custom, is degraded by the very industry which should obtain respect, and if unmarried, she loses the prospect of being suitably established in life. (*P*, VI, p. 107)

The professional meritocracy is, however, not open to every character, since it required a certain level of financial support during the apprenticeship and early career in the period, as Edgeworth illustrates in Buckhurst Falconer's episode. Buckhurst wishes to go into the Army but is forced to take up orders since his father 'cannot afford to purchase [him] a commission, and to maintain [him] in the army' (*P*, VI, p. 32). Edgeworth's redefinition of profession and apparent endorsement of a meritocratic society do not necessarily subvert the existing class system.

The quotation registering Mr Percy's concern above is important in the additional sense that it raises gender issues. The quotation points out that female characters are excluded from the opportunities of social mobility attainable through professional meritocracy. It, moreover, uncovers that they would have great difficulty in acquiring multilingualism because professional training/education is denied to them. *Patronage* prescribes literary education as an alternative means for women to fill the gap. This prescription is reminiscent of the educational programme for women in *Letters for Literary Ladies*. *Patronage* encourages women to be sensitive to dialects rather than competent in foreign languages except for French, which was usually regarded as acceptable as an accomplishment of genteel ladies. Such alternative kind of multilingualism is observable in Mrs Percy, as I have discussed.

The alternative multilingualism found in exemplary women characters complements their marital partners' more extensive multilingualism, as in the case of Caroline and Count Altenberg. Caroline's sound linguistic sensitivity inherited from her mother is enriched by literary cultivation. One of the moments in the novel to display how Caroline and Count Altenberg are made for each other is when they share sentiments evoked by the lines of 'a native land' from Scott's *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805). According to Michael Gamer, Scott's metrical romances, including *the Last Minstrel*, is partly driven by his 'patriotic desire to promote

*national* (British) unity' against Napoleon.<sup>263</sup> Caroline's literary favourites also include Scott's countryman Thomas Campbell's *Ye Mariners of England!* (1801), and this literary taste indicates her cosmopolitan appreciation of the representations of ideal patriotisms by British writers whose cultural roots are not necessarily English.

It seems debatable whether Edgeworth's text prescribes the circumscription of women's patriotic roles since she was a successful woman writer with formidable multilingualism. She learnt some professional dialects (legal, accounting, etc.) when assisting with her father's property management. She had a deep knowledge of the French language and was familiar with Hiberno-English.<sup>264</sup> Her work demonstrates a rich, formidable multilingualism in terms of professional dialects, Hiberno-English, and the French language, at the levels of narrative voices as well as characters' dialogues. The inscription of 'Maria Edgeworth' by the extrafictional voice on the title page is charged with all this information. On the one hand, since there are no textual marks to separate this extrafictional voice and the authorial voice in the text, the authorial voice is charged with the linguistic properties as well as gender of Edgeworth. The authorial voice of *Patronage* shares rhetorical properties with the authorial voice of *Belinda*, such as less obtrusive self-reference by use of the term 'we' than 'I' aside the rhetoric of 'overt authoriality'. Through such rhetorical properties, the authorial voice of *Patronage* demonstrates rational femininity like its counterpart in *Belinda*. For instance, while establishing its status as narrative authority by controlling the course of the narrative and addressing the historical reader directly, the authorial voice of *Patronage* typifies a 'proper' lady's reaction to the confrontation between Colonel Hauton and his father: 'We spare the reader a shocking scene of filial and parental reproaches' (*P*, VII, p. 80). A similar indication of a profile as a 'proper' lady in the authorial voice is observed in the following instance: 'We pass over . . . . [*sic*] shall we be forgiven – the love-scenes between Mr Henry and Constance' (*P*, VII, p. 110). On the other hand, the authorial voice performs a high level of multilingualism. For instance, this voice, which usually sounds judicious, can cover the 'fashionable' dialect:

---

<sup>263</sup> Gamer, *Romanticism and the Gothic* (2000), p. 180.

<sup>264</sup> Edgeworth was assigned a translation of Madame de Genlis's *Adèle et Théodore* as her first serious publishing project by Richard Lovell Edgeworth. See Butler, *ME*, pp. 91-92.



To give an account of Mrs Falconer's concert in fashionable style, we should inform the public, that Dr Mudge for ever established his fame in '*Buds of Roses*;' and Miss La Grande was astonishing, absolutely astonishing in '*Frenar vorrei le lagrime*'—quite in Catalani's best manner [...]. (*P*, VI, p. 241)

The authorial voice moreover reports in indirect speech Alfred's professional dialect extensively, in the court scene of the lawsuit against Mr Percy:

He stated that, —

'His father, Lewis Percy, plaintiff in this cause, and Robert Percy, Bart. defendant, both descended from Sir John Percy, who was their grandfather [...]. The present action was in consequence brought by Mr Percy for the recovery of his liberty, and his property'. (*P*, VII, pp. 232-33)

Such multilingual performances by the authorial voice, which is gendered as feminine, create tension with the thematic prescription of 'proper femininity'. This incoherence between the illustration of ideal patriotism and the narrative authority implies that Edgeworth's texts may not necessarily authorise the ideal and requires further investigation. Chapter 6 will discuss this potential incoherence in the dissemination of ideal patriotism by Edgeworth's work.

### 4.3 Patriotism, Language, and Professionalism in *Mansfield Park*

*Mansfield Park* shares with *Patronage* an interest in the relationship between patriotism, professionalism, and language, but presents a different emphasis. The text features the clergy, country gentlemen, and moreover, the officers of the navy and the marine. In Alistair M. Duckworth's perspective, 'the necessary interdependence of the clerical and landed orders' is at the heart of the thematic structure of the text.<sup>265</sup> I argue that despite the novel's interest in a professional meritocracy, professionalism is not so closely related to multilingualism and multiculturalism as in *Patronage*. Instead, multilingualism is explored through the text's question of 'proper' femininity.

*Mansfield Park* has been read as a 'Condition-of-England novel' by some critics.<sup>266</sup> Duckworth interprets the 'estate' in the text, particularly *Mansfield Park*, as 'symbolic of a whole social and moral inheritance' (p. 31). Possessed by Sir

<sup>265</sup> Alistair M. Duckworth, *The Improvement of the Estate*, 1971 (1994), p. 50.

<sup>266</sup> For example, Roger Sales, *Jane Austen and Representations of Regency England* (1994), p. 87.

Thomas Bertram, a Member of Parliament and owner of a plantation in the West Indies, Mansfield Park is closely connected with the British Empire's politics and economy. The novel opens with Sir Thomas's offer to accommodate Fanny Price in Mansfield Park. Although he may initially appear an exemplary landed gentleman, Sir Thomas turns out to be a failure as the head of the family.<sup>267</sup> Except for Edmund, the Bertram children prove serious defects in Sir Thomas's paternal function. Tom is hardly a responsible heir to the family seat. Absorbed in horse races, he contributes a substantial loss to the family property with his debt, and this irresponsibility results in Edmund being deprived of Mansfield Parsonage. Tom suffers from a serious disease towards the end of the novel, symbolising the self-destructive degeneracy of his family and class. Maria commits adultery and triggers Julia's elopement. If Sir Thomas 'nearly brings about the ruin of Mansfield Park' by such malfunctioning as a patriarch, it is Edmund and Fanny who are represented as the redeemers of the failed family and the local community around Mansfield Park.<sup>268</sup> Although they are not the legal inheritors of Mansfield Park, Edmund and Fanny are represented as its spiritual inheritors, and in other words, the transmitters of English morality by way of a dutiful clergyman and his virtuous wife, and therefore legitimate guardians of the English, and moreover, the British nation.

In the beginning of the novel, Edmund is said to be preparing to take orders. Although he is the only promising character among the Bertrams, he is not entirely exemplary; his morality goes astray when he is attracted by Mary Crawford. His decision to act with her and others in the theatre scheme at Mansfield Park exposes his self-deception, since he knew about the improper language and characterisation of the play. Even when he is disappointed at her casual attitude towards the adultery of Mrs. Rushworth and Henry Crawford, his condemnation is not so severe as Fanny's. Unlike Fanny, he attributes Mary's deficiency to the influence of the 'world' rather than her inner self.<sup>269</sup> The ultimate redemption of him therefore needs to be achieved by his marriage to Fanny, his moral rock. The effective guardian of Mansfield Park and national inheritance it symbolises, is thus Fanny as Tony Tanner argues (p. 157).

---

<sup>267</sup> Duckworth, p. 71.

<sup>268</sup> Tony Tanner, *Jane Austen* (London: Macmillan, 1986), p.152.

<sup>269</sup> *The Oxford Illustrated Jane Austen*, ed. by R. W. Chapman, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (1988), III: *Mansfield*



Given this context, Fanny's marriage to Edmund would mean that she is selected as the most eligible for the important role. Mary captures his fancy at first, but she is eventually punished for her radical and subversive tendencies. In order to explore Fanny's eligibility, I am going to examine Austen's linguistic characterisation of Fanny and Mary in what follows. The novel reaches a climax when Edmund becomes disillusioned about Mary after the elopement of Henry and Mrs. Rushworth. Edmund's shock concentrates on Mary's idiolect to refer to the adultery as a 'folly', as the following letter from him to Fanny indicates:

So she began—but how she went on, Fanny, is not fit—is hardly fit to be repeated to you. I cannot recall all her words. I would not dwell upon them if I could. Their substance was great anger at the *folly* of each. She reprobated her brother's folly in being drawn on by a woman whom he had never cared for, to do what must lose him the woman he adored [...]. To hear the woman whom—no harsher name than folly given!—So voluntarily, so freely, so coolly to canvass it!—No reluctance, no horror, no feminine—shall I say? No modest loathings!—This is what the world does. (*MP*, pp. 454-55)

Mary's idiolect, which gives 'no harsher name than folly' to the sinful conduct, confirms her loose morality, fatally deficient to Edmund's viewpoint.<sup>270</sup> He condemns it so much that he finds it 'hardly fit' to be repeated to Fanny. What is important here is not only that he recognises an unbridgeable chasm between his idiolect and Mary's idiolect, but also that he sees her immoral idiolect as contagious and try to protect Fanny from its contamination. Edmund attributes Mary's idiolect to the negative influence of fashionable society:

She was speaking only, as she had been used to hear others speak, as she imagined every body else would speak. Her's are not faults of temper. [...] Her's are faults of principle, Fanny, of blunted delicacy and a corrupted, vitiated mind. (*MP*, p. 456)

Like Lady Jane's idiolect in *Patronage*, Mary's idiolect is characterised as conforming to the dialect of 'the world', which is fashionable society, and is criticised by Edmund for its uncritical conformity. Among his strictures against Mary here, the one against the lack of 'proper femininity' revealed in her idiolect requires serious attention. It is here that Edmund establishes a kind of linguistic alliance between himself and Fanny against Mary. It is also here that the major

---

*Park*, p. 456. Hereafter referred to as *MP* in the parenthesis.

<sup>270</sup> Maaja A. Stewart identifies Mary's choice of the term 'folly' among her 'loose words about sexuality' in her *Domestic Realities and Imperial Fictions* (1993), p. 134. Stewart also links them with Mary's 'loose words about male authority', which mock the male

obstacles set for Fanny's prospective marriage to him are removed. He declares, '[T]he charm is broken. My eyes are opened' (*MP*, p. 456). Edmund compares his previous attachment to Mary to being under a spell, that is, a linguistic binding. Implicitly, her idiolect is characterised as dangerously enchanting. Fanny's idiolect is now defined as purer, much less affected by the dialect of 'the world', than Mary's. This linguistic characterisation of Fanny qualifies her femininity as satisfactory for her marital partnership with Edmund.

Beside the lack of strict morality, Mary's idiolect shows her unrivalled ease with language. She brings in new dialects, including the dialect of 'the world', alters a word definition, parodies Pope, and proposes to edit Kotzebue's play *Lovers' Vows*. She is also in favour of French expressions, dares to use 'a vulgar phrase', and has a 'lively and affectionate' style of writing (*MP*, pp. 376, 394). One could find, in her, proficient multilingualism as in the Percys of *Patronage*. I, however, argue that while *Patronage* foregrounds the beneficial aspect of multilingualism, *Mansfield Park* seems to emphasise its subversive side, mainly because *Mansfield Park* characterises Mary's idiolect as destabilising or too radical, as we are going to observe.

When Mary meets the Bertrams for the first time, she penetrates their family myth by introducing a dialect which has hardly been used there. She asks about Fanny:

Pray, is she out, or is she not?—I am puzzled.—She dined at the parsonage, with the rest of you, which seemed like being *out*; and yet she says so little, that I can hardly suppose she *is*. (*MP*, p. 48)

Mary's application of the fashionable dialect here shrewdly addresses Fanny's social status. It is embarrassing enough to Edmund, who avoids a direct answer:

I believe I know what you mean—but I will not undertake to answer the question. My cousin is grown up. She has the age and sense of a woman, but the outs and not outs are beyond me. (*MP*, p. 49)

This evasion occurs because it has been ruled in *Mansfield Park* that Fanny cannot be a 'Miss Bertram' rather than because he is unfamiliar with the dialect. Mary's idiolect effectively touches this hypocrisy of the apparent domestic order at *Mansfield Park* and challenges Sir Thomas's authority. Edmund replies to Mary's question in his own judicious terms. This response performs a linguistic resistance



against the value system of fashionable society like Mrs Percy's speech acts in *Patronage*.

In another dialogue with Edmund, Mary's attempt to redefine the meaning of a word is notable:

'Do you think the church itself never chosen then?'  
'Never is a black word. But yes, in the *never* of conversation which means *not very often*, I do think it. For what is to be done in the church?' (*MP*, p. 92)

Mary decides to redefine the 'never' of the conversation and modifies if not distorts Edmund's original question to control their dialogue. This instance marks her authoritative approach to linguistic matters. There is a similar example in her words to Fanny:

[Y]ou must give my compliments to him [Edmund]. Yes—I think it must be compliments. Is not there a something wanted, Miss Price, in our language—something between compliments and—and love—to suit the sort of friendly acquaintance we have had together?—So many months acquaintance!—But compliments may be sufficient here [...]. (*MP*, pp. 287-88)

Once again, Mary finds conventional vocabulary not subtle enough, but, this time her linguistic comment touches on sexual transgression. As if to imply that she hardly shares the same English language with Mary, Fanny refuses to offer an affirmative response to her. It is highly understandable that a concept obscuring the boundary between 'compliment' and 'love' within the context of heterosexual relationship is slippery and even flirtatious, and would be unacceptable to Fanny. Although Mary may not achieve subversion here by redefining or coining words, she leaves an adequate indicator of potential sexual transgression.

Mary also tampers with male writers' discourse. For instance, she parodies Hawkins Browne's parody of Pope (*MP*, p. 161). Such a double parody could be more subversive than a direct parody, since it is doubly far from inheriting and transmitting the canon of English literature. Mary makes a conspicuous contrast with Fanny, who can recite Cowper's lines faithfully to the original text in a sentimental manner.<sup>271</sup>

Among these features of Mary's idiolect, her applications of French expressions are especially important to our concern with femininity and

---

<sup>271</sup> Similarly, *Emma* features the eponymous heroine's appropriation of Shakespeare as part of her gender transgression in terms of matchmaking, which is to be rectified during the course of the novel. See *The Oxford Illustrated Jane Austen*, IV: *Emma* (1934), p. 75.

multilingualism. A typical example is found in her note to Fanny after the elopement:

Depend upon it there is some mistake, and that a day or two will clear it up—at any rate, that Henry is blameless, and in spite of a moment's *etourderie* thinks of nobody but you. (*MP*, p. 437)

Mary's use of French vocabulary is connected with a multicultural perspective in a negative sense. She is blamed for avoiding naming and judging the misconduct of Henry and Mrs. Rushworth in terms of the English language, thus English values, which would condemn the incident. Her employment of the French term is viewed as an escape to French values, a cunning sliding to a foreign cultural sphere where the meaning of the adultery could be alienated from the original context of English culture.

Mary's subversive attitude to the sanctioning of adultery as well as her radical and authoritative approach to language in general disqualify her as the wife of a clergy man whose role would be to help to maintain and improve the virtue of the English, and moreover the British, nation. On the other hand, Fanny is rewarded for her conservative reception and transmission of the English language and English cultural heritage. If her assistance is fundamental to the fallible Edmund's professional, and indeed patriotic, role, her conservative idiolect and strict morality are essential to the assistance.

The temptation of linguistic subversion is not unknown to Fanny, however. For instance, she is 'tempted' to play with Dr Johnson's 'celebrated judgement' on her way to Mansfield Park after her long and uncomfortable stay at her parents' dwelling in Portsmouth (*MP*, p. 392). This temptation never materialises; it is moreover reported by the authorial voice rather than demonstrated by Fanny's direct speech or thought. The potential subversion in this instance is an appropriation without distortion, thus less extensive than Mary's double parody. Fanny experiences a much greater linguistic temptation, when she is attracted to *Lovers' Vows*. While she is shocked by the sensational themes and improper language of the script, she comes to memorise it so well as to serve as a prompter.<sup>272</sup> Nevertheless she escapes Sir Thomas's condemnation. Her firm resolution not to

---

<sup>272</sup> Despite Inchbald's alterations of some subversive features of the original play, her translation of *Lovers' Vows* was received with controversy in England. See Sales, pp. 118-19.



act on the stage is recognised by him and Edmund as a due claim for her innocence. Uttering the language of the script without actions and off the stage is strictly distinguished from performing it with actions on the stage.<sup>273</sup> Moreover, Fanny differs from other characters, who would shorten the script or focus on their own speeches only, in the sense that she attains a comprehensive reading of the whole text unlike them.<sup>274</sup>

The handling of linguistic issues in *Mansfield Park* thus makes a clear contrast with that in *Patronage*. As we have observed, *Mansfield Park* hardly presents the beneficial aspect of multicultural perspectives. The novel warns us of its potential harm to subvert or neglect the traditional values of the English, and moreover, the British nation. *Patronage* is more supportive of multicultural perspectives brought by multilingualism. *Mansfield Park*'s scepticism of multicultural perspectives is mainly thematised as their negative influence on femininity. Nonetheless, the novel demonstrates remarkable multilingualism by incorporating such radical or subversive idiolect inclined for French phrases as that of Mary Crawford and the sailors' dialect of Mr. Price and his son William. In particular, Mr. Price's sailors' slang is represented vividly, including rough expressions. One may question whether there is incompatibility between the novel's representation of the nautical dialect, which is often deemed as so rough, and its narrative authority contingent on the identity of 'the author of *Pride and Prejudice*', which is dubbed as 'a lady' on the title page of *Pride and Prejudice*. It should be noted that *Mansfield Park* demonstrates multilingualism mainly at the level of characters' speech, not at the level of authorial voice. I thereupon argue that *Mansfield Park*'s endorsement of multilingualism, if there is any, is more limited than *Patronage*.

*Mansfield Park* details more of severe sides of a professional meritocracy than *Patronage*. *Mansfield Park* opens with the history of the Ward sisters and emphasises the hardship of Mrs. Price's marital life with a former 'Lieutenant of Marines, without education, fortune, or connections' (*MP*, p. 3). Mr. Price is

---

<sup>273</sup> This thematic sequence may be understood to resonate with speech act theory, since the novel considers that the utterance of the same sentences can have different meanings, depending on the context. This resonance between *Mansfield Park* and speech act theory thus provides additional legitimacy to the methodology of the thesis, which employs Lanser's application of speech act theory to her paradigm of women writers' narrative voices.

<sup>274</sup> Butler, *War of Ideas*, p. 230.

represented as a self-centred and ill-educated father, reading newspapers and the naval lists only. His idiolect packed with the sailors' dialect is represented as coarse. In other words, he is an unattractive example of professional meritocracy. According to Southam, the status of the Marines was inferior to that of the Navy (pp. 202-4). The scenes in the Prices' home provide vivid sketches of a chaotic domestic life without material comfort. Its hardship is engraved on the weary and confused Mrs. Price.

Unlike his father, William Price is presented as a promising character, coping with his competitive career in the Navy. The text, however, indicates that his career is supported financially as well as politically by Sir Thomas, and his promotion to a lieutenant is caused by Henry Crawford's scheme to impress Fanny. Professional success in a naval career in the period needed family connections, in particular, 'naval and political connections' which are typically monopolised by privileged classes, such as the landed gentry like Sir Thomas.<sup>275</sup> This aspect of William's professional episode is consistent with Buckhurst's obligation to choose the clergy in *Patronage*. There are few clues to indicate that William's idiolect registers the acquisition of a multicultural perspective by professional training. His speech is, however, often presented in indirect speech or summarised by the authorial voice; it is thereby difficult to judge whether multilingualism is endowed to him.

Instead of a naval career, the clergy is the profession prepared for Edmund. He makes an intriguing comment on his idiolect and profession:

I am a very matter of fact, plain spoken being, and may blunder on the borders of a repartee for half an hour together without striking it out. (*MP*, p. 94)

He dismisses the possibility of becoming a lawyer on the basis that his idiolect is incompatible with the profession. The implication may be that he is not so willing to acquire a new dialect and verbal skills essential to the profession; he would prefer a profession which would be compatible with his existing idiolect. Hence *Mansfield Park* does not define professionalism as a notion that encourages and enables people to learn (an)other dialect(s)/language(s) and relevant value systems, and consequently multicultural perspectives. In contrast to *Patronage*, *Mansfield Park* hardly invests in the potential benefit of professional meritocracy's linguistic

---

<sup>275</sup> Southam, p. 182.



training. In *Mansfield Park* linguistic issues are much more closely bound up with the question of femininity than with male professionalism, whereas in *Patronage* we find the reverse connection. The relationship between patriotism, language, and professionalism in *Mansfield Park*, therefore, has a remarkably different emphasis from that in *Patronage*. The moral education to detach ‘proper femininity’ from multilingualism/multiculturalism is central to the ideal patriotism in *Mansfield Park*. On the contrary, the professional education of the male gender with the potential ramifications of multilingualism/multiculturalism is central to the ideal patriotism in *Patronage*.

#### 4.4 Patriotism, Language, and Professionalism in *The Wanderer*

In contrast to the concentration of linguistic issues on the male gender in *Patronage*, Burney’s *The Wanderer* makes the female gender central to its linguistic themes, as *Mansfield Park* does. The opening scene of *The Wanderer* is set on the French coast during ‘the dire reign of the terrific Robespierre’ (*W*, p. 11). The heroine Juliet Granville experiences greater tension between an individual and the nation than the protagonists of *Patronage* and *Mansfield Park* do. Under the obligation to keep her identity secret, including her name, she has to be rigorously individualistic and detached from national and social groups. Due to her English roots and French upbringing, she is made a political football between the two nations. Margaret Anne Doody penetratingly notes that Juliet ‘resides in ambiguity, representing to the view of others incompatible identities’ and that ‘it is impossible to say whether she is French or English—and, indeed, Juliet is in a sense both’.<sup>276</sup> Juliet’s Anglo-French identity is analogous to the Anglo-Irish identity in the sense that they are both dual and ‘ambiguous’.

Joanne Cutting-Gray, among other critics, discusses Juliet’s social/cultural isolation in terms of her concealed surname, commenting that the concealment of her surname makes her ‘alienation’ ‘culturally absolute’.<sup>277</sup> In modifying this comment, I argue that Juliet’s social/cultural ‘alienation’ and ambiguous identity are most strongly marked by her linguistic competence rather than the absence of

<sup>276</sup> Margaret Anne Doody, *Frances Burney* (1988), p. 324.

<sup>277</sup> Joanne Cutting-Gray, *Woman as ‘Nobody’ and the Novels of Fanny Burney* (1992), p. 86.

surname. Having been brought up in France, Juliet can speak French as fluently as if she were a native speaker, while the authorial voice informs us that she speaks English ‘with a foreign accent’ (*W*, p. 17). Such idiosyncratic multilingualism causes alarm or suspicion among English characters. Juliet is perceived by them, and perhaps by Burney’s contemporary English/British readers, as foreign and potentially subversive due to her attachment to the French language. The perspective of approaching another value system in terms of language as ‘tongue’ and ‘dialect’ is conspicuous in *The Wanderer*. At the opening of the novel, where Admiral Powell presumes that Juliet is a foreigner but feels that her view is compatible with his norms of ‘old England’, he identifies the paradigm of authentic English culture with the paradigm of the native speaker of the English language: ‘to my seeming, you appear to be a person of as right a way of thinking, as if you had lisped English for your mother-tongue’ (*W*, p. 23). The plea of Albert Harleigh, the hero of the novel, that Juliet should receive his affection similarly manifests this perspective: ‘Ah! why not condescend to *think*, at least, *another language*, if not to speak it? Why not anticipate, in kind idea, at least, the happy period,—for me! When I may be permitted to consider as included, and mutual in our destinies, whatever hitherto—’ (italics mine; *W*, p. 594). He asks Juliet to take up another value system that would enable her to accept his affection, by asking her to ‘think’ in ‘another language’, to be more precise, according to our terminology, another dialect. The majority of the English characters interpret Juliet’s attachment to the French language as allegiance with French values and suspect that she is potentially subversive. According to Doody, ‘Any émigré—or émigrée—may be ignorantly hated, confounded with the revolutionaries, and suspected of spying for the French government, or working in some way to bring the guillotine and Revolution to England’ (*Burney*, p. 326). Such prejudice would not be easily cancelled out by Juliet’s declaration, ‘I am English’, as far as she is unable to remove the French accent from her English (*W*, p. 26). Her English acquaintances continue to associate her with France, for instance, by calling her ‘the woman from France’, ‘our dingy French companion’ and ‘that frenchfied swindler’ (*W*, pp. 53, 57). Her idiosyncratic multilingualism remains so disturbing a constituent of her ambiguous identity that it needs a full explanation when her identity is finally disclosed by her French friend Gabriella.

According to Gabriella’s account, rendered in the authorial voice, Juliet



‘had the advantage of speaking English with her grandmother; who knew no other language; and who entered the convent as a pensioner. By this means, and by books, Juliet had perfectly retained her native tongue, though she had acquired something of a foreign accent’ (*W*, p. 643). The proficiency of Juliet’s multilingualism has been demonstrated earlier in the novel through her recital of canonical works from both English and French literature. The authorial voice narrates:

[W]hether she took a French authour, or an English one; the accomplished Boileau, or the penetrating Pope; the tenderly-refined Racine, or the all-pervading Shakespeare, her tones, her intelligence, her skilful modulations, gave force and meaning to every word, and proved alike her understanding and her feeling. [*sic*] (*W*, p. 116)

Juliet’s linguistic competence in both the English and French languages is so good as to give ‘force and meaning to every word’. Even though her English may have ‘a foreign accent’, she is represented with more active abilities to transmit and moreover rejuvenate the canonical literature in each language than Fanny Price’s transmission of English literature in *Mansfield Park*. Given that *Patronage* hardly refers to the female characters’ competence in modern languages, the gap between their characterisations and Juliet’s is highly remarkable.

Furthermore, the feminisation of the coded language in *The Wanderer* makes a great contrast with the thematisation of the coded language in *Patronage*. From the outset, Juliet herself is made a coded text to decode, like the Tourville papers in *Patronage*. She is called ‘the Incognita’, ‘Ænigma’, and the like by the authorial voice and her English acquaintances. Her French benefactress, the Marchioness, gives her the initials, ‘L. S.’ for the correspondence across the channel. ‘L. S.’ is, in a sense, a code name, but also a coded text of Juliet’s social/cultural backgrounds—the crucial part of her identity. The English characters’ attempt to elucidate her identity centres on the decoding of this code name/coded text. Harleigh finds her cryptic, lamenting that she is ‘for ever thus impenetrable, thus incomprehensible’ (*W*, p. 337). Intriguingly, while *Patronage* represents the coded language as masculine discourse like diplomatic papers or a Wilkinsian ‘universal language’, *The Wanderer* embodies it in the person of the heroine. Like *The Wanderer*, *Mansfield Park* associates the coded language with a female character, though ironically. The lethargic and tedious Lady Bertram, who seems the last person to hold an important or political secret, is compared to a ‘cipher’ by Mrs. Grant. In Mrs. Grant’s words, Lady Bertram ‘seems more of a

cipher' when Sir Thomas is away (*MP*, p. 162). The text thereby seems to indicate the extent of Sir Thomas's patriarchal 'decoding' of or control over Lady Bertram in relation to the public and the wife's dependence on such a 'decoding' system regardless of whether she holds anything important. In Juliet's case, it was the Marchioness who contrived her code name/code text. However, this coding was necessitated by Juliet's father and his aristocratic family's disowning of her as Lady Juliet Granville. Trapped in the politics of patriarchal primogeniture, she is forced to yield to mostly xenophobic encodings by English characters whom she meets as an incognito, and is made into different coded texts, depending on their suspicions or deductions.

I have argued that the explorations of the relationship between multilingualism and gender in *The Wanderer* and *Mansfield Park* place a greater emphasis on the female gender than the one in *Patronage*. It would follow that the link between multilingualism and male-oriented professionalism may not be so tightly drawn in *The Wanderer* as in *Patronage*. In *The Wanderer*, the number of professional characters is overwhelmed by those of the leisured class, who are typically country gentlemen and aristocrats. The most conspicuous professional character in the novel is Admiral Powel, who turns out to be Juliet's uncle. He is a retired naval officer benevolent to her, who was in disguise. His familiarity with different kinds of social dialects (naval and fashionable society's, for example) may be regarded as adaptable multilingualism, but his command of modern languages is rather poor. On his encounter with Juliet, he says, 'I speak French so indifferently, which, however, I don't much mind [...] that I am afraid the gentlewoman would hardly understand me, or else I would translate for myself' (*W*, p. 17). Although his interest in the French language (and the value system accompanying the language) seems obligatory and far from eager, he tries to communicate with the French-speaking heroine, 'translating' for himself. Later in the novel, when he makes the acquaintance of her French guardian the Bishop, he reconfirms his poor knowledge of French and lack of interest in the language, 'I have partly forgot my French; which, not to mince the matter, I never thought it much worth while to study' (*W*, p. 858).

Admiral Powel's multilingualism may thus be too limited to bear the fruit of multiculturalism. His patriotism is, nevertheless, benevolent enough to traverse national boundaries. It is he, together with Harleigh, who rescues Juliet on the



French shore. Replying to other passengers' antipathy against her, the Admiral declares, 'A woman, a child, and a fallen enemy, are three persons that every true Briton should scorn to misuse' (*W*, p. 12). His reference to 'true Briton' addresses the question of legitimate membership of the British nation, thus the question of ideal patriotism, for the first time in the novel. His ideal patriotism is dual loyalty to both the English nation and the British nation. He says to Juliet, 'I hope the compliment you make our country in coming to it, is that of preferring good people to bad; in which case every Englishman should honour and welcome you' (*W*, p. 17). This remark is referred to by Harleigh as 'patriotic benevolence' (*W*, p. 17). The Admiral may be able to transcend national boundaries and help the apparently French heroine, but with the condition that English people should be acknowledged as superior to any other national groups. His account of his Anglo-centric patriotism is phrased in terms of chivalry and Christian norms:<sup>278</sup>

An unprotected female, provided she's of a good behaviour, has always a claim to a man's care, whether she be born amongst our friends or our foes. I should be ashamed to be an Englishman, if I held it my duty to think narrower than that. And a man who could bring himself to be ashamed of being an Englishman, would find it a difficult solution, let me tell you, my good gentlewoman, to discover what he might glory in. However, don't think that I say this to affront you as a foreigner, for I hope I am a better Christian. I only drop it as a matter of fact. (*W*, pp. 22-23)

The Admiral's chivalrous rhetoric and conduct seem to echo the Burkean recognition of chivalry as a counter-revolutionary value at one level.<sup>279</sup> His reference to Christian norms, which is repeated throughout the novel, may be read in the historical context of 'the forging of the British nation', as well. As Colley has argued (pp. 11-54), Protestantism is a key defining factor of the British nation in the period. The tension between Protestantism and Catholicism is also registered when Juliet needs to clear Lord Denmeath's doubt about her religious attachment. She confirms her belief in Protestantism but calls for the need to overcome sectarianism: 'I am firmly a Protestant! But, as such, I am a Christian; so, and most piously, yet not illiberally, is the Bishop' (*W*, pp. 615-16).

If we return to the Admiral's statement of Anglo-centric patriotism quoted above, being a good Englishman is to him the ultimate glory of a born Englishman. His disapproval of international marriage is part of such an attitude: 'And I, Sir,

<sup>278</sup> See also Katharine M. Rogers, *Frances Burney* (1990), p. 134.

<sup>279</sup> For Burney and *Reflections*, see Julia Epstein, *The Iron Pen* (1989), p. 189.

think [...] that a man who could go out of old England to chuse himself a wife, never deserves to set foot on it again! If I knew any worse punishment, I should name it' (*W*, p. 16). The Admiral views the national identity as central to an individual's identity. So much subjection of an individual to the nation may be interpreted as a symbol of the institutionalising ethos of the naval meritocracy.

The Admiral's career path is characterised by success in the professional meritocracy and resulting achievement of social mobility. From a humble background he distinguishes himself in the Navy by exertion, and his successful professional life is rewarded with a comfortable retirement into a mansion in Richmond. Even after he has acquired membership of genteel society, he maintains his scepticism of aristocracy. He is so proud of his professional commitments as to consider the members of the naval meritocracy as the most worthy patriots. At the celebration of Juliet's successful reclaiming of her status as Lady Juliet Granville, the Admiral toasts 'the King and the Royal Navy':

Ladies and gentlemen, I shall now make free to propose two toasts to you: the first, as in duty bound, is to the King and the Royal Navy. I always put them together; because why? I hold our King to be our pilot, without whom we might soon be all aground; and, in like manner, I hold us tars to be the best part of his majesty's ship's company; for though old England, to my seeming, is at the top of the world, if we tars were to play it false, it would soon pop to the bottom. So here goes to the King and the Royal Navy! (*W*, p. 868)

Despite this somewhat radical elevation of the meritocracy, his outlook is hardly subversive. His patriotism may have been strengthened during his professional training, but it is quite nostalgic, constantly upholding 'old England'.<sup>280</sup> The linguistic benefit of professional education shown in *Patronage* is almost absent from him, as we have seen above.<sup>281</sup> Burney's illustration of the potential effects of the training for English professional meritocracy is thus not so rosy as Edgeworth's.

*The Wanderer*, however, provides an example of the union between benevolent professionalism and proficient multilingualism in the form of the French Bishop. He is Juliet's 'guardian and protector' since her grandmother's death (*W*, p. 644). His compassionate benevolence extends beyond the boundaries of national groups and religious sectors. When Juliet is forced to get married to a

---

<sup>280</sup> For example, when the Admiral welcomes the Bishop, he says, 'Mr. Bishop, you are welcome to old England!' (*W*, p. 858).

<sup>281</sup> Such absence of multilingualism/multiculturalism in a naval officer features in Burney's characterisation of Captain Mirvan in *Evelina* (1778), as well. He 'has a fixed and most prejudiced hatred of whatever is not English' (*Evelina*, pp. 38, 49).



‘commissary’ of Robespierre’s Terror, he readily offers to sacrifice himself in order to save her. The Bishop’s multilingualism is demonstrated in terms of his clerical dialect, which involves Latin, and his good understanding of the English language.<sup>282</sup>

The ‘purifying’ operation of the Terror is shown to oppress such a worthy national member as the Bishop and to favour such a rogue commissary as Juliet’s ‘husband’. Her anonymous exile was caused by the commissary, who was able to read the old Earl Melbury’s note promising that if she settled in France with a French husband she would receive six thousand pounds. The commissary prioritises his self-interest over public interests which his professional duty is supposed to protect. He forces Juliet to become his wife so that he can claim the portion offered by the Earl Melbury. His greed is characterised as hideous; the authorial voice relates that he takes ‘diabolical delight’ in his mercenary scheming (*W*, p. 727).<sup>283</sup>

What the novel seems to highlight here includes the relationship between multilingualism and national interests. The commissary was able to make use of the promissory note since he ‘had a competent knowledge of modern languages’, ‘having often been employed as a spy’ (*W*, p. 740). In the scene where he catches up with Juliet in England, the authorial voice reports that he ‘appeared perfectly to understand English’ and spoke ‘in tolerable English’ (*W*, pp. 727-28). His ‘competent’ multilingualism and his decoding skill seem to be represented as an ability appreciated by Robespierre’s administration because they work to spot traitors. Juliet, however, dismisses his multilingualism in that he ‘spoke intelligibly’ modern languages, ‘though with vulgar phraseology and accent’ (*W*, p. 740). In this way, he functions as a negative example of multilingual professionals. We may find similarity between him and M. de Tourville in *Patronage*, but the former seems to be presented as a more threatening example. *The Wanderer* illustrates the potential threats of multilingualism with more emphasis than *Patronage* does. The former novel is thus more cautious in valuating multilingual professionals than the latter novel.

---

<sup>282</sup> In the scene where he reunites with Juliet and meets her English acquaintance in England, he is shown to have a good understanding of the English words spoken to him although he cannot speak English very well.

<sup>283</sup> To Epstein, the commissary ‘appears only as a dark, maniacal, Gothic figure of terror’ (p. 176).

It would be appropriate to look at Harleigh's linguistic characterisation, since he is destined to be Juliet's husband. He is privileged with a life of leisure as the heir of the family and a nephew to a peer. He demonstrates proficient multilingualism, in particular, fluency in French. In the opening scene of the novel, where Juliet requests permission to be taken aboard, he speaks to her in French. Although his dialogues with her are rendered in English by the authorial voice, he is shown to succeed in his French communication with her as follows:

Harleigh enquired, in French, whether she had escaped the general contagion, from which almost all in the boat had suffered, of sickness.

She cheerfully replied, Yes! She had escaped every evil! (*W*, p. 16)

Harleigh also offers to translate her French into English soon after this dialogue. As I have mentioned above, he appreciates that a language is a gateway to another value system. His proficient multilingualism can thus be considered as conscious inclination toward multiculturalism. The combination of multilingualism/multiculturalism with compassionate 'benevolence', which supported Juliet's 'female difficulties', in him appears quite analogous to the combination found in the preferred patriots of *Patronage*, although he is not a member of a professional meritocracy.<sup>284</sup>

Evidently, Juliet's multilingualism/multiculturalism is far superior to Harleigh's and the other male multilingual characters in the text we have examined. The significant difference between her multilingualism and that of the male characters is that her multilingualism is not really the product of training or education with which professional meritocrats and country gentlemen would be privileged. Her multilingualism is a surviving skill acquired during her 'female difficulties', which were brought by the patriarchy. Nor is it the product of the kind of private education Elinor has enjoyed. Juliet had to acquire and maintain English and French to that high standard in order to survive her exile in France and England. As she moves along the ladder of the social hierarchy during the exile, she is also exposed to various kinds of dialects, such as the dialects of farmers, milliners, and English fashionable society. She experiences what Mr Percy is seriously concerned about in relation to female accomplishments. During her exile incognito, her accomplishments hardly help her to maintain her life. Unlike male professionalism,

---

<sup>284</sup> Claudia L. Johnson identifies Harleigh as a 'man of feeling' of the sentimental tradition. See Johnson, *Equivocal Beings* (1995), p. 172.



her accomplishments would only bring manual labours with low incomes, and she would be unable to keep her status as a gentlewoman.<sup>285</sup> She laments:

How few, she cried, how circumscribed, are the attainments of women! and how much fewer and more circumscribed still, are those which may, in their consequences, be useful as well as ornamental, to the higher, or educated class! those through which, in the reverses of fortune, a FEMALE may reap benefit without abasement! those which, while preserving her from pecuniary distress, will not aggravate the hardships or sorrows of her changed condition, either by immediate humiliation, or by what, eventual, her connexions may consider as disgrace! (*W*, p. 289)

Juliet's outstanding multilingualism thus signals the problem of patriarchy. At the same time, through Elinor's characterisation, *The Wanderer* implies that women's education requires a modest approach to literature and knowledge unlike her complacent and half-digested private learning. Elinor's subversive idiolect with theatrical or extreme expressions often tampers with the discourse of the male canon and is to be punished like that of Mary Crawford in *Mansfield Park*.<sup>286</sup>

*The Wanderer*, moreover, includes an extensive number of untranslated French dialogues in its narrative proper, far more than *Patronage*. In *The Wanderer*, French dialogues are often put in the main text, with English translations in footnotes. The translation in footnotes encourages the reader to attribute the proficient multilingualism to the author, since there are no marks of separation between the narrative voice of the footnotes and the authorial voice, and furthermore between the authorial voice and the extrafictional voice. It may be reasonable to argue that *The Wanderer* is less hesitant in connecting a high level of multilingualism with the female author than *Patronage* is.

I began this chapter by arguing that the ideal patriotism in *Patronage* links multilingualism and professionalism as pivotal foci in its formula. The formula of the ideal was then compared with those in *Mansfield Park* and *The Wanderer*. My comparative study contended that these texts share interests in multilingualism and professionalism in relation to ideal patriotism, but with different emphasis. One major difference between *Patronage* and the other two novels is that the former explores multilingualism primarily in terms of a professional meritocracy whereas

<sup>285</sup> See also Epstein, pp. 185-86.

<sup>286</sup> For example, see *W*, p. 371. Epstein comments that 'Elinor serves as Burney's most subversive character' (pp. 187-88).

the latter two do so in terms of female gender. I also pointed out that *Mansfield Park* and *The Wanderer* are much more sceptical of a male-oriented professional meritocracy as an educational and cultural institution of multilingualism than *Patronage*. Compared with the texts by Austen and Burney, *Patronage* conflates multilingualism and professionalism in a much more systematic way and presents a more optimistic or idealistic formula of patriotism. In the formula, professional meritocrats are given more potential to contribute to the harmonisation between national and social groups. Moreover, the formula suggests a culturally inclusive constitution of the nation and offers a solution to the predicament of the Anglo-Irish identity.



## *Chapter 5*

### **Maria Edgeworth's Ideal Patriotism and Its Ideological Strands: Enlightenment Cosmopolitanism and Romantic Nationalism**

The previous chapter identified the key constituents of Edgeworth's ideal patriotism in *Patronage*. This chapter examines the major ideological underpinnings of her ideal patriotism and its definition of the nation in further detail. These underpinnings are Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Romantic nationalism, which resonate throughout *Patronage*, as the previous chapter noted. The first section of this chapter explores the definition of the nation, and its qualifications for ideal patriots with regard to class, linguistic abilities, and gender roles, in the formulations of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Romantic nationalism. The second section aims to elucidate how such components of these ideological strands are conflated with innovative modifications within Edgeworth's illustrations of ideal patriotism and national identity. The texts selected as case studies are *Essay on Irish Bulls* (1802), *Harrington* (1817), and *Helen* (1833). The rationale for this selection is not only that the inclusion of these texts extends my sampling of Edgeworth's works in the entire thesis more comprehensively than the samplings in existing studies, but also that these texts provide remarkable sources to sharpen my account of her ideal patriotism and its implications. *Irish Bulls* addresses the importance of 'verbal hygiene' to the mission of ideal patriots in the context of the Union between Britain and Ireland more self-consciously than *Patronage*, where Mrs Percy's 'verbal hygiene' resisting fashionable dialect is depicted as part of her multilingual virtue. *Harrington* and *Helen* have received little attention in the criticism of Edgeworth but signal the limitation of her inclusive patriotism and concept of the nation to a much greater extent than *Patronage*. *Harrington* reveals Edgeworth's priority of the hegemony of the landed gentry over the pluralist claim of her ideal patriotism and composition of national membership. This finding develops my observation in *Patronage* that Edgeworth's ideal patriotism allows social mobility only to the extent that it does not subvert the landed order. *Harrington* provides an additional emphasis on the significance of

‘verbal hygiene’ as part of ideal patriots’ responsibility. *Helen* expands our understanding of women’s role in Edgeworth’s ideal patriotism. Through the theme of a multilingual matriarch heavily involved with her husband’s professional life as a statesman, the text demonstrates that women’s extensive multilingualism/multiculturalism would not qualify them as ideal patriots without their fulfilling domestic duties, especially their education of their daughters. This observation corroborates my argument about *Patronage* to the effect that women’s multilingualism/multiculturalism is expected to be more limited than men’s in Edgeworth’s thematic paradigm.<sup>287</sup>

### **5.1 The Discourses of Enlightenment Cosmopolitanism and Romantic Nationalism: David Hume, Adam Smith, and Edmund Burke**

This section focuses on the writings of David Hume, Adam Smith, and Edmund Burke in order to elucidate how the representative discourses of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Romantic nationalism served to shape Edgeworth’s ideal of patriotism. Previous chapters referred to these two ideological strands in broad terms. This chapter adds theoretical details and clarifies parameters of their systems relevant to my investigation, and moreover questions which aspects Edgeworth’s paradigm assumes or challenges. The focus on Hume, Smith, and Burke in this enquiry is not arbitrary but strategic since Edgeworth’s texts provide reference to or resonate with these writers’ notions and, furthermore, since their discourse is regarded as the canon of mid- or late eighteenth-century Britain encompassing the major ‘male’ genres of political philosophy, economics, history, and/or aesthetic discourse. The identity of Hume, Smith, and Burke within the British nation as Scottish or Anglo-Irish make the comparison between them and Edgeworth even more intriguing since she shared their attempts to negotiate their provincial backgrounds from the ‘Celtic fringes’ with the growth of the British Empire.

In referring to Enlightenment cosmopolitanism, I follow the definition of Thomas J. Schlereth, whose study remains the most comprehensive contribution to

---

<sup>287</sup> Pearson’s study juxtaposes *Patronage* and *Helen* as key texts.



the field to date:<sup>288</sup>

First, it was an attitude of mind that attempted to transcend chauvinistic national loyalties or parochial prejudices in its intellectual interests and pursuits. In the ideal, the ‘cosmopolite,’ or ‘citizen of the world,’ sought to be identified by an interest in, a familiarity with, or appreciation of many parts and peoples of the world; he wished to be distinguished by a readiness to borrow from other lands or civilizations in the formation of his intellectual, cultural, and artistic patterns. Therefore, the typical Enlightenment cosmopolite aspired to be—although he did not always succeed in being—eclectic in his philosophical and scientific outlook, synergistic in his religious perspective, and international in his economic and political thought.<sup>289</sup>

Schlereth also emphasises the hitherto neglected aspect of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism as ‘a psychological construct that prompted many philosophes to replace or to modify their attachment to their geographical region or sphere of activity with a more expansive, albeit abstract, attitude toward the whole world’ (p. xiii).<sup>290</sup> In addition, while indebted to earlier cosmopolitan pursuits in Europe during the Ancient period, the Renaissance, and Early Modern, Enlightenment cosmopolitanism may be distinguished from them by its ingenious enquiries into the ‘further implications [of cosmopolitanism] in science and economics’.<sup>291</sup> Edgeworth’s ideal patriotism recycles some of these characteristics of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism. For example, her Irish tales reveal a kind of Enlightenment economic cosmopolitanism by proposing a Smithian socio-economic formula which the tales promote as applicable and beneficial to the Irish nation as well as to the Scottish and the English nations.<sup>292</sup>

In this thesis, the writings of Hume and Smith are selected as the representatives of the cosmopolitanism that is reproduced in the writings of Edgeworth, for the following reasons.<sup>293</sup> Critics have pointed out the considerable influence of the French Enlightenment writers’ works over Edgeworth’s fiction,

---

<sup>288</sup> See Karen O’Brien, *Narratives of Enlightenment* (1997), p. 2.

<sup>289</sup> Thomas J. Schlereth, *The Cosmopolitan Ideal in Enlightenment Thought* (1977), pp. xi-xii.

<sup>290</sup> Schlereth notes that, in the age of Enlightenment, ‘philosophes’ or philosophers were often meant to be ‘synonymously and simultaneously cosmopolites’ (p. 1).

<sup>291</sup> Schlereth, p. xxv.

<sup>292</sup> Critics have noted Edgeworth’s adaptation of Adam Smith’s theory in her socio-political outlook as well as narrative strategies. See Butler, ‘Introduction’, *Castle Rackrent and Ennui*, p. 28; Butler, ‘Irish Culture and Scottish Enlightenment’, in *Economy, Polity, and Society*, ed. by Stefan Collini, Richard Whatmore, and Brian Young (2000), pp. 160-66; Connolly, ‘Reading Responsibility’, pp. 154-58.

<sup>293</sup> Schlereth’s study features Hume as one of the three principal contributors to the Enlightenment cosmopolitanism (p. xv).

such as Marmontel's, alongside that of the Scottish Enlightenment philosophers.<sup>294</sup> Given their post-Union Scottish background and potential applicability to Ireland in the context of her Union with the British Empire, the theories of the Scottish Enlightenment philosophers are relevant to the concerns about the future of the Irish nation and the British nation in Edgeworth's text more immediately than Enlightenment theories from France or elsewhere. Nicholas Phillipson's account of the debates in Scotland about the Anglo-Scottish Union and the Scottish Enlightenment helps us to see their momentous relevance to such concerns of Edgeworth's text. Phillipson astutely notes the priorities of the Scots in the Union and their resulting choice of the alternative vocabulary in the debates:

Many Scots recognized that the preservation of Scotland's future independence would have more to do with securing her social, economic and cultural fabric than with securing her constitution. In fact those who took part in the debate were very reluctant to use political terminology to describe their country, preferring more ambiguous terms like 'Nation', 'People', 'Country' to describe a kingdom with an ancient history, an underdeveloped economy and an underdeveloped constitution. [...] In fact, in responding to the pressure of political events, the Scots found that they were groping for an alternative to a political language which did not make sense of their own political predicament. [...] What they sought was a language responsive to the economic, social and historical experience of provincial communities and realized that the virtue of a provincial citizen class was more likely to be released by economic and cultural institutions than by a national parliament remote from the provincial citizen's world.<sup>295</sup>

Phillipson argues that Hume's writing 'fortified' this tendency in the language of the Anglo-Scottish Union debates and transmitted the preference for 'ambiguous terms' like 'nation', 'people', 'country' to 'narrowly political' terms such as 'monarchy', 'aristocracy', 'republic', 'commonwealth', as notable from the documents of the Select Society (pp. 25-33). Edgeworth's writings in response to the controversy about the Union of Ireland and Britain, for instance *Castle Rackrent*, opt to secure the social, economic, and cultural fabric of Ireland rather than her constitution, like the majority of Scots' reactions to the Anglo-Scottish Union in Phillipson's account. It seems tenable that her ideological vocabulary was conditioned by Hume's critical contribution to the language of politics and civic society in the eighteenth-century Anglophone world. Edgeworth's articulations of her ideal patriotism prefer 'ambiguous' terms such as 'nation', 'country', and 'people' to 'narrowly political' terms such as 'constitutions' and 'subjects'.

---

<sup>294</sup> For instance, Butler, *ME*, pp. 155, 249, 303; Butler, 'Irish Culture', p. 166.



Moreover, Hume preceded the numerous giants of the Scottish Enlightenment, and his friend and disciple Smith elaborated the Humean insight into economy and moral sentiments in relation to civic societies. Edgeworth's works make explicit references to their notions in terms of civic virtues and political, philosophical, economic, and moral theories. In particular, their articulations of the individual's claim to the nation and their accounts of 'sympathy' and 'benevolence' inspired her model of individuals' social and national membership.<sup>296</sup> In what follows, more citations are made from Hume's writing than from Smith's since the intertextuality between Edgeworth and Hume has received much less attention from critics than the intertextuality between her and Smith.<sup>297</sup>

The Enlightenment cosmopolitanism relied on the conviction that the principles of human nature are universal. While this conviction has been called 'universalist' in recent scholarship, the philosophers did not negate cultural differences entirely. For example, Hume recognised cultural differences in terms of national characters, namely in an essay entitled 'Of National Characters'. National characters are, Hume states, unarguably contingent on 'moral causes': 'That the character of a nation will much depend on *moral* causes, must be evident to the most superficial observer' ('Of National Characters', p. 79).<sup>298</sup> By 'moral causes', he means 'all circumstances which are fitted to work on the mind as motives or reasons, and which render a peculiar set of manners habitual to us'; for example, he refers to the legal, political, or economic 'circumstances' of the national polity such as 'the nature of the government, the revolutions of public affairs, the plenty or penury in which the people live, the situation of the nation with regard to its neighbours' ('Of National Characters', p. 78). Individual citizens' manners are conditioned by moral causes, and a resemblance among their manners forms 'a common or national manner' by way of 'sympathy' or 'contagion' resulting from close communication or social networking regardless of geographical proximity:

---

<sup>295</sup> Nicholas Phillipson, 'The Scottish Enlightenment', in Porter and Teich (eds), pp. 25-26.

<sup>296</sup> Edgeworth's correspondence implies that she read Hume's essays carefully. See H. W. Hausermann, *The Genevese Background* (1952), p. 111. The Edgeworths' familiarity with Adam Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* is well-documented in *Practical Education*, in particular in the chapter on 'Sympathy and Sensibility'.

<sup>297</sup> Butler's *War of Ideas* connects Edgeworth's work and Hume's paradigm but focuses on its psychological dimension (p. 130).

<sup>298</sup> Hume, *Political Essays*, ed. by Knud Haakonssen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

Where a number of men are united into one political body, the occasions of their intercourse must be so frequent, for defence, commerce, and government, that, together with the same speech or language, they must acquire a resemblance in their manners, and have a common or national character, as well as a personal one, peculiar to each individual. ('Of National Characters', p. 82)

This is an important part of Hume's notion about national characters, revealing the intersection of his universalism and relativist perspective. Since his premise is that the effects of certain 'moral causes' are common among mankind, he views the plurality of national characters in terms of the plural expressions of sentiments as common effects of certain social, political, or economic environments of civic societies. Therefore, in his theory, cultural differences 'all spring from the same "universal, established principles of morals"' (*EPM*, p. 250) and are consistent with his investment in universal principles of human nature which underlie similar moral responses across the nations.<sup>299</sup> Cultural differences are reduced into his universalist generalisation rather than requiring further differential explorations of their diversity. His comparison of national characters to rivers from the same source in 'Dialogue' in *EPM* is highly illustrative of his emphasis on generalisation rather than differentiation: 'The RHINE flows north, the RHONE south; yet both spring from the *same* mountain, and are also actuated, in their opposite directions, by the *same* principle of gravity. The different inclinations of the ground, on which they run, cause all the difference of their courses' (*sic*; *EPM*, p. 192). Hume's interest in the '*same*' rather than the '*different*' typifies the universalist concerns of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism. The shift of emphasis from the '*same*' to the '*different*' was to occur in the discourse of Romantic nationalism. This contrast is one of the vital elements distinguishing Enlightenment cosmopolitanism from Romantic nationalism. My reference to the former as a 'universalist cosmopolitanism' and my reference to the latter as a 'differential nationalism' in this thesis are meant to highlight this contrast.

The indifference to cultural differences among the Enlightenment cosmopolites is reflected in their definition of the nation as 'mainly a civic and legal conception' detached from cultural heritage: to them the nation was 'composed of individuals bound together not necessarily because they had the same language,

---

<sup>299</sup> Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. by Tom L. Beauchamp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998). Hereafter referred to as *EPM*.



history, or culture but because they had the same rights and liberties'.<sup>300</sup> Returning to my last quotation from Hume's essay 'Of National Characters' above, for example, we find his premise that a 'political body' rather than a cultural group is the fundamental unit to develop a national character. Later in the same essay he declares, 'a nation is nothing but a collection of individuals' ('Of National Characters, p. 79).<sup>301</sup> Cultural factors are thus obscured, if not ignored, in the definition of the nation by the Enlightenment cosmopolites. Their definition of *patria* is hardly made in cultural terms in the discourse of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism, either; one's claim to one's fatherland or mother country is not necessarily intrinsic in cultural ties, as long as one is possessed of civic ties.<sup>302</sup> Edgeworth's references to the nation in her works are made in such terms, too, as we will see.

The universalism of the Enlightenment cosmopolites has limitations in its assumptions about class, gender, and race, however. It is, after all, 'universalism' from the perspective of 'a very small group of West European intellectuals', as Schlereth notes (p. 57), and, to be more precise, the perspective of a small group of *male* 'West European intellectuals'. These limitations are traceable to their occasional displays of patriarchal assumptions and racial prejudice in their writings. For example, one of Hume's patriarchal assumptions is that women's mental as well as physical faculties are inherently inferior to men's:

As nature has given *man* the superiority above *woman* by endowing him with greater strength both of mind and body; it is his part to alleviate that superiority, as much as possible, by the generosity of his behaviour, and by a studied deference and complaisance for all her inclinations and opinions. ('Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences', p. 74)<sup>303</sup>

Racial prejudice, which should be incompatible with the doctrine of universalism, is also evident in Hume's following remarks:

I am apt to suspect the negroes, and in general all the other species of men (for there are four or five different kinds) to be naturally inferior to the whites. There scarcely ever was a civilized nation of any other complexion than white, nor even

---

<sup>300</sup> Schlereth, p. 109. See also O'Brien, p. 2.

<sup>301</sup> Quoted in Schlereth, p. 104.

<sup>302</sup> Schlereth, p. 109.

<sup>303</sup> From the edition of *Political Essays* referred to above. The citation is followed by Hume's understanding that 'the male sex, among a polite people discover their authority [...] by gallantry', in dealing with the female sex. This patriarchal interest in gallantry is to be applied by Burke, who sentimentalised chivalry as the central ethos of his Romantic nationalism in *Reflections*.

any individual eminent either in action or speculation. ('Of National Characters', p. 86)

Accordingly, the ideal of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism is 'actually uncosmopolitan', failing to conceive the citizenship of the world open to everyone on the globe.<sup>304</sup> Schlereth interprets that this limitation is a negative legacy of the 'stubborn strain of paternalistic elitism' in the Ancient cosmopolitanism: 'Neither the Stoics nor their admirers in the Enlightenment ever resolved cosmopolitanism's basic juxtaposition: a belief in the individualism of the elite and an abstract faith in the humanity of the mass' (p. 14). It is debatable whether Edgeworth's paradigm of ideal patriotism inherits this underlying contradiction between an elitist practice of individualism and an intellectual investment in universalism within Enlightenment cosmopolitanism. The conflicts between the ideology's patriarchal assumptions and Edgeworth's texts, which generally advocate the intellectual faculty of women, are conspicuous. My case studies of *Irish Bulls*, *Harrington*, and *Helen* in the next section will explore how these texts challenge or negotiate with the patriarchal and racial prejudice of the Enlightenment cosmopolitanism in their formulations of ideal patriotism.

The dimension of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism as the ideology of 'outsiders' requires attention, too. According to Schlereth, Enlightenment cosmopolitanism was 'an important reaction, in part a definite protest of individual dissent against certain social, religious, economic, and political realities of the eighteenth, century, that they [Enlightenment philosophers] considered parochial and confining to themselves as individuals and as an intellectual class' (p. xiii). Hume and Smith's strained relationship with the house of Hanover, Richard Price's commitment to English Dissentism, and Voltaire's precarious social position under the *ancient regime*, all made their footing within their nations less than stable and resulted in their contriving cosmopolitanism which would mediate such troubled situations.<sup>305</sup> This component of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism is noteworthy since the claim of Edgeworth and the Protestant Ascendancy for a space within the Irish nation and the British nation was tenuous and faced a similar problem to that of the Enlightenment cosmopolites.

---

<sup>304</sup> Schlereth, p. xiv.

<sup>305</sup> Annette Baier calls Hume 'an unwitting virtual woman' in the sense that he had an "outsider" position' in relation to the dominant culture. Baier, 'Hume', in *Feminist Interpretations of David Hume*, ed. by Anne Jaap Jacobson (1992), p. 22.



Within the theoretical framework of this cosmopolitanism, patriotism was often made congenial to it: ‘If one was to be a true citizen of the world, as both Richard Price and Christoph Wieland pointed out, one was also to be a good citizen of one’s nation. No conflict need arise between the two allegiances if both were directed toward mankind’s welfare’.<sup>306</sup> This ‘dualistic’ loyalty enabled the Enlightenment cosmopolites, who were often regarded as ‘outsiders’, to carve out a space within the nation by pursuing their cosmopolitan ideals. It also prevented their cosmopolitan ideals from being fully escapist. On the other hand, it was ‘occasionally ambiguous’ loyalty, too, due to the elusive nature of the Enlightenment cosmopolites’ relationship with their nations.<sup>307</sup> For Alexander Broadie, Hume’s allegiance with the Scottish nation was ‘highly ambiguous’; despite his occasional expressions of his pride in being Scottish, the following claim is his typical self-portrait as a citizen of the world, and especially a rootless one:<sup>308</sup> ‘I am a Citizen of the World; but if I were to adopt any Country, it would be that in which I live at present, and from which I am determin’d never to depart, unless a War drive me into Swisserland or Italy [*sic*]’.<sup>309</sup> Such an ambiguously ‘dualistic’ allegiance would have been convenient to the thorny question of national identity confronting Edgeworth as well as the Anglo-Irish landed elites. The latter promoted ‘Anglo-Irish patriotism’, which applied this kind of ‘dualistic’ loyalty for the cause of the welfare of the Irish nation and attempted to justify their authority (and privilege), as the ‘patriots’ who could lead the indigenous Irish.

Since Enlightenment cosmopolites’ ideal patriotism is often designed to be compatible with their cosmopolitan pursuits, they seem to represent themselves as the principal disseminators of cosmopolitan ideals as well as of ideal patriotism. They arguably invested the future of their nations in the conscientious members of the middle classes improving the landed system.<sup>310</sup> Aristocrats were associated with degeneracy and distinguished from the landed gentry ‘with lofty contempt’: for example, Smith ‘pinned what hopes he had for the survival of a free society upon the intelligent and commercially-minded gentry whose very circumstances

---

<sup>306</sup> Schlereth, p. 106. See also O’Brien, p. 4.

<sup>307</sup> Schlereth, p. 106.

<sup>308</sup> Alexander Broadie, *The Scottish Enlightenment* (2001), p. 59.

<sup>309</sup> Hume, Letter to Gilbert Elliot of 22 September 1764, quoted in Broadie, p. 60.

<sup>310</sup> For example, see John Dwyer, ‘Adam Smith in the Scottish Enlightenment’, in *Adam Smith*, ed. by Hiroshi Mizuta and Chuhei Sugiyama (1993), pp. 157-58.

ensured that they would be responsible to a model of a commercial polity'.<sup>311</sup> In the vision of Enlightenment philosophers, social mobility was also possible. Hume's positive attitude towards the social system of meritocracy is detectable in his appreciation of the capabilities of 'low people' from European societies: 'low people, without education, will start up amongst us, and distinguish themselves in every profession' (Of National Characters', p. 86). This appreciation of 'upward social mobility in commercial society' is developed in Smith's theory. The *Wealth of Nations* calls for general education which would make upward social mobility more accessible but at the same time serve as 'safety valves for social unrest'.<sup>312</sup> On the other hand, Robert L. Heilbroner observes that 'all the *philosophes*, including Smith, share one limit to their social imaginations. This is an inability to imagine that the lower orders might some day exercise sovereignty over society'.<sup>313</sup> It should be added that the social imaginations of Hume and Smith are constrained by more than this one limit. The patriarchal assumptions and racial bias in their cosmopolitan theories, which I have emphasised above, also restrict their social imaginations. Under these conditions, Enlightenment cosmopolites' investment largely rested with the landed system. In their view, the landed system can be rejuvenated by the meritocratic ethos of professional and commercial classes in cooperation with educational programmes to qualify them as the promoters of the nation's and mankind's welfare.

The ideal education of patriots in the paradigms of Enlightenment cosmopolites would have been a liberal education with emphasis on the classics, the tradition of which their writings show literary and philosophical affinities with. Besides this quite aristocratic or privileged education, general education with emphasis on 'geometry and mechanicks' rather than Latin, 'which can scarce ever be of any use to them [the children of the common people]' was prescribed by Smith for raising patriots from lower classes, who were deprived of privileged educational opportunities (*Wealth of Nations*, v. i. f 55, pp.785-86).<sup>314</sup> In the

---

<sup>311</sup> Phillipson, 'Adam Smith as Civic Moralist', in *Wealth and Virtue*, ed. by Istvan Hont and Michael Ignatieff (1983), pp. 192, 197.

<sup>312</sup> Knud Haakonssen, 'Introduction', in *Political Essays* by Hume, p. xxiv.

<sup>313</sup> Robert L. Heilbroner, 'The Man and His Times', in *The Essential Adam Smith*, ed. by Robert L. Heilbroner (1986), p. 3.

<sup>314</sup> Athol Fitzgibbons notes some contrast between the educational prescriptions conceived by Hume and Smith. See Fitzgibbons, *Adam Smith's System of Liberty, Wealth, and Virtue* (1995), p. 159.



previous chapter, I argued that Edgeworth's educational formula for potential patriots unites the linguistic benefit of their education/training with multicultural perspectives. Enlightenment cosmopolites also appreciated fluency in the lingua franca, which would facilitate international communication, in particular French among the English-speaking philosophers. However, they were hardly interested in multicultural perspectives since, as I have mentioned above, their priority lay with a commitment to universalism rather than to cultural differentiation. These attitudes are observable in Hume and Smith's interest in universal grammar, 'general language', and linguistic standardisation in the French and English languages,<sup>315</sup> especially Hume's notorious obsession of purging 'Scotticisms'.<sup>316</sup> Unlike Edgeworth's educational programme for ideal patriots, their programme scarcely appreciates the link between multilingual education and multicultural perspectives. Their principle of social sympathy concentrates on 'sentiments' rather than language as its means, whereas the contrary is the case in Edgeworth's writings.

The gender roles in the ideal patriotism of Enlightenment cosmopolites mirrored their patriarchal assumptions. Even for Hume, who has recently been considered by some feminist commentators to have appreciated the intellectual functions of women to a certain degree,<sup>317</sup> the primary social role of women was reproduction regulated by the tight observance of chastity: 'The greatest regard, which can be acquired by that sex [the female sex], is derived from their fidelity' ('Of Qualities Useful to Ourselves', in *EPM*, p. 123). Hume saw that men are responsible to ensure the welfare of his family, upon which social stability is based, and that their motivation for exertion requires women's chastity:

Men are induc'd to labour for the maintenance and education of their children, by the perswasion [*sic*] that they are really their own; and therefore 'tis reasonable, and even necessary, to give them some security in this particular. This security cannot consist entirely in the imposing of severe punishments on any transgressions of conjugal fidelity on the part of the wife [...]. What restraint, therefore, shall we impose on women, in order to counter-balance so strong a

---

<sup>315</sup> The fascination of Hume and Smith with *Remarques sur la Langue Française* (1647) by Claude Favre de Vaugelas (1585-1650) and/or the Port-Royal *Grammaire Générale et Raisonnée* (1660) is documented in their letters and works. Vaugelas advocated the purification of the French language. See Peter Jones, *Hume's Sentiments* (1982), pp. 136-37.

<sup>316</sup> See James G. Basker, 'Scotticisms and the Problem of Cultural Identity in Eighteenth-Century Britain' in *Sociability and Society in Eighteenth-Century Scotland*, ed. by John Dwyer and Richard B. Sher (1991), pp. 81-95.

<sup>317</sup> For example, see Baier 'Good Men's Women', *Hume Studies*, 5 (1979), pp. 9-10. See also Kathryn Temple, "'Manly Composition'", in Jacobson (ed.), p. 266.



temptation as they have to infidelity? [*sic*] ('Of Chastity and Modesty', in *THN*, p. 365)<sup>318</sup>

Hume is not interested in how to punish the men who committed adultery with the disloyal women, and such a gap in his expectations between men and women provides another instance of the Enlightenment philosophers' patriarchal assumptions. In Smith's case, he interprets the male and the female in binary oppositions: 'the public as against the private; the commercial as against the domestic; the worker as against the nurturer; the independent as against the dependent sphere; the productive as against the reproductive agent'.<sup>319</sup> Moreover, women's contribution to the 'wealth of nations' apart from reproduction hardly deserves a space in Smith's model.<sup>320</sup> Given these gender assumptions by the Enlightenment cosmopolites, they seem to prefer the separation of the public sphere as a male sphere from the domestic sphere as female. The intellectual zones in which such cosmopolitanism and patriotism were to be formulated and practised were located in a male public sphere and included the coffee houses. Salons administered by upper-class hostesses in a private sphere were also regarded as an important intellectual zone, but they were not entirely domestic settings since they usually involved only a limited number of participants from the host families. Edgeworth's writings share with the Enlightenment gender models' emphasis on the virtue of chastity for women. But her representation of gender roles suggests that men, too, should be loyal to their wives, and that the domestic sphere should be an intellectual zone where women could share with men discussions to enlighten their family's view. In Edgeworth's writings, the family circle is perceived as a microcosm of society. The wife and the husband are supposed to be friends to each other and to consolidate between them a social bond which would be the basis for their social life on a greater scale.

With these major components of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism, Burke's Romantic nationalism holds an intricate relationship. Although a clear-cut distinction between the former and the latter is often assumed by scholars of literature, there are significant continuities. Burke's indebtedness to Enlightenment

---

<sup>318</sup> Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. by David Fate Norton and Mary J. Norton, repr. with corrections (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). Hereafter referred to as *THN*.

<sup>319</sup> Kathryn Sutherland, 'Adam Smith's Master Narrative', in *Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations*, ed. by Stephen Copley and Kathryn Sutherland (1995), p. 112.

<sup>320</sup> See Sutherland pp. 98-99, 117-18.



thought in his theorisation of Romantic nationalism needs special attention here. For example, his cultural nationalism in the *Reflections* attempts to establish the superiority of the British constitution over the doctrines of revolutionary France, especially by reiterating strictures on the latter's 'confiscation' of the properties that used to belong to the church and the landed class:

These professors of the rights of men are so busy in teaching others, that they have not leisure to learn any thing themselves; otherwise they would have known that it is to the property of the citizen, and not to the demands of the creditor of the state, that the first and original faith of civil society is pledged. (*Reflections*, p. 107)<sup>321</sup>

Our people will find employment enough for a truly patriotic, free, and independent spirit, in guarding what they possess, from violation. (*Reflections*, p. 248)

The view that the protection of individuals' rights to properties is fundamental to civic society is crucial to the theories of Scottish Enlightenment philosophers such as Hume and Smith. Further intersections of Burke's ideas and the theories of Hume and Smith in numerous terms have been explored by Burke's scholars. Published in 1978, Donald Winch's study on Smith reports, 'there is, by now, a sizeable body of literature emphasising the conservative intellectual affinities between Smith and Burke which takes the argument well beyond the establishable facts of their friendship'.<sup>322</sup> To take a recent example, Tom Furniss argues that Burke's aesthetic ideology was inspired by the models of political economy devised by Hume and Smith, especially their accounts of 'luxury', which release the notion from the monopoly of aristocracy and make it more congenial to the ethos of the middle classes.<sup>323</sup>

Among these intersections between Enlightenment notions and Burke's ideas, Burke's revelation of a kind of cosmopolitan perspective in the *Reflections* needs to be noted. For instance, he concedes:

It is not clear, whether in England we learned those grand and decorous principles, and manners, of which considerable traces yet remain, from you, or whether you took them from us. But to you, I think we trace them best. You

---

<sup>321</sup> Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, ed. by L. G. Mitchell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993). Burke identifies 'confiscation' as the 'cement' to hold the French nation, proposed by the doctrines of revolutionary France (*Reflections*, p. 191).

<sup>322</sup> Donald Winch, *Adam Smith's Politics* (1978), p. 24. See also C. R. Fay, *Burke and Adam Smith* (1956), which is not included in Winch's list.

<sup>323</sup> Tom Furniss, *Edmund Burke's Aesthetic Ideology* (1993), pp. 56-59.

seem to me to be—*gentis incunabula nostrae* [‘the cradle of our people’, Virgil, *Aeneid*]. (*Reflections*, p. 80)

One of the main reasons for Burke’s repugnance against the post-revolutionary French nation and his praise for the English nation is that the former has discarded the spirit of ‘chivalry’, in other words, ‘decorous principles’ and ‘manners’, whereas the latter still holds them. That contrast is part of the means Burke distinguishes the English nation from the French nation. On the other hand, he admits in the passage above that ‘decorous principles’ and ‘manners’ may not be inherent in the social and cultural identities of the English nation, and could be inherent in those of the French nation. What emerges in this admission is a somewhat cosmopolitan perspective. As if to rectify this logical liability, in *Letter to a Member of the National Assembly 1791*, which was written as a response to criticism against the *Reflections*, he attempts to understate this cosmopolitan perspective, which he has slipped out in the *Reflections*:<sup>324</sup>

When I praised the British constitution, and wished it to be well studied, I did not mean that its exterior form and positive arrangement should become a model for you, or for any people servilely to copy. I meant to recommend the *principles* from which it has grown, and the policy on which it has been progressively improved out of elements common to you and us. [...] As you had a constitution formed upon principles similar to ours, my idea was, that you might have improved them as we have done, conforming them to the state and exigencies of the times, and the condition of property in your country, having the conservation of that property, and the substantial basis of your monarchy, as principal objects in all your reforms. (*Letter from Mr Burke*, p. 286)

These rather lengthy and apologetic remarks show Burke’s awareness of different ‘circumstances’ under which the British nation and the French nation are situated respectively. Although he disavows the same beneficial effect of the formula, which the British nation enjoys, over the French nation, he ends up emphasising similarities between the traditions of the English nation and the French nation and encourages the French nation to apply the British formula. In this sense, Burke’s vision may be seen as strictured by a cosmopolitan perspective. His reference to the classical or historical examples in other European countries to support his articulation of Romantic nationalism may be taken as another indicator of a cosmopolitan perspective. Given the entangled traffic of ideas between Burke and

---

<sup>324</sup> *A Letter from Mr Burke, to a Member of the National Assembly*, originally published in Paris, repr. (1791). My page reference to this text is in accordance with L. G. Mitchell’s edition, which is included as appendix in his Oxford edition of *Reflections*. Hereafter referred to as *Letter from Mr Burke*.



Enlightenment philosophers, it is reasonable that Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Burkean nationalism converge in Edgeworth's conceptualisation of ideal patriotism.<sup>325</sup> Having noted this feature of the intricate relationship between Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Burkean nationalism, we shall now consider some of the main constituents of Burke's theory in the *Reflections*, as a canonical work of Romantic nationalism.

One of the most perceptible characteristics of Burke's Romantic nationalism in the *Reflections* may be its chauvinist cultural nationalism.<sup>326</sup> Recognising the commonalities between Burke's Romantic nationalism in the *Reflections* and Richard Price's Enlightenment patriotism in 'A Discourse on the Love of our Country' (1789), Furniss draws a critical division between them in the sense that Price's Enlightenment patriotism

assumes that a nation can only be free, virtuous and fully coherent when all its citizens enjoy freedom of conscience and the right to participate in the political process. Burke's cultural nationalism assumes that a nation can only be free, virtuous and fully coherent through engaging the imaginative identifications of each citizen or subject.<sup>327</sup>

While Price is usually located by critics in the context of English Dissent and/or the 'English Enlightenment', he shared with Scottish and French Enlightenment writers the ideal that patriotism and cosmopolitanism are mutually compatible:

In pursuing particularly the interest of our country we ought to carry our views beyond it. We should love it ardently but not exclusively. We ought to seek its good, by all the means that our different circumstances and abilities will allow, but at the same time we ought to consider ourselves as citizens of the world, and take care to maintain a just regard to the rights of other countries.<sup>328</sup>

Furniss's distinction between Price and Burke may thus be applicable to highlight a crucial contrast between Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Burke's cultural nationalism. Moreover, Burke's nationalism is often exclusive with its 'aggressive differentiation which invokes many of the "others" of his time' in defining cultural

---

<sup>325</sup> Mc Cormack's investigation into the lack of attention to *Reflections* after the 1790s in Ireland shrewdly argues that the idiosyncratic significance of Edgeworth's Irish tales is to fill this gap in the Irish press. Mc Cormack, 'Between Burke and the Union', in Whale (ed.), p. 82.

<sup>326</sup> For Burke's cultural nationalism in the *Reflections*, see Furniss, 'Cementing the Nation' in Whale (ed.), pp. 115-44.

<sup>327</sup> Furniss, 'Cementing the Nation', p. 141. What Furniss means by 'civic nationalism' here is equivalent to 'patriotism' in my usage.

<sup>328</sup> Richard Price, *Political Writings*, ed. by D. O. Thomas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 181. Partly quoted in Furniss, 'Cementing the Nation', p. 118.

and national identities.<sup>329</sup> Edgeworth's patriotism sides with Enlightenment cosmopolites rather than with Burke in these regards, by allowing the nation to be culturally hybrid, far from homogeneous, and by disapproving national chauvinism, as the reading of *Patronage* in the previous chapter noted.

This homogenizing cultural bonding in Burke's Romantic nationalism looks to sentimental attachment to 'custom' institutionalised by the traditional landed order, and evokes the nostalgia for the aristocratic 'chivalry'. Burke employed landed estates as the symbol of the authentic English tradition, including the landed order, to be preserved and, also as the transmitter of cultural nationalism.<sup>330</sup> The use of landed estates as a metaphor underpins his indictment of the doctrines promoted by revolutionary France. His rhetoric censoriously features the French doctrines as 'abstract' radicalism destructing the tangible, the specific, or the local. According to my argument hitherto, Edgeworth's patriotism may not seem to incorporate Burke's cultural nationalism due to the former's pursuit of cosmopolitan ideals. Her ideal patriotism, however, borrows his ideological device. She represents dilapidated landed estates as an indicator of social degeneracy with a tinge of Burkean nostalgia<sup>331</sup> and also designates landed estates as a potential institution to disseminate ideology, which is not a cultural nationalism but her own version of ideal patriotism, throughout the nation. This borrowing is important in the additional sense that Edgeworth's ideal patriotism could encompass both the city and the country, whereas Enlightenment cosmopolitanism revolved around the metropolitan settings of Paris, Edinburgh, London, and Geneva.

Burke's Romantic nationalism in the *Reflections* is usually considered as conservative in the sense that it approves social improvements insofar as the traditional landed order is not subverted. Using metaphors of buildings, he recommends 'improvements' rather than 'destructions'. His counter-revolutionary spectacle enshrines the aristocracy, deeming the class as a cultural institution 'wholly composed of hereditary property' and 'hereditary distinction', which ensures 'preservation and transmission' of traditional values (*Reflections*, p. 51). This argument is accompanied by his occasional discrimination against such a rising class as the professional meritocracy:

<sup>329</sup> John Whale, 'Introduction', in Whale (ed.), p. 8. See also Deane, *Strange Country*, p. 8.

<sup>330</sup> For instance, see *Reflections*, p. 162.

<sup>331</sup> See Mc Cormack, *From Burke to Beckett* (1994), pp. 28-93; Mc Cormack, *Ascendancy*



It cannot escape observation, that when men are too much confined to professional and faculty habits, and, as it were, inveterate in the recurrent employment of that narrow circle, they are rather disabled than qualified for whatever depends on the knowledge of mankind, on experience in mixed affairs, on a comprehensive connected view of the various complicated external and internal interests which go to the formation of that multifarious thing called a state. (*Reflections*, pp. 44-45)

Within several pages after this quotation, Burke makes his ideal of the ruling class more clearly:

Woe to the country which would madly and impiously reject the service of the talents and virtues, civil, military, or religious, that are given to grace and to serve it; and would condemn to obscurity every thing formed to diffuse lustre and glory around a state. Woe to that country too, that passing into the opposite extreme, considers a low education, a mean contracted view of things, a sordid mercenary occupation, as a preferable title to command. Every thing ought to be open; but not indifferently to every man. (*Reflections*, p. 50)

While Burke's emotive rhetoric apparently advocates social mobility, the mobility is conditional and contrived to be consistent with his idealisation of the aristocracy. He appreciates the members of a professional meritocracy, provided that they 'are given to grace and to serve it'. Professional meritocracy is expected to be alleged with aristocratic values such as 'grace' or the spirit of 'chivalry'.<sup>332</sup> Furthermore, he admits the 'considerable faults and errors' of the hereditary aristocracy:

Those of the commons, who approached to or exceeded many of the nobility in point of wealth, were not fully admitted to the rank and estimation which wealth, in reason and good policy, ought to bestow in every country; though I think not equally with that of other nobility. The two kinds of aristocracy were too punctiliously kept asunder [...]. This separation, as I have already taken the liberty of suggesting to you, I conceive to be one principal cause of the destruction of the old nobility. The military, particularly, was too exclusively reserved for men of family. (*Reflections*, pp. 138-39)

Although Burke objects to the exclusiveness of the hereditary aristocracy, including its ill effect on the military profession, he maintains his partiality to the hereditary aristocracy. He suggests that new aristocrats should not be treated as equals to hereditary aristocrats while the former should be given appropriate 'rank and estimation'. His nationalism does not allow so significant roles to the members of a professional meritocracy as does Edgeworth's ideal patriotism.

---

*and Tradition*, pp. 97-168. See also Deane, *Strange Country*, p. 33.

<sup>332</sup> Burke's rhetoric here finds its variation in Mr Percy's articulate criticism of patronage, which I cited in the previous chapter: 'Woe be to the country, that trusts to such rulers and such defenders! Woe has been to every country, that has so trusted' (*P*, VI, p. 109). As I

This class component of Burke's paradigm is interlinked with his gender programme. It is now a predominant understanding among scholars that his view of the female gender in the *Reflections* is patriarchal, and much explanation may not be needed here. The Burkean vision of domestic women 'as merely a re-formation of dependent, eroticized, trivialized, and subjugated courtly "woman"' provoked Mary Wollstonecraft's fierce counter-argument in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792).<sup>333</sup> The major female figures in the *Reflections* and *Letter from Mr Burke* are royals, aristocrats, and 'the females of the first families in France'. Commonly, they are represented as a principal target of the lust of revolution; the most notorious example is the representation of Marie Antoinette as fleeing 'almost naked' from rebels.<sup>334</sup> By repeating such representations, Burke emphasises the detrimental effects of the subversion of traditional social order. His Romantic nationalism domesticates women to be maternal figures ensuring the continuity of the family lineage and the nourishment of 'domestic affections' as the basis of the organic bonding among family, among neighbours, and ultimately in the nation<sup>335</sup> since he conceives the 'polity' in 'the image of a relation in blood; binding up the constitution of our country with our dearest domestic ties; adopting our fundamental laws into the bosom of our family affections; keeping inseparable, and cherishing with the warmth of all their combined and mutually reflected charities, our state, our hearths, our sepulchres, and our altars' (*Reflections*, p. 34). In this manner, Burke ennoble the female gender as an ornamental symbol of the traditional landed order to be protected by the spirit of 'chivalry', but he simultaneously reduces this gender to an organ of reproduction, as illustrated in his reference to Princess Sophia and 'a foreign princess' who is imagined as an alternative to her:

On what ground [...] could the legislature have fastidiously rejected the fair and abundant choice which our own country presented to them, and searched in strange lands for a foreign princess, from whose womb the line of our future rulers were to derive their title to govern millions of men through a series of ages?

The Princess Sophia was named in the act of settlement of the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of King William, for a *stock* and root of *inheritance* to our kings, and not for her merits as a temporary administratrix of a power [...]. (*Reflections*, p. 24)

---

pointed out, this remark is one of the key moments in *Patronage*.

<sup>333</sup> Kelly, *Women, Writing, and Revolution 1790-1827* (1993), p. 26.

<sup>334</sup> See also *Letter from Mr Burke*, p. 274.

<sup>335</sup> Kelly, *Women*, p. 16.



Here Burke's interest in the imagined 'foreign princess' and Princess Sophia concentrates on the question of which woman's 'womb', rather than 'merits' for the rule of the country, should be legitimate to maintain the royal hereditary lineage. This paradox in Burke's expectations of the female gender is most remarkable in his depiction of the mob's assault on Marie Antoinette's chamber, which I have mentioned above; he also refers to her without courtesy as 'this persecuted woman' (*Reflections*, p. 27).

It would follow that Burke shared patriarchal assumptions with Enlightenment cosmopolites that women's primary role is to bear children, although with a different emphasis. Burke associated the female gender with aristocratic values to a greater extent. He also differs from them in the sense that he puts more emphasis on the hierarchical structure of patriarchal society. Such Burkean expectations on the female gender are obviously in tension with Edgeworth's criticism of superficial femininity poisoned by the aristocratic degeneracy; the ideological implication of Burkean gender outlook was 'not to undermine court government and aristocratic culture but to defend them as already imbued with the values of the professional middle-class cultural revolution'.<sup>336</sup> While Edgeworth's model heroines are characterised as domestic, there is much less compromise between her opinion of aristocratic decadence and her affinity for professional ethos than in Burke's vision of model women.

After our examination of class and gender assumptions in Burke's configuration of nationalism, it is appropriate to look into the linguistic component of the configuration. Burke regards language as an important component of his cultural nationalism, particularly in the sense that

Burke and the counterrevolutionaries believed that the study of Greek and Latin refined and civilized man. Like the revolutionaries, they associated these languages with traditional values and a world view, albeit with different meaning. In the interstices of the counterrevolutionary consciousness, Latin looms as the universal language of European world order. Consequently, the proliferation of 'vulgar' tongues and ideologies, the fragmentation of the linguistic order of Europe, suggests Babel and a second fall of language. It suggests the unsaying of Europe through the linguistic fragmentation of its classical, communal culture.<sup>337</sup>

Burke's appreciation of the classical languages and literature as the roots of traditional values is an understandable reaction to the re-evaluation of the

---

<sup>336</sup> Kelly, *Women*, p. 16.

<sup>337</sup> Steven Blakemore, *Burke and the Fall of Language* (1988), p. 81.

‘vernacular language’ in revolutionary France, which was propelled by the antipathy against the classical languages as the ‘elitist prerogatives of aristocrats and popes’.<sup>338</sup> Curiously enough, Burke’s nationalism, as a result, fails to give a central role to the ‘vernacular language’, unlike many nineteenth-century versions of Romantic nationalism. In this regard, the linguistic component of his theory reveals its understated cosmopolitan strand, which tracks the roots of the English cultural heritage back to the classic European civilisation. We may regard the familiarity with the classical languages required of ideal national leaders in his Romantic nationalism as a kind of multilingualism. The Burkean multilingualism is connected with aristocratic values and is hardly associated with social mobility as in Edgeworth’s ideal patriotism, however.

Finally, Burke’s Anglo-Irish background should be addressed. It is highly debatable how he related his dual or ambivalent national identity to his cultural nationalism in the *Reflections*. In drawing on the English custom or heritage, he frequently uses the term ‘we’ and ‘our’ to imply that he identifies himself as a member of the English nation. In this sense, his definition of the nation may not seem so tightly constructed around cultural heritage. This question is, however, far too intricate and controversial to be accommodated within the scope of my thesis. It seems therefore appropriate to take this question into account and focus on possible contradictions between Burke’s political and social prescriptions for England and Ireland. For example, Declan Kiberd argues that ‘There were two Burkes: an English Burke who thought one thing (usually quite traditional), while the Irish Burke felt quite another thing (often covertly radical in tendency)’.<sup>339</sup> While it may be questionable whether a clear division can be set between the English Burke and the Irish Burke, such a Burkean contradiction seems highly relevant to Edgeworth’s formulation of ideal patriotism and construction of national identity.

---

<sup>338</sup> Blakemore, p. 78.

<sup>339</sup> Declan Kiberd, *Irish Classics* (2001), pp. 209-12.



## 5.2 Case Studies

### 5.2.1 *An Essay on Irish Bulls*

This kaleidoscopic essay on ‘bulls’ or verbal blunders commonly attributed to the Irish nation was co-authored by Edgeworth and her father. As Butler discerns, the rich materials and strands of *Irish Bulls* make it difficult to pin down the text against a single tradition or ideology.<sup>340</sup> Closer to our agenda, Myers recognises in *Irish Bulls* co-existing affinities with Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and cultural nationalism which we detected in *Patronage* in the previous chapter.<sup>341</sup> Even in the light of such an intricately ambivalent feature of the work, which both Butler and Myers underscore, the Edgeworths’ argument in *Irish Bulls* seems to be predominantly charged with the Enlightenment values rather than the norms of Burkean cultural nationalism.<sup>342</sup> The Edgeworths’ introduction to the edition of 1808 refers to the work as *Essay concerning the Nature of Bulls and Blunders* and implicitly stylises it as a treatise like those published by the Scottish Enlightenment writers such as Hume, whose political ‘essays’ were highly renowned. Through the Edgeworths’ editorial revisions, the work underwent some omissions and additions but retains a logically contrived complex of chapters, all headed by titles denoting their topics.<sup>343</sup> Part of the reason is because the authorial voice often draws attention to the logical flow of the chapter at the outset in order to justify its argument. In these terms, the text differs from Burke’s *Reflections*, in which the epistolary form allows his remarks to appear as spontaneous and sentimental. Some chapters of *Irish Bulls* such as ‘Little Dominick’ and ‘The Irish Incognito’ could be read as independent moral tales, and indeed their respective textual universes may seem too expansive to be contained in the form of ‘essay’. *Irish Bulls* may, as Myers argues, ‘destabilize[s]’ the model of literary genre, but after all these chapters seem to be meant as anecdotes to support the Edgeworths’ main argument in the text.<sup>344</sup> In this sense *Irish Bulls* may be said to sustain a form of essay, even though it may not be to a rigid extent.

The principal purpose of this essay is, according to the authorial voice, to

<sup>340</sup> Butler, ‘Edgeworth’s Ireland’, *Novel*, 34 (2001), p. 279.

<sup>341</sup> Myers, ‘Goring John Bull’, in *Cutting Edges*, ed. by James E. Gill (1995), pp. 380-81.

<sup>342</sup> See also Ó Gallchoir, ‘Maria Edgeworth’, p. 59.

<sup>343</sup> See Butler’s comprehensive account of the editorial history in *Works*, 1, pp. xiv-xvi, 369-70. The Pickering edition of the text is based on the edition of 1832.

rectify the persistent prejudice held by the English nation against the verbal blunders of the Irish, who became their fellow countrymen with the effect of the Union between Britain and Ireland in 1801. While displaying the text's multiple strands, which would communicate different signals to different audiences, Butler admits that 'the nagging theme of English injustice always somehow seems more visible than the rest'.<sup>345</sup> The Edgeworths' challenge to the English discrimination against 'Irish bulls' is undertaken not only by hunting similar 'bulls' among the English nation but also by characterising 'Irish bulls' as cosmopolitan phenomena with reference to examples within and outside Europe. In the early chapter entitled 'Originality of Irish Bulls Examined', the authorial voice declares, 'Many bulls, reputed to be bred and born in Ireland, are of foreign extraction' and introduces 'bulls' located among other European nations such as the French nation and the Spanish nation, as well as in 'the East' (*IB*, pp. 76-77). The authorial voice's commentary on 'Irish bulls' is therefore not only localised within the Anglophone world but also articulated from a cosmopolitan perspective. This cosmopolitan or universalist notion of 'Irish bulls' is advanced further by the Edgeworths' decision to omit an introductory chapter entitled 'Vulgar Errors' from the edition of 1808 onwards. In this chapter, the authorial voice notes, 'English is not the mother tongue of the natives of Ireland; to them it is a foreign language, and, consequently, it is scarcely within the limits of probability, that they should avoid making blunders both in speaking and writing' (*IB*, pp. 372-73). The effect of the editorial omission of this chapter seems to prevent the readers from attributing the phenomena of 'Irish bulls' simply to the colonial linguistic predicaments under which the indigenous Irish are placed. Rather, the readers are persuaded to see 'bulls' as verbal traits commonly shared by various nations. 'Irish bulls' formerly deemed as the principal part of the 'peculiar' national character of the Irish are no longer to label the Irish national character as fallible. The verbal culture of the Irish nation in terms of 'bulls' is conceived as cosmopolitan, and the Irish are qualified as citizens of the world. The Edgeworths' attempt to disown blunders as 'unique' to the Irish nation or to tone down the negative stereotype of the Irish is accompanied by their observations on 'bulls in conduct' in the chapter 'Practical Bulls': 'As we have not hitherto been successful in finding original Irish bulls in language, we

---

<sup>344</sup> Myers, 'Bull', p. 367.

<sup>345</sup> Butler, 'Edgeworth's Ireland', p. 279.



must now look for them in conduct' (*IB*, p. 103). This move situates the issue of national character in a non-verbal territory where both the cosmopolitanisation of the Irish nation and the universalisation of nations can be facilitated. In these terms, *Irish Bulls* bears traces of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism. The Edgeworths' frequent references to Enlightenment writings from Scotland and France, such as Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Robertson's *The History of Scotland*, Voltaire's *Le Siècle de Louis XIV*, and Marmontel's *Contes Moraux*, and to the classical literature serve to consolidate these traces, as well.

The Edgeworths' refutation of the English prejudice of designating verbal and practical blunders as the 'original' and core feature of the Irish national character is not geared only to an attempt to universalise the verbal capacity of the indigenous Irish, however. It also admits that the use of 'figurative language' by the indigenous Irish distinguishes their national character. While their figurative language tended to be viewed from English perspectives as 'Irish bulls', the Edgeworths try to establish its positive force as ingenuity, through detailed analyses and also to distinguish it from plain 'bulls' found across nations. The authorial voice's citations of the figurative language used in Ireland include examples that reveal the political tensions in Ireland, such as those attending the rebellion of 1798. By illustrating some injustice done by the English and Anglo-Irish upper classes to the indigenous Irish, the authorial voice implies that the use of figurative language often understood as 'Irish bulls' was an inevitable resource for the latter under the former's colonial rule in Ireland.

The vindication of the Irish national character in *Irish Bulls* thus consists of two major stages. The first stage is to allow the Irish nation to stand on an equal footing with other nations, including the English nation, by demonstrating that 'bulls' which were thought to be symptomatic of the Irish nation and of its inferiority are indeed phenomena shared by various nations. This procedure is important in the sense that the authorial voice does not seek to elicit English pity from the outset by restricting the issue to the colonial relationship between England and Ireland. Resorting to an English colonial pity, which may not appreciate the merit of the Irish nation in a wider context, may have merely effected the demeaning of the Irish nation. The first stage thus aims to set a kind of neutral ground for the second stage where the text addresses the Irish nation's colonial predicaments more explicitly and attempts to define the distinctive dimension of

the nation's character positively in terms of their ingenious use of figurative language. The second stage praises the Irish national character for its creative verbal skills but at once re-registers the Irish as colonial subjects. This kind of contradictory view on colonial subjects may be seen as parallel to the incomplete universalism of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism, which has been noted in the first section of this chapter above. The colonial awareness is observable throughout the text, which ends with the following passage implying the hegemony of England over Ireland after the Union:

One of the Czars of Russia used to take the cap and bells from his fool, and place it on the head of any of his subjects whom he wished to disgrace. The idea of extending such a punishment to a whole nation was ingenious and magnanimous; but England cannot now put it into execution towards Ireland. Would it not be a practical bull to place the bells upon her own imperial head? (*IB*, p. 153)

Intriguingly, England and Ireland are seen as one united and personified body. The attempt to place the fool's 'cap and belles' on the head of Ireland is interpreted as the attempt to put them on England's own expanding 'imperial' head, after all.<sup>346</sup> The colonial connotation of the Anglo-Irish relationship is augmented by the comparison with the notorious Russian slavery. Even though Ireland and England may be now a united body with a single 'head', the 'head' is the 'imperial' England, to which Ireland is made subordinate.

This perception of the Anglo-Irish relationship is complemented by the Edgeworths' prescription for the English and Anglo-Irish ruling classes to exercise paternalistic landlordism towards the indigenous Irish. *Irish Bulls* suggests that ideal patriots should be able to appreciate the dialects and figurative language of the lower Irish so that the former can be familiar with the latter's needs. In other words, ideal patriots are supposed to be multilingual to an appropriate degree. This principle seems to be the basis for the Edgeworths' suggestion that ideal patriots, especially when they issue public discourse, should themselves avoid committing 'bulls', in particular oppressive 'bulls', which would reveal 'party barbarisms':

It is to be hoped, that all party barbarisms in language will now be disused and forgotten; for some time has elapsed since we read the following article of country intelligence in a Dublin paper: –

'General — scoured the country yesterday, but had not the good fortune to meet with a single rebel.'

---

<sup>346</sup> See also Myers, 'Bull', p. 384.



[...]. Possibly, however, this was only a figure of speech, like that of bishop Wilkins, who prophesied that the time would come when gentlemen, when they were to go a journey, would call for their wings as regularly as they call for their boots. –We *believe* that the hyperboles of the privy-counsellor and the bishop are of equal magnitude. (*IB*, p. 85)

It is implied that the ruling class should not indulge in ‘hyperboles’ because of the serious influence of their public discourse of authority. Reflecting on the rebellious symptoms in Ireland as well as the aftermath of the Revolution in France, the text signals Burkean caution against the consequences of political subversion, as they may play out in the domain of language. Just before the passage cited above, the authorial voice tries to dissuade the reader from registering the neologisms driven by party spirits as permanent:<sup>347</sup>

We observe that it has been [...] found necessary to publish, in France, *une Dictionnaire néologique*, a dictionary of the new terms adopted since the revolution.

It must be supposed, that during the late disturbances in Ireland, many *cant* terms have been brought into use, which are not yet to be reckoned amongst the acknowledged terms of the country. [...] It has often been said, that the language of a people is a just criterion of their progress in civilization; but we must not take a specimen of their vocabulary during the immediate prevalence of any transient passion or prejudice. (*IB*, pp. 84-85)

It would follow that the text’s expectation for ideal patriots is Burkean in the sense that it politicises ‘verbal hygiene’ self-consciously. By ‘verbal hygiene’, I mean ‘the urge to meddle in matters of language’, following Deborah Cameron’s broad definition.<sup>348</sup> Mrs Percy’s challenge against Lady Jane’s assumption that fashionable dialect is standard English in *Patronage*, which I highlighted in the previous chapter, is a typical example of ‘verbal hygiene’. The authorial voice’s multilingualism demonstrated in the text meets the text’s expectation. Its good command of dialects, modern languages, and classical languages underpin its ‘verbal hygiene’, aiming at the social harmony in post-Union Britain chiefly through the denunciation of the English discrimination against ‘Irish bulls’. While the national identity or allegiance of the authorial voice may often appear ‘ambiguous’,<sup>349</sup> its ‘verbal hygiene’ seems to enable the narrative voice to

<sup>347</sup> See also Ó Gallchoir, ‘Maria Edgeworth’, pp. 107-8.

<sup>348</sup> According to Cameron, the prescriptive attempt to standardise a language typifies ‘verbal hygiene’, but the reverse attempt to appreciate the diversity of dialects may also be considered as such, since the latter case is also an intervention in linguistic matters. For more refined discussion of the term, see Cameron’s *Verbal Hygiene* (1995), especially Chapter 1.

<sup>349</sup> For the view to find the national identity of the narrative voice less ambiguous, see Butler,

authenticate itself as an eligible patriot in these terms, as Burke attempts to legitimise his operations with the construction of a similarly slippery national identity on behalf of the English nation in the *Reflections*.

Presented as important candidates for such ideal patriotists in *Irish Bulls* are members of the professional meritocracy, such as military officers and professionalised landlords.<sup>350</sup> English and Scottish military officers are referred to as crucial ‘diffusers’ of the character of the Irish nation. Through their mobile and public office the officers are expected to gather ‘real knowledge’ about Ireland and her people with the aid of appropriate multilingualism. The ‘well informed and well-bred’ Irish gentleman, who is ‘superior to local and national prejudice’ in the anecdote of Bath Coach in Chapter 12 observes:

I am sure my country [Ireland] has great obligations to the gallant English and Scotch military, not only for so readily assisting to defend and quiet us, but for spreading in England a juster notion of Ireland. Within these few months, I suppose, more real knowledge of the state and manners of that kingdom has been diffused in England by their means, than had been obtained during a whole century. (*IB*, p. 127)

These remarks are considered as fair by his fellow passengers, the Englishman and the Scotchman, who are said to be free of national prejudice like him. The story of the Hibernian mendicant about his confrontation with an English sergeant from the landed class provides a striking counter-example of the Edgeworths’ ideal patriots from the professional meritocracy. The mendicant describes the sergeant’s national discrimination by saying, ‘He was a handsome portly man, but very proud, and looked upon me as dirt under his feet, because I was an Irishman; and at every word would say, “*That’s an Irish bull!*” or, “*Do you hear Paddy’s brogue?*” at which his fellow-soldiers, being all English, would look greatly delighted’ (*IB*, p. 114). The sergeant’s repeated mockery of the mendicant’s ‘Irish bulls’ and ‘brogue’ culminates in a fight which results in the death of a peasant girl who has been courted by both of them. This anecdote illustrates that military officers could evoke national prejudice very easily among their cohorts and warns that they should make efforts to avoid spreading such prejudice.

---

‘Introductory Note’, *Works*, I, p. xvii.

<sup>350</sup> For example, the authorial voice counts male writers from the landed class, who are often affiliated with a professional meritocracy such as lawyers and military officers, in its list of the honorary members of the Irish nation, preferred to legendary heroes, in the end of the text.



We can also find in the text the implicit suggestion that Anglo-Irish landlords should be multilingual to a certain extent since they are, like military officers, often in contact with the indigenous Irish, whose ‘brogues’ and figurative language might be difficult to understand. A degree of multilingualism would enable the former to become familiar with the latter’s needs. An anecdote about Paddy M’Doole in Chapter 6 demonstrates such an imperative. M’Doole is a flax-dresser and dealer, and the anecdote is about his appeal to his former landlord. He complains about his injury, caused by a local ‘deputy inspector’, after giving a detailed account of how precarious his life is. The examples of ‘Irish brogues’ and figurative language of the indigenous Irish are represented by means of typological deviations, such as ‘plase [*sic*]’ and ‘*kilt*’ (*IB*, p. 101). The figurative use of the term ‘*kilt*’ among the lower Irish has been repeatedly discussed in the editorial devices of *Castle Rackrent*. This obsession with the term seems mainly due to Edgeworth’s concern about its implicit context of violence between and within nations in a turbulent Ireland.

We have observed the links between the ruling class and multilingualism in the ideal patriotism proposed by *Irish Bulls*. When we look for the gender component of the formula, the following passage seems relevant:

But we have been informed by a lady of unquestionable veracity, that she very lately received a petition worded in this manner –  
 ‘To the right hon lady E— P—.  
 ‘Humbly showeth;  
 ‘That your poor petitioner is now lying dead in a ditch,’ &c. (*IB*, p. 101)

This passage is meant to be a similar example of the ‘metaphorical sense’ of ‘dead’ in the usage of the lower Irish, but brings a woman of the landed class under the spotlight. Significantly, it illustrates that she holds authority among local peasants, at least from their perspectives. She is represented with the capacity to attract petitions from peasants. This picture of a woman from the landed class might appear to deserve only a small space in the text, but prevents the gender outlook of the text from being so patriarchal as that of the writings of the Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Burkean nationalism. The authorial voice’s inclusion of women, especially literary women with a publishing career, among the ‘men of genius’, whom it proposes Ireland should boast instead of legendary heroes, also bears out such an appreciation of women’s potential for patriotic roles in a public

sphere.<sup>351</sup>

The text's call for sufficient multilingualism among English and Anglo-Irish ideal patriots requires that they be familiar with the colonial subjects' verbal culture. But such multilingualism is not expected to sentimentalise the cultural heritage of the latter. In the 'Conclusion', the authorial voice acknowledges that:

As we were neither *born nor bred* in Ireland, we cannot be supposed to possess this *amor patriæ* in its full force: we profess to be attached to the country only for its merits; we acknowledge that it is a matter of indifference to us whether the Irish derive their origin from the Spaniards, or the Milesians, or the Welsh [...]. We moreover candidly confess that we are more interested in the fate of the present race of its inhabitants than in the historian of St Patrick, St Facharis, St Cormuc [...]. (*IB*, p. 152)

The authorial voice has humanitarian concerns about the current and future welfare of the Irish nation rather than the cultural roots of the nation. In this regard, the ideal of patriotism for the British nation in *Irish Bulls* is decisively closer to Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and measures its distance from cultural nationalism, shared by Burke and Irish historians, as it idealises the cultural heritage of the nation.<sup>352</sup> It is also noteworthy that the authorial voice manifests support for the principle of meritocracy in terms of the 'country' of its attachment. The priority given to the 'merits' of the country rather than to the 'origin' of the country may be seen as parallel to the appreciation of personal merits over genealogical roots articulated in Edgeworth's novels.

The prescription of ideal patriotism is backstitched with frequent references to rebellious symptoms and political organisations in Ireland, such as the United Irishmen. It is also accompanied by the Edgeworths' awareness of the 'sly civility' of the indigenous Irish, which induces an uneasiness among the English and Anglo-Irish ruling classes.<sup>353</sup> Ideal patriotism explored in *Irish Bulls* is therefore counter-balanced by the political tension within the post-Union British nation to a greater extent than in *Patronage*. Designing 'verbal hygiene' to conciliate the cultural and political tension between nations, *Irish Bulls* emphasises its political

---

<sup>351</sup> The Edgeworths refer to both Frances Sheridan and Elizabeth Hamilton in the list in the edition of 1803 whereas in later editions Hamilton's name is omitted. See also Myers, 'Bull', p. 382.

<sup>352</sup> Myers, 'Bull', pp. 382-83.

<sup>353</sup> See Sean Moore, 'Taking the Bull by the Horns', in *New Voices in Irish Criticism 3*, ed. by Karen Vandavelde (2002), pp. 115-22.



benefit as a crucial constituent of ideal patriotism more clearly than *Patronage* does.

### 5.2.2 *Harrington*

*Harrington* was conceived in response to a letter of complaint from the American Jewish reader, Rachel Lazarus. In her letter of 7 August 1815, she politely criticised Edgeworth's stereotypical portrayals of Jewish characters in her fiction and pointed out that such prejudiced representations would imprint anti-Semitism on the minds of the young generation:

Relying on the good sense and candour of Miss Edgeworth I would ask, how it can be that she, who on all other subjects shows such justice and liberality, should on one alone appear biased by prejudice: should even instill [*sic*] that prejudice into the minds of youth! Can my allusion be mistaken? It is to the species of character which wherever a *Jew* is introduced is invariably attached to him. Can it be believed that this race of men are by nature mean, avaricious, and unprincipled? [...] [I]n this happy country, where religious distinctions are scarcely known, where character and talents are all sufficient to attain advancement, we find the Jews to form a respectable part of the community.<sup>354</sup>

Lazarus identifies racial and religious bias in Edgeworth's illustrations of Jewish characters, as Lazarus's references to the 'race' and 'religious distinctions' denote. Edgeworth admitted the defect and claimed that *Harrington* was composed as a gesture of 'atonement and reparation'.<sup>355</sup> Under the circumstances, the novel grapples squarely with racial, religious, and cultural intolerance. Precisely because of this self-conscious project, *Harrington* provides an important textual space where we can sharpen our investigation into the relationship of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Burkean nationalism within Edgeworth's ideal patriotism.

The story, narrated by the protagonist Harrington, opens with his graphic reminiscence of the night when he, at the age of five, was imbued with horror and disgust at Jews by his malevolent nursery maid's fabrication. In order to put him under her control, the maid Fowler threatened him by maintaining that Simon, a Jewish 'clothes man' or clothes collector, would take him away in a sack if he disobeyed her. Throughout his childhood, Harrington's prejudice against Jews

---

<sup>354</sup> MacDonald (ed.), p. 6.

<sup>355</sup> Letter from Edgeworth to Lazarus, 4 August 1816, in MacDonald (ed.), p. 8.

continues to grow with his biased parents' encouragement, to the extent that he would be seized with hysteria at the mere sight or idea of a Jew. His mother adores his anti-Semitic fits as evidence of delicate 'sensibility' inherited from her. To his father, who was a member of Parliament opposing the legislative proposal for the naturalisation of Jews, anti-Semitism is politically correct. Harrington senior, however, censures Harrington's hysterical reactions to Jews as feminine and sends him to public school in the hope that his excessive sensibility can be rectified and his anti-Semitism be put on a more rational basis. At school, Harrington joins his school friends' racial harassments of a Jewish peddler Jacob. When the boys hold Jacob against the flames in a fireplace, Harrington's Enlightenment sense of 'humanity' is triggered and overwhelms his anti-Semitic prejudice for the first time; he rescues Jacob as 'a fellow creature' in defiance of his aristocrat friend Mowbray, who leads an anti-Semitic party of boys. This event forms a friendship between Harrington and Jacob; transnational friendship based on the sense of humanity is a feature of Enlightenment ideals. Jacob brings opportunities for Harrington to make the acquaintance in Cambridge and London of respectable Jewish characters who are highly cosmopolitan. Harrington falls in love with Berenice, the daughter and heiress of the wealthy and 'benevolent' Mr Montenero. Mr Montenero, a 'Spanish Jew', is visiting England after his move from Spain to America due to Spain's religious intolerance. Harrington's previously well-known anti-Semitic prejudice and imagined religious difference between him and Berenice torment him as major obstacles to their marriage, but he eventually convinces himself that his prejudice has been removed and religious difference in their prospective marriage could be overcome. There is a greater obstacle on the Monteneros' side, which is unknown to Harrington, however. Deceived by Mowbray, who is now Harrington's rival in courting Berenice, the Monteneros believe that Harrington is regularly suffering from nervous fits and susceptible to insanity. Even when this falsification plotted by Mowbray and Fowler is exposed and when Mr Montenero saves Harrington senior from potential bankruptcy, Harrington senior maintains his resistance to their marriage. Harrington senior assures that he has discarded his prejudice against Jews after Mr Montenero's generous offer of £30,000 to him but maintains that religious difference in a married couple is unacceptable. Mr Montenero then reveals that Berenice's mother was an English Protestant, and that Berenice was brought up in her mother's faith and is 'not Jewess' (*Ha*, p. 327). Harrington senior



is pleased with this news, and the novel concludes with the prospect of the approved marriage, while Mr Montenero and Fowler are destined to go to America together.

The criticism of the novel has focused on the drastic twist of the plot whereby Berenice turns out to be Christian. The majority of the critics have interpreted this twist as Edgeworth's failure to overcome anti-Semitism. Michael Ragussis represents this approach with an enquiry into the ideology of 'conversion' through an extensive analysis of intertextual relations between *Harrington* and other representations of Jews in English literature.<sup>356</sup> From the other extreme of the critical reception, Susan Manly emphasises the text's cosmopolitan and anti-Burkean components but admits in passing that its conclusion is 'somewhat uneasy'.<sup>357</sup> Even when the cosmopolitan dimension of *Harrington* is focused on, it is impossible to ignore the potential incoherence implied by the plot of what Ragussis calls 'conversion'. Owing to this potential incoherence, the text presents a valuable case against which we can test the quest for cosmopolitan ideals in Edgeworth's ideal patriotism and definition of the nation. The previous chapter of this thesis contended that *Patronage* endorses an inclusive patriotism which depends on multilingual/multicultural ideal patriots and observed that Edgeworth's notion of the nation is little constrained by cultural heritage and offers accommodating membership to individuals. This sub-section further assesses the extent of the identified inclusiveness of Edgeworth's ideal patriotism and scheme of national membership. I will argue that *Harrington*'s apparent failure to rectify anti-Semitic prejudice reveals the limitation of class in Edgeworth's formula of ideal patriotism and nation. Edgeworth's formula of ideal patriotism, I will propose, prioritises the conservation of traditional landed order at the cost of racial, cultural, and religious tolerance, if necessary. This sub-section thus functions not only to provide a further case to support my account of Edgeworth's ideal patriotism but also to develop the account by detecting the ideological limitations of some components in the ideal.

Edgeworth frames her fictional intervention in anti-Semitism as a dialectic

---

<sup>356</sup> Michael Ragussis, 'Representation, Conversion, and Literary Form', *Critical Inquiry* 16 (1989), 113-43; Ragussis, *Figures of Conversion* (1995), pp. 57-76. See also Neville Hoad, 'Maria Edgeworth's *Harrington*', in *British Romanticism and the Jews*, ed. by Sheila A. Spector (2002), pp. 121-37; Twila Yates Papay, 'A Near-Miss on the Psychological Novel', in *Fetter'd or Free?*, ed. by Mary Anne Schofield & Cecilia Macheski (1987), pp. 359-69; Judith W. Page 'Maria Edgeworth's *Harrington*', *The Wordsworth Circle* 32 (2001), 9-13.

<sup>357</sup> Susan Manly, 'Burke, Toland, Toleration', in Whale (ed.), pp. 154, 161.

between Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Burkean nationalism, staged within the English nation. The narrator Harrington relates English prejudice against Jews retrospectively as a ‘preposterous’ anachronism belonging to the era before ‘our enlightened days’ (*Ha*, p. 168). Situated in the Enlightenment course of history as ‘the progress of human knowledge and reason’, his narration implies that Enlightenment cosmopolitan ideals prevail against Burkean nationalism in the future of the English nation. Moreover, Harrington overcomes anti-Semitic prejudice, owing to Enlightenment values, such as a sense of ‘humanity’ for a ‘fellow creature’ (*Ha*, p. 186) and ‘enlightened philanthropy’ (*Ha*, p. 225). Meanwhile, the text slips in an allusion to Voltaire’s ‘illiberal attacks upon the Jews’ (*Ha*, p. 269) and hints at the limit of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism. This limitation of Voltaire’s cosmopolitan vision is, indeed, shared by Hume’s writing. Hume recycles anti-Semitic prejudice in an essay:

Thus the JEWS in EUROPE, and the ARMENIANS in the east, have a peculiar character; and the former are as much noted for fraud, as the latter for probity. (‘Of National Characters’, p. 84)

*Harrington’s* reference to this limit of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism is, nevertheless, made in its narrative past and appears to characterise the limit as an out-dated defect which has been corrected by the time of the narrative present. Meanwhile, Edgeworth figures English discrimination against Jews mainly as the drawback of Burkean nationalism in the *Reflections*, as I will argue in what follows. As Ragussis elucidates, Burke incorporates strong bias against the Jews as the English nation’s enemy in the *Reflections*, purposefully making revolutionary French and Jewish ‘interchangeable’ in his powerful rhetoric.<sup>358</sup> For instance, the *Reflections* refers to Richard Price’s sermon, which it blames for its ‘revolutionary’ perspective, as the ‘famous sermon of the Old Jewry’ and connects the sermon with the doctrine of ‘the Old Jewry’.<sup>359</sup> Burke’s censure of the revolutionary government in France also includes his characterisation of its principle as ‘a stock-jobbing constitution’ and therefore as ‘Jewish’.<sup>360</sup> Moreover, Harrington’s former anti-Semitic disease is represented conspicuously as that of a Burkean man of feeling, whose feminised sensibility weeps for the chivalric past of the English

<sup>358</sup> *Figures*, p. 120. See also pp. 120-24.

<sup>359</sup> Ragussis, *Figures*, pp. 120-21. Price’s sermon, ‘A Discourse on the Love of Our Country’, was delivered at a meeting house in the Old Jewry.



nation. His union with Berenice is therefore represented broadly as his preference for Enlightenment cosmopolitanism over Burkean nationalism, which would rectify Harrington's exclusive notion of the English nation as well as his confused gender. Further details of the gender politics in *Harrington* are discussed later in this sub-section.

Intriguingly, Edgeworth manipulates the chronology of ideological climate in Europe to designate the anti-Semitism of the English nation as Burkean but as a phenomenon before the flourishing period of the Enlightenment in the fictional world of *Harrington*. The time-span of Harrington's narrative is situated between the 1760s and the 1780s and refers to controversies about 'An Act to Permit Persons Professing the Jewish Religion to be Naturalized by Parliament' (1753) and the Gordon riots (1780). The Act was repealed the following year. Edgeworth could have exploited the historical contexts of these events, which precede the publication of Burke's *Reflections* (1790). In fact, in the Act of 1753, which is often called the 'Jew Bill', religious identity is made central to the Jewish nationality, as in the paradigm of the *Reflections*; the Act defines the 'Jews' as 'persons professing the Jewish religion'. Given Edgeworth's decision not to narrow down her scope on these earlier historical events, her association of anti-Semitism and Burkean nationalism seems a strategy to demonstrate her criticism of Burkean nationalism. The implicit victory over anti-Semitism is invested in the Enlightenment future (the narrative present), which Edgeworth characterises as leaving Burkean nationalism and the limitation of the Voltairian and Humean cosmopolitanisms behind in the past. Taking into account this ideological framework for the narrative device of *Harrington*, my discussion in what follows questions how the controversial 'conversion' plot conditions Edgeworth's ideal patriotism, which would legitimise individuals' national affiliations. This sub-section, moreover, seeks to assess the extent of the inclusiveness of Edgeworth's notion of the nation, which would emerge from what her texts regard as legitimate or illegitimate national affiliations.

My observation about the plot is that, as critics have argued, the double apparent exclusion of Jewish identity from the English nation in the end of the novel by way of the 'conversion' of Berenice and the expulsion of Mr Montenero,

---

<sup>360</sup> Ragussis, *Figures*, p. 121.

inevitably hints at the limitation of Edgeworth's project to surmount her anti-Semitism. The twist of the plot, it would follow, reveals the limitation of the cosmopolitan strand of her ideal patriotism, as well. I argue that the twist of the plot was not driven purely by intolerance towards Jews as the racial, religious, and cultural 'other', as most critics interpret, but mainly by the social 'other'. The social 'otherness' of the Jews includes potentially subversive influence over the English, and moreover, British class system, as the text is concerned about. And this textual concern is closely interlinked with the class dimension of Edgeworth's ideal patriotism. In the previous chapter, I pointed out that while *Patronage* allows social mobility which is exemplified by successful members of a professional meritocracy, the novel hardly subverts the landed system, in the sense that most of the characters belonging to a professional meritocracy are originally from the landed class and depend on the privilege and wealth of the class during their apprenticeship or early careers. *Harrington* not only confirms this observation about Edgeworth's ideal patriotism in *Patronage* but also provides more extensive illustrations of her attachment to the leadership of the landed class than *Patronage*.

According to my argument hitherto, Edgeworth's portraits of ideal patriots are benevolent multilingual/multicultural characters embodying her fictional alliance between the landed class and the norms of professional meritocracy. If we are to look for such a character in *Harrington*, Mr Montenero is characterised by the most obvious eligibility. He is a benevolent 'Jewish gentleman, born in Spain' (*Ha*, p. 194) connected to a 'noble Spanish family' through 'an intermarriage' (*Ha*, p. 222). His friendship with General B— from England has been maintained since he and his family 'treated' the general and his wife 'at their utmost need' 'in the most kind and hospitable manner' in America during the beginning of the American War of Independence (*Ha*, pp. 250-51). Like Mr Percy in *Patronage*, Mr Montenero provides a foreign enemy with humane hospitality. While Mr Montenero's connection with the upper classes is often mentioned, he is shown to have familiarity with the financial world. He also appreciates professional meritocracy as a system of justice towards conscientious Jews, who were often made social outcasts in their countries of residence, regardless of their virtue. With few alterations, Edgeworth puts in his mouth a quotation of Lazarus's claim about Jewish members of professional meritocracies in America. He confides to Harrington that



his daughter had passed her childhood chiefly in America, ‘in a happy part of that country [America], where religious distinctions are scarcely known – where characters and talents are all-sufficient to attain advancement – where we Jews formed a respectable part of the community – where, in most instances, they are liberally educated, many following the honourable professions of law and physic with credit and ability, and associating with the best society that country affords [...]’. (*Ha*, p. 220)

Lazarus’s original claim was made in her letter of complaint to Edgeworth, part of which was cited earlier in the opening of this sub-section.<sup>361</sup> While Edgeworth localises the ‘happy’ territory, where the system of professional meritocracy is exemplified, to a ‘part’ of America rather than the entire country, as Lazarus originally wrote, Edgeworth emphasises that Mr Montenero approves of a pluralist social system that operates with meritocracy, racial and religious tolerance to form a ‘happy’ system. However, it is also noted here that he has some contempt for ‘vulgar rich’ like the Coates, a commercial family in the City. He is, furthermore, characterised by what this thesis has been calling multilingualism. An eloquent example is found in his dialogue with Harrington about Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. Mr Montenero can tell the subtle difference between Ovid’s original verse in Latin and English translations. He observes, ‘[T]his line is not in the original; but if you look farther back in the fable, you will find, that the idea is still more strongly expressed in the Latin, than in the English’ (*Ha*, p. 234). His former residence in Spain implies that he is fluent in Spanish, while the ‘accent’ and ‘idiom’ of his English are perceived as ‘foreign’ by Harrington (*Ha*, p. 219). Mr Montenero’s apparent cosmopolitanism is also observable in the scene of his dinner party where he invites a group ‘mixed of English and foreigners’, including General B—, the Spanish Ambassador, the Russian Envoy, a Polish Count, and ‘his lady’ (*Ha*, p. 250). The narrator underscores that Mr Montenero’s transnational relationship with each guest is a long-standing friendship rather than the superficial acquaintance often found in the London society (*Ha*, p. 250). His transnational benevolence also wins the loyalty of an Irish orange woman, who saves him and his household from the mob’s threats during the Gordon riots. His ability to cement transnational sympathy operates not only towards the European nations on the Continent but also towards the Irish nation, who are situated in a colonial tension with the English nation. Mr Montenero’s cosmopolitan profile may thus be regarded as suitable for

---

<sup>361</sup> Letter from Lazarus to Edgeworth, 7 August 1815, in Macdonald (ed.), p. 6.

an Edgeworthian ideal patriot whose responsibility covers the promotion of harmony within the British Empire as well as between Britain and other European countries by means of transnational benevolence and sufficient multilingualism/multiculturalism.

There are more characters that are associated with meritocracy and multilingualism, but they are not entirely figured as such. Other Jewish characters such as Israel Lyons and Jacob are among them. By the time of Harrington's narration, the multilingual Cambridge scholar Lyons is dead, and the narration locates him in a bygone era. As Neville Hoad comments, Jacob's footing in the English nation is represented as 'tenuous'.<sup>362</sup> Among English characters, General B— may be counted as an example, for his transnational friendship with Mr Montenero, his substantial military service, and his connection with the landed class. Despite these characteristics and his English nationality, he is kept in the background of the story. Mowbray, too, personifies the intersection of social classes. As a son of a countess 'in her own right' and a 'simple commoner' (*Ha*, p. 183), he serves military campaigns. His allegiance overall lies with the aristocracy and its exclusive values, however; he dies in the duel triggered by his anti-Semitism.

Harrington is endowed with a stronger claim on the status of an ideal patriot. Besides his great commitment to exercising racial, religious, and cultural tolerance, he is multilingual in the sense that he is sensitive to English dialects as well as knowledgeable in the classical languages to a certain extent. It is through his multilingual filter that the reader learns about Berenice's disinclination for 'fashionable phrases' and Mr Montenero's 'foreign idiom'. If we may regard Harrington's ability to detect 'fashionable' and 'foreign' elements in one's idiolect as part of 'verbal hygiene', his multilingualism is distinguished from Mr Montenero's. Mr Montenero may be fluent in modern languages and well-read in Latin, as I have noted above, but his multilingualism is represented without indications of 'verbal hygiene' for the English language. The text hardly demonstrates his intervention in the matters of the English language. In the previous sub-section on *Irish Bulls*, I have contended that *Irish Bulls* gives great importance to 'verbal hygiene' among the operations of ideal patriots. In this

---

<sup>362</sup> Hoad, p. 126.



regard, Harrington may be called a more legitimate candidate for an ideal patriot than Mr Montenero within Edgeworth's paradigm. His multilingualism/multiculturalism is, however, not acquired through a professional life. It is possible to infer that Harrington is intended to become a statesman like his father and embark on a professional career. During the time-span of his narration, he has, however, no experience of leading a professional life, whilst he comes in contact with the ethos of professional meritocracy through his acquaintance. On the basis of these observations, Mr Montenero and Harrington might be understood as holding rival claims on the role of the ideal patriot. Situated in this context, the consequence of the plot is in tension with Edgeworth's ideal patriotism. Despite Mr Montenero's considerable eligibility, the text prevents him from becoming an ideal patriot within the English nation even as his daughter appears to be allowed to enter the English nation through her marriage. What is more suggestive, he is relocated to America with the mischievous Fowler in the same ship. As Ragussis observes, their departures are 'important political markers' signalling that they have 'no place in the reconstituted community'.<sup>363</sup>

According to Hoad's interpretation of *Harrington*, which seems subtler than those of other critics, Mr Montenero and Fowler are expelled for their (potential) social subversion. Given Fowler's subversion of the existing class and gender system in her relationship with Harrington,<sup>364</sup> as shown at the beginning of the novel, the text may be understood to ship Mr Montenero away from the English nation for a similar reason. Mr Montenero's financial power could threaten the status of the English landed class. As Hoad suggests (pp. 128-29), his financial assistance rendered to Harrington senior and the bank is an act of rescuing not only an individual but also an institution, and therefore in allegorical terms, the English landed class as a whole. Mr Montenero's financial influence can be accepted only as a friendly donation from a foreigner and never as a contribution from a potential member of the English nation. Harrington senior's newly-acquired concessionary attitude towards Mr Montenero is thus a heavily-conditioned variation of the Enlightenment cosmopolitanism. If we recall Schlereth's study, which I quoted in the first section of this chapter, the significance of economic consideration to the Enlightenment cosmopolitanism distinguishes the ideology from its predecessors.

---

<sup>363</sup> 'Representation', p. 132.

<sup>364</sup> Hoad, p. 133.

Harrington senior's acceptance of Mr Montenero's offer necessitates the former's identification of the latter as a 'Spanish Jew', not as a future member of the English nation.<sup>365</sup>

The fear of a Jewish financial power that could subvert the landed order in England thus seems to be the principal driving force behind the twist of the plot. I would argue that the text's limitation in this regard registers Edgeworth's class prejudice rather than impulse for racial, religious and cultural discrimination. The majority of the studies of *Harrington* are from critics whose expertise is the representation of Jews, but not necessarily Edgeworth's work.<sup>366</sup> They often conclude that Edgeworth's 'conversion' plot demonstrates her failure to achieve racial, religious, and/or cultural tolerance in the fictional world. If we take into account Edgeworth's religious tolerance articulated in her other writings, it is difficult to reach such a conclusion so simply. My reading, like that of Manly, maintains that the principal topic of *Harrington's* narrative, in terms of plot and theme, was not really religious, racial, and cultural intolerance. As observable in a letter from Edgeworth to Lazarus, Edgeworth hardly expected that her project of correcting her former anti-Semitic prejudice in *Harrington* would be received as a failure:

I really should be gratified if I could have any testimony even were it ever so slight from those of your persuasion that they were pleased with my attempt to do them justice. But except from you, my dear Madam, and one or two other individuals in England, I have never heard that any of the Jewish persuasion received *Harrington* as it was intended.<sup>367</sup>

In this passage, there is an expectation that *Harrington* could win the favour of Jewish readers. This expectation does not anticipate the potential offence of *Harrington* to a Jewish audience. Edgeworth knew that the focus of Lazarus's criticism of her former stereotypical description of Jewish characters was racial and religious intolerance, as Lazarus indicated in her first letter to Edgeworth. In the same letter of 21 June 1821, part of which has just been quoted above, Edgeworth proudly advertises her brother's administration of a village school where pupils of different persuasions are 'instructed together and live and learn to be good and

---

<sup>365</sup> Hoad, pp. 126, 128, 129.

<sup>366</sup> Manly is an exception.

<sup>367</sup> Edgeworth to Lazarus, 21 June 1821, in Macdonald (ed.), p. 23.



happy'.<sup>368</sup> This letter serves as another self-conscious claim on religious tolerance by Edgeworth. When we move back to the world of *Harrington*, we see the family tie between Mr Montenero and Berenice, and moreover with his Christian English wife, transcend religious, racial, and cultural difference; Berenice identifies herself with the Jewish nation, feeling their pains as her own at the sight of Shylock on stage; Harrington heard her 'soft low sigh' and saw her 'countenance of great sensibility, painfully, proudly repressed' (*Ha*, p. 214). Although Mr Montenero disowns her as a Jew in the end of the novel, this development does not necessarily cancel out the earlier episode of religious, racial, and cultural tolerance exercised between the two characters, as critics suggest. Through Harrington's gaze, the harmonious identification between the two is foregrounded: 'I wished only that she had said more. However, when her father spoke, it seemed to be almost the same as if she spoke herself, her sympathy with him appeared so strongly' (*Ha*, p. 231). Perhaps more importantly, Harrington seems to be part of their sympathy and demonstrate transnational identification. Furthermore, it should be noted that the text 'provides no information concerning Jewish life and customs' but broadly associates the virtue of 'industry' with Jewish culture.<sup>369</sup> In such a treatment of Jewish culture, there is little indication of cultural intolerance. These aspects of the text and its contexts effectively preclude religious, racial, and cultural intolerance as a major element in the final twist of the plot. Furthermore, even if the possibility of Edgeworth's intolerant *motivation* is permitted, the cryptic *device* of the text signals racial, religious, and cultural tolerance in her definition of the nation.

I argue that *Harrington's* apparent eradication of Jewish identity from the English nation is not so univocal as most of the critics see.<sup>370</sup> It is Mr Montenero who declares that Berenice is 'not a Jewess'. She is defined as 'not a Jewess' from the perspective of her Jewish father rather than by non-Jewish characters such as the narrator Harrington. Mr Montenero's exclusion of Berenice from the Jewish nation is echoed by Lazarus's complaint in her letter that Berenice 'was not a Jewess'.<sup>371</sup> Both the fictional and historical Jews important to the text (i.e. Mr Montenero and Lazarus) deny Jewish identity to Berenice due to her faith in Christianity. The text is more elusive about the fate of Berenice's Jewish identity

<sup>368</sup> Edgeworth to Lazarus, 21 June 1821, in Macdonald (ed.), p. 22.

<sup>369</sup> Papay, p. 367.

<sup>370</sup> For example, see Ragussis, 'Representation', pp. 133-34 and Hoad, pp. 128-29.

than Mr Montenero, Lazarus, and most of the critics maintain. If Jewish identity or other national identities are understood to be contingent on religion, the novel's attempt to project cosmopolitan ideals may indeed be compromised. If Jewish identity or other national identities are understood to be more flexible, in other words, much less bounded by the religious conditioning, the end of the novel can be read as more culturally accommodating, since Berenice's national identity can be considered as a hybrid of Englishness and Jewishness; her Jewish identity can be reserved. As I have observed above, Berenice's hybrid national identity is arguably irremovable, given her emotional identification with the Jewish nation, which is notable in her confrontation with Shakespeare's anti-Semitic drama on stage. The text therefore questions and criticises the conventional definition of the nation and individuals' national identity based on religious allegiance. The novel's criticism of such an exclusive definition of the nation and its membership is apparently addressed to both Jewish and English people who may recycle such an exclusive nationalism.

We have been testing Edgeworth's ideal patriotism articulated in *Harrington* in terms of its social and religious criteria for national membership. It now seems appropriate to turn to its criterion of gender. Edgeworth's frequent association of 'femininity' with aristocracy is a Burkean device. Its effect is, however, to foreground the degeneracy of Burkean norm of aristocratic femininity for condemnation. For example, Edgeworth delineates sharp contrasts between Lady Anne Mowbray's affected delicacy and her arrogant anti-Semitic behaviour.<sup>372</sup> Lady Anne's artificial femininity is aligned with the decadence of the French aristocracy through not only her tastes for French ornaments and shoes but also Fowler's shrewd comparison of her with Marie Antoinette. Lady Anne's defects are attributed to her mother's responsibility. Her mother, Countess de Brantefield, is an imposing matriarch who is too proud to have her racial and class bias rectified. Although married to a 'simple commoner' (*Ha*, p. 183), she transmits racial and class prejudice inherited along her own aristocratic lineage. Besides the family treasure of furniture closely associated with the history of the English monarchy and aristocracy, anti-Semitic paintings along with racial

---

<sup>371</sup> Letter from Lazarus to Edgeworth, 28 October 1817, in Macdonald (ed.), p. 16.

<sup>372</sup> *Harrington*'s description of Lady Anne's pompous ornament of paper flowers connects her femininity with the notion of artificiality (*Ha*, p. 203).



prejudice are inherited by the Countess. She attempts to amplify rather than simply maintain, the exclusive prejudice of the English nation, as her wish to enlarge the ancestral collection of anti-Semitic paintings typifies. The text also blames Mrs Harrington for nurturing anti-Semitism in Harrington. By her compliance with the conventional definition of femininity structured around 'exquisite sensibility', she indulges him in his hysterical disgust of Jews as a sign of the delicate sensibility inherited from her.

Contrary to these female characters from the English upper classes, Berenice is characterised by unaffected and rational femininity. To Harrington, her femininity is 'perfect sweetness of temper, a sort of feminine gentleness and softness, which art cannot feign, nor affectation counterfeit; a gentleness, which, while it is the charm of female manners, is so perfectly consistent with true spirit, and with the higher, or the stronger qualities of the mind' (*Ha*, p. 234). Berenice's defiance of the conventional femininity is illustrated in her commenting on duels in public. In 'conquering her extreme timidity, and with a calmness that astonished us all', she expresses her opinion about the issue to Harrington's admiration (*Ha*, p. 264). The lack of 'fashionable phrases' in her idiolect (*Ha*, p. 234), which obtained his high regard, also indicates that her femininity is non-conformist. Given this detachment from fashionable dialect and given her literary cultivation, Berenice's linguistic sensitivity is comparable to that of the Percy women in *Patronage*. Yet, she is not shown to confront fashionable dialect with 'verbal hygiene', unlike Mrs Percy. Berenice's implicit fluency in Spanish is hardly illuminated, either. Therefore, a hint of multilingualism may be found in her characterisation, but it is kept at a low key and is scarcely comparable to the extent of multilingualism in Mr Montenero and Harrington. Her capability of 'settling some business' with the bank for benevolent causes is shown as another aspect of her progressive femininity. The episode registers her financial authority as an heiress to a great fortune. Harrington is ready to accept her foreseeable financial superiority after his father declared that he would disinherit Harrington if Harrington should get married to a Jewess (*Ha*, p. 254). Admitting that it would be 'mortifying' to his pride, Harrington nonetheless persuades himself to submit to a reversed gender role in terms of family finance for the sake of his marriage 'with such a woman as Berenice' (*Ha*, p. 256).

The novel provides a glimpse into Berenice's past defect in her sensibility,

that is, susceptibility to the opinions of the world. Further details about this defect are barely given, however. Instead, an account of the cause of the defect is given in terms of Harrington's earlier problem of susceptible sensibility. His anti-Semitic reactions became so well-known that he came to demonstrate his sensibility as expected by spectators. In reminiscence, he confesses the social pressure on what he felt: 'I really often did not know the difference between my own feelings, and the descriptions I heard given of what I felt' (*Ha*, p. 172). The situation of the young Harrington as a 'child scarce seven years old' (*Ha*, p. 171) whose sensibility is on exhibition is comparable to the situation of young women from the upper classes entering the world and the marriage market; children and young women are subject to social pressure, as beings less than 'men'. In this episode, adjusting one's sensibility to social expectations is at the expense of real feelings. The novel provides a rational diagnosis of the fundamental harm brought by affected sensibility rather than simply criticising it. The fact that Berenice's sensibility is less guilty of susceptibility than Harrington's former sensibility marks a contrast between her less susceptible thus less 'feminine' sensibility and the residue of his absurd sensibility in the form of what Hoad terms 'feminized swooning and ecstatic incanting' (p. 130), for the Black Prince and other 'kings' and 'heroes' from 'the days of chivalry' (*Ha*, p. 239). In this sense, the union of Berenice and Harrington may be interpreted as rectifying his former profile as a 'feminised' man of excessive sensibility with rational femininity in her. Here, it is useful to refer to Claudia Johnson's account of the link between the vogue of feminised 'men of feeling' in the 1790s and Burkean nationalism (pp. 1-19). Johnson argues that Burke's nationalism in the *Reflections* 'fundamentally unsettled gender' and left women 'without a distinct gender site' through its 'conservative insistence upon the urgency of chivalric sentimentality' along with the representations of 'men of feeling' by other writers such as Laurence Sterne (p. 11). Edgeworth's characterisation of Harrington and Berenice seems to re-balance such an unsettled gender relation. Harrington's previous sensibility as a Burkean man of feeling is made to appear ridiculous beside Berenice's rational femininity. Fundamental to the correction of Harrington's gender role is rational femininity found in Berenice rather than superficial femininity found in Lady Anne and the like. In these terms, *Harrington* advances women's rationality and its benefit to redefine gender roles in a marital couple. The text also testifies to the development of women's intellectual



life:<sup>373</sup> ‘Formerly a literary lady was rather a wonder than a companion. There were women of superior talents; but female society was not, as it is now, generally well informed’ (*Ha*, p. 205). In these senses, *Harrington* contests the patriarchal assumption of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism, which restricts the rational and intellectual capacity of women. While picturing these progressive illustrations of female gender, the novel indicates that women’s national identity is often subject to patriarchal definition, and moreover implies that the construction of women’s national identity is more constrained than that of men’s national identity. It is Mr Montenero who declares Berenice is ‘not a Jewess’, and it is Harrington senior who, in response to this, adopts her as ‘my own daughter’ (*Ha*, p. 329) with the implication that she is now defined as Christian and English. This disclosure of constraints on the construction of women’s national identity provides an additional dimension to Edgeworth’s account of patriarchal interference with gender roles and national identities in her period.

We have been exploring the fictional world of *Harrington* and its implementation of the ideological conditions of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Burkean nationalism. It now seems appropriate to summarize how they condition Edgeworth’s ideal patriotism and definition of the nation. The project of uprooting cultural, national, and racial prejudice in *Harrington* employs the notions and implications of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Burkean nationalism more explicitly than her other works. Addressing anti-Semitism as a component of Burkean nationalism in the *Reflections*, *Harrington* poses its ideal of patriotism against Burkean nationalism through its affinity with a more accommodating definition of the English nation which could encompass racial, religious, and cultural diversity. The novel also reprimands the self-indulgent nostalgia for the chivalric past in Burkean nationalism so harshly as to project its emotional excess as insanity. The novel, furthermore, rebukes the male-oriented assumption of Burkean nationalism for its dependence on feminised men of feelings at the expense of a gender role for women. At the level of class outlook, *Harrington* remains anti-Burkean in its distrust of aristocrats. Sir Josseline’s ring, a symbol of the exclusive aristocratic lineage, is taken out of the possession of the Countess of Brantefield, and is bestowed on the union of Harrington and Berenice in the end of

---

<sup>373</sup> Hoad, p. 135.

the novel. The ring is given a new value as a token of Jacob's 'gratitude' and thus as a symbol of the transnational friendship between the English nation and the Jewish nation. In order to justify its anti-Burkean position, *Harrington* situates Burkean nationalism before the 'enlightened days' with a twist of the chronology of ideological climate in Europe. The text thereby prolongs the paradigm of the Enlightenment beyond its historical moment so that the text can place its ideal nation within a scene of racial, religious, and cultural tolerance. The tolerance is intended to surpass the limits of the cosmopolitan ideals of Voltaire, Hume, and the like, which are not necessarily free of racial and national prejudice. Edgeworth's class bias precludes a complete picture of inclusive nationhood, however. Her conservative attachment to the traditional landed system makes it necessary to exclude foreign characters with subversive financial power from acquiring membership of the English, and the British nation. The resulting picture conveys a patriotism which is designated to be as accommodating as possible but to evade class subversion. The emphasis on the significance of 'verbal hygiene' to ideal patriots' role in the novel is another feature of this patriotism. Endowed with a great deal of financial power but without 'verbal hygiene' for the English language, Mr Montenero is to be expelled from the English, and the British nation. *Harrington* thus emphasises the imperative of maintaining the hegemony of the landed class over cosmopolitanism, and supplies a further emphasis on 'verbal hygiene' in Edgeworth's ideal patriotism and constitution of the nation.

### 5.2.3 Helen

In the previous two sub-sections, we have observed the added conditions of Edgeworth's ideal patriotism and its concept of the nation. Through the reading of *Irish Bulls* in the first sub-section, it was found that 'verbal hygiene' is crucial to the multilingualism expected from Edgeworthian patriots. In the reading of *Harrington* in the second sub-section, it was argued that Edgeworth's ideal patriotism endorses social mobility only to the extent that the traditional landed system is maintained, and moreover that 'verbal hygiene' for the English language is prioritised over the extensive knowledge of foreign languages in her model patriots' multilingual operations. *Harrington* was thus understood to reveal the



limitation of the pursuit for inclusiveness in Edgeworth's ideal. An examination of *Helen* in the current sub-section, which concludes this chapter, will identify further liabilities of her ideal patriotism, particularly its prescription of reduced multilingualism for women patriots.

*Helen* (1834) is Edgeworth's final published novel. Despite the significant timing of its publication in her writing career, it has received little attention from critics, as Ó Gallchoir has shrewdly pointed out.<sup>374</sup> It was published in the year when Edgeworth regretfully stated in her personal correspondence that the political turbulence in Ireland makes it 'impossible' for her to represent Ireland in the fictional form:

It is impossible to draw Ireland as she now is in a book of fiction—realities are too strong, party passions too violent to bear to see, or care to look at their faces in the looking-glass. The people would only break the glass, and curse the fool who held the mirror up to nature—distorted nature, in a fever. [...] Sir Walter Scott once said to me, 'Do explain why Pat, who gets forward so well in other countries, is so miserable in his own'. A very difficult question; I fear above my power. But I shall think of it continually, and listen, and look, and read.<sup>375</sup>

Introducing this extract, Butler comments that 'Since the danger did not pass, she [Edgeworth] could not plead Ireland's cause with sincerity before the English public, or argue that an individual's duty lay in identifying his interests with his country: two of her principal themes when she established herself as an Irish writer'.<sup>376</sup> It may appear that the 'two of her principal themes' have been dropped even by the time of Edgeworth's composition of *Helen*,<sup>377</sup> but I shall suggest that it was only to a certain extent. Edgeworth's publishing career may appear to have ceased pursuing those two themes through the representation of Ireland, but not necessarily altogether through the representation of England. On the one hand, *Helen* focuses on England and English characters on an 'unusual' but 'conscious' 'decision to avoid Irish characters'.<sup>378</sup> On the other hand, the text promotes the patriotic virtue of identifying personal interest with public goods as the basis of a culturally inclusive construction of the British national identity, as I shall argue in what follows. While Edgeworth's formula of culturally flexible patriotism in *Helen*

<sup>374</sup> 'Maria Edgeworth', pp. 193-94.

<sup>375</sup> Letter from ME to Michael Pakenham Edgeworth, begun on 14 February 1834. Cited in Butler, *ME*, pp. 452-53. The first two sentences of the passage are quoted in Ó Gallchoir, 'Maria Edgeworth', p. 193.

<sup>376</sup> Butler, *ME*, p. 453.

<sup>377</sup> According to Butler, *Helen* was written between 1830 and 1833 (*ME*, pp. 458-62).

is prescribed for the English nation as the leader of the British nation, the inclusive definition of nation is expected to benefit the Irish nation. The Irish nation is understood to be part of the British nation in the paradigm of the formula. In this sense, the text is consistent with Edgeworth's Irish writings as well as major English tales such as *Patronage* and *Harrington* in its attempt to conceptualise an ideal patriotism; the ideal patriotism would cement and benefit the British nation as a united body. *Helen* may thus be seen to engage with Scott's question about why the indigenous Irish, represented by the figure that Scott calls 'Pat', are 'miserable' in their 'own country'. And in fact, Edgeworth did write later in the same year that 'the scene of the next story I write, if ever I do write again shall be in Ireland'.<sup>379</sup> The configuration of culturally flexible membership of the English, and moreover the British nation in *Helen* is based on the appreciation of a multiculturalism which would challenge the political and/or religious sectarianism within the British nation, the English nation, and the Irish nation of the period.

The eponymous heroine Helen is the only daughter of Colonel and Lady Anne Stanley. After her parents' death, she was brought up by her benevolent uncle Dean Stanley. Dean's sole imprudence, his 'extravagant' and aristocratic taste, incurs the sale of his estates (*He*, p. 6). The story starts just after he has passed away leaving debts and bequeathing to Helen, only a small provision which he put aside for her a long time ago. His major legacy for her is thus not estates in conventional terms but assets of 'excellent education' which nurtured 'accomplishments and elegance of manners' and 'a firm sense of duty' (*He*, p. 7). 'Sweet-tempered and kind-hearted' Helen decides to take responsibility for her beloved uncle's debt and live in a discreet manner (*He*, p. 7). Meanwhile, her childhood friend Lady Cecilia gets married to General Clarendon and invites her to stay at their new home on a permanent basis. Amiable Cecilia is the only child of the local grandees, Lord and Lady Davenant. This invitation was motivated by Cecilia's selfish scheme to prevent Clarendon's half-sister from settling in their home. Miss Clarendon, an outspoken and rational woman, uncompromisingly seeks for the truth and has a low opinion of Cecilia since Cecilia is not really sincere. Clarendon himself, who is introduced by the narrator as 'English decidedly --

---

<sup>378</sup> Manly and Ó Gallchoir, 'Introductory Note', in *He*, p. viii.

<sup>379</sup> Edgeworth to Lazarus, 10 November 1834, cited in Butler, *ME*, p. 452 and in Manly and Ó Gallchoir, *He*, p. ix.



proudly English', is a stern patriarch with 'a high-born, high-bred military air' (*He*, p. 17). He is committed to his duties and responsibilities as a military professional and conscientious landlord. His well-maintained Clarendon Park estates appear to symbolise the prosperity of the English landed order and so testify to his Englishness. Owing to a number of failed marriages around him, he avowed that he would never marry a woman whose first love is not himself. Cecilia had a romantic attachment to Colonel D'Aubigny before but conceals that fact to Clarendon. This tendency to deception in Cecilia is attributed in the text to Lady Davenant's neglect of her early education. Lady Davenant is an intelligent, 'deep', and 'high' character (*He*, p. 13). She is involved in her husband's career as a statesman and follows him to London and foreign countries, away from their country seat Cecilhurst. While regretting her past neglect of Cecilia's education, her morality is strict enough to recognise and dub its ill consequence as 'one little black spot' and 'the speck of evil' in Cecilia's heart (*He*, p. 225). It is during her frequent absences that Helen accedes to Cecilia's further schemes. The first major scheme obliges Helen always to wear the same outfits as Cecilia's and leads Helen almost to bankruptcy. Helen survives this trial by confessing her guilt to Lady Davenant and selling her own carriage to pay off the bills. Cecilia's second and far more problematic scheme requests Helen to receive a parcel containing Cecilia's old love letters to D'Aubigny, as Helen's. The parcel is mysteriously sent to Clarendon Park, and its contents become known to Clarendon. On the basis of Helen's admission that the parcel was for her (although she never claims that she wrote those controversial letters), he believes that it was she who held the romantic correspondence with D'Aubigny. He sympathises with her initially, but his distrust of Helen's integrity develops, because Helen complies with Cecilia's further manoeuvres to eliminate her incriminating past with D'Aubigny. Clarendon's distrust of Helen culminates in his disapproval of her marriage to his ward Granville Beauclerc. Mortified by the complete loss of Clarendon's respect, and disillusioned by Cecilia's prolonged refusal to confess the truth to him, Helen takes refuge in Miss Clarendon's old castle in Wales. The climax is brought by Lady Davenant's fatal illness. On her mother's urgent return from Russia due to the disease, Cecilia discloses the truth to her family. Helen's marriage to Beauclerc now gains an overdue approval from Clarendon, while Clarendon declares his separation from Cecilia. After the wedding of Helen and Beauclerc, Lady Davenant kneels at Clarendon's feet to

request his ‘justice’, if not ‘love’, in the form of another chance for Cecilia (*He*, p. 371). The novel closes with Clarendon’s embrace of Cecilia, and the dying Lady Davenant’s joining their hands, whereupon the matriarch speaks to Helen, ‘Helen, my dearest Helen, now, and not till now, happy – perfectly happy in Love and Truth!’ (*He*, p. 371).

Despite the gap of nearly two decades since the last publication of novels by Edgeworth, *Helen* recycles the thematic synthesis of patriotism and multilingualism/multiculturalism prominent in her earlier narratives of nations and individuals, which we have analysed since Chapter 4 in the thesis. The textual world of *Helen* is engaged almost exclusively with the English nation but is crowded with multilingual characters. Lady Davenant is the most salient example, whereas a larger number of the upper-class English characters are shown to be fluent in the French language than in the earlier novels. Consequently, the text portrays the English nation as culturally more open. This cultural framework of *Helen* is just as sceptical of the universalist assumption of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism, as is that of *Patronage*. The text emphasises cultural differences in terms of the ‘untranslatability’ of some words. Mr Churchill, a man of letters, observes:

*Pavoneggiarsi!* – untranslatable. One cannot say well in English to peacock oneself. To make oneself like unto a peacock is flat; but *pavoneggiarsi* – action, passion, picture, all in one! To plume oneself comes nearest to it; but the words cannot be given, even by equivalents, in English; nor can it be naturalized, because, in fact, we have not the feeling. [...] [T]he language of every country is, to a certain degree, evidence in record, history of its character and manners. (*He*, pp. 114-15)

Such a differential perspective opposes the universalist tenet of Enlightenment writings. Moreover, ‘the language of every country’ is conceived as a cultural index of each country. It follows that the notion of multilingualism in the text is comparable to that in *Patronage* in the sense that it is conceived as a token of multiculturalism and, furthermore, as a beneficial means of communication and understanding across cultural, national, and political groups. This multilingual/multicultural perspective is intended to overcome the dichotomies of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Romantic nationalism. As I have noted, Enlightenment cosmopolitanism focuses on the universal principles of the mankind and neglects cultural differences; Romantic nationalism appreciates cultural



differences but often operates with exclusive approaches. For Edgeworth, multilingualism/multiculturalism assists international communication and understanding without minimising cultural differences and without aggressive cultural/national bias. The text censures political sectarianism within the English nation<sup>380</sup> and observes through its authorial voice that the sectarianism generates and, in turn, is aggravated by, mutually exclusive partisan dialects: ‘[I]n the pedantry of party spirit no parizan [*sic*] will speak but in the slang or cant of his own draft’ (*He*, p. 192).<sup>381</sup> Multilingualism/multiculturalism is imagined as an ability to mediate between sectarian politics and dialects in this way, too.

The multilingualism observable in Lady Davenant has a rich complexity. As expected in an accomplished woman of the period, she is fluent in French, but her fluency surpasses genteel ladies’ common usage of fashionable French vocabulary. Her familiarity with French literature covers the writing of ‘the old French metaphysicians’, as her words to Helen indicate:

‘*Distinguez*’, said Lady Davenant; ‘*distinguons*, as the old French metaphysicians used to say, *distinguons*, there be various kinds of jealousy, as of love. The old romancers make a distinction between *amour* and *amour par amours*.’ (*He*, p. 27)

Such familiarity rivals men’s knowledge. For instance, Lady Davenant completes Mr Churchill’s partial French quotation:

‘Male gossip! – “*Tombe sur moi le ciel!*”’ cried Churchill.  
 ““*Pourvu que je me venge,*” always understood,’ pursued Lady Davenant [...].  
 (*He*, p. 111)

Moreover, she gives her Portuguese page Carlos ‘her orders in Portuguese’ (*He*, p. 20). At the level of dialect, her linguistic competence remains impressive. She is fond of referring to Scottish phrases or proverbs. For instance, in reply to Helen’s suggestion that Cecilia’s husband ‘must be considered’, Lady Davenant remarks, ‘[T]rue; a husband is certainly a thing *to be cared for* – in Scottish phrase, and General Clarendon is no doubt a person to be considered’ (*He*, p. 18). She also recommends to Helen, ‘[T]ake the advice of a Scotch proverb – proverbs are vulgar, because they usually contain common sense – “Let well alone.”’ (*He*, p. 69). Significantly, Lady Davenant self-consciously identifies the regional identity of the

<sup>380</sup> For instance, the scene at Lady Castlefort’s party for her husband’s election campaign satirises political sectarianism. See also Ó Gallchoir, ‘Maria Edgeworth’, p. 217.

<sup>381</sup> See also Pearson, p. 216.

dialect for the hearers' information. She is equally sensitive to gender dialects, as the following dialogue between her and Beauclerc indicates:

'You were very unjust to me, Lady Davenant, yesterday, and unkind.'  
'Unkind is a woman's word; but go on.' (*He*, p. 103)

In this passage, Lady Davenant performs 'verbal hygiene' in rectifying Beauclerc's idiolect which transgresses the boundaries of supposedly male dialect.<sup>382</sup> She furthermore enjoys mimicking the language of a biographer:

'Helen, I have a mind,' continued she, 'to tell you what, in the language of affected autobiographers, I might call "some passages of my life."' (*He*, p. 50)

The rich multilingualism in Lady Davenant is matched with the wide range of her reading; her reading was partly constituted to catch up with her husband's extensive reading as well as by the usual repertoire of reading expected from a genteel lady. Her familiar access to male discourses such as metaphysics poses a question about her femininity, which will be discussed later in this sub-section. The multilingualism in her is furthermore understood as symbolic of a culturally flexible perspective and united with an inclusive patriotic cause, like the multilingualism embodied by the Percys in *Patronage*. For instance, her benevolence saves Carlos; she 'had brought him to England, had saved him from his mother, a profligate camp-follower, had freed him from the most miserable condition possible, and had raised him to easy, happy, confidential life' (*He*, p. 217). She 'taught him to write' and 'guided that little hand to make the first letters that he ever formed', as she herself acknowledges (*He*, p. 223). Her characterisation shows the major attributes of Edgeworthian ideal male patriots who can extend their understanding and sympathy beyond the national, social, and cultural borders by the aid of extensive multilingualism. What is more, Lady Davenant admits that her 'national feeling' was provoked by Madame de Staël's implicit contempt for English women's lack of 'any great conversational and political influence in society' in public sphere:

I turned, in the first place, as every body did, eagerly to the chapter on England, but, though my national feelings were gratified, my female pride was dreadfully

---

<sup>382</sup> On the other hand, Lady Davenant's 'resistance to some of the most blatant signs of sexist language use' is observable in her idiolect, as Pearson has pointed out. Pearson, p. 229.



mortified by what she says of the ladies of England; in fact she could not judge of them. (*He*, pp. 59-60)

The conflicts between ‘gratified national feelings’ and ‘female pride’ in Lady Davenant address the patriarchal circumscription of the female gender in the national life of the period. Even though the high valuation of the English nation may be pleasing to English women, they may not be entirely happy with the nation if the conditions of national membership for the female gender are restrictive, as her dilemma indicates. Convinced that public goods may be achieved only by political commitments in a public sphere as practised by men, Lady Davenant embarked on professing her political cause as a ‘female politician’ and emulating the professional and conventionally male career of a statesman. In Edgeworth’s paradigm, statesmen are professionals who could be leading ideal patriots. Lady Davenant eventually claimed her right to ‘share with Lord Davenant, at least, the honour and pleasures of patronage’, when her husband became eminent in the political world (*He*, p. 61). These experiments with the notion of patriotism through a pseudo-male professional life during her earlier years are related as the breach of ‘proper femininity’ by herself to Helen. In reminiscence, Lady Davenant admits that Lord Davenant ‘really had public virtue’, whereas she ‘only talked of it’ (*He*, p. 62). She also relates to Helen that she tried her hand on ‘very patriotic but not overwise’ projects of her ‘own’, for instance, the running of a school at Cecilhurst and a lace factory, and an attempt to ‘make Indian cachemires [*sic*] in England’ (*He*, p. 63). All of these projects ‘drained’ her funds without much success (*He*, p. 63). Nevertheless, her patriotic projects in a public as well as a domestic sphere are shown as attempts to intervene in the male-oriented social and economic domain of national life. Such representation provides a basis for the text’s criticism of Lady Davenant’s transgression of the ‘male’ domain at the expense of domestic duties.

Part of the problem with Lady Davenant’s involvement in her husband’s professional life is, as the novel shows, her frequent absence from domestic dialogue. Seemingly because of her hectic schedule following Lord Davenant’s agenda, she also tends to interrupt domestic conversations. These habits are deeply regretted by Helen, who often feels the urge to find a moral guide in her. Similarly, Beauclerc complains that Lady Davenant unfairly presumed a defect in him, by interrupting his remark (*He*, p. 104). These signs of Lady Davenant’s domestic

negligence account for the lack of sufficient communication between her and Cecilia since Cecilia's childhood, even though the gap was partially filled when Cecilia started consulting Lady Davenant about her attachment to Clarendon. Lady Davenant's failure in domestic life, especially maternal duty, is criticised by the text on grounds of its malformation of Cecilia's personality as well as her loss of her two boys who would be heirs to the family fortune.

Accordingly, *Helen* appears to set limitations on the multilingual function and operational space of the female gender, as that in *Patronage* does. In the world of these two novels, 'proper femininity' is designated as incompatible with the extensive multilingualism that 'proper masculinity' deserves; 'proper femininity' is expected to prioritise domestic, especially maternal duties, over the multilingualism that women could develop through a quasi-experience of 'male' professional life. My reading of *Patronage* in Chapter 4 suggested that the novel highlights contrasts between men and women in terms of their access to multilingualism/multiculturalism. Professional life is, in a sense, opportunities for men to acquire multilingual/multicultural ability, whereas such a training/education and life are conventionally inaccessible to women, especially upper-class women, who are expected to stay within the domestic sphere. Lady Davenant's multilingual capacity enabled her to teach Carlos how to write, speak, and read the English language. He, however, takes advantage of this well-meant linguistic education and employs his acquired linguistic competence in imparting the content of her confidential correspondence unfaithfully. Since this correspondence was of a political nature, touching on affairs of the state, Carlos's treachery virtually terminates Lord Davenant's professional career as well as Lady Davenant's eligibility as his wife. Through this episode, Lady Davenant's patriotic efforts, which are assisted with multilingualism/multiculturalism, are shown to fail to achieve the same success as Mr Percy's efforts attain in *Patronage*, although the two characters personify a similar compound of extensive multilingualism/multiculturalism and inclusive patriotism.

Does such a thematic construction mean that the novel reveals Burkean nostalgia for the passive female gender? Ó Gallchoir's following comment seems relevant to this question. By noting the historical context of the 'Parliament Reform' in the 1830s, she argues that *Helen* 'can be read as an almost Burkean



lament for the passing of an old order'.<sup>383</sup> What Ó Gallchoir means by 'an almost Burkean lament for the passing of an old order' would involve a regret at the loss of aristocratic femininity compatible with patriarchal assumptions. While Lady Davenant repents her past transgression, her application of Enlightenment values, rather than Burkean norms, to her notion of 'proper femininity' is depicted as a beneficial influence over Helen and Beauclerc. In the first section of this chapter I noted that Enlightenment writings and Burke's the *Reflections* share patriarchal expectations, but that the latter differs from the former by the degree of identification of the aristocracy with the female gender. Given the emphasis on the ideological union between 'proper femininity' and the aristocracy in *Reflections*, *Helen's* pointed criticism of the degeneracy of aristocratic femininity in terms of artificial sensibility, mercenary tendency, and exclusive arrogance, demonstrated by Lady Katrine and Lady Castlefort among other female characters from the aristocracy, militates against the Burkean ideal of the female gender.

In the narrative present, Lady Davenant is represented as wearing the trousers of the Enlightenment thinkers, even after her decision not to step into the 'male' sphere. Her witty narrative of Cecilia's acquaintance with Clarendon follows the Enlightenment perspective to see human history as a progressive course:

'I must go back,' continued Lady Davenant; 'quite to the dark ages, the time when I knew nothing of my daughter's character but by the accidental lights which you afforded me. I will take up my story before the Reformation, in the Middle ages, when you and your dear uncle left us at Florence [...]' (*He*, p. 21)

Lady Davenant's account of her first love figures her fiancé, who 'was military' (*He*, p. 52), as a Burkean hero. She confesses to Helen about her early fancy, which contributed to her hasty and failed engagement to him. This fancy is packed with Burkean sentimental yearnings for aristocratic chivalry and Burkean notions of the 'sublime' and the 'beautiful' (*He*, p. 51). It endorses the Burkean patriarchal formula of the marital relationship where the wife is expected to devote her full self to the husband's welfare. This romantic notion of a Burkean hero is swiftly rejected in the plot. Lady Davenant's fiancé's real love turns out to be another woman. Lady Davenant terminates her engagement with him and eventually finds a more suitable husband in Lord Davenant, who is not quite a Burkean hero. Lord

---

<sup>383</sup> 'Maria Edgeworth', p. 204.

Davenant was a younger son without prospect of great inheritance, when she got married to him. It was after the accidental deaths of his elder brothers that he became entitled to the hereditary estates. In contrast to his second brother, who made a glorious military career in a professional meritocracy, he started with little ambition. Lord Davenant embarked on his professional career as a statesman principally through the encouragement of Lady Davenant, who was quick to recognise ‘what to the world was then unknown, his great talents for civil business’ (*He*, p. 57). The inauguration of his patriotic commitments as a statesman was dependent on her insight; without her quick recognition, he could have wasted his ‘great talents’, which can actually be made use of for public goods.

These anti-Burkean episodes from Lady Davenant’s reminiscence are accompanied by her high valuation of reason and rationality, the principal values of the Enlightenment. Her appreciation of reason and rationality is, for instance, manifested in her admiration of her husband: ‘Lord Davenant’s superiority I particularly perceived in the solidity of the ground he uniformly took and held in reasoning’ (*He*, p. 67). She also notes that he helped with the training of her rationality (*He*, p. 67). Her rationality subsequently transmits Enlightenment norms to the young orphan protagonists Helen and Beauclerc, serving to foster their reason; she performs this service in place of their absent parents. For instance, Lady Davenant advises Helen to form her own judgement rather than be dependent on her: ‘It must not be what I please, my dear child, nor what I think best; but what you judge for yourself to be best; else what will become of you when I am in Russia? It must be some higher and more stable principle of action that must govern you’ (*He*, p. 29).<sup>384</sup> She furthermore reminds Helen that women are ‘rational beings’:

Women are now so highly cultivated, and political subjects are at present of so much importance, of such high interest, to all human creatures who live together in society, you can hardly expect, Helen, that you, as a rational being, can go through the world as it now is, without forming any opinion on points of public importance. (*He*, p. 214)

Lady Davenant argues that women’s opinions based on rationality are as crucial to public goods as men’s. This argument incorporates women’s rationality within a

---

<sup>384</sup> Butler has observed that the source of this remark is Richard Lovell Edgeworth’s advice to Edgeworth, which is mentioned in Edgeworth’s letter to Mrs O’Beirne, n. d. [1811] (*ME*, p. 477). Given this observation, Lady Davenant’s belief in Enlightenment values may be



philanthropic patriotism which takes ‘all human creatures who live together in society’ into account, in accordance with the paradigm of Enlightenment writings.

Meanwhile, she also guides Beauclerc in his reasoning:

[I]n fact Beauclerc, instead of being ‘le philosophe sans le savoir,’ was ‘le bon enfant sans le savoir;’ for, while he questioned the rule of right in all his principles, and while they were held in abeyance, his good habits and good natural disposition held fast and stood him in stead; while Lady Davenant, by slow degrees, brought him to define his terms, and presently to see that he had been merely saying old things in new words, and that the systems which had dazzled him as novelties were old to older eyes [...]. (*He*, p. 93)

This educational role demonstrates her unconventional femininity as a surrogate mother not only because she harnesses the young man’s reasoning, but also because she guides him to ‘define his terms’. Her linguistic education of Beauclerc illustrates her formidable multilingual competence which occasionally interferes with the ‘male’ domain.<sup>385</sup> As if to counter-balance the transgression of femininity, she warns that women should ‘act as women’ if they want to keep ‘their privilege – their charm’ (*He*, p. 210). She admits, ‘Female influence must, will, and ought to exist on political subjects as on all others; but this influence should always be domestic, not public – the customs of society have so ruled it’ (*He*, p. 214). This latter example of her concession to the ‘customs of society’, which is evidently based on patriarchal assumption, may be considered as one of the few instances of the text’s endorsement of Burkean belief in ‘customs’. Despite these particular instances of concession to Burkean assumption about gender, the text would not necessarily cancel out the benefit of Lady Davenant’s Enlightenment education of Helen and Beauclerc.

Another aspect of the novel signals additional affinities with Enlightenment writings. Lady Davenant intends her ‘personal narrative’ of her past errors to be of ‘use’ to Helen (*He*, p. 69). Lady Davenant’s narrative act is meant to assist the progress of the next female generation at the expense of her own personal shame. As I repeatedly noted hitherto, the Enlightenment paradigm of human history presumed the progress of mankind. The novel avails Helen of the wisdom and mistakes in Lady Davenant’s past negotiations with a patriotic spirit and rational femininity. Helen’s rationality is, moreover, forged by Lady Davenant’s occasional

---

regarded as parallel to the belief of ‘male’ authority in this regard.

<sup>385</sup> See also my comment on the subversive potentiality of Lady Davenant’s interference with Beauclerc’s unfinished sentence in a quotation cited above.

strict comments on her conduct, as we have observed above. The strength of rationality distinguishes the heroine's femininity as real and artless in contrast to affected femininity in the form of sensibility, such as Lady Castlefort's, and superficial femininity in the form of amiability, such as Cecilia's. Beauclerc was 'charmed by the perfect confiding simplicity of Helen's mind, so unlike what he had seen in others – so real' (*He*, p. 95). The 'independence of mind she shews' is also highly appreciated by him (*He*, p. 267). The rational and artless femininity on Helen's part is characterised as much more appreciative of 'the truth', which is the central notion of the text, than the irrational and deceptive femininity of other female characters. In Lady Davenant's voice, the text proposes that social happiness depends on women's observance of the truth: 'Even that emphatically termed the virtue of our sex, Helen, on which social happiness rests, society depends, on what is it based? is [*sic*] it not on that single-hearted virtue truth?—and truth on what? on [*sic*] courage of the mind' (*He*, p. 35). If rational femininity can respect the truth and consequently ensure social welfare, as in Lady Davenant's argument, rational femininity may be regarded as part of ideal patriotism.

Another virtue of Helen seems to be linked to the ideal patriotism articulated in the text. Her great compassion would extend beyond the boundaries of social classes and nations. Her earlier benevolent financial arrangement for a Welsh 'upholsterer and cabinet-maker' who used to be employed at the Deanery, provides a good example (*He*, p. 340). Her wry criticism of the arrogance of the aristocracy towards the lower classes serves as another example:

They who ought to be the first in courtesy, because the first in fashion; they who ought to form the bright links between rank and rank in society, thus rudely severing them asunder! And for what? The petty, selfish, vulgar triumph of the moment. [*sic*] (*He*, p. 275)

Helen is far from dazzled by the pompous culture of the aristocracy. In these terms, she may be said to be hardly a Burkean heroine. The indifference to fashion enables her to be an eligible female patriot, far from tempted to absenteeism for the sake of the fashionable life. In the text, Lord Beltravers's absenteeism is attributed to his 'pretty and silly' second wife's pursuit of the fashionable status in London circle and is strictly repudiated (*He*, p. 75). A parallel case is found in *The Absentee*, where the Clonbronies' absenteeism is portrayed as a consequence of Lady Clonbrony's obsession with London life. As in *The Absentee*, absenteeism is



symbolised by a ‘dilapidated’ estate (*He*, p. 74) and featured as the antithesis to ideal patriotism in *Helen*. The equation of absenteeism and anti-patriotism is typified by Lord Beltravers’s detachment from, or even hatred towards, his ‘country’ and fellow countrymen and women: Clarendon remembers, ‘I heard Beltravers begin by cursing England and all that inhabit it. “But your country!” remonstrated his aunt. He abjured England; he had no country, he said, no liberal man ever has’ (*He*, p. 77). Free from the aspiration for fashion, Helen is unlikely to become another Lady Beltravers who would encourage anti-patriotic absenteeism.

Helen’s lack of interest in fashion is furthermore detectable in her idiolect. Mr Churchill commends the fact that she ‘speaks pure English, not a leash of languages at once’ (*He*, p. 115). Although he turns out to be a petty character, this comment on her idiolect may be taken as reliable, since he is represented as possessing a literary talent.<sup>386</sup> Helen’s idiolect is comparable with that of Mrs Percy in *Patronage* in resisting fashionable dialect. Helen is, however, not endowed with so powerful a multilingualism as Lady Davenant’s. Helen feels isolated in Wales, not knowing Welsh to understand local peasants (*He*, p. 343), and this episode points to her unfamiliarity with regional dialect and makes a contrast with Lady Davenant’s familiarity with Scotch dialect. Helen’s rather limited multilingualism is to be supplemented by Beauclerc’s more extensive multilingualism through their marital union. He is competent in the classical languages as well as French, he enjoys the French theatre, converses with some characters in French, is well-read in the classics, and drafts a play parodying the classical tradition.<sup>387</sup>

Multilingualism in Beauclerc is concurrent with an enthusiastic benevolence which can extend to foreigners. His decision to give financial assistance to the Polish aristocrat Count Polianski at the cost of falcon hunting represents such generous benevolence. Moreover, he ventured to restore the dilapidated Old Forest estates at his own cost so that Lord Beltravers can cease to be ‘a useless absentee, a wanderer abroad’ (*He*, p. 75). On the other hand, Beauclerc’s benevolence is often united with reckless ‘enthusiasm’ and needs Clarendon’s advice (*He*, p. 75). Multilingualism operating with such wide-reaching

---

<sup>386</sup> While Churchill tends to be neglected by critics, Pearson pays due attention to his function (p. 227).

<sup>387</sup> For example, see *He*, pp. 81, 97.

benevolence is part of Edgeworth's formula of ideal patriotism. Young as he is, Beauclerc is yet to take up any professional commitments, but is expected by Lady Davenant 'for the sake of society – of the public good' to 'end [up] in public life' (*He*, p. 68). While he is an heir to great estates, he is more often referred to as a man of 'genius' rather than a man of property.<sup>388</sup> He has been invited to stand for the country but declined the invitation due to '[s]omething about not being tied to party, and somewhat he said about patriotism' (*He*, p. 36). Lady Davenant appreciates his patriotic motivation: '[E]ven those who, like Granville, go into high life in London, do not sometimes for a season or two, lose their first enthusiasm of patriotism' (*He*, p. 36). Apparently, his reluctance to be a statesman is his association of the profession with political sectarianism; his notion of ideal patriotism is antithetical to sectarianism. Despite the patriotic motivation and actions, he is too impractical and philosophical to manage projects. For instance, his uneven attention would derail his project of improving Old Forest. The project can make proper advances, provided that Helen assists him. Her aid consists of decoding his 'sketch' for the project and making it presentable. Cecilia exclaims at the textual complexity of his 'sketch' embedded in the draft of his play:

“Act i. Scene 1. Sextus Tarquin goes to consult the Oracle, who foretells the crime he is to commit,”

‘And then,’ cried Lady Cecilia, ‘come measures of old and new front of Old Forest house, wings included. – Now he goes on with his play.

“Tarquin’s complaint to Jupiter of the Oracle – Modern Predestination compared to Ancient Destiny.”

‘And here,’ continued Cecilia, ‘comes prices of Norway deal and a great blot, and then we have “*Jupiter’s answer that Sextus may avoid his doom [...]*”

“Kitchen 23 ft. by 21. Query with hobs?”

‘I cannot conceive, my dear Helen,’ continued Lady Cecilia, ‘how you could make the drawing out through all this,’ and she continued to read. (*He*, p. 97)

The future partnership between Helen and Beauclerc in promoting social welfare as part of their patriotic commitments is expected to be based on this kind of coordination contingent on Helen's support. The crucial function of her support would require adequate decoding and reading abilities. In Chapter 4, I argued that in the paradigm of *Patronage* the decoding skill is equated with multilingualism. Helen's decoding skill is likewise part of her multilingual competence.

Being a hereditary heir, Beauclerc shows more affinities with Enlightenment values than with Burkean norms. He believes in 'education' and

<sup>388</sup> For instance, see *He*, pp. 20, 35.



‘the diffusion of knowledge’ and supports ‘the aristocracy of talent’ more than ‘the aristocracy of birth’:

He observed, that the hope which every man born in England, even in the lowest station, may have of rising by his own merits to the highest eminence, forms the great spring of industry and talent. He agreed with the intelligent foreigner’s observation, that the aristocracy of talent is superior in England to the aristocracy of birth.

The General seemed to demur at the word superior, drew himself up, but said nothing in contradiction. (*He*, p. 83)

Beauclerc’s belief in education and a professional meritocracy resonates with Hume and Smith’s theoretical investment in education and a meritocracy to allow social mobility, which I noted in the first section of this chapter. Closely connected with the aristocracy by birth, and at the same time, belonging to a professional meritocracy, Clarendon seems to be more aligned with the hereditary right of the aristocracy than with the merit of talented men. Such a standpoint is in contrast to Beauclerc’s enthusiasm for a professional meritocracy.<sup>389</sup> Like Helen, Beauclerc lacks exclusive upper-class elitism. I have quoted her wry remarks on the aristocracy above. That quotation precedes the following passage:

Had she [Helen] been able to see his [Clarendon’s] countenance, she would have read in it at once how exactly he was at that instant feeling with her. More indignant than herself, for his high chivalrous devotion to the fair could ill endure the readiness with which the gentlemen, attendants at ottoman or sofa, lent their aid to mock and to embarrass ever passing party of the city tribe, mothers and their hapless daughter-train. (*He*, p. 276)

Beauclerc’s ‘chivalry’ could accommodate the lower-class women, far from the Burkean ‘chivalry’, which idealises aristocratic femininity. Comparing him with Churchill, Helen acknowledges that the ‘one thing I like better in Mr Beauclerc’s manners than in Mr Churchill’ is:

‘That he always speaks of women in general with respect – as if he had more confidence in them, and more dependence upon them for his happiness. Now Mr Churchill, with all the adoration he professes, seems to look upon them as idols that he can set up or pull down, bend the knee to or break to pieces, at pleasure’. (*He*, p. 126)

The justice to women in Beauclerc makes him an eligible patriot in the textual world.

The military professional General Clarendon embodies more obvious

---

<sup>389</sup> Ó Gallchoir, ‘Maria Edgeworth’, p. 215.

affinities with Burkean norms. His criteria for selecting his wife are chauvinist and nationalist. His wife must have had no romantic attachment before him and no extensive travelling experience in foreign countries, the influence of which, he is afraid, may trigger disloyalty in her. As Lady Davenant perceives, Clarendon idealises Cecilia, in the manner of a Burkean patriarchal theory, as an ornamental ‘idol’ to credit his own honour (*He*, p. 25).<sup>390</sup> His inclination for ‘obstinacy’ is also interpreted by Lady Davenant as central to the ‘great and masculine virtues’ in Burkean terms, that is, ‘as Burke says’ (*He*, p. 25). Charged with numerous patriarchal responsibilities, Clarendon’s performance as a husband fails through his self-centred ideal of the married life; he effectively encourages Cecilia to develop her deception because his pride disallows him to see her true nature. The defective mechanism of his patriarchal ‘obstinacy’ prompts a question about his suitability as a leader of the English nation, or his status as an ideal patriot: for instance, can he fulfil one of his professional responsibilities to tend the martial court, which is mentioned in the text, if he is unable to make proper judgements in marital matters? An aspect of Clarendon’s fault in his domestic life results from his incompetence in understanding speech or reading between the lines. He was unable to disentangle Helen’s elusive statements concerning the packet containing Cecilia’s love letters.<sup>391</sup> Helen’s subtle rhetoric implied that she was remotely involved in the affair but never admitted that she wrote those letters. Failing to read the lines between her message and Cecilia’s elusive statements, Clarendon develops his wrong conviction in favour of Cecilia. This misreading may be explained by the fact that he reads little, unlike Cecilia, Helen, and Beauclerc; Lady Davenant acknowledges that Clarendon is ‘inferior’ to Cecilia ‘in literature’ (*He*, p. 26). Those characters who can ‘read’ are valued more highly than Clarendon. The episode seems to suggest that he needs to acquire better multilingualism by means of reading so that he can fulfil patriotic duties to maintain ‘comfort and liberty, such as can be seen only in England’ in his exemplary estates (*He*, p. 81).

There are two other candidates worth considering here as Edgeworthian ideal patriots: Lord Davenant and Mr Churchill. Lord Davenant is gifted with some characteristics of Edgeworth’s ideal patriots. His public life is driven by public

---

<sup>390</sup> For another example of Clarendon’s patriarchal prejudice, see *He*, p. 210.

<sup>391</sup> Ó Gallchoir, ‘Maria Edgeworth’, p. 207. Butler sharply observes that Clarendon tends to be trapped by ‘the literary meaning rather than the suppressed implication’ and thus ‘seems



‘honour’ for his countrymen as well as private ‘love’ for his wife. He is well-read and multilingual, like Mr Percy. For example, Lord Davenant is fluent in French, as would be expected in his professional career, which involves diplomatic missions (*He*, p. 62). Nevertheless, he is not characterised as sufficiently domestic in the sense that he leaves to Lady Davenant the responsibility for Cecilia’s education. Furthermore, he is shown to express ‘satirical observations’ about the notion of patriotism (*He*, p. 36). He is therefore not really represented as an Edgeworthian ideal patriot like Mr Percy, despite his professional commitments and multilingual skills.

Minor character as he may appear, Mr Churchill’s important function in the novel is to question the writer’s role in Edgeworth’s ideal patriotism. Some scenes of the novel foreground his remarkable multilingual operations as a man of letters, including ‘verbal hygiene’.<sup>392</sup> His ‘verbal hygiene’ here addresses the question of the ‘correct’ English language, supposedly on behalf of the nation. He is, however, a selfish character; he utilises his multilingual talent not for the cause of social harmony but for the reverse effect. He shares the guilt of spicing up the memoirs of Colonel D’Aubigny and damaging Helen’s reputation. This deed is judged as shameful in the text, especially because it takes place in a patriarchal society where women are discouraged from proving themselves by ‘public actions’. The text addresses such a social predicament of the female gender in Lady Davenant’s voice: ‘[T]o how few can my character be really known! Women cannot, like men, make their characters known by public actions’ (*He*, p. 219). Churchill’s multilingualism is wasted in causing social disharmony and inflicting pains on a member of the conventionally disadvantaged sex. His intrigue is eventually rewarded with an injury at a duel with Beauclerc. Churchill’s insufficient publishing experience also prevents him from counting as a professional writer; neither has he any other professional engagements. With all the noteworthy multilingualism, he is hardly a character eligible to be an ideal patriot.

This sub-section has so far analysed the ideological orientation of ideal patriotism in *Helen*. It was argued that *Helen* shares with *Patronage* an interest in forwarding an ideal patriotism which plots apparently inclusive national membership through the strategic union between multilingual/multicultural

---

to lack sophistication’ and ‘intellectual’ strength (*ME*, p. 471).

<sup>392</sup> For instance, see *He*, p. 117.

perspectives and the ethos of professional meritocracy. It was also observed that *Helen* circumscribes the multilingualism of the female gender more obviously than *Patronage*. *Helen*'s allegory of breached femininity features Lady Davenant, who is a far more formidable female character than female characters in *Patronage* and the other novels by Edgeworth. *Helen* presents extensive multilingualism as a major marker of Lady Davenant's deviation from conventional femininity. By punishing her through the deaths of her two sons and her surviving daughter's moral deficiencies, the novel suggests that the formula of ideal patriotism for men should not be applicable to women at the expense of maternal duties, and that women's priority should be to fulfil domestic duties. In this sense, the ideal patriotism in *Helen* shares a patriarchal assumption with the discourse of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Burkean nationalism. But the text's commitment to patriarchal assumptions extends only so far, since it neither supports Burkean worship of aristocratic femininity nor the Enlightenment scepticism of rationality in women. While shrewdly restricting the subversive potentiality of the female gender, *Helen* applies the Enlightenment norm of rationality to the female gender. The novel also appears to endorse the ethos of professional meritocracy.



## ***Chapter 6***

### **Conclusion:**

#### **Maria Edgeworth's Ideal Patriotism and Narrative Modes: Voices, Identities, and Nations**

The preceding two chapters developed my enquiry into Edgeworth's view of the relationship between individuals and nations in terms of the illustrations of ideal patriotism in her narratives. This enquiry concluded that her narratives conceive ideal patriotism as a notion that legitimises individuals' identification with the nation. It was argued that her formula of ideal patriotism is characterised by cultural inclusiveness and hence could offer national membership to individuals without any cultural screening. The formula is a feasible solution to her ambiguous national identity as Anglo-Irish. As I argued in my application of Susan Lanser's narratology in Chapters 2 and 3, this national identity is constructed as at once problematic and culturally flexible in Edgeworth's novels. The two chapters investigated the textual articulations of her national identity, in terms of narrative mode. My contention on that matter was that her early narrative modes generate a certain distance between her as extrafictional voice and the Irish nation in the sense that the authorisation of the two early Irish novels depends on the narrative authorities of personal voices that are alternative to the authorial voice. In the terms of Lanser's theory, the narrative authority of authorial voice is contingent on the author's identity since the reader conventionally identifies authorial voice with extrafictional voice where there are no textual marks or obvious contextual factors, to separate the two voices. In this paradigm, Edgeworth's authorial voice is understood to be bound up with her Anglo-Irish identity along with her other social identities. This Anglo-Irishness would destabilise the narrative authority of her authorial voice with regard to the affairs of the Irish nation, given the colonial context within which the Anglo-Irish were not really considered as legitimate members of the Irish nation because they were not indigenous to Ireland. By contrast, the personal voices in *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui* feature 'natural' or blood ties with traditional Ireland. I argued that the application of such personal voices

does not solve the problem of narrative authorisation in the Irish tales, either. As Chapter 3 noted, Edgeworth's authorial voice and personal voice share rhetorical properties that enforce self-authorisation and thus narrative authorisation. Since her early writings establish the authorial voice as the 'default' narrative authority, the application of the personal voice implies some uncertainty about the narrative authority of the authorial voice. The presence of the personal voices thereby constructs Edgeworth's Anglo-Irish identity as problematic and generates tension between her as extrafictional voice and the Irish nation. My claim is therefore that authorial voice and personal voice, whether they are considered separately or together, constitute the Anglo-Irish identity and embody its predicament. The problematic tension within the Anglo-Irish identity is, however, mitigated somewhat by Edgeworth's writing practice of necessitating the identification between the imaginative consciousnesses of the author as extrafictional voice and the narrators, including those descending from the indigenous Irish, as Chapter 3 indicated. The cultural flexibility implied by this writing practice could resolve the tension between Edgeworth's national identity and the Irish nation, although only to a limited extent. This implicit cultural flexibility is elusive unless the extrafictional voice in literary sketches is included in the reader's scope. I therefore argued that Edgeworth's ideal patriotism is modelled partly as a more effective mediation of the contradiction in Anglo-Irishness than this implicit cultural flexibility in her writing practice.

Chapters 4 and 5 demonstrated that Edgeworth's ideal patriotism derives ideological elements from both Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Romantic nationalism. My discussion referred to the writings of David Hume and Adam Smith as the representative discourse of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism, and to Edmund Burke's *Reflections* as the classical text of Romantic nationalism. Like Enlightenment cosmopolitanism, Edgeworth's ideal patriotism claims to dispense with cultural prejudice but differs from Enlightenment cosmopolitanism by questioning its universalist viewpoint. Through its emphasis on cultural differences, her ideal patriotism denotes an affinity with Romantic nationalism, but distinguishes itself from Romantic nationalism, by criticising the latter's culturally exclusive definition of the nation. Her ideal can thus be understood as mediation between Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Romantic nationalism. This mediation is significant not only in the context of the ideological transition from



cosmopolitanism to nationalism in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe but also in the context of Edgeworth's background as a member of the landed Protestant Ascendancy; this ideological transition made the political climate of Ireland uncongenial for the social minority elites.

Chapters 4 and 5, furthermore, examined the components of gender and class in Edgeworth's ideal patriotism and pointed out its ideological liabilities. My reading of selected works by her demonstrated that their illustrations of ideal patriotism are designed to rectify defects of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and Romantic nationalism, notably patriarchal assumptions, racial and/or national prejudice, and attachment to the traditional landed system. In terms of class, Edgeworth's ideal patriotism accredits a professional meritocracy's contribution to public goods and permits upward mobility to the successful members of the meritocracy. The eligibility of professionals as patriots is additionally thematised as their acquisition of multilingual competence and thus multicultural perspectives, through their careers. Such licensing of social mobility is, however, only to the extent that the traditional landed system is maintained. The conservation of the traditional landed order is so urgent as to be prioritised over the pursuit of cosmopolitan ideals in Edgeworth's ideal, as my reading of *Harrington* highlighted. I also contended that her female characters figuring as ideal patriots are characterised by multilingualism on a more restricted scale than that of their male counterparts. This inconsistency compromises women's multilingualism, which could be subversive, for the sake of 'proper femininity'. *Helen* was discussed as a prime example testifying to such gender politics in Edgeworth's ideal at the thematic level.

The object of this concluding chapter is to interrogate how far Edgeworth's texts authorise the thematic formula of ideal patriotism. As I have mentioned above, her narratives are authorised by narrative voices that are characterised by self-authorising rhetorical properties. These narrative voices are typically categorised as authorial voice or personal voice. The liabilities of Edgeworth's authorial voice and personal voice in relation to the construction of her Anglo-Irish identity have been mentioned above. In short, the narrative authority of the authorial voice is destabilised by the historical condition, in the narrative authorisation of the Irish tales. One solution to this problem, offered by Edgeworth's narrative strategies, is narrative authorisation dependent on the

authority of the indigenous Irish instead of the Anglo-Irish. For instance, *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui* attempt to solve the problem by forming their narrative authorities as contingent on the personal narrators' blood ties with traditional Ireland, by replacing the authorial voice with the personal voices. Resorting to the personal voice does not solve the problem, however. The employment of personal voice in place of the authorial voice reproduces the historical condition by recreating a certain rift between Edgeworth as extrafictional voice and the Irish nation. A far more promising solution to the problem of narrative authorisation and, moreover, the Anglo-Irish identity in Edgeworth's novels is provided by the thematic formula of ideal patriotism. This alternative solution, which was discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, has its own liabilities in the sense that the formula is not flexible in class and gender issues and may not enable every individual to achieve so unproblematic identification with the nation. This chapter enhances the junction of narratological analysis mainly presented in Chapters 2 and 3 and the thematic analysis mainly presented in Chapters 4 and 5, as a strategic means to elucidate the extent to which Edgeworth's texts authorise the thematic formula of ideal patriotism and thereby solve the problem of her narrative authorisation as an Anglo-Irish woman writer from the Ascendancy. In particular, the major novels discussed in the earlier chapters are revisited with the following set of questions: Does the narrative mode of the text support or contradict the ideal patriotism plotted at the thematic level? In other words, how far do the narrative voice and the thematic formula cooperate in the text? What does the text communicate about Edgeworth's ideal of the relationship between individuals and nations, given the consistency or contradiction between its narrative mode and its thematic construction? How does the text (re-)construct Edgeworth's national identity? What kind of space do Edgeworth's narratives create for her to perform a patriotic role as a legitimate member of the Irish/British nation, in particular as a woman writer? All of these questions will not be systematically applied to each of the texts. Rather, all the texts will be used to answer all the questions. It should be noted, however, that to examine the consistency between the thematic illustration of the ideal and its narrative mode does not mean that the consistency is the sole or ultimate criterion in determining the value of Edgeworth's work. The enhanced methodological junction here will show that the novels in question do not necessarily perform a coherent authorisation of the thematic formula of ideal



patriotism. I will argue that where the thematic formula of ideal patriotism appears incompatible with Edgeworth's identity, the authorial voice negotiates the incompatibility and testifies to the viability of the formula.

### 6.1 Edgeworth's Ideal Patriotism and Narrative Mode

This section re-reads the novels in personal voice then the novels in authorial voice. This scheduling by category of narrative mode rather than chronology is intended to advance the purpose of this section. One of the major distinctions Lanser makes between personal voice and authorial voice is that the authority of personal voice is contingent on the characterisation of the character-narrator, whereas the authority of authorial voice is largely contingent on the author's identity provided that there are no textual marks and obvious contextual factors to separate authorial voice from extrafictional voice. Since the section poses questions about the text's authorisation of Edgeworth's ideal patriotism, it seems appropriate to revisit the texts according to the category of narrative authorities.

#### 6.1.1 *Castle Rackrent*

*Castle Rackrent* lacks an obvious illustration of ideal patriotism, unlike Edgeworth's later works. Concentrating on portraying who cannot be regarded as ideal patriots rather than who may be,<sup>393</sup> the text is like a negative photographic image from which positive prints may be made. It is therefore useful to re-read the text after examining the formula of the ideal patriotism in Edgeworth's other texts.

While the Rackrents are clearly represented as the reverse of ideal landlords/patriots, the lower indigenous Irish are not given so much opportunity to replace the degenerate landlords. The virtue of exertion essential to professionalism, a central component of Edgeworthian ideal patriotism, is stereotypically represented as foreign to the ingenious Irish. This stereotype is

---

<sup>393</sup> See also Tracy, p. 26.

recycled in the fictional editor's remarks, for instance, in his note about Thady's use of 'Monday morning':

Thady begins his memoirs of the Rackrent Family by dating *Monday morning*, because no great undertaking can be auspiciously commenced in Ireland on any morning but *Monday morning*. 'O, please God we live till Monday morning, we'll set the slater to mend the roof of the house. On Monday morning we'll fall to, and cut the turf [...], &c.

All the intermediate days, between the making of such speeches and the ensuing Monday, are wasted: and when Monday morning comes, it is ten to one that the business is deferred to *the next* Monday morning. (*CR*, p. 55)

The Editor's glossing of the Hiberno-English phrase 'English tenants' (*CR*, p. 58) additionally enforces the definition of exertion as English virtue. The lack of exertion attributed to Thady and other indigenous Irish characters prevents them from being eligible patriots, although they are multilingual to some extent, in terms of their acquisition of Hiberno-English and a professional dialect of law. Thady's 'fluency' as he 'pours forth law-terms' is noted in the Editor's glossary, as an example of the indigenous Irish's 'fluency' in legal dialect (*CR*, p. 63).<sup>394</sup> The indigenous Irish characters, however, do not perform 'verbal hygiene'. Additionally, the multilingualism of the indigenous Irish may be understood as largely different from the multilingualism of the professionals. The former is acquired as a means to survive the colonial system, not as an educational benefit of a professional meritocracy which is usually aligned with the colonial system.

Jason's characterisation, however, exemplifies the educational benefit of a professional meritocracy to the extent that through his legal profession, he, a member of the allegedly indolent nation, acquires self-exertion. As Thady's attorney son on the verge of taking over Castle Rackrent, Jason symbolises a rising professional meritocracy. In contrast, Sir Condry's earlier failure in the legal career anticipates his failure as a landlord.<sup>395</sup> The deficient landlordship of Sir Condry, the final Rackrent, leads to the sale of his estates for Jason's ready money earned through the attorney's successful professional career. At this stage of the narrative a meritocracy appears about to subvert the hereditary primogeniture. While Jason's social mobility is attributable to his exertion, that exertion is shown to pursue merely self-interest and to lack benevolence. His unpopularity as an alternative

---

<sup>394</sup> Butler notes Thady's use of 'Anglo-French legal terminology' ('Introduction', *Castle Rackrent and Ennui*, p. 12).

<sup>395</sup> See also Mc Cormack, *Ascendancy and Tradition*, p. 120.



landlord and social leader is confirmed by the mob's protest against his potential succession to the Rackrent estate. Despite his payment for the estate, the end of the novel leaves the future ownership of the estate as controversial.<sup>396</sup> These thematic aspects deny Jason's eligibility as an ideal patriot.<sup>397</sup>

The figure in *Castle Rackrent* who is closest to Edgeworth's formula of ideal patriot may be the fictional editor. His editorial devices, such as notes to Thady's narration and the glossary, indicate strong multilingualism in translating the language and culture of the indigenous Irish, and match the merits of Edgeworthian ideal patriots. The editorial devices resemble the style of the transactions of the Royal Irish Academy.<sup>398</sup> This stylistic spell registers an affinity with English, and British colonialist culture, with which the landed class in Ireland was aligned.<sup>399</sup> I argue that the Editor's national identity, however, seems suspended between the English nation and the Irish nation, falling into the Anglo-Irish. While his writing style shows affinity with English, and British, colonialist culture, his remark, tucked away in the glossary, about 'his national vanity' connotes his identification with the Irish nation:

The Editor had flattered himself that the ingenious contrivance which Thady records, and the similar subterfuge of this old Irishman, in the dispute concerning boundaries, were instances of 'cuteness unparalleled in all but Irish story: an English friend, however, has just mortified the Editor's national vanity by an account of the following custom, which prevails in part of Shropshire. (CR, p. 66)

Such a hybrid national identity and multilingualism in the Editor is compatible with the thematic formula of ideal patriotism, although he is not clearly linked with a professional meritocracy. Through his characterisation, the thematic formula of ideal patriotism does not incorporate so much flexibility in its class component, while recommending professional norms such as exertion. The thematic formula is not flexible in its gender component, either. In the episode of Isabella, Sir Condy's wife, her familiarity with foreign literature, such as Plato and Goethe, and her enthusiasm for theatre are represented as the symptoms of her failure to fulfil

<sup>396</sup> See Mc Cormack, *Ascendancy and Tradition*, p. 108.

<sup>397</sup> See also Mary Jean Corbett, *Allegories of Union in Irish and English Writing, 1790-1870* (2000), p. 50.

<sup>398</sup> The 'fourth volume' of the transactions is quoted in the Editor's glossary (CR, p. 56).

<sup>399</sup> Butler calls the Editor an 'unassailable representative of more advanced culture' and considers him as 'English' ('Introduction', *Castle Rackrent and Ennui*, pp. 15, 18). Corbett also finds the Editor's voice 'identifiably English' (p. 41).

‘proper femininity’. The novel thereby implicitly warns against the danger of women’s exposure to the ‘male’ language and literature, such as classical literature and emotive foreign literature, and prescribes restrictions on multilingualism in women.<sup>400</sup>

If the thematic construction of *Castle Rackrent* appears to hint at an Anglo-Irish landed class characterised by professional norms as ideal patriots, the narrative mode of the text undercuts such thematic hints. As argued in Chapter 3, the narrative mode consists of Thady’s personal voice and the Editor’s pseudo-authorial voice and forms narrative authority contingent on the authorities of the indigenous Irish character-narrator and the supposedly Anglo-Irish Editor. As we have observed, the Editor embodies some aspects of Edgeworth’s ideal patriotism, in particular proficient multilingualism and multiculturalism. His supposed affiliation with the landed class is almost consistent with the class component of the formula for ideal patriots; although he may not be quite associated with a professional meritocracy in the text, it is obvious that he endorses professional norms such as exertion. Part of the composite narrative authority is thus congruent with the formula of the ideal, with less emphasis on the meritocratic side of professionalism. The other part, which is conferred by Thady’s personal voice, contradicts the formula, however. Thady is characterised as multilingual to some extent, but his English is not fluent enough to perform ‘verbal hygiene’. His nostalgia for Gaelic feudalism and his lack of professionalism do not fit the formula. Since his narrative authority is defined by the Editor as superior to the Editor’s, the contradiction between Thady’s narrative authority and the formula becomes the more problematic. Perhaps the only observable commonality between the narrative authorities of Thady and the Editor is that they are constructed as masculine. This masculinity of the composite narrative authority in the text excludes femininity from narrative authority. I contend that such circumscription of femininity in terms of narrative authority is parallel to the constraints on femininity in the formula of ideal patriotism.

Given the conflicts between the thematic construction and narrative mode of the novel, *Castle Rackrent*’s authorisation of ideal patriotism hardly seems coherent. The alliance between the landed class and a professional meritocracy,

---

<sup>400</sup> For the Rackrent women’s failure to fulfil ‘proper femininity’, see Corbett, pp. 47-48.



and proficient multilingualism/multiculturalism, including ‘verbal hygiene’, are not quite authorised as crucial to the formula. Such incoherent authorisation of proficient multilingualism/multiculturalism is consistent with my argument in Chapter 3 that the application of Thady’s voice as the primary narrative authority constructs the Anglo-Irish identity as problematic. It was argued that the employment of the indigenous Irish character’s narrative voice instead of the authorial voice, which bears the Anglo-Irish identity, contests the legitimacy of the Anglo-Irish as members of the Irish nation and thus contradicts the notion of cultural flexibility.

Among the key components of the formula, it is only the restrictive prescription of modest multilingualism for women that seems to be fully authorised. Obviously, such constraints on women’s linguistic operation are incompatible with Edgeworth’s multilingual writing career, as it is identified with the extrafictional voice. The absence of her name in the title page of the first edition would obscure the incompatibility. In later editions that were published under her name, the incompatibility, however, becomes visible and unresolved as a tension between the extrafictional voice and the ideological liability of ideal patriotism in terms of gender roles.

### 6.1.2 *Ennui*

The benefits of professional meritocracy take a clear shape in *Ennui*. The protagonist-narrator is introduced as the Earl of Glenthorn initially. ‘Bred up in luxurious indolence’, the heir to immense estates starts suffering from ‘that mental malady’ of ‘*ennui*’ (*E*, pp. 161, 162). The cure for this ‘malady’ requires experiments with residential landlordship on his Irish estate and, moreover, experience of a professional meritocracy. Lacking the wisdom of political economy, his attempts fail to achieve fundamental improvement on the previously neglected estate; he confesses that ‘it never occurred to me that it became a British nobleman to have some notion of the general state of that empire, in the legislation of which he has a share; nor had I the slightest suspicion that political economy was a study requisite or suitable to my rank in life or situation in society’ (*E*, p. 252). The lack of constant exertion and such a comprehensive appreciation of the affairs of the

state and estate labels him as a premature landlord and patriot, although he comes to understand the Hiberno-English of his peasants and becomes multilingual/multicultural to that extent.<sup>401</sup> On the discovery that his ‘lawful mother’ (*E*, p. 266) is Ellinor, his nurse from the indigenous Irish stock, the narrator returns the ‘hereditary title and lawful property’ (*E*, p. 281) to the real earl, formerly known as her blacksmith son, Christy O’Donoghoe. The rationale for this deed is the observance of the ‘lawful’: ‘I had no right to keep possession of that which I knew to be another’s lawful property’ (*E*, p. 272). The narrator resumes his birth name of Christy O’Donoghoe and commences legal training, following the advice of Lord Y- ‘an Irish nobleman’ (*E*, p. 285). Without hereditary privileges, the narrator feels ‘ambitious’ to prove ‘some personal merit, independent of the adventitious circumstances of rank and fortune’ (*E*, p. 284). Additionally, his love interest to verify his eligibility to marry Cecilia Delamere consolidates his professional commitment, and the malady of ennui is completely cured.

The narrator’s legal career is represented as crucial to his reformation and qualifies him as a legitimate patriot. His acquisition of a professional dialect is associated with his success at the court, where he ‘spoke with confidence and fluency’ (*E*, p. 305).<sup>402</sup> This success wins Count Y-’s sanction for his marriage with Cecilia, ‘who is heir at law’ to the Glenthorn estate (*E*, p. 289). Without professional education, he would have remained ill read. Indeed, his reputed lack of literary cultivation evoked Cecilia’s initial prejudice against him (*E*, p. 290). His proud ending of his narrative notes that he has ‘acquired a taste for literature’ as part of his improvement (*E*, p. 308). His multilingual competence is connected to a multicultural perspective, as he recognises the untranslatability of the French term ‘ennui’ into English: ‘For this complaint there is no precise English name; but, alas! The foreign term is now naturalized in England’ (*E*, p. 162). This remark also performs ‘verbal hygiene’ in the sense that he laments the incorporation of new loanword ‘ennui’ into the English language. The reward for the narrator is realised in the form of his union with Cecilia and in his inheritance of the Glenthorn estate via her. Under the real earl’s, or effectively his imprudent wife’s regime, Glenthorn

---

<sup>401</sup> For example, the narrator explains the usage of Hiberno-English: ‘To English ears the possessive pronouns *my* and *his* may sound extraordinary, prefixed to a justice of peace; but, in many parts of Ireland, this language is perfectly correct’ (*E*, p. 207).

<sup>402</sup> Glenthorn’s professional fluency at the court anticipates that of Alfred Percy in *Patronage*, which was discussed in Chapter 4.



Castle becomes 'so melancholy and disgusting a scene of waste, riot, and intemperance' (*E*, p. 304). Upon the careless death of his drunk 'young heir apparent' in a fire, the real earl offers the title and estate to the narrator. The narrator, who has taken the surname of Delamere on his marriage with Cecilia, inherits the title and responsibility of the Earl of Glenthorn, this time by 'lawful' means, and, accordingly, the sub-title of his narrative 'Memoirs of the Earl of Glenthorn' is legitimised.

The thematic construction appears to uphold a professional meritocracy, largely because the plot makes it mandatory that the narrator undergoes the training and practice as a lawyer in order to be eligible to marry Cecilia. She appreciates personal merits more than hereditary privileges. The thematic advancement of the meritocracy is, however, not so thorough. Cecilia is not prepared to support the meritocracy at the cost of her social status. The narrator confides that she was 'not so romantic, or so silly, as to think of marrying any man without the probability of his being able to support her in the society of her equals' (*E*, p. 292). Moreover, Lord Y- sounds ambivalent in recommending a professional meritocracy. On the one hand, he declares, 'In our country, you know, the highest offices of the state are open to talents and perseverance; a man of abilities and application cannot fail to secure independence, and obtain distinction' (*E*, p. 293). On the other hand, he says, '[H]er relations, I fancy, could find means of providing against any pecuniary embarrassments, if she should think proper to unite herself to a man who can be content, as she would be, with a competence, and who should *have proved himself able, by his own exertions, to maintain his wife in independence*' (*E*, p. 294). This remark implies that the narrator may not have to depend solely on his merits permanently, and that once he proves them he should be rewarded with comfortable advantages by means of his adopted family's hereditary privileges. Lord Y- also overlooks Mrs Delamere's class-biased disgust at the surname of O'Donoghoe, which would denote a peasant origin, and suggests that the narrator should take up 'the name and arms of Delamere' (*E*, p. 306).<sup>403</sup> Moreover, the Glenthorn estate is accessible to the narrator only by 'lawful' inheritance, not by a purchase with financial power gained from professional success. The real earl's letter to the narrator emphasises that this transaction of inheritance is according to 'law': 'I

---

<sup>403</sup> See also Butler, 'Introduction', *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui*, p. 47.

write this to beg you, being married, of which I give you joy, to miss Delamere, that is the *hare* at law, will take possession of all immediately, for I am as good as dead, and will give no hindrance' (*E*, p. 308). Ironically, intending to refer to the 'heir at law', the real earl cannot help committing 'bulls' and proving that he is not qualified as a reliable landlord/ideal patriot.<sup>404</sup> Highlighted here is the fact that he is not quite fluent in legal dialect and standard English. In Edgeworth's world, basic knowledge of legal dialect is fundamental to the good maintenance of a landlord's estate. The acquisition of standard English is also essential to ideal patriots' role of performing 'verbal hygiene'. The real earl is thus characterised as fatally unsuitable as an ideal patriot.

Like Jason of *Castle Rackrent*, Glenthorn counteracts the stereotype of the indigenous Irish by proving that he can succeed in a professional meritocracy by exertion. Glenthorn has a stronger eligibility for the status of legitimate patriot than Jason; Glenthorn does not prioritise self-interest over the senses of benevolence and justice, like Jason, as testified by the episodes of Glenthorn's generosity towards Lady Geraldine and her husband, and his justice towards the real earl. Despite such merits and professional success, the landed property is almost as inaccessible to Glenthorn as to Jason without a legal or marital connection with a hereditary right to the estate. The combined implication of the two novels seems then that landed order should not be subverted directly by the financial power of successful professionals, which has been earned by their merits. Only to the extent that professionals can be safely placed within the traditional hereditary system, are they admitted into the landed elites.

It is argued that the thematic formula of ideal patriotism is considerably accommodating in terms of cultural relations, if not class relations. The novel provides characters with various forms of national identities. The prime instance is Glenthorn, whose national identity is represented as a complex hybrid. Notwithstanding his birth as an indigenous Irishman, Ellinor's fostering him in her cabin, and his return to the feudal Glenthorn estate, he used to identify himself as a 'British nobleman' (*E*, p. 252) with 'English ears' (*E*, p. 193). His former decadent life imprints a French tincture through the disease of 'ennui' on his national identity, as well. The adoption of an Anglo(-Irish) professional education contributes an

---

<sup>404</sup> See also Ó Gallagher, 'Maria Edgeworth', p. 304.



additional twist. He is, however, represented as an ideal patriot of the Irish nation as well as the British nation in the conclusion of the text, which reports that ‘Glenthorn Castle is now rebuilding’ (*E*, p. 308). If we regard the novel’s events to ‘span the decade 1795 to 1805’, we may interpret the protagonist’s hybrid identity as a symbol of the Union.<sup>405</sup> The formula of ideal patriotism is not so flexible with regard to gender, however. Lady Geraldine from the genteel stock of the indigenous Irish is characterised as a proud patriot<sup>406</sup>. Eloquent patriotism is expressed in her scorn for her fellow countrywomen’s preoccupation with dresses: ‘We Irish might live in innocence half a century longer, if you didn’t expedite the progress of profligacy’ (*E*, p. 227). The assumption of this remark is that the destiny of the nation is left to its female members’ discretion. The plot confirms this assumption in the sense that female characters are given a great share in national life. For instance, Glenthorn cannot become a full-fledged patriot unless he obtains Cecilia’s approval of his merits and the benefit of her hereditary right to the Glenthorn estate.<sup>407</sup> Women’s operation as ideal patriots is, nevertheless, limited since neither Lady Geraldine nor Cecilia is endowed with multilingualism and social mobility which overwhelm Glenthorn’s.

The narrative mode of *Ennui* bestows unrivalled narrative authority on Glenthorn’s personal voice, unlike the narrative mode of *Castle Rackrent*. Glenthorn’s narrative voice is occasionally accompanied by the narrative voice of ‘the editor’. The editor’s voice appears distinguishable from Glenthorn’s personal voice, but the former is too intangible to compete with the narrative authority of the latter. In this respect, the authorisation of ideal patriotism in *Ennui* may well be less complex than that in *Castle Rackrent*.

The hybrid national identity and satisfactory multilingualism/multiculturalism in Glenthorn as a character extend the thematic endorsement of cultural inclusiveness in the ideal to the level of narrative authority. His blood tie with the indigenous Irish nation, however, generates tension with the ideal at the level of narrative authority, since that blood tie is featured as central to the narrative authority. As I argued in Chapter 3, the application of such narrative authority to the Irish tale, instead of the narrative authority of authorial voice,

<sup>405</sup> Butler, ‘Introduction’, *Castle Rackrent and Ennui*, pp. 33, 36.

<sup>406</sup> According to Butler, Geraldine’s patriotism may be understood as dual allegiance, as an Irish and British patriot (‘Introduction’, *Castle Rackrent and Ennui*, pp. 42, 44).

renders Edgeworth's Anglo-Irish identity precarious and constructs her relationship with the Irish nation as less than legitimate. In terms of class, Glenthorn's background is represented as crossing the borders between peasantry, professional meritocracy, and aristocracy, but within the framework of the traditional landed order. Such a thematic restriction on Glenthorn's class profile conditions his personal voice as embodying the alliance between the landed class and a professional meritocracy in the formula, and accordingly the narrative authority is in tune with the class component of ideal patriotism. The narrative authority is also consistent with the gender component of the ideal, since its characterisation as male leaves no room for the intervention of femininity in narrative authorisation.

Given the co-existing compatibility and incompatibility between the narrative authority and the thematic formula of ideal patriotism, *Ennui* is ambivalent in authorising the formula. Furthermore, although the narrative form and the thematic content cooperate in authorising restrictions on women's multilingualism, such restrictions generate friction with the extrafictional voice, which conveys the authority of the multilingual, female, and Anglo-Irish author. I argue that this tension between the thematic formula of ideal patriotism and the extrafictional voice would remain unresolved and thus imply that the formula is not working in this instance. Unlike the authorial voice of *Belinda*, the personal voice of *Ennui* is gendered as male and is incapable of negotiating the incompatibility between the femininity of extrafictional voice and the male-oriented formula.

### 6.1.3 *Harrington*

*Harrington* is another example of Edgeworth's few novels narrated in the personal voice. Since the text's thematic prescription of ideal patriotism has been scrutinised in Chapter 5, its narrative mode is focused in what follows. If we recapitulate *Harrington*'s thematisation of ideal patriotism, its formula pursues cosmopolitan ideals to the extent that this pursuit does not subvert the traditional landed order. The formula is, therefore, culturally accommodating to a compromised degree, while reinstating the significance of proficient

---

<sup>407</sup> See also Butler and Tim McLoughlin, 'Introductory Note' to *Ennui* (*Works*, 1, p. xlviii).



multilingualism/multiculturalism, especially ‘verbal hygiene’. The professional meritocracy is thus not really presented as potential social leaders. In terms of gender, ideal femininity personified by Berenice is rational. The novel’s principal question about her national identity, in other words, the question of whether she is a ‘Jewess’ or not is, however, to be answered by her father. The femininity symbolised by her is therefore beyond and subject to patriarchal norms simultaneously. The conceivable multilingualism in her, in terms of her fluency in the Spanish, the English, and the Hebrew languages, and her familiarity with English literature, is given a low profile and not characterised as rivalling Harrington’s multilingual competence.

As a character, Harrington displays sufficient multilingual competence, especially, ‘verbal hygiene’, which defines him as a more legitimate patriot for the English, and the British, nation than Mr Montenero, who possesses multilingualism in a wider sense. Multilingualism, especially, ‘verbal hygiene’ is thus endorsed in terms of narrative mode, which has Harrington’s personal voice as the uncontested narrative authority. The pursuit of cosmopolitan ideals at the thematic level is restricted by the interest of conserving landed order. This limitation corresponds to Harrington’s characterisation as possessing an acquired cultural flexibility but without experience of a professional meritocracy. Accordingly, the limitation is extended to the narrative authority. The characterisation of the narrative authority as masculine reproduces patriarchal pressure on femininity. This pressure is in tension with the feminine gender of the extrafictional voice. The problem of a similar tension in *Ennui* was noted in the previous sub-section. Moreover, the characterisation of the narrative authority for this English tale as English creates an uncongenial distance between Edgeworth as extrafictional voice and the English nation, and renders her national identity problematic with the English nation. In other words, such narrative authorisation addresses the controversial status of the narrative authority of the authorial voice with regard to the affairs of the English nation. In fact, this aspect is a valuable instance among Edgeworth’s English tales since most of them are narrated in authorial voice and construct her identification with the English nation as less problematic.

#### 6.1.4 *Belinda*

*Belinda*, published in 1801, when the Union took effect, portrays the eponymous heroine's entry into the world. *Belinda* is intended to find the right husband by the lessons gained from her acquaintance with two contrasting families: the fashionable Delacours and the discreet Percivals. The domestic situation of each family serves as an index of their eligibility as patriots. The Percivals are precursors of the Percys in *Patronage*. Their retired and harmonious family life is introduced in a chapter which the extrafictional voice entitles 'Domestic Happiness'. The matrimonial union of Mr and Lady Percival is shown to be 'a union of interests, occupations, taste, and affection' (*B*, p. 203). The contrast between the Percivals and the Delacours is elaborated by the fact that Mr Percival selected Lady Percival over Lady Delacour. In Mr Percival's words, the text conceptualises marriage as liable for social welfare as well as personal happiness; he convinces *Belinda* that matrimonial union only for 'the first object of their [the couple's] fancy or their affections' would be an error injurious both to individuals and society (*B*, p. 258).<sup>408</sup>

The domestic happiness resulting from Mr and Lady Percivals' marriage is presented as a contribution to the national well-being. The authorial voice underscores their fertility by noting their family's 'large' size as well as 'happy' state (*B*, p. 204). Mr and Lady Percival raise their children, the next generation of the nation, as 'reasonable creatures' (*B*, p. 203) and encourage them to follow academic or creative pursuits. The presence of Adam Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* in the family's library symbolises their integrity under the influence of Enlightenment moral theory and political economy. Mr Percival demonstrates sufficient multilingualism, in particular, 'verbal hygiene'. For instance, in commending to *Belinda* an essay 'as one of the best essays in the English language', he intervenes in matters of the English language (*B*, p. 215).<sup>409</sup> His recommendation may be seen as a patriotic act in the additional sense that he helps with the education of a young member of the nation. Furthermore, his friendship with Mr Vincent's late 'creole' father and his conscientious guardianship over

<sup>408</sup> This conceptualisation of marriage is to be echoed by the exemplary English character, Sir James Brooke, in *The Absentee*. See Corbett, p. 70.

<sup>409</sup> Mr Percival's reference to a 'Greek proverb' can also be considered as relevant to his



Vincent indicate transnational benevolence, which is a component of Edgeworth's ideal patriotism. If any sign of social mobility through the system of the meritocracy is noticeable in the Percivals, it would be the union of 'Mr' Percival and 'Lady' Percival. But this sign of social mobility is conditioned by Mr Percival's somewhat conservative objection to social subversion for the cause of improvement (*B*, p. 217). On the basis of these thematic conditions, the Percivals may appear to exemplify Edgeworth's ideal patriotism to the extent that their characterisation confirms her investment in conscientious members of the landed class, although they are not explicitly associated with the professional ethos.

The Percivals' domestic felicity is juxtaposed with the Delacours' dysfunctional household. Lady Delacour is obsessed with power at home as well as in fashionable society, and this obsession strains her relation with Lord Delacour. The Delacours' extravagant honeymoon has triggered their 'selling of lands' (*B*, p. 34), and scars their legitimacy as members of a landed class and moreover as potential ideal patriots. The hereditary landed system, however, awards Lord Delacour a 'large estate' since he was an 'heir at law' to 'a rich nobleman' (*B*, p. 36) and results in further degeneration of the Delacours' life. Lady Delacour is incessantly on the circuit of fashionable life and admits that she has no independence of action and mind (*B*, p. 36). *Belinda* notes that a crucial liability of fashionable life is its incompatibility with literary cultivation, echoing *Letters for Literary Ladies*.<sup>410</sup>

Lady Delacour's neglect of domestic duties is alluded to and punished in the thematic motifs of her son's stillbirth, her first daughter's premature death, her estrangement from her second daughter, and her breast injury due to the duel with Mrs Luttridge. Her negligence of 'maternity' and 'proper' femininity is schematised as contradictory to the notion of ideal patriotism. Out of rivalry with Mrs Luttridge, Lady Delacour joins an election campaign for the political opponent of Mrs Luttridge's relation and admits that her campaigning effectively made a joke of patriotism: 'My hatred to Mrs Luttridge was, of course, called love of my country. Lady Delacour was deified by all *true* patriots' (*B*, p. 47). It was during this election that she fought a duel in men's clothes with Mrs Luttridge. Her transgressions of 'proper' femininity, 'maternity', and ideal patriotism are altogether punished with

---

multilingual competence (*B*, p. 237).

<sup>410</sup> For instance, see *B*, p. 6.

‘a blow’ to her breast (*B*, p. 51). These transgressions are, furthermore, repudiated by ‘the common people’, who ‘polled for an independent candidate of their own choosing, whose wife, forsooth, was a proper behaved woman’ (*B*, pp. 53-54); the popular opinion made it clear that a woman’s conduct is a barometer of her husband’s eligibility for national politics.

Clarence Hervey, Belinda’s presumed future husband, is represented as a potential ideal patriot, but perhaps not entirely. He experiences a professional meritocracy through his military service but sells off his commission because he becomes impatient with his fellow officers’ lack of literary appreciation. Contrary to the professionals in *The Absentee*, the professional characters in *Belinda* are not very well informed as a class, although there are some individual exceptions such as Dr X—. Clarence is characterised as fluent in French and Italian as well as conversant with literature across the world (*B*, pp. 52, 103). Despite such connections with professional life, multilingualism, ‘considerable literary talents’, ‘a strong sense of honour, and quick feelings of humanity’ (*B*, p. 10), he is initially presented as a figure wasting his talents. The early episode of his assistance with Lady Delacour delineates him as somewhat disrespectful of the cause of patriotism. He is requested to help her flee from a resentful English mob in the aftermath of her duel (*B*, p. 52). Hervey was racing pigs against a French officer’s turkeys on a bet. In order to distract the mob’s attention, he appeals to them for ‘the love of old England’ and for their support of his race against his French rival (*B*, p. 53). Hervey’s initial portrait thus appears not so compatible with the ethos of Edgeworthian ideal patriots. Additionally, as Lady Delacour notes, he is deficient in putting things ‘into execution’ (*B*, p. 54).

It is Dr X— who induces Hervey to be ‘useful to his fellow creatures’ (*B*, p. 106). Hervey’s immediate vow to exert himself for public goods touches Belinda. This is the moment when her attachment to him starts developing. However, the programme for him to qualify as an ideal patriot becomes elusive after Part 1 of the text, except for Lady Delacour’s reference to his presumed future as ‘an English member of parliament’ (*B*, p. 339). His characterisation comes to revolve around the episode of his secret Rousseauesque relationship with Virginia. Through this episode, the novel’s formula of the ideal patriot in relation to Hervey concentrates on the question of what kind of woman could help him to become a legitimate patriot rather than what kind of ideal patriot he should become. During his stay in



France ‘just before the revolution’, he develops a disgust at the ‘vanity, affectation, and artifice’ of the Paris belle and forms a ‘romantic project of educating a wife for himself’ after ‘the works of Rousseau’ (*B*, p. 343). His acquaintance with Belinda makes him realise the significance of rational education for women in the post-revolutionary context. He starts admiring Belinda for her ‘virtues from reason’ in preference to Virginia, whose virtues ‘sprang from sentiment’ (*B*, p. 359), and establishes Belinda as an ideal post-revolutionary Englishwoman in his view.

Belinda’s rational femininity is thereby characterised as a national virtue. Besides, she demonstrates transnational compassion to Mr Vincent’s slave, Juba, saving him from a malicious trick played on him. At one stage she is about to marry Mr Vincent, who is the son of a wealthy ‘creole’ planter in the West Indies. This episode marks her cultural flexibility, as well. She is fluent in French and well read in English literature. Such multilingual competence and multicultural appreciation would qualify her as an ideal patriot. Her role is, however, more of assistance with the selection of male ideal patriots and their actual operations. For instance, her ‘reason and prudence’ put Mr Vincent’s moral defect in a fair light and convince her that it is appropriate to halt her romantic relationship with him (*B*, p. 425). Since marriage is liable for social well-being as well as personal happiness in *Belinda*, this denunciation is significant in the additional sense that Belinda precludes a wrong marriage which would cause injurious consequence to national well-being. The text removes him to Germany, refusing the renewal of leave for him to stay within the English, and the British, nations, as if to punish him. The text simultaneously resumes its establishing of Hervey’s eligibility. The prospect of the marital union between Belinda and him is displayed positively in their literary partnership much earlier in the novel, where she supplements his pause in reciting Ben Jonson (*B*, p. 158). The scene predicts that she will help Hervey to develop his merits as a patriot, especially in the linguistic field, as in Helen’s partnership with Beauclerc in *Helen*. Belinda and Hervey’s marriage may not appear so definite, however. The novel is concluded by Lady Delacour’s speech to give a kind of stage direction to the major characters. She says, ‘Clarence, you have a right to Belinda’s hand, and may kiss it too – – Nay, Miss Portman, it is the rule of the stage’ (*B*, pp. 450-51). Since Lady Delacour may not be entirely reliable even after her reformation, it is possible to see that this ending keeps the couple’s union open to question. Belinda’s following reminder to Lady Delacour, however, implies not

only the improbability of their immediate union but also the likelihood of their eventual union: ‘there is nothing in which novelists are so apt to err, as in hurrying things toward the conclusion. In not allowing *time* enough for that change of feeling, which change of situation cannot instantly produce’ (*B*, p. 449). This remark could be read so that if ‘enough’ time is allowed for ‘that change of feeling’, Belinda and Hervey will be united, given their previous mutual attraction.

It is necessary to return to Dr X—, since he appears eligible to be identified as ideal patriot. He enlightens Hervey about the virtue of individuals’ use to their fellow countrymen/women. He is characterised by a ‘great literary reputation’ (*B*, p. 101) and ‘verbal hygiene’ in improving Hervey’s usage (*B*, p. 123). Dr X— also cures Lady Delacour’s injury and domestic relations. His professional operation helps to rectify another estranged family, Virginia and Mr Hartley. Dr X—’s contribution to the reconstructions of the two wrecked families’ welfare possesses social and national significance in the text’s framework. He is, however, somewhat distanced from the circle of the landed characters, while he is said to be ‘perfectly well-bred’ (*B*, p. 101). His name is almost anonymous, if not dehumanised, with no sign of his background except for the professional one. Even more peripheral characters such as Mr Horton are given a full surname which could signify the family’s local or other hereditary connections. There is little information about Dr X—’s abode either, and he is often seen to be rootless, travelling among his patients. Such a characterisation indicates that it is difficult for a successful professional to establish his social station, especially in relation to the landed class.

My thematic analysis of *Belinda* has hitherto argued that the text focuses on ‘proper femininity’ rather than ‘proper masculinity’ in relation to ideal patriotism. As we have observed, the novel characterises Belinda by rational femininity, a sufficient level of multilingualism, transnational benevolence, and firm morality. The multilingualism and firm morality are, however, designated as potential aids for Hervey’s future operation as a good landlord and patriot. The circumscription of femininity is, furthermore, suggested by the punishment of Lady Delacour’s subversion of gender relations. Her subversive character is not only featured with the transgressive acts I have mentioned but also improper multilingualism which is capable of mimicking the style of (gossip) newspaper: ‘[A]llow me to speak of myself in the style in which the newspaper writers talk of me — Lady Delacour’s sprightly elegance was but pale’ (*B*, p. 38).



As in Edgeworth's other novels in the authorial voice, the authorial voice of *Belinda* is not distinguished from the extrafictional voice by textual marks and contextual matters. The rhetorical properties of the authorial voice in *Belinda*, moreover, confirm such a continuation between the authorial voice and the extrafictional voice, as I demonstrated in Chapter 3. In particular, the authorial voice's rhetoric to appear less intrusive in its self-reference while advancing its self-authorisation through 'overt authoriality', is parallel to that of the extrafictional voice, which speaks on behalf of a female 'author' in the advertisement. The proximity between the authorial voice and the extrafictional voice also makes the former liable to the latter's literary manifesto about the definition of 'Moral Tale' in the 'Advertisement' for the novel. As I have argued, the delivery of the manifest is not really consistent with the notion of 'proper femininity', even though the content may be so. While the thematic construction features 'proper femininity' as the gender component of ideal patriotism, the authorial voice thus contradicts such an easy subjection of women's authority to men's. In terms of class, the authorial voice is connected with both the landed class and a professional meritocracy, in parallel with Edgeworth's affiliation with both the social classes. In summary, the authorial voice mitigates the tension between Edgeworth's social identities encoded in the novel's extrafictional voice and the thematic hesitation, by questioning the patriarchal norm of 'proper' femininity and raising the profile of a professional meritocracy. Given these negotiations by the authorial voice, I contend that the authorial voice serves to reduce the contradiction between the formula of ideal patriotism and Edgeworth's social identities. Indeed, the authorial voice is the more effective than the personal voice in this kind of negotiation at the level of narrative authority, precisely because the authorial voice is contingent on Edgeworth's identity. Furthermore, the authorial voice's authorisation of the thematic formula in this English tale is suggestive in the sense that the authorisation invests, with regard to the matters of the English nation, in the authority of Edgeworth's Anglo-Irish identity. The text results in reconciling her Anglo-Irish identity with the English nation and demonstrates the potential of the ideal patriotism, while mediating between the ideal's ideological liabilities and Edgeworth's social identities that are parameters of the extrafictional voice. The cooperation of the narrative form and the thematic content in *Belinda* may be considered as offering an effective solution to the problem of Edgeworth's narrative

authorisation and, furthermore, her identity as a female writer from the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy.

### 6.1.5 *Ormond*

Edgeworth's final novel set in Ireland portrays the course of Harry Ormond's 'reformation' and 'improvement' (*O*, p. 28). Ormond grows up from being a boy of wild sensibility to a man of property with social concerns and the prospect of benevolent landlordship. As her surviving sketches show, the thematic structure and narrative mode of the text underwent drastic changes.<sup>411</sup> In Chapter 3 above, I examined Edgeworth's experiments with personal voice in the two earlier versions of the text, 'Vesey' and 'Vesay'. The narrative mode of *Ormond* settles on an authorial voice which claims to 'trace, with an impartial hand' (*O*, p. 28). At the thematic level, the protagonists of 'Vesey' and 'Vesay' are provided with education at 'college', albeit poorly attended, and a diplomatic profession under an ambassador whom they met in Milan.<sup>412</sup> *Ormond* deprives its 'hero' of both formal education and professional experience. Instead, he is rewarded with 'a prodigious fortune' from his father's second wife, an 'Indian woman, the governor's mahogany-coloured daughter' (*O*, p. 125). Ormond visits Continental Europe like the protagonists of 'Vesay' and 'Vesey'. Ormond's European stay is, however, on an aristocratic grand tour limited to Paris under the *ancien régime*, whereas Vesey and Vesay's travel across the Continent is mostly on professional missions. Connolly has pointed out that the Annalys, who are presented as conscientious landlords in *Ormond*, are characterised in a 'far more negative' light in Edgeworth's manuscript entitled 'hist<sup>y</sup> for K of B. Islands'.<sup>413</sup> In this manuscript, the Annalys are designated as 'English settlers' contesting Corny's tenure: 'At one point their name is rendered "Any=lies", in what appears to be an indictment of the legitimacy of their claim to the land of the King of the Black Islands'.<sup>414</sup> The figure to become Lady Annaly in *Ormond* is called 'Mrs Annaly' in 'Vesey' and 'Vesay'. The Annalys are remoulded from litigious members of 'English' landed gentry

<sup>411</sup> Connolly, 'Introductory Note', in the Pickering edition of *Ormond* (*O*, pp. viii-x).

<sup>412</sup> Bodley, MS. Eng misc. c. 896.

<sup>413</sup> Connolly, 'Introductory Note', the Pickering *Ormond* (*O*, p. ix).



threatening the Gaelic tradition, which the Black Islands signify; they are now compassionate aristocrats executing benevolent landlordship. These changes in composition history may be regarded as a conservative move in the sense that the protagonist's affiliation with a professional meritocracy was reduced and that apparently exemplary landlordship is situated in the hands of an aristocratic family.

Upon such drastic changes, *Ormond* articulates ideal patriotism. The orphan hero is brought up by Sir Ulick O'Shane, a 'jobber' and entrepreneur who apparently belongs to the Protestant Ascendancy by conversion. Sir Ulick used to be a fellow officer of Ormond's father on the 'English service' (*O*, p. 106). After the 'marriage without a fortune' to Ormond's mother and its subsequent events of 'debt' and 'great distress' (*O*, p. 11), Captain Ormond goes to India to improve his fortune. When Ormond's mother dies, Sir Ulick takes Ormond under his protection, from the 'nurse in an Irish cabin' (*O*, p. 11). Sir Ulick is introduced as a successful social figure close to the politics of the Irish nation. His struggles in advancing his fortune, however, appear parallel to Captain Ormond's. The last two of Sir Ulick's three marriages are mercenary matches for 'strong and high connexions' and 'very large fortune' (*O*, p. 7). Both Sir Ulick and Captain Ormond appear dependent on the privileges brought by their remarriages, in their social and financial striving, despite their earlier meritocratic careers. The parallel episodes of the two former army officers imply that professionals could be insufficiently provided for without marital connections which are often with the landed interest.

When Sir Ulick's self-interest removes Ormond from Castle Hermitage, Ormond goes to Sir Ulick's cousin, Cornelius O'Shane, who 'called himself the king of the Black Islands' (*O*, p. 11). Edgeworth contrasts Sir Ulick as an opportunist of commercial economy with Corny as the champion of Gaelic feudalism. Sir Ulick's manoeuvring 'won his courtier-way onwards and upwards to the possession of a seat in parliament, and the prospect of a peerage' (*O*, p. 37). He purchases 'estates in three counties', for two of which he borrows money at high interest (*O*, p. 155). His landowning is part of his commercial project of 'the improvement of his fortune and the advancement of his family' (*O*, p. 8). His pursuit of self-interest ignores the landlord's responsibility for social welfare and encourages his peasants to raid wrecked vessels on Sir Herbert's estate and violate

---

<sup>414</sup> Connolly, 'Introductory Note', the Pickering *Ormond* (*O*, p. ix)

the landed order. Sir Ulick's investments are concluded by his bankruptcy and dishonourable death. He has virtually bankrupted Ormond, too, by abusing Ormond's fund under his care. Sir Ulick's heir, Marcus, completes the impoverishment of Castle Hermitage, by incurring a compensation for his adultery. Marcus has never been presented as eligible as a landlord/patriot, since he is a 'strong party man' treating peasants 'as if they were slaves' (*O*, p. 156). Castle Hermitage is put up for an auction, and Marcus asks Ormond to bid beyond the minimum value.

Similarly, at Corny's death, the Black Islands are deserted by the heir at law. Black Connal, the husband of Corny's only daughter Dora, beseeches Ormond to 'take the Black Islands off his hands, for they encumbered him terribly' (*O*, p. 234). Black Connal used to be an officer in the 'Irish brigade' (*O*, p. 86) but revels in a life of dissipation in pre-revolutionary France so much that he has no hesitation in selling the estates for the sake of his residence in Paris, visits to Versailles, and gambling. Although Corny was popular among his peasants, he is a failed landlord in the sense that he is to blame for the underdevelopment of Dora's rationality; she fails to choose the right husband and heir to her family estate. Corny's refusal of 'division of labour'<sup>415</sup> is shown in the negative light of his 'great natural powers, both of body and mind', which 'might have attained the greatest objects', being wasted 'on absurd or trivial purposes' (*O*, p. 37); nor does the authorial voice's reference to him as a 'barbarian mock-monarch' give credit to him as a landlord and social leader (*O*, p. 49). Moreover, his underestimation of the 'division of labour' and professional expertise impedes Ormond's potential professional career. Corny's policy to be 'his own lawyer' (*O*, p. 121) causes the purchase money for Ormond's commission to be frozen in the bank due to flaws in the relevant document drawn up by Corny.

The Annalys come into the gap that neither Sir Ulick nor Corny can fill as landlords/patriots. Sir Herbert Annaly excels in landlordship '[b]y the sacrifice of his own immediate interest, and by great personal exertion' (*O*, p. 161). Ormond is impressed with 'the prosperous state of the peasantry', 'their industry and independence' and their attachment to the Annalys (*O*, p. 160). Sir Herbert's professional and benevolent landlordship is borne out by his Enlightenment

---

<sup>415</sup> Connolly, 'Introduction', in *Ormond* (London: Penguin Books, 2000), p. xiii.



sympathy for ‘his fellow-creatures’ (*O*, p. 162). His mother, Lady Annaly is a model mother who has performed ‘long and able administration of a large property, during the minority of her son’ (*O*, p. 9). Her administration of the estate is reconciled with ‘proper femininity’ by the authorial voice’s emphasis that she made a ‘graceful resignation of power’ once Sir Herbert came of age (*O*, p. 9). The family’s landlordship appears to be a model of ideal patriotism. Indeed, Ormond admires Sir Herbert’s ‘love of his country’ (*O*, p. 154). The family are concerned about Ormond’s education. In particular, Lady Annaly’s belief in personal merits encourage him to commence his reformation (*O*, p. 27). The Annalys also teach him the virtue of ‘domestic happiness’ (*O*, p. 159). The family’s landlordship is never impeccable, however. Their tenure has ‘some confounded flaw in that old father’s will, through which the great Herbert estate slips to an heir at law’ (*O*, p. 154). This fundamental flaw prevents Lady Annaly and Florence from receiving a comfortable portion after Sir Herbert’s premature death. Aware of such risk, Sir Herbert prioritises public justice over his life and dies while hunting outlaw peasants. This episode questions his ‘benevolent enthusiasm’ (*O*, p. 176), which is so enthusiastic as to put at risk the prosperity of his estate and peasantry, both of which depend on the Annalys’ possession of the tenure. The episode also warns about the risk entailed in a landlord’s insufficient knowledge of legal dialect.

None of these three models of landlordship survive the narrative time span. The text thereby prepares a stage for Ormond, who has witnessed all the models, to practise his own. To start with, he needs to buy the Black Islands since he has only a ‘little paternal estate of three hundred pounds a year’ (*O*, p. 125). The plot understates the commercial aspect of the purchase to a considerable extent. The purchase is justified by Ormond’s attachments to the Black Islands and Corny, by the peasants’ recognition of Ormond as Corny’s ‘lawful representative’ (*O*, p. 234), by Ormond’s intention to continue Corny’s improvements, and by the characterisation of the purchase fund as not commercial profit gained by Ormond himself but hereditary privilege. The direct subversion of the primogeniture by the financial power is also evaded by Ormond’s decision not to buy Castle Hermitage whilst Marcus, whom Ormond considers as Sir Ulick’s ‘natural representative’ (*O*, p. 234), is on exile. The extent to which the plot is preoccupied with ‘lawful’ and ‘natural’ claims on the landed estate points to the controversial notion of legitimacy in the context of landowning in Ireland. A closer look at Ormond’s inheritance of

an Indian fortune furthermore elucidates Edgeworth's emphasis that the inheritance is meant to be rigorously legitimate. When dying, Captain Ormond settles all the Indian fortune, originally brought by his second wife, on her and their son. The Indian fortune does not reach Ormond until his Indian stepfamily die. Such arrangements by Captain Ormond may be read as an honourable refusal to exploit the wealth of a British colony.<sup>416</sup> The gesture is so thorough as to leave 'no provision for the education or maintenance of' Ormond (*O*, p. 39). Accordingly, he is immunised from any charge of abusing the economy of his Indian stepfamily, who represent colonial India, as his father's 'European son' (*O*, p. 126). Moreover, this legitimised succession stands for the idealisation of the colonial relationship between Europe and India as a familial one.

The representation of a professional meritocracy in *Ormond* provides another phase to its counterparts in Edgeworth's previous novels. At one stage, Ormond asks Sir Ulick to purchase a commission in the army, but after the inheritance Ormond is induced by Sir Ulick to cancel the plan. Yet the text draws a model professional in Dr Cambray. Edgeworth gives fuller characterisation to him than Dr X—'s in *Belinda*, endowing Dr Cambray with a full surname, the cultural and religious background of a Huguenot, and scenes of domestic happiness in his abode.<sup>417</sup> The Annalys are appreciative of Dr Cambray's personal merit, enjoying their friendship with him. Black Connal used to be an officer but becomes assimilated into aristocratic culture in pre-revolution Paris. The text is vague about whether Captain Ormond was a successful professional and whether his second marriage is meant to be the reward for his professional success. Ormond has 'always heard him spoken of as a good officer' (*O*, p. 106). If the source of this remark is reliable, the plot's implication would be that successful professionals may be rewarded with the wealth of the Empire (provided that they profess allegiance with the British Empire) but not necessarily membership of the landed class in the 'British Isles'; they may gain prestige in British colonies. At the end of the novel, Ormond is granted the status of landlord, even without professional experience. Although he is not a professional meritocrat himself, he stands for the new myth of the meritocracy. Successful professionals may not be allowed to become a member

---

<sup>416</sup> *Belinda* provides a comparable episode in the characterisation of Virginia's father (*B*, p. 386).

<sup>417</sup> For the allusions of the surname Cambray, see Hollingworth, pp. 189-90.



of the landed elites by means of their acquired financial power immediately, but they could bequeath the prize from their professional careers to their heirs. In the new myth, the bequeathed professional prize is dubbed as hereditary privilege and would enable the heirs to have access to landed estates and membership of the landed class in a virtually traditional, thus legitimate manner. The meritocratic system is consequently compromised to be fitted into the hereditary landed system. Another important legacy from Captain Ormond to his son is commitment to his 'country'. When Ormond decides to take up military service, he requests a commission in 'the English service' of the British army, rather than 'the Irish regiment' of the French army. He prefers 'the service of my own country – the service in which my father' served (*O*, p. 106). Ormond's succession to the Indian fortune may be seen as a reward for his prior patriotic profession, or professing that he regards the country for which his father served as his 'own'.

The text operates with multicultural perspectives by emphasising the untranslatability of French culture/vocabulary into English culture/vocabulary in the voices of the authorial narrator and the bilingual Black Connal (*O*, pp. 101, 208). The text also addresses sectarianism and introduces its danger in the linguistic domain, by noting that mutual understanding of 'words, actions, and intentions' across religious and political sectors is 'scarcely possible' (*O*, p. 165). *Ormond* therefore shares with *Patronage* the advancement of multilingualism as the means by which ideal patriots might cross the borders between social, political, and national groups. In such a thematic framework, Ormond is shown to develop multilingualism. Due to his early neglected education, he is 'deficient in English' (*O*, p. 128).<sup>418</sup> His acquaintance with Lady Annaly encourages him to improve his English and learn French through 'an excellent collection of what may be called the English and French classics', given by her (*O*, p. 55). She has slipped in the French books to invite him to learn a foreign language 'particularly useful' to his potential profession (*O*, p. 55). His real improvement in French has to wait until his stay in Paris, where he learns to make connections between the language and French culture. At this stage, his acquisition of French is no longer bound up with professional education, since he has inherited the fortune. Although Ormond's multilingual competence may not figure as the benefit of professional education, it

---

<sup>418</sup> In this sense, I contest Hollingworth's claim that Ormond's language is 'always the "best" language' (pp. 209-10).

would still qualify him as an ideal patriot, provided that he would learn a legal dialect, as well. His lack of fluency in legal dialect is demonstrated, earlier in the novel, as a potential obstacle to his becoming a model landlord/patriot in the future. Ormond refused to understand Moriarty's report on Black Connal's abusive landlordship by saying that he was 'no lawyer' and therefore would not 'understand a word of it' (*O*, p. 66). As I have observed, the novel emphasises the importance of legal dialect to successful landlordship through the calamitous episode of the flaw in the Annaly's family document.

In accordance with such multicultural perspectives, *Ormond* represents hybrid forms of national identities; on the one hand, Ormond's political and religious affiliation may be understood as English due to his wish to take the 'English service' (*O*, p. 106) and reference to his 'protestant religion' (*O*, p. 149); on the other hand, his early days in an 'Irish cabin' and the Black Islands attach him to traditional Ireland. Furthermore, in Paris, he allows Dora to alternate his national identities between the English and the Irish: from '*Le bel Anglois*' to '*mon bel Irlandois*' (*O*, p. 201). The implication of this example seems to be that the distinction between the English and the Irish could be compromised, especially in relation to the other countries of Europe. Ormond and Dora here do not mind whether Ormond is presented as an Englishman or an Irishman to their French acquaintances. His national identity is also characterised as hybrid national identity, by the authorial voice's reference to his 'English foot' (*O*, p. 199) and 'Irish risible muscles' (*O*, p. 200) within a few pages. Mdlle O'Faley and Black Connal 'blur[s] the lines between the nations'.<sup>419</sup> Of the two, the more curious example is Mdlle O'Faley, since her character is a compound of national identities interlinked with class identities.<sup>420</sup> Her father is 'an officer of the Irish brigade' related to a 'merchant in Dublin', and her mother is 'a French lady of good family':

When she spoke French, which she spoke well, and with a true Parisian accent, her voice, gestures, air, and ideas, were all French; and she looked and moved a well-born, well-bred woman: the moment she attempted to speak English, which she spoke with an inveterate brogue, her ideas, manner, air, voice, and gestures were Irish; she looked and moved a vulgar Irishwoman. (*O*, pp. 60-61)

Notably, the cultural paradigm of Mdlle O'Faley's ideas changes, depending on the

<sup>419</sup> Connolly, 'Introduction', in the Penguin *Ormond*, p. xvii.

<sup>420</sup> In this sense, Mdlle O'Faley shares with the narrator of *Ennui* the embodiment of mixed classes as well as national identities, which I mentioned above in Section 6.1.3.



language or dialect of use. This quotation then may be considered as further evidence for my argument that the understanding of foreign languages and dialects (such as regional and social), which I call ‘multilingualism/multiculturalism’, could accommodate different cultural paradigms and help to reduce the gap between people segmented into national groups, classes, political sectors, and other social groups. Ormond’s acquired multilingualism in terms of fluency in English dialects (both standard and regional) and French is thematically linked with the ‘cause of justice and humanity’ to enable him to act as an ideal patriot through conjugal partnership with Florence (*O*, p. 175). His compassion for the ‘lower Irish’ and friendship with the Huguenot Dr Cambray are also consistent with such inclusive patriotism.

*Ormond* generates extensive roles for female characters to perform as ideal patriots, and their roles are mediated with ‘proper femininity’ at the thematic level. Ormond’s reformation, which qualifies him as a legitimate patriot, owes a great debt to Lady Annaly’s ‘prophecies’ (*O*, p. 235). Her ‘prophecies’ are reported by the authorial voice at the end of the novel to have come true. Her surrogate motherhood for Ormond covers the defects of Sir Ulick and Corny’s surrogate fatherhood. She teaches Ormond the virtue of exertion and encourages him to be prepared for a professional meritocracy. As I have noted above, her contribution to his linguistic education is significant. In this regard she is comparable to Lady Davenant in *Helen*, who assists Beauclerc’s linguistic education. Lady Annaly’s resource for such linguistic benefaction is, however, presented as much less subversive than Lady Davenant’s formidable multilingualism, as demonstrated by Lady Annaly’s ‘graceful resignation of power’ (*O*, p. 9). Florence inherits from her mother benevolence and rational femininity, and probably rich linguistic competence that would assist men of merits. Although her textual appearance is quite limited, Ormond’s admiration of her rational femininity motivated him to prove his merits in the world.

Such a thematic construction is authorised by an intrusive authorial voice which claims its ‘impartial’ narrative authorisation. Suffice to say, the authorial voice is gendered as feminine as the authorial voices in Edgeworth’s other novels discussed in this chapter, in the terms of Lanser’s narratology. Like its counterpart in *Belinda*, the authorial voice in *Ormond* constantly reminds the reader of its doing ‘justice’ (*O*, pp. 139-40). *Ormond*’s authorial voice patronises its eponymous

protagonist more than *Belinda*'s authorial voice. The former refers to Ormond as 'our hero' frequently throughout the narrative, to the effect that Ormond may not appear so independent even after his ordeal. *Belinda*'s authorial voice alternates its reference to the heroine so that Belinda appears to possess more independence than Ormond.<sup>421</sup> The authorial voice of *Ormond*, moreover, shares with its counterpart in *Belinda* unobtrusive, and hence 'feminine', self-reference through the use of the pronoun 'we', while performing 'overt authoriality'. Commonality is also observable between the authorial voice of *Ormond* and its counterpart in *Helen* in the sense that both the authorial voices refer to themselves as biographers rather than historians. As I will note in the next sub-section, the distinction between a biographer and a historian is noted by the authorial voice in *Helen* as a basis for its self-characterisation as feminine. These commonalities between the authorial voices in *Ormond*, *Belinda*, and *Helen* would construct the authorial voice of *Ormond* as a bearer of Edgeworth's social identities, including femininity, although *Ormond* is less articulate in featuring the gender of its authorial voice than the other two texts are.

While *Ormond*'s authorial voice praises Lady Annaly's 'graceful resignation of power', its patronising narrative acts contradict such an endorsement of 'proper femininity'. The authorial voice supports the component of cultural tolerance in ideal patriotism by performing multilingualism/multiculturalism, but it is beyond the modest extent recommended to women. For instance, its multilingualism is demonstrated in its following comment about a French phrase: "‘*La canaille*,’ synonymous with the *swinish multitude*, an expression of contempt for which the Parisian nobility have since paid terribly dear' (*O*, p. 191). Since the authorial voice links the French phrase with Burke's phrases 'swinish multitude' from *Reflections*,<sup>422</sup> the narrative voice's multilingual commentary enters a political and 'male' sphere. In terms of class, the authorial voice's affiliation with a professional meritocracy fills the gap left by the gentrification of a professional meritocracy in the thematic construction of ideal patriotism; I argued that Ormond's access to landownership/landlordship by the inheritance of financial power from his professional father accommodates a professional meritocracy safely within the

---

<sup>421</sup> For instance, *Belinda*'s authorial voice occasionally calls Belinda 'Miss Portman' with some formality.

<sup>422</sup> See Connolly's footnote to the extract (*O*, p. 243, n. 96).



traditional landed order. The narrative authority thus endorses a rich multilingualism as crucial to ideal patriotism and reinstates the ethos of meritocracy to the thematic endorsement of the professional class. The narrative authority, moreover, contradicts the thematic constraints on femininity and mediates between Edgeworth's femininity and the notion of authority.

Edgeworth's earlier experiments with the personal voice of the male proto-protagonist as the narrative authority for this final Irish novel deserve some more discussion. As I discussed in Chapter 3, the narrative authorities of *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui*, the first two Irish novels by Edgeworth, are dependent on personal voices, which are characterised to a full or significant extent by 'natural' bonds with traditional Ireland. I argued that such a composition of narrative authority constructs Edgeworth's national identity as highly problematic. In contrast, the application of authorial voice in the third Irish novel *The Absentee* (1814), which will be analysed later, is understood to construct her identification with the Irish nation as less tense or more secure, since the novel's authorial voice dispenses with narrative authority contingent on 'natural' ties with traditional Ireland. The final form of *Ormond* in authorial voice reproduces the congeniality between Edgeworth's Anglo-Irish identity and the Irish nation, which *The Absentee* has created. The experiment with Vesey/Vesay's personal voice for *Ormond* is not contradictory to the negotiation between Edgeworth's Anglo-Irish identity and the Irish nation, since Vesey/Vesay is endowed with little claim as a 'natural representative' of traditional Ireland like Ormond and her. I argue that the major effect of changing from the male personal voice to the authorial voice is that the employment of authorial voice ensures the incorporation of femininity into the narrative authority and reduces the conflicts between the thematic constraints on femininity and the femininity carried by the extrafictional voice. The reduction of the conflicts is made possible without so much risk, owing to the rhetorical properties of the authorial voice. The rhetorical properties of the authorial voice do not necessarily transgress femininity, since they establish the authority of the narrative voice through less intrusive self-reference, as Chapters 2 and 3 demonstrated. It is thereupon contended that in addition to the example of the authorial voice in *Belinda*, which I have discussed above, this instance demonstrates the potential of authorial voice as a narrative mode in the sense that it modifies the thematic illustration of ideal patriotism at the level of narrative

authority so as to reduce conflicts between the illustration and Edgeworth's social identities borne by extrafictional voice. And such modification cannot be effected by the personal voices in *Castle Rackrent*, *Ennui*, and *Harrington*, since their characterisation as male detaches them from the extrafictional voice, which is usually gendered feminine.

### 6.1.6 *Helen*

Chapter 5 contended that the thematic structure of *Helen* heavily restricts women's role as ideal patriots in the name of 'proper femininity'. The authorial voice in the text may be regarded as consistent with the feminine and Anglo-Irish extrafictional voice, both in the terms of Lanser's narratology and of its self-presentation. The authorial voice presents itself as feminine and reconfirms its observance of 'proper femininity' through its self-characterisation as a biographer's voice distinguishable from a historian's voice. The biographer's voice is defined as operating in the domain of 'manners' and 'morality', whereas the historian's voice is defined as operating in the conventionally male domain of 'politics':

The political conferences were held in Lord Davenant's apartment: to what these conferences tended we never knew and never shall; we consider them as matters of history, and leave them with due deference to the historian; we have to do only with biography. Far be it from us to meddle with politics – we have quite enough to do with manners and morality. (*He*, p. 208)

The authorial voice is, however, not entirely exemplary of the gender and class dimensions of the formula the text thematically proposes. As I have noted in the subsection on *Belinda* above, Edgeworth's authorial voice constantly performs 'overt authoriality', and the authorial voice in *Helen* is not exceptional. 'Overt authoriality' is not quite compatible with the notion of 'proper femininity', as I have also mentioned. In terms of class, the authorial voice approves a professional meritocracy as 'glorious for their country' (*He*, p. 105). But at the same time, it is bound by the sense of class hierarchy, since it follows the contemporary comparison of a professional meritocracy to the aristocracy by calling them 'the aristocracy of talents':



They [guests at Clarendon Park] were political, fashionable, and literary; some of ascendancy in society, some of parliamentary promise, and some of ministerial eminence – the aristocracy of birth and talents well mixed.

The aristocracy of birth and the aristocracy of talents are words now used more as a common-place antithesis, than as denoting a real difference or contrast. In many instances, among those now living, both are united in a manner happy for themselves and glorious for their country. England may boast of having among her young nobility

‘The first in birth, the first in fame,’  
men distinguished in literature and science, in senatorial eloquence and statesman-like abilities. (*He*, p. 105)

The authorial voice works to ennoble the hereditary aristocrats by applying to the meritocracy the notion of hierarchical privilege that the hereditary aristocrats enjoy. This class orientation in the authorial voice of *Helen* may be considered as more conservative than the thematic construction of the text and reconfirms Edgeworth’s attachment to the traditional landed system. In short, the narrative authority of *Helen* contests ‘proper femininity’ and social mobility promoted by the illustration of ideal patriotism. The authorial voice thereby negotiates Edgeworth’s gender and class identities with the thematic formula of ideal patriotism and enables the formula to keep viable. The employment of authorial voice in *Helen* for the authorisation of the English tale also constructs Edgeworth’s relationship with the English nation as congenial, since the narrative authorisation invests in the Anglo-Irish authority of the authorial voice rather than the authority of a narrator indigenous to England. *Helen* thus renders Edgeworth’s identification with the English nation less problematic than *Harrington* does and shares commonality with *Belinda* in this regard.

I have revisited *Castle Rackrent*, *Belinda*, *Ennui*, *Ormond*, *Harrington*, and *Helen* by means of the enhanced strategic junction of narratological analysis and thematic analysis. The aim of revisiting these texts was to investigate the extent to which narrative form endorses the thematic formula of ideal patriotism that could provide to individuals legitimate identification with the nation without any cultural discrimination. The resulting conclusion is that Edgeworth’s novels do not necessarily authorise the thematic formula of ideal patriotism, which is presented with some variations, coherently. The potential gap in the dissemination of ideal patriotism by her novels is detectable only by the combined approach of narratological analysis and thematic analysis. The finding, in turn, testifies to the benefit of a narratological approach to her texts, which has been largely neglected

in the critical reception of them. It is possible to interpret the potential gap as a ground to dismiss the formula of her ideal patriotism as a theoretical failure. My elaboration is, however, that the potential gap points to the multi-layered process of the negotiations Edgeworth's Anglo-Irish national identity requires. The negotiation of her novels between the Anglo-Irish identity and the notion of the nation compulsorily involves not only cultural negotiation but also political negotiations with the gender and class components of the notion. I contend that such manifold negotiation needs to be conducted at different levels of the text, since some part of the negotiation may be censured as subversive if attempted at the thematic level; the thematic level, after all, is usually more intelligible to the reader than the level of narrative authority. I stress that the formula is particularly viable for Edgeworth's authorial voice. As we have observed, her authorial voice negotiates landed-class femininity with a male-oriented professional meritocracy. The authorial voice also negotiates femininity and rich multilingualism. The formula of ideal patriotism could thus accommodate Edgeworth's social identities through her authorial voice and legitimise her Anglo-Irish identity as part of the Irish and, moreover, the British nation. Although the formula of ideal patriotism may not be compatible with all the major social identities of Edgeworth at the thematic level, the formula could compensate for the incompatibility at the level of narrative mode. It is concluded that the cooperation of the authorial voice and the thematic prescription of the ideal patriotism, as observed in *Belinda*, *Ormond*, and *Helen*, provides the most promising solution to the problem of her Anglo-Irish identity, especially as a woman writer. The next and final section of this chapter, however, argues that such a solution may not solve the identity problem fundamentally. Through a comparative reading of *The Absentee* and *Patronage*, which are both narrated in authorial voice, it is observed that there is discrepancy between Edgeworth's prescriptions of ideal patriotism for Irish society, on the one hand, and for English society, on the other. This observation leads to the contention that the inconsistency would reproduce the colonial context that triggers the identity problem. I will note that such reproduction situates Edgeworth's novel close to the historical liabilities of the Union.



## 6.2 *The Absentee and Patronage*

*The Absentee* and *Patronage* were conceived to constitute a single text, since the former was originally written as an episode of the latter, as mentioned in Chapter 4.<sup>423</sup> As I indicated, this composition history would suggest that, in theory, the episode, which became *The Absentee*, was continuous with *Patronage* in terms of contexts and themes. Furthermore, *The Absentee* and *Patronage* are narrated in the same narrative mode: authorial voice. These genealogical and stylistic aspects create a strategic ground for the question of whether there is consistency between Edgeworth's prescriptions of ideal patriotism for English society and Irish society, respectively.

*Patronage* and *The Absentee* are firmly interlinked by the motif of shipwreck and the notion of legitimacy in relation to the protagonists' status as landlords and patriots. As I have discussed in Chapter 4, the motif of shipwreck is employed to test Percys' legitimacy as landlords and patriots of the English and British nations in *Patronage*. *The Absentee* revolves around the notion of legitimacy like *Patronage*, but with different emphasis. *The Absentee*'s opening captures the uncomfortable position of the Clonbronies, an 'Anglo-Irish' absentee family, in London society, by inviting the reader to eavesdrop on the gossip of exclusive English socialites. By displaying a scene of Lady Clonbrony's lavish but ill-received gala and uncovering Lord Clonbrony's financial 'embarrassments', the text points to the damage of their absenteeism, which invites further investigation, from the outset. The scene also figures the Clonbronies' state with the motif of 'shipwreck' in the sense that the family are misplaced in London society and this mislocation triggers their financial crisis.<sup>424</sup> The Clonbronies' 'shipwreck' justifies their return to Ireland, without having the fundamental legitimacy of their landownership questioned. While the figure of 'shipwreck' is used to test the Percys' legitimacy in *Patronage*, it is employed in *The Absentee* primarily to support the Clonbronies' legitimacy. The legitimacy of the Clonbronies' tenure of their landed estate in Ireland is questioned, but not so severely as Mr Percy's tenure. They are never challenged through legal procedures as he is. Given that *Patronage* dispossesses Mr Percy of his estate and puts him into the prison despite his

<sup>423</sup> Heidi Van de Veire, Kim Walker, and Marilyn Butler, 'Introductory Note', *A*, pp. xv-xix.

<sup>424</sup> See also Mc Cormack, 'Tedium', p. 97.

conscientious landlordship, *The Absentee*'s representation of the Clonbronies seems much more lenient. The ironical gap between Edgeworth's handling of the Percys and the Clonbronies may have been too large to be kept together within a single text.

*The Absentee* concentrates its engagement with the notion of legitimacy on the characterisation of Grace Nugent, the future wife of Lord and Lady Clonbrony's son Colambre. The novel thereby avoids questioning the legitimacy of Colambre as the heir to the Irish estate but examines his potential as such. The diversion from the legitimacy of the Clonbronies' tenure to the legitimacy of Grace as Colambre's future partner insinuates the controversial nature of landownership in Ireland.<sup>425</sup> The text alludes to the diversion of its engagement with the notion of legitimacy with somewhat self-directed irony in Lady Clonbrony's declaration, 'So my darling Grace is as legitimate as I am' (*A*, p. 195). The novel's censure of Lady Clonbrony's responsibility for her family's absenteeism in favour of London life makes it evident that her birth may be legitimate but her eligibility as the wife of a landlord/patriot is hardly as legitimate as Grace's eligibility.

Colambre's eligibility as the heir of the Clonbrony estate is in proportion to his learning of ideal patriotism in *The Absentee*. Colambre's 'English education' concluded at Cambridge equips him with 'the means of becoming all that a British nobleman ought to be' (*A*, p. 20). While noting this 'British' orientation, the authorial voice refers Ireland as Colambre's 'own country':

his own country endeared to him by early association, and a sense of duty and patriotism attached him to Ireland. – 'And shall I too be an absentee?' was a question which resulted from these reflections [...] (*A*, p. 9)

In this extract, absenteeism is conceived as contradictory to 'patriotism'. The early years of Colambre's childhood were spent 'at his father's castle in Ireland', which is 'his native country', according to the authorial voice (*A*, p. 8). While his attachment is said to be emotional, his 'patriotism' is not represented as purely sentimental. He perceives Ireland in economic terms as well as sentimental terms: 'I desire to become acquainted with it [Ireland] -- because it is the country in which my father's property lies, and from which we draw our subsistence' (*A*, p. 59). Such an appreciation of Ireland as a place supporting the family's economic life and his

---

<sup>425</sup> Mc Cormack and Walker, 'Introduction', in *The Absentee* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. xvii.



attempt to understand its socio-economic structure are promising beginnings for him to become a benevolent landlord and patriot. As this thesis has emphasised, the socio-economic ties between countrymen and women are more important than ethno-cultural ties in Edgeworth's ideal patriotism. Could we then find in Colambre such ideal patriotism intertwined with multilingualism/multiculturalism and professional meritocracy as we found in the Percys?

Edgeworth's appreciation of meritocracy is indicated in *The Absentee*. In Ireland Colambre meets officers and lawyers and is impressed with 'a taste for science and literature, in most companies, particularly among gentleman belonging to the Irish bar' (*A*, p. 66); the professionals are characterised by enlightened perspectives. In a Dublin coffee house, where he finds a group of 'English, Irish, and Scotch' officers, he makes friends with Sir James Brooke, an English officer (*A*, p. 64). Sir James is familiar with Ireland through his profession. It is he who introduces Colambre to the social changes in post-Union Ireland and gives him a list of reading about the country. It seems a strategic matter that Edgeworth arranges an English professional rather than an Irish character as Colambre's primary guide to Ireland. Sir James's analytical description of Ireland sounds authoritative and brings in a colonial surveyor's perspective.<sup>426</sup> His introduction of the country to Colambre might not be precisely accurate, but it helps Colambre's perspective to see Ireland not only as a sentimental place but also as a socio-economic community to which the Clonbrony estate belongs. Colambre is thus made ready to travel around the country in order to become a legitimate landlord and patriot. Besides, Sir James's motto '*Deeds not words*' (*A*, p. 78) becomes a principle for Colambre's future landlordship.

The Gaelic aristocrat Count O'Halloran is an even more illustrative example of the military profession. When Colambre consults him about a potential military career, the Count conveys his strong conviction that the military professionals' commitments are crucial to 'the liberty and the existence of our own country', and thus they are leading ideal patriotism. This conviction paraphrases the theory of *Professional Education*:

---

<sup>426</sup> For the colonial representation of Ireland through map-making and the Edgeworths, see Connolly, 'Gender, Nation and Ireland in the Early Novels of Maria Edgeworth and Lady Morgan' (1995), pp. 28-29.

The life of an officer is not now a life of parade, of coxcombical or of profligate idleness – but of active service, of continual hardship and danger. [. . .] A martial spirit is now essential to the liberty and the existence of our own country. In the present state of things, the military must be the most honourable profession, because the most useful. Every movement of an army is followed, wherever it goes, by the public hopes and fears. Every officer must now feel, besides this sense of collective importance, a belief that his only dependence must be on his own merit [. . .]. (*A*, p. 172)

One of the most important aspects in these remarks by the Count is that this retired officer of the ‘Wild Geese’, appears to refer to Britain as ‘our own country’. Moreover, his integration, through his nephew’s connections, into the governmental administration of Britain by providing professional assistance seems to be placed as a model example of ideal patriotism, which aims to dispense with cultural prejudice.<sup>427</sup> The Count advocates the meritocratic ideal, in a far more rigorous sense than Lord Y— does in *Ennui*. The former proclaims that a professional’s ‘only dependence must be on his own merit’ (*A*, p. 172), whereas the latter speaks of meritocracy coordinated with and gratified by the hereditary system. There are counter-examples of officers in the novel, but the Count’s observation about the military profession eclipses them. It kindles Colambre’s yearning for ‘a commission in a regiment going to Spain’ (*A*, p. 171). Colambre considers this commitment in order to escape from Grace Nugent after he wished to marry her but found her unacceptable as his wife since she was said to be illegitimate.

The Count also emphasises that officers are now expected to be enlightened as well as industrious (*A*, p. 172). He is a man of letters himself, and his domestic space crammed with categorised curiosities suggests the encyclopaedia and thus the Enlightenment. Proficient multilingualism is also noticeable in him. Colambre finds it enjoyable to share extensive multilingualism with him. For instance, Colambre speaks to him in Latin as a coded language for secret communication: “‘*Emptum aprum!*’” said lord Colambre to the count, without danger of being understood by those whom it concerned’ (*A*, p. 94).<sup>428</sup>

Colambre’s multilingual proficiency would surely cover Hiberno-English. At first Paddy’s Hiberno-English in the London coach yard sounded to him ‘so strange’ that he ‘could not help laughing, partly at, and partly with, his countryman’ (*A*, p. 11). Mingling with indigenous peasants in Ireland, Colambre cultivates

<sup>427</sup> Mc Cormack and Walker, ‘Introduction’, the Oxford edition of *The Absentee*, p. xxvi. See also Tracy, p. 32.

<sup>428</sup> For the Count’s sharing with Colambre fluency in French, see *A*, p. 171.



familiarity with the regional dialect. For instance, he responds in Hiberno-English to Larry's explanation of the Garraghtys' cheating middle-man operation: "Do I make your honour *sensible*?" [The footnote translates this as 'Do I make you understand?'.] "You make me much more sensible than I ever was before," said lord Colambre' (*A*, p. 110).

The multilingualism and sympathy with professionalism observable in Colambre would qualify him as a legitimate patriot as formulated by *Patronage*. Once Grace Nugent's parents' marriage is proved to be lawful, and subsequently her legitimacy as Colambre's future wife is confirmed, Colambre withdraws the plan for a Spanish commission instantly. He does not waver in doing so, and the enthusiasm he had for the military service appears quite shallow, especially if read against the Count's elevation of the ethos of a professional meritocracy: 'when once this noble ardour is kindled in the breast, it excites to exertion, and supports under endurance' (*A*, p. 172). The authorial voice narrates, 'Joy and love returned in full tide upon our hero's soul; all the military ideas, which but an hour before filled his imagination, were put to flight: Spain vanished, and green Ireland reappeared' (*A*, p. 175). Although Colambre's rejoicing is understandable, the text removes the military service from his outlook so easily as to appear to be almost slighting the military meritocracy's charge of ideal patriotism. The novel is set in wartime, and, according to *Professional Education* and *Patronage*, under such circumstances Colambre would be required to share the military defence of 'his own country', like Godfrey Percy does. Precisely because of this discrepancy, some contradictions are detectable between Edgeworth's prescriptions of ideal patriotism for the English heir Godfrey and the Anglo-Irish heir Colambre.

The prescription for Colambre seems incongruous within a larger intertextual network, as well. The historical context suggests that Colambre's potential commission would have been bound up with the British operation against Napoleon during the Peninsula War. While the contemporary reader observes Colambre's easy disengagement from the military commitments, publications which feature the Anglo-Irish hero Arthur Wellesley's professional contribution to Britain's major victories during the Peninsular War were in circulation and preparation.<sup>429</sup>

---

<sup>429</sup> For example, William Thomas Beckford, *Letters from Portugal and Spain; Comprising an Account of the Operations of the Armies under Their Excellencies Sir Arthur Wellesley*,

Salient implications are evident in *The Absentee*'s authorising Colambre's legitimacy as a landlord and patriot without compelling him to have the experience of the career within a professional meritocracy. With regard to Colambre's choice of Grace Nugent over the military commission, it has been argued that in the framework of *The Absentee* her support is essential to the validity of his residential landlordship in Ireland.<sup>430</sup> Given Edgeworth's emphasis on male ideal patriots' dependence on their wives' assistance with their public duties, this argument seems reasonable. It may be added that Colambre's choice signals the text's vision that benevolent landlordship in Ireland is as urgent a patriotic commitment as wartime military contributions abroad. Furthermore, the licensing of social mobility through the meritocratic system would be too risky in the context of post-Union Ireland since the indigenous peasants' access to social mobility would easily subvert the landed system which favoured the Anglo-Irish landlords. Given this potential scenario of subversion, the ideal patriotism of *The Absentee* seems to be formulated as more conservative than its counterpart *Patronage*.<sup>431</sup>

I suggest that the discrepancy between *The Absentee*'s version of ideal patriotism for Irish society and *Patronage*'s version of ideal patriotism for English society is the climax of the contradiction in Edgeworth's ideal patriotism. The subdued advocacy of a professional meritocracy in *The Absentee* allows less social mobility for the Irish nation than *Patronage*'s more committed idealisation of the meritocracy does for the English nation. Since the class boundary between the landed class and the lower classes in nineteenth-century Ireland is often understood as largely corresponding to the colonial boundary between the 'colonisers' and the 'colonised', the religious boundary between Protestants and Catholics, and the cultural boundary between the English or Anglo-Irish and the Gaelic, this contradiction in Edgeworth's ideal patriotism is susceptible to the allegation that the ideal's licensing of more rigid class divisions in the Irish social context than in the English social context articulates discrimination against the indigenous Irish, and thus racial, cultural and religious intolerance. This discrepancy in the thematic

---

and Sir John Moore, from the Landing of the Troops in Mondego Bay to the Battle at Corunna (1809); Francis L. Clarke, *The Life of the Most Noble Arthur Marquis and Earl of Wellington* (1812).

<sup>430</sup> Heidi Thomson, 'Introduction', in *The Absentee* (London: Penguin Books, 1999), pp. xxii-xxv.

<sup>431</sup> See also Ó Gallchoir, 'Maria Edgeworth's Revolutionary Morality and the Limits of Realism' (2000), p. 96.



constructions of ideal patriotism for the English nation and the Irish nation in *The Absentee* and *Patronage* is authorised by the same narrative mode: authorial voice. Given the genesis of the two novels, their close intertextuality, and the same narrative mode, the discrepancy is highly intriguing.

Here it is appropriate to recall my interpretation of *Harrington*. I argued that *Harrington* attempts to prescribe culturally inclusive patriotism but prioritises the conservation of the traditional landed order at the cost of its pursuit of cosmopolitan ideals. In this sense, *Harrington* and *The Absentee* seem to be subject to similar problems in formulating ideal patriotism. The decisive distinction between the two novels is, however, the difference between their narrative authorities. *Harrington*'s limited formula of ideal patriotism for the English/British nation is authorised by a male English personal voice. To the contrary, *The Absentee*'s limited formula of ideal patriotism for the Irish/British nation is authorised by an authorial voice which conveys Edgeworth's social identities via the extrafictional voice. The constraint on social mobility in *The Absentee* is, therefore, the more attributable to her Anglo-Irish identity, and renders this identity more liable to the cultural prejudice resulting from class prejudice, than is the case in *Harrington*.

Accordingly, *The Absentee* constructs the Anglo-Irish identity as more problematic than *Patronage* does, although their employment of authorial voice and their thematic contents do cooperate in authorising cultural inclusiveness coherently. The use of authorial voice, which carries Edgeworth's Anglo-Irish identity via extrafictional voice, as the narrative authority for the matters of the Irish or the English nation, would reduce the tension between the Anglo-Irish class, on the one hand, and the Irish or the English nation, on the other. The narrative forms of the two novels thus demonstrate cultural flexibility, which the thematic formulae of ideal patriotism in the two novels illustrate in terms of multilingualism/multiculturalism.

Due to its claim on cultural flexibility, Edgeworth's view of individuals and nations is, in a sense, compatible with the theory of the Union as amalgamating the nations harmoniously within the British Empire. As we have observed, examples of Edgeworth's ideal patriotism may be said to be more liberal than the legislation

of the Union, which is rated as ‘convoluted and contradictory’ by R. F. Forster.<sup>432</sup> For instance, the characterisation of *Ennui*’s protagonist demonstrates that even an individual descending from the indigenous Irish nation could qualify as an ideal patriot of the Irish, and moreover the British nation. The suggestion of such cultural flexibility for the formation of the British nation is, however, undermined by the limits of the class component in Edgeworth’s ideal patriotism. In chapter 5, I pointed out that *Harrington* demonstrates such a flaw. Authorised by an English personal voice, *Harrington* fails to conceive of the English nation as accommodating Jewish characters, whose financial power could be subversive of the English landed order. *The Absentee* embeds a similar sort of class prejudice in its version of ideal patriotism. Since *The Absentee*’s ideal patriotism is designed for the Irish nation and narrated in an authorial voice, the novel renders its version of ideal patriotism more controversial than *Ennui* does. Even the most enthusiastic defence of a professional meritocracy in Edgeworth’s novels is not free of class prejudice, partly because they compromise meritocratic ideals so that the class may fit into the hereditary landed system, and partly because they fail to deconstruct the historical conditions of professions. The historical conditions at issue here are that most of what the Edgeworths call ‘professions’ are supposed to be aligned with the English-oriented ‘British’ institutions such as the monarch and colonialism. For instance, the army,<sup>433</sup> the legal system, Anglican Church and Church of Ireland are all British institutions, and if indigenous Irishmen sought to take up and practise one of these professions they were required to profess their allegiance to British interests. Given these historical conditions, although Edgeworth’s ideal patriotism may appear to be inclusive by distributing opportunities of social mobility through a professional meritocracy more widely, it is not actually so accessible to the indigenous Irish, to whom British interests were often incompatible with their own. The resort to the notion of ‘lawful’ in Edgeworth’s novels without clarifying what kind of ‘law’, furthermore, destabilises the ‘lawful’ procedures of the ideal patriots’ access to landed estates. In most of the cases what is meant by ‘lawful’ in these texts seems to abide by the ‘law’ of the British Empire rather than Gaelic Ireland. For all its remarkable scope of cultural flexibility, the evasion of questioning these

---

<sup>432</sup> R. F. Foster, *Paddy and Mr Punch* (1995), p. 81.

<sup>433</sup> Most of Edgeworth’s ideal patriots who opt for military careers take or are planning to take the British service, as observable in the examples of Godfrey Percy, Ormond, and



colonialist assumptions fails to exonerate Edgeworth's ideal patriotism from the practical flaw in the 'fabric of Union and the process of Anglicization', which served as 'the necessary antecedents of modern Irish [cultural] nationalism'.<sup>434</sup>

My recapitulation of the historical context in the paragraphs above prepares an appropriate ground to validate my argument that Edgeworth's novels intervene in the debate of her contemporaries about the relationship between individuals and nations. Written in the period of ideological transition from Enlightenment cosmopolitanism to Romantic nationalism, her novels provide a creative formula which could negotiate between individuals and nations, by appropriating and partly rectifying these ideologies of cosmopolitanism and nationalism. The formula is designed to preclude universalist reduction and cultural screening in identifying individuals with nations. In addition to such an ideological contribution, Edgeworth's novels achieve artistic innovation by sophisticating narrative modes, especially authorial voice. As I have argued, her authorial voice is the textual evidence for the viability of her ideal patriotism. Her novels therefore enlarged the possibilities of narrative modes and the novel as a genre. Perhaps it is not unreasonable to suggest that Edgeworth's novels are relevant to today's ongoing debate about individuals and nations. This new century is, after all, witnessing the co-existence of globalism and cultural nationalism. If globalism may be understood as a standardising movement like Enlightenment cosmopolitanism, the relevance of Edgeworth's moment to the present time becomes obvious. Her novels are still able to speak to our current concern with national and cultural identities.

---

Colambre.

<sup>434</sup> Foster, *Paddy*, p. 82.

## *Bibliography*

### 1. Works by Maria Edgeworth

Edgeworth, Maria, *The Novels and Selected Works of Maria Edgeworth*, ed. by Marilyn Butler and others, 12 vols (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1999-2003); abbreviated as *Works*

I: *Castle Rackrent, Irish Bulls, and Ennui*, ed. by Jane Desmarais, Tim McLoughlin and Marilyn Butler (1999)

II: *Belinda*, ed. by Siobhán Kilfeather (2003)

III: *Leonora and Harrington*, ed. by Marilyn Butler and Susan Manly (1999)

IV: *Manœuvring and Vivian*, ed. by Claire Connolly with Marilyn Butler (1999)

V: *The Absentee, Madame de Fleury, and Emilie de Coulanges*, ed. by Heidi Van de Veire and Kim Walker with Marilyn Butler (1999)

VI: *Patronage*, vols I & II, ed. by Conor Carville and Marilyn Butler (1999)

VII: *Patronage*, vols III & IV, ed. by Conor Carville and Marilyn Butler (1999)

VIII: *Ormond*, ed. by Claire Connolly (1999)

IX: *Helen*, ed. by Susan Manly and Clíona Ó Gallchoir (1999)

X: *The Parent's Assistant and Moral Tales*, ed. by Elizabeth Eger and Clíona Ó Gallchoir (2003)

XI: *Practical Education*, ed. by Susan Manly (2003)

XII: *Popular Tales, Early Lessons, and Whim for Whim*, ed. by Elizabeth Eger, Clíona Ó Gallchoir, and Marilyn Butler (2003)

—, *Belinda*, ed. by Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin (London: J. M. Dent, 1993)

—, *Letters for Literary Ladies to Which is Added an Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification*, ed. by Claire Connolly (London: J. M. Dent, 1993)



—, ‘hist<sup>y</sup> for K of B. Islands’, Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS. Eng. misc. c. 896.

—, ‘Vesey’ and ‘Vesay’, Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS. Eng. misc. c. 896

—, ‘The Life & Death of a Divorcée’, Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS. Eng. Misc. c. 897

Edgeworth, Richard Lovell and Maria, *Practical Education* (London: J. Johnson, 1798)

Edgeworth, Richard Lovell (and Maria), *Essays on Professional Education* (London: J. Johnson, 1809)

—, *Memoirs of Richard Lovell Edgeworth, Esq.: Begun by Himself and Concluded by His Daughter Maria Edgeworth* (London: R. Hunter, 1820)

Colvin, Christina, ed., *Maria Edgeworth: Letters from England, 1813-1814* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971)

Edgeworth, Frances, *A Memoir of Maria Edgeworth with a Selection from Her Letters* (privately printed, 1867)

Hare, Augustus, J. C., *The Life and Letters of Maria Edgeworth* (London: Edward Arnold, 1894; repr. 1971)

MacDonald, Edgar, E., ed., *The Education of the Heart: The Correspondence of Rachel Mordecai Lazarus and Maria Edgeworth* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1977)

## 2. Primary Sources by Other Writers

Austen, Jane, *The Novels of Jane Austen*, ed. by R. W. Chapman, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn, III: *Mansfield Park* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1934)

—, *The Novels of Jane Austen*, ed. by R. W. Chapman, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn, IV: *Emma* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1934)

Austin, J. L., *How to Do Things with Words: The William James Lectures Delivered at Harvard University in 1955* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962)

Barthes, Roland, *Image, Music, Text*, trans. by Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977)

Beckford, William Thomas, *Letters from Portugal and Spain; Comprising an Account of the Operations of the Armies under Their Excellencies Sir Arthur Wellesley, and Sir John Moore, from the Landing of the Troops in*

- Mondego Bay to the Battle at Corunna* (London: Richard Phillips, 1809)
- Burke, Edmund, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, ed. by L. G. Mitchell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993)
- Burney, Fanny (Frances), *Evelina or the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World*, ed. by Edward A. Bloom with the assistance of Lillian D. Bloom (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982)
- , *The Wanderer; Or, Female Difficulties*, ed. by Margaret Anne Doody and others (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991)
- Clarke, Francis L., *The Life of the Most Noble Arthur Marquis and Earl of Wellington* (London: J. & J. Cundee, [1812])
- Derrida, Jacques, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, trans. by Mark Dooley and Michael Hughes (London: Routledge, 2001)
- Edgeworth, Richard Lovell, 'An Essay on the Art of Conveying Secret and Swift Intelligence', in *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, VI (1797)
- , *A Letter to the Right Hon. The Earl of Charlemont, on the Tellograph, and on the Defence of Ireland* (Dublin: P. Byrne, 1797)
- Falconer, John, *Cryptomenysis Patefacta: Or the Art of Secret Information Disclosed without a Key* (London: Daniel Brown, 1685)
- Falconer, William, *Shipwreck* (London: A. Millar, 1762)
- , *An Universal Dictionary of the Marine* (London: T. Cadell, 1796)
- Hume, David, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998)
- , *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. by David Fate Norton and Mary J. Norton, repr. with corrections (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002)
- , *Political Essays*, ed. by Knud Haakonssen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994)
- Price, Richard, *Political Writings*, ed. by D. O. Thomas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991)
- Scott, Walter, *Waverley; Or 'Tis Sixty Years Since*, ed. by Claire Lamont (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986)
- Searle, John R., *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969)
- Smith, Adam, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, ed. by R. H. Campbell and others, 2 vols (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1981)



- Wilkins, John, *An Essay Towards a Real Character, and a Philosophical Language* (London: SA, Gellibrand, John Martyn Printer to the Royal Society, 1668)
- , *Mercury or the Secret and Swift Messenger, Shewing How a Man May with Privacy and Speed Communicate His Thoughts to a Friend at Any Distance* (1707); *Essay Towards a Real Character and a Philosophical Language* (Amsterdam: J. Benjamins, 1984)
- Wilkins, John, and others, *Mercury, or, the Secret and Swift Messenger: Shewing, How a Man May with Privacy and Speed Communicate His Thoughts to a Friend at Any Distance* (London: Printed by I. Norton for John Maynard and Timothy Wilkins and are to be sold at the George in Fleetstreet, neere Saint Dunstans Church, 1641)

### 3. Secondary Sources

- Altieri, Joanne, 'Style and Purpose in Maria Edgeworth's Fiction', *Nineteenth Century Fiction*, 23 (1968), 265-78
- Asbach-Schnitker, Brigitte, 'Introduction', in *Mercury; Or the Secret and Swift Messenger* by John Wilkins (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1984)
- Baier, Annette, 'Good Men's Women: Hume on Chastity and Trust', *Hume Studies*, 5 (1979), 1-19
- , 'Hume: The Reflective Women's Epistemologist?', in Jacobson, pp. 19-38
- Baldick, Chris, *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Literary Terms*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001)
- Basker, James G., 'Scotticisms and the Problem of Cultural Identity in Eighteenth-Century Britain', in *Sociability and Society in Eighteenth-Century Scotland*, ed. by John Dwyers and Richard B. Sher (Edinburgh: The Mercat Press, 1991), pp. 81-95.
- Belanger, Jacqueline E., 'Educating the Reading Public: British Critical Reception of the Irish Fiction of Maria Edgeworth and Lady Morgan, 1800-1830' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Kent at Canterbury, 1999)
- Bilger, Audrey, *Laughing Feminism: Subversive Comedy in Frances Burney, Maria Edgeworth, and Jane Austen* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998)
- Blakemore, Steven, *Burke and the Fall of Language: The French Revolution as*

- Linguistic Event* (Hanover, N. H; London: Published for Brown University Press by University Press of New England, 1988)
- Booth, Wayne C., *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961)
- Broadie, Alexander, *The Scottish Enlightenment: The Historical Age of the Historical Nation* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2001)
- Burgess, Miranda J., *British Fiction and the Production of Social Order, 1740-1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000)
- Butler, Marilyn, *Maria Edgeworth: A Literary Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972)
- , *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975)
- , *Romantics, Rebels, and Reactionaries: English Literature and Its Background 1760-1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981)
- , 'Introduction', in *Castle Rackrent and Ennui* by Maria Edgeworth (London: Penguin, 1992)
- , 'General Introduction', in *Works*, I, pp. VII-LXXX
- , 'Introductory Note', in *Works*, VI, pp. vii-xxx.
- , 'Irish Culture and Scottish Enlightenment: Maria Edgeworth's Histories of the Future', in *Economy, Polity, and Society: British Intellectual History, 1750-1950*, ed. by Stefan Collini, Richard Whatmore and Brian Young, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 158-80
- , 'Edgeworth's Ireland: History, Popular Culture, and Secret Codes', *Novel: A Forum on Fiction*, 34 (2001), 267-92
- Butler, Marilyn, and Tim McLoughlin, 'Introductory Note' [to *Castle Rackrent*], in *Works*, I, pp. vii-xiv
- , 'Introductory Note' [to *Ennui*], in *Works*, I, pp. xxxii-lv
- Butler, Marilyn, Heidi Van de Veire, and Kim Walker, 'Introductory Note', in *Works*, V, pp. vii-xxxix
- Cameron, Deborah, *Verbal Hygiene, Politics of Language* (London: Routledge, 1995)
- Chambers, J. K. and Peter Trudgill, *Dialectology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980)
- Colley, Linda, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992)



- Connolly, Claire, 'Introduction', in *Letters for Literary Ladies to Which Is Added an Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification* by Maria Edgeworth, (London: J. M. Dent, 1993), pp. xvi-xxvi
- , 'Gender, Nation and Ireland in the Early Novels of Maria Edgeworth and Lady Morgan' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Wales, 1995)
- , 'Reading Responsibility in *Castle Rackrent*', in *Ireland and Cultural Theory: The Mechanics of Authenticity*, ed. by Colin Graham and Richard Kirkland (Basingstoke; New York: Macmillan; St. Martin's, 1999), pp. 136-61
- , 'Introductory Note', in *Works*, viii, pp. vii-xxii
- , 'Introduction', in *Ormond* by Maria Edgeworth (London: Penguin Books, 2000)
- Corbett, Mary Jean, *Allegories of Union in Irish and English Writing, 1790-1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000)
- Cutting-Gray, Joanne, *Woman as 'Nobody' and the Novels of Fanny Burney* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1992)
- Davie, Donald, *The Heyday of Sir Walter Scott* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961)
- Deane, Seamus, *A Short History of Irish Literature* (London: Hutchinson, 1986)
- , *Strange Country: Modernity and Nationhood in Irish Writing since 1790* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1997)
- Demott, Benjamin, 'Comenius and the Real Character in England', in Subbiondo (ed.)
- Doody, Margaret Anne, *Frances Burney: The Life in the Works* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988)
- Duckworth, Alistair M., *The Improvement of the Estate: A Study of Jane Austen's Novels*, 1971 (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1994)
- Dunne, Tom, *Maria Edgeworth and the Colonial Mind*, O'Donnell Lectures; 26th (Cork: University College Cork, 1984)
- , 'Haunted by History: Irish Romantic Writing 1800-50', in Porter and Teich (eds), pp. 68-91
- , "'A Gentleman's Estate Should Be a Moral School': Edgeworthstown in Fact and Fiction, 1760-1840', in *Longford: Essays in County History*, ed. by Raymond Gillespie and Gerard P. Moran, (Dublin: Lilliput, 1991), pp. 95-121

- Dwyer, John, 'Adam Smith in the Scottish Enlightenment', in *Adam Smith: International Perspectives*, ed. by Hiroshi Mizuta and Chuhei Sugiyama (Basingstoke; New York: Macmillan; St Martin's Press, 1993), pp. 141-61
- Dwyer, John, and Richard B. Sher, *Sociability and Society in Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Edinburgh: Mercat, 1993)
- Eger, Elizabeth, 'Introductory Note', in *Works*, x, pp. vii-xiii
- Eagleton, Terry, *Criticism and Ideology Study in Marxist Literary Theory* (London: NLB, 1976)
- , *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger: Studies in Irish Culture* (London: Verso, 1995)
- Edwards, John. *Multilingualism* (London: Routledge, 1994)
- Ehrlich, Susan, 'Narrative Iconicity and Repetition in Oral and Literary Narratives', in *Twentieth Century Fiction: From Text to Context*, ed. by Peter Verdonk and Jean Jacques Weber, (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 78-96
- Epstein, Julia, *The Iron Pen: Frances Burney and the Politics of Women's Writing* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989)
- Fay, C. R., *Burke and Adam Smith: Being a Lecture Delivered at the Queen's University at Belfast, April 27, 1956* (Belfast: Marjory Boyd, 1956)
- Finch, Geoffrey, *Linguistic Terms and Concepts* (London: Macmillan, 2000)
- Fitzgibbons, Athol, *Adam Smith's System of Liberty, Wealth, and Virtue: The Political and Moral Foundations of 'the Wealth of Nations'* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995)
- Flanagan, Thomas, *The Irish Novelists, 1800-1850* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959)
- Fludernik, Monika, *Towards a 'Natural' Narratology* (London: Routledge, 1996)
- Foster, R. F., *Modern Ireland, 1600-1972* (London: Allen Lane, 1988)
- , *Paddy and Mr Punch: Connections in Irish and English History, 1993* (London: Penguin Books, 1995)
- Furniss, Tom, *Edmund Burke's Aesthetic Ideology: Language, Gender, and Political Economy in Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993)
- , 'Cementing the Nation: Burke's Reflections on Nationalism and National Identity', in Whale (ed.), pp. 115-44
- Gallagher, Catherine, *Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the*



- Marketplace, 1670-1820* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994)
- Gamer, Michael, *Romanticism and the Gothic: Genre, Reception, and Canon Formation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000)
- Gaull, Marilyn, *English Romanticism: The Human Context* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1988)
- Genette, Gérard, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1980)
- Gilbert, Sandra M., and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1979)
- Gonda, Caroline, *Reading Daughters' Fictions 1709-1834: Novels and Society from Manley to Edgeworth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996)
- Griffin, Dustin H., *Patriotism and Poetry in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002)
- Haakonssen, Knud, 'Introduction', in David Hume's *Political Essays*, ed. by Haakonssen
- Harman, Claire, *Fanny Burney: A Biography* (London: Harper Collins Publishers, 2000)
- Harris, Roy, and Talbot J. Taylor, *Landmarks in Linguistic Thought I: The Western Tradition from Socrates to Saussure*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (London; New York: Routledge, 1989)
- Hastert, Marie Paule and Jean Jacques Weber, 'Power and Mutuality in *Middlemarch*', in Toolan (ed.), pp. 163-78
- Hausermann, Hans Walter, *The Genevese Background: Studies of Shelley, Francis Danby, Maria Edgeworth, Ruskin, Meredith, and Joseph Conrad in Geneva, with Hitherto Unpublished Letters* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1952)
- Heilbroner, Robert L., ed., *The Essential Adam Smith* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986)
- , 'The Man and His Times', in Heilbroner (ed.)
- Hoad, Naville, 'Maria Edgeworth's *Harrington*: The Price of Sympathetic Representation', in *British Romanticism and the Jews: History, Culture, Literature*, ed. by Sheila A. Spector (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 121-37

- Hobsbawm, Eric, *The Age of Revolution, Europe 1789-1848* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1962)
- Hollingworth, Brian, *Maria Edgeworth's Irish Writing: Language, History, Politics* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997)
- Hudson, R. A., *Sociolinguistics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996)
- Hurst, Michael, *Maria Edgeworth and the Public Scene: Intellect, Fine Feeling and Landlordism in the Age of Reform* (London: Macmillan, 1969)
- Jacobson, Anne Jaap, ed., *Feminist Interpretations of David Hume* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992)
- Jameson, Frederic, *Marxism and Form: Twentieth-Century Dialectical Theories of Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971)
- Joeres, Ruth-Ellen Boetcher, and Elizabeth Mittman, eds, *The Politics of the Essay: Feminist Perspectives* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993)
- Johnson, Claudia L., *Equivocal Beings: Politics, Gender and Sentimentality in the 1790s: Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, Burney, Austen, Women in Culture and Society* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1995)
- Jones, Peter, *Hume's Sentiments: Their Ciceronian and French Context* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1982)
- Kahn, David, *The Codebreakers: The Story of Secret Writing*, rev. edn (New York: Scribner, 1996)
- Keane, Angela, *Women Writers and the English Nation in the 1790s: Romantic Belongings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000)
- Kearns, Michael, *Rhetorical Narratology* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999)
- Kelly, Gary, *English Fiction of the Romantic Period, 1789-1830* (London: Longman, 1989)
- , *Women, Writing, and Revolution, 1790-1827* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993)
- Kiberd, Declan, *Irish Classics* (London: Granta, 2001)
- Kirkpatrick, Kathryn, 'Putting Down the Rebellion: Notes and Glosses on *Castle Rackrent*, 1800', *Éire-Ireland*, 30 (1995), 77-90
- Knowlson, James, *Universal Language Schemes in England and France, 1600-1800* (Toronto; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1975)
- Kowaleski-Wallace, Elizabeth, *Their Fathers' Daughters: Hannah More, Maria*



- Edgeworth, and Patriarchal Complicity* (New York ; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991)
- Lanser, Susan Sniader, *The Narrative Act: Point of View in Prose Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981)
- , *Fictions of Authority: Women Writers and Narrative Voice* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992)
- Leersen, Joep T. H., *Remembrance and Imagination: Patterns in the Historical and Literary Representation of Ireland in the Nineteenth Century* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1996)
- Manly, Susan, 'Burke, Toland, Toleration: The Politics of Prejudice, Speculation, and Naturalization', in Whale (ed.), pp. 145-67
- Manly, Susan and Clíona Ó Gallchoir, 'Introductory Note', in *Works*, IX, pp. vii-xiii
- Mc Cormack, W. J., *Ascendancy and Tradition in Anglo-Irish Literary History from 1789 to 1939* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985)
- , 'The Tedium of History: An Approach to Maria Edgeworth's *Patronage*', in *Ideology and the Historians*, ed. by Ciaran Brady (Dublin: The Lilliput Press, 1991), pp. 77-98
- , *From Burke to Beckett: Ascendancy, Tradition and Betrayal in Literary History* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1994)
- , 'Between Burke and the Union: Reflections on Pro: Co 904/2', in Whale (ed.), pp. 60-93
- Mc Cormack, W. J. and Kim Walker, 'Introduction', in *The Absentee* by Maria Edgeworth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988)
- McLoughlin, T. O., *Contesting Ireland: Irish Voices against England in the Eighteenth Century* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999)
- Miller, J. Hillis, *Speech Acts in Literature* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001)
- Mills, Sara, 'Knowing Your Place: A Marxist Feminist Stylistic Analysis', in Toolan (ed.), pp. 182-205
- , *Feminist Stylistics* (London: Routledge, 1995)
- Mittman, Elizabeth, 'Christa Wolf's Signature in and on the Essay: Woman, Science, and Authority', in Joeres and Mittman (eds), pp. 95-112
- Moore, Sean, 'Taking the Bull by the Horns: The Edgeworths' *Essay on Irish Bulls* and the Historicising of Irish "Sly Civility"', in *New Voices in Irish*

- Criticism 3*, ed. by Karen Vandavelde, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2002), pp. 115-22
- Morris, Pam, ed., *The Bakhtin Reader: Selected Writings of Bakhtin, Medvedev and Voloshinov* (London: Arnold, 1994)
- Moynahan, Julian, *Anglo-Irish: The Literary Imagination in a Hyphenated Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995)
- Myers, Mitzi, 'Romancing the Moral Tale: Maria Edgeworth and the Problematics of Pedagogy', in *Romanticism and Children's Literature in Nineteenth-Century England*, ed. by James Holt McGavran, (Athens; London: University of Georgia Press, 1991), pp. 96-128
- , 'Goring John Bull: Maria Edgeworth's Hibernian High Jinks versus the Imperialist Imaginary', in *Cutting Edges: Postmodern Critical Essays on Eighteenth-Century Satire*, ed. by James E. Gill, (1995), pp. 367-94
- Mylne, Vivienne, 'Dialect and the Narrator in Maria Edgeworth, John Galt, and George Sand', *Rivista di Letterature Moderne e Comparate*, 40 (1987), 323-41
- Newton, David E., *Encyclopedia of Cryptology* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 1997)
- Nokes, David, *Jane Austen: A Life* (London: Fourth Estate, 1997)
- O'Brien, Karen, *Narratives of Enlightenment: Cosmopolitan History from Voltaire to Gibbon* (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997)
- Ó Gallchoir, Clíona, "'The Whole Fabric Must Be Perfect': Maria Edgeworth's *Literary Ladies* and the Representation of Ireland", in *Gender Perspectives in Nineteenth-Century Ireland: Public and Private Spheres*, ed. by Margaret Kelleher and James H. Murphy (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1997), pp. 104-15
- , 'Maria Edgeworth and the Rise of National Literature' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Cambridge University, 1998)
- , 'Maria Edgeworth's Revolutionary Morality and the Limits of Realism', *Colby Quarterly*, 36 (2000), 87-97
- Ohman, Richard, 'Literature as Act', in *Approaches to Poetics: Selected Papers from the English Institute*, ed. by Seymour Chatman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974)
- O'Nally, Patrick, *Parties, Patriots and Undertakers: Parliamentary Politics in Early Hanoverian Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1997)



- Outram, Dorinda, *The Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995)
- The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn [on Compact Disc] (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992)
- Page, Judith W., 'Maria Edgeworth's *Harrington*: From Shylock to Shadowy Peddlers', *Wordsworth Circle*, 32 (2001), 9-13
- Page, Norman, *The Language of Jane Austen* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1972)
- Papay, Twila Yates, 'A Near-Miss on the Psychological Novel: Maria Edgeworth's *Harrington*', in *Fetter'd or Free?: British Women Novelists, 1670-1815*, ed. by Cecilia Macheski and Mary Anne Schofield (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1986), pp. 359-69
- Pascal, Roy, *The Dual Voice: Free Indirect Speech and Its Functioning in the Nineteenth-Century European Novel* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1977)
- Pearson, Jacqueline, "'Arts of Appropriation": Language, Circulation, and Appropriation in the Work of Maria Edgeworth', *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 28 (1998), 212-34
- Petrey, Sandy, *Speech Acts and Literary Theory* (New York: Routledge, 1990)
- Petyt, K. M., *The Study of Dialect: An Introduction to Dialectology* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1980)
- Phillipson, Nicholas, 'The Scottish Enlightenment', in Porter and Teich (eds), pp. 19-40
- , 'Adam Smith as Civic Moralizer', in *Wealth and Virtue: The Shaping of Political Economy in the Scottish Enlightenment*, ed. by Istvan Hont and Michael Ignatieff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 179-202
- Poovey, Mary, *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer: Ideology as Style in the Works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley, and Jane Austen* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984)
- Porter, Roy, and Mikulâaés Teich, eds, *The Enlightenment in National Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981)
- Pratt, Mary Louise, *Toward a Speech Act Theory of Literary Discourse* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977)
- Ragussis, Michael, 'Representation, Conversion, and Literary Form: *Harrington* and the Novel of Jewish Identity', *Critical Inquiry*, 16 (Fall 1989), 113-43

- , *Figures of Conversion: 'The Jewish Question' and English National Identity, Post-Contemporary Interventions* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 1995)
- Renwick, W. L., *English Literature, 1789-1815*, Oxford History of English Literature, IX (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963)
- Rogers, Katharine M., *Frances Burney: The World of 'Female Difficulties'* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990)
- Romaine, Suzanne, *Bilingualism*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995)
- , *Language in Society: An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)
- Sales, Roger, *Jane Austen and Representations of Regency England* (London: Routledge, 1994)
- Salmon, Vivian, *The Study of Language in 17th-Century England* (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1979)
- ed, *The Works of Francis Lodwick: A Study of His Writings in the Intellectual Context of the Seventeenth Century* (London: Longman, 1972)
- Schlereth, Thomas J., *The Cosmopolitan Ideal in Enlightenment Thought, Its Form and Function in the Ideas of Franklin, Hume, and Voltaire, 1694-1790* (Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977)
- Schmitt, Cannon, *Alien Nation: Nineteenth-Century Gothic Fictions and English Nationality* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997)
- Selden, Raman, *From Formalism to Poststructuralism*, The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism, VIII (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995)
- Shapiro, Barbara J., *John Wilkins, 1614-1672; An Intellectual Biography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969)
- Sheeran, P. F., 'Colonists and Colonized: Some Aspects of Anglo-Irish Literature from Swift to Joyce', *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 13 (1985), 97-115
- Simpson, Paul, *Language, Ideology and Point of View* (London: Routledge, 1993)
- Slaughter, M. M., *Universal Languages and Scientific Taxonomy in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982)
- Southam, Brian, *Jane Austen and the Navy* (London: Hambledon and London, 2000)
- Spender, Dale, *Mothers of the Novel: 100 Good Women Writers before Jane Austen* (London: Pandora, 1986)



- Spolsky, Bernard, *Oxford Introductions to Language Study: Sociolinguistics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998)
- Stewart, Maaja A., *Domestic Realities and Imperial Fictions: Jane Austen's Novels in Eighteenth-Century Contexts* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1993)
- Stillman, Robert E., *The New Philosophy and Universal Languages in Seventeenth-Century England: Bacon, Hobbes, and Wilkins* (Lewisburg London; Cranbury, NJ: Bucknell University Press; Associated University Presses, 1995)
- Stimson, Dorothy, 'Dr. Wilkins and the Royal Society', in Subbiondo (ed.)
- Subbiondo, Joseph L., ed., *John Wilkins and 17th-Century British Linguistics* (Amsterdam; Philadelphia: J. Benjamins, 1992)
- Sutherland, Kathryn, 'Adam Smith's Master Narrative: Women and *the Wealth of Nations*', in *Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations: New Interdisciplinary Essays*, ed. by Stephen Copley and Kathryn Sutherland (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 97-121
- Tanner, Tony, *Jane Austen* (London: Macmillan, 1986)
- Temple, Kathryn, "'Manly Composition": Hume and the History of England', in Jacobson, pp. 263-82
- Thomson, Heidi, 'Introduction', in *The Absentee* (London: Penguin Books, 1999)
- Tomalin, Claire, *Jane Austen: A Life* (New York: Knopf, 1997)
- Toolan, Michael J., *Narrative: A Critical Linguistic Introduction* (London: Routledge, 1988; repr. 1991, 1992, 2001)
- ed., *Language, Text and Context: Essays in Stylistics* (London: Routledge, 1992)
- Tracy, Robert, *The Unappeasable Host: Studies in Irish Identities* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 1998)
- Trumpener, Katie, *Bardic Nationalism: The Romantic Novel and the British Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997)
- Turner, Cheryl, *Living by the Pen: Women Writers in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1992)
- Uglow, Jenny, *The Lunar Men: The Friends Who Made the Future* (London: Faber and Faber, 2002)
- Urban, Mark, *The Man Who Broke Napoleon's Codes: The Story of George Scovell* (London: Faber and Faber, 2001)

- Watson, Nicola, J., *Revolution and the Form of the British Novel 1790-1825: Intercepted Letters, Interrupted Seductions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994)
- Whale, John C., 'Introduction', in Whale (ed.), pp. 1-17
- ed., *Edmund Burke's Reflections on the Revolution in France: New Interdisciplinary Essays* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000)
- Winch, Donald, *Adam Smith's Politics: An Essay in Historiographic Revision* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978)
- Wohlgemut, Esther, 'Maria Edgeworth and the Question of National Identity', *Studies in English Literature*, 39 (1999), 645-58