



Vices and Virtues in Joseph Andrews by Henry Fielding

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ABSTRACT

Henry Fielding's novel, *Joseph Andrews* is one of his finest masterpieces. *Joseph Andrews* is a novel written in the middle eighteenth century by Henry Fielding. In this novel, Fielding talks of human nature and of the need for control of sexuality. *Joseph Andrews* is a novel by Henry Fielding that explores the theme of vices and virtues in a satirical and comic manner. The story follows the adventures of the title character, Joseph Andrews, a virtuous young man who serves as a footman and falls in love with his employer's daughter, Fanny. As Joseph travels from place to place, he encounters a variety of characters that represent different vices and virtues. The novel presents a world in which vice and virtue are not necessarily fixed attributes of individuals but rather can be shaped by circumstances and environment. For example, the character of Lady Booby is initially presented as a figure of vice; as she attempts to seduce Joseph, but later she is shown to have the potential for virtue when she decides to help Fanny and Joseph reunite. The purpose of studying vices and virtues in *Joseph Andrews* is to gain a deeper understanding of the novel's characters and themes. As a novel of moral instruction, *Joseph Andrews* presents a critique of the societal vices and virtues of the time, and provides examples of how to lead a virtuous life. By examining the vices and virtues portrayed in the novel, readers can gain insight into the cultural and social values of the 18th century. The novel explores various vices such as greed, envy, and lust, as well as virtues such as honesty, kindness, and humility.

KEYWORDS: Henry fielding, vices, virtues, chastity, morality, satire, Hypocrisy, Love, Irony

INTRODUCTION

"Joseph Andrews" by Henry Fielding is a novel that explores the themes of vice and virtue through its characters and their actions. The novel is a satire of the popular genre of the time, the "picaresque" novel, which typically featured a rogue or antihero as the main character. In "Joseph Andrews," the titular character is presented as the embodiment of virtue, while the other characters are portrayed as either virtuous or vice-ridden. Some of the vices and virtues present in the novel are:

VICES

In *Joseph Andrews*, The characters show a lot of inappropriate behaviour including the man and woman characters. Chastity is a recurrent theme- Joseph is a classic example of Male chastity as he is the victim of seduction by Lady Booby and Mrs. Slipslop.

London is depicted as a place of lust and filled with wantonness. The city is corrupt with vices where Lady Booby represents the corruption of London settlers. She gambles drinks and party with her friends while attempting to devour the chastity of Joseph Andrews. When her husband died, she pretended to mourn for her husband but she plays card

with her friends for six days. She started to seduce Joseph Andrews and wanted to have a sexual intercourse with him.

Mrs Slipslop has been a widow for many years and she found Joseph attractive and wanted to devour him as well which also reflects the mannerisms and ill behaviour of city dwellers.

In the novel, one can also see the other characters such as Betty also was filled with sexual lust for Joseph when she encountered him in her landlord's Mr Tow- wouse's inn. After Joseph declined her submissiveness, she slept with the landlord and she was fired by the landlord's mistress after she was caught sleeping with him.

The theme is heightened when Fanny, Mr. Parson Adams and Joseph were heading and amidst was attacked by a group of hounds where the leader of the hounds Squire kidnaps and takes away Fanny so that he could raped her. She was saved by Mr. Peter a steward of Lady Booby. Beau Didapper also shows the same amount of lust for Fanny where he decides to woo around Fanny and triggering the anger of Joseph. The only characters who remained chastise was Mr. Parson Adams, Fanny and Joseph Andrews.

Lust: Many of the characters in the novel are driven by lust, particularly Lady Booby, who desires Joseph and tries to



seduce him. Her maid, Mrs. Slipslop, is also presented as a lustful character (Fielding, 2001, pp. 43-68).

Greed: Mr. Peter Pounce, a lawyer, is shown as a greedy character who is willing to take advantage of others for his own financial gain. (Fielding, 2001, pp 200)

Hypocrisy: The character of Parson Adams, while generally virtuous, is also shown as a hypocrite at times, particularly in his dealings with Joseph.

Envy: Mrs. Slipslop is envious of Lady Booby's attention towards Joseph and tries to undermine Joseph's relationship with Lady Booby.

Mrs. Slipslop is a character in Henry Fielding's novel "Joseph Andrews," and she is portrayed as a woman of many vices. (Fielding, 2001, p. 172) Some of the vices in her character include:

Hypocrisy: Mrs. Slipslop is a hypocrite, and she pretends to be pious and moral while engaging in immoral behavior. For example, she pretends to be a virtuous woman while trying to seduce Joseph.

Lust: Mrs. Slipslop is a sexually promiscuous character, and she is often depicted as being driven by her sexual desires. She tries to seduce Joseph and engages in sexual activity with other characters in the novel.

Deceitfulness: Mrs. Slipslop is deceitful, and she uses lies and manipulation to achieve her goals. She tells lies to Lady Booby about Joseph and tries to turn her against him.

Arrogance: Mrs. Slipslop is an arrogant character, and she often looks down on others. She thinks of herself as superior to the other servants and believes that she is entitled to more privileges than them.

Jealousy: Mrs. Slipslop is jealous of Fanny, Joseph's love interest, and she tries to sabotage their relationship. She is envious of Fanny's beauty and tries to discredit her in front of Lady Booby.

Peter Pounce is a character in Henry Fielding's novel "Joseph Andrews". He is portrayed as a cunning and manipulative character who is primarily motivated by self-interest. . (Fielding, 2001, p. 180) .Some of the vices in his character include:

Deceitfulness: Peter Pounce is a deceitful character who uses lies and manipulation to achieve his goals. He is a lawyer who takes advantage of the legal system to enrich himself and is not above using underhanded tactics to get what he wants.

Greed: Peter Pounce is a character who is primarily motivated by greed. He is always looking for ways to make money and is willing to take advantage of anyone to do so.

Immorality: Peter Pounce is an immoral character who engages in various forms of vice. For example, he is known to frequent brothels and is not above taking advantage of women for his own pleasure.

Disloyalty: Peter Pounce is a disloyal character who will switch sides and allegiances whenever it suits him. He is not above betraying his friends or colleagues to get ahead.

Arrogance: Peter Pounce is an arrogant character who thinks of himself as superior to others. He believes that he is more intelligent and savvy than those around him and often looks down on those who are not as well-educated or well-connected .

Parson Barnabas

Parson Barnabas is a hypocritical and corrupt clergyman who uses his position to enrich himself and take advantage of others. He is depicted as a greedy and manipulative character who is not motivated by a desire to help others or do good works. (Fielding, 2001, p. 88)

Mr. Wilson is a wealthy landowner in Henry Fielding's novel "Joseph Andrews". He is portrayed as a lecherous and manipulative character who is primarily motivated by his own desires. Some of the vices in his character include:

Lust: Mr. Wilson is a character who is primarily motivated by his own sexual desires. He is known for making unwanted advances towards both Fanny and Joseph, and is not above using his wealth and power to take advantage of others.

Deceitfulness: Mr. Wilson is a deceitful character who uses lies and manipulation to get what he wants. He pretends to be interested in Fanny's well-being in order to get close to her, and later tries to blackmail Joseph into giving up Fanny.

Arrogance: Mr. Wilson is an arrogant character who thinks of himself as superior to others. He believes that his wealth and status make him more important than those around him and is not above using his power to bully others.

Immorality: Mr. Wilson is an immoral character who engages in various forms of vice. For example, he is known to frequent brothels and is not above taking advantage of women for his own pleasure.

VIRTUES

The eponymous character, **Joseph Andrews**, is a virtuous and honourable young man who faces many trials and tribulations on his journey to find his place in the world (Fielding, p 16). Here are some of the virtues displayed by Joseph Andrews in the novel:

Honesty: Joseph Andrews is honest and straightforward in all his dealings. He refuses to lie or deceive others, even when it would be to his advantage to do so.

Kindness: Joseph Andrews is kind and compassionate, always willing to help those in need. He goes out of his way to help his fellow travellers on the road, and he shows kindness and respect to all he meets.

Courage: Joseph Andrews displays courage in the face of danger and adversity. He is not afraid to stand up for what he believes in, even when it puts him in harm's way.

Humility: Joseph Andrews is a humble man who does not seek glory or fame. He is content to live a simple life and work hard to earn his keep.

Chastity: Joseph Andrews is a chaste and virtuous young man who resists the advances of women who would lead him astray. He remains loyal to his fiancée, Fanny, even when it is difficult to do so.

Forgiveness: Joseph Andrews is a forgiving man who is able to see the good in others, even when they have wronged him. He forgives those who have treated him poorly and is always willing to give others a second chance.

Fanny is a virtuous and kind-hearted young woman who possesses many admirable qualities. Here are some of the virtues displayed by Fanny Goodwill in the novel:

Patience: Fanny displays remarkable patience throughout the novel. She is often mistreated and subjected to various hardships, but she remains calm and composed, never losing her temper or becoming resentful.

Compassion: Fanny is a deeply compassionate person who cares for the well-being of others. She is kind and sympathetic to those who are suffering, and she goes out of her way to help those in need.

Humility: Fanny is a humble young woman who does not seek attention or recognition. She is content to live a simple life and does not desire material possessions or social status.

Loyalty: Fanny is fiercely loyal to Joseph Andrews, her fiancé. She remains faithful to him throughout the novel, even in the face of great adversity and temptation.

Forgiveness: Fanny is a forgiving person who is able to look past the faults and mistakes of others. She forgives those who have wronged her and is always willing to give others a second chance.

Selflessness: Fanny is a selfless person who puts the needs of others before her own. She is always willing to make sacrifices for the sake of others and does not seek personal gain or advancement.

Parson Adams is a virtuous and well-meaning clergyman who possesses many admirable qualities (Fielding, 2001, p. 12). Here are some of the virtues displayed by Parson Adams in the novel:

Kindness: Parson Adams is a kind and compassionate man who is always willing to help others. He goes out of his way to assist those in need, and he treats everyone he meets with respect and consideration.

Generosity: Parson Adams is a generous person who gives freely of his time and resources. He is not interested in material possessions and is happy to share what he has with others.

Honesty: Parson Adams is an honest man who values truth and integrity. He is not afraid to speak his mind and will

always stand up for what he believes in, even in the face of opposition.

Humility: Parson Adams is a humble man who does not seek attention or praise. He is content to live a simple life and does not desire wealth or power.

Forgiveness: Parson Adams is a forgiving person who is able to see the good in others, even when they have wronged him. He is always willing to give others a second chance and is quick to forgive those who have treated him poorly.

Faith: Parson Adams is a man of deep faith who is committed to his religious beliefs. He is a dedicated clergyman who seeks to help others find meaning and purpose in their lives through the teachings of the church.

BETTY THE SERVANT

Betty is a loyal and trustworthy servant who is devoted to her mistress, Lady Booby. She remains steadfast in her duty despite the mistreatment she receives from her mistress (Fielding, 201, p. 219)

Wilson is a coachman who demonstrates courage and kindness by helping Joseph and Parson Adams on their journey. He risks his own safety to protect them from harm. (Fielding, 2001, p. 160).

Parson Adams brother is a pious and kind-hearted man who shares many of his brother's virtues, including honesty, humility, and forgiveness.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Joseph Andrews is a novel that offers a complex exploration of vices and virtues. The characters in the novel are flawed and imperfect, but they strive to lead a virtuous life despite the temptations and challenges they face. At the same time, the novel is a critique of the societal vices of the time, such as greed, envy, and lust.

By studying vices and virtues in Joseph Andrews, readers can gain insight into the cultural and social values of the 18th century, as well as the complexities of human behaviour and motivation. The study of vices and virtues in the novel can also help readers develop critical thinking and analytical skills, ethical and moral reasoning, and empathy and compassion for others. Overall, the examination of vices and virtues in Joseph Andrews offers a rich and nuanced exploration of the human condition, and can provide readers with valuable lessons and insights that are applicable to a range of contexts.

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