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DECONSTRUCTING APPEARANCES IN THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY NOVEL

SUMMARY

Appearances are one of the main concerns in eighteenth-century novels, but most studies relegate them to a subordinate role, in relation to other issues. Following Slavoj Žižek's understanding of ideology, Alain Badiou's concept of logics of appearances and Jacques Derrida's deconstruction, this thesis offers a sustained analysis of a series of issues of appearances in the eighteenth-century novel, through an exploration of sixteen defining traits, based on Samuel Johnson's definitions of 'appearance', 'appear' and 'apparition'. The concept of appearances allows for an interrogation of ideas, beliefs and positions about most things, including appearances themselves, as they remain open, in their structure and logic, destabilising and deconstructing the ways of thinking that try to contain them. This thesis argues that eighteenth-century novels reproduce, resist and deconstruct the eighteenth-century ideology based on a desire to neutralise the effects of appearances. Through a wide range of eighteenth-century novels, from *Robinson Crusoe* to *Evelina*, it argues that novels destabilise the relationship between appearance and being, proposing the multiple appearances of beings and becomings. William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* is taken as a paradigm, shown to contain most of the issues of appearances in the eighteenth-century novel, revealing that whatever there is, it must be supplemented by appearances in order to appear as reality. This thesis argues that novels came to grasp such a truth of appearances from the beginning of eighteenth century, by locating appearances subjectively, making more evident the multiplicity and extent of fictions, allowing readers an increased degree of awareness of the fictionality of reality. Thus, this thesis makes a significant contribution to the study of issues of appearance and ideology within literature studies by establishing the genre of the novel as the event of appearances in the eighteenth century.

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INTRODUCTION

In the preface written for the first edition of *Things As They Are; or, the Adventures of Caleb Williams* (1794), William Godwin declares that:

> The following narrative is intended to answer a purpose, more general and important than immediately appears upon the face of it. The question now afloat in the world respecting THINGS AS THEY ARE, is the most interesting that can be presented to the human mind. (*Caleb* 1)

Through the consistent use of italics, the Penguin edition (1988) makes it clear that 'THINGS AS THEY ARE' refers to the title of the novel, and that it is not just an emphasis on the expression.[1] Nevertheless, to what 'things' does the title refer? Why is such a question then 'afloat in the world' 'the most interesting that can be presented to the human mind'?

In July 7th 1795, responding to an attack in the *British Critic*, Godwin defined the 'object' of his novel more explicitly as 'the administration of justice and equity, with its consequences, as it exists in the world at large, and in Great Britain in particular', his purpose being:

> to expose the evils which arise out of the present system of civilised society; and having exposed them to lead the enquiring reader to examine whether they are, or are not, as has commonly been supposed, irremediable; in a word, to disengage the minds of men from presupposition, and launch them upon the sea of moral and political enquiry. (Godwin 1795 94)

According to Jeff Miles, 'the intended effect of Godwin's novel' is 'to portray things as they are and to awaken in the reader a sense of the injustice and power inequity inherent in England's political system' (Miles 78). However, Miles recognises that 'there is no guarantee that the novel's readers will discern this moral' (Miles 78). Godwin's recourse

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1. Godwin reversed the title and subtitle of the novel for The Standard Novels Edition of 1831. But by then the novel was already known as *Caleb Williams*, following the tradition of naming novels after the main protagonist, such as *Robinson Crusoe*, *Roxana*, *Pamela*, *Clarissa* and *Tom Jones*.

to a preface suggests that he might have thought the same, and the diversity of critical interpretations confirms this.[2] There cannot be any guarantee, in part because the way things are is not evident in itself. That applies to every 'thing', including any presentation and its intended 'moral'. It includes the very question of 'things as they are', as it might appear 'upon the face' of a novel, in its title, preface, 'surface' or textual materiality. After all, just as the most interesting question concerning *Caleb Williams* is said to be 'more general and important' than what there 'immediately appears' to be, things 'as they are' are not necessarily as they might appear.[3]

The question of 'things as they are' —which at first might not seem to be an ontological inquiry about the being of 'things'— refers to the difference between existence and appearance. It includes a question about appearances, about 'things' that appear or that are made to appear. However, it is not limited to a phenomenological or epistemological problem. It is not just about the construction of reality or the knowledge of such a reality, but also about what passes or is made to pass for reality, and the possibility of its change.

Similar concerns are present in other eighteenth-century novels, in which characters appear to worry about appearances. Of course, both before and since the eighteenth century, characters have been engaged in keeping up appearances, trying to make the right appearance and not trusting appearances too much, afraid of becoming the victims of false appearances. A preoccupation with appearances seems to have intensified in the eighteenth century and become very visible in the novel. Reading eighteenth-century novels, one can easily get the

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2. Vijay Mishra notes that the original preface —'penned on the day on which Thomas Hardy, a member of the London Corresponding Society, was arrested for high treason (May 12, 1794)— was suppressed by the publisher for fear that Godwin, too, would be arrested and the problematic fictionality of his text considerably undermined. The preface was, however, incorporated into the 1796 text, its political immediacy lost with the arrest and successful prosecution of the original dissenters' (Mishra 118). The first edition of *Caleb Williams* was published on May 26, 1794. For the second edition (1796), Godwin added another preface, signed '29 October 1795'. For Miles, 'like the preface to the first edition of [Godwin's] [*Enquiry Concerning*] *Political Justice*, the original preface to *Caleb Williams* grounds the text in the historical moment of its publication and contextualizes its theoretical project within an explicitly delineated account of contemporary political debate. [...] [while] the 1796 preface [...] augments the reader's experience of the novel via its ability to incorporate extradiegetically the "real life" political anxieties of its historical moment into the fictional realm of the novel' (Miles 69). However, Mitzi Myers argues, quoting Godwin, that 'authors are no more infallible in determining the moral or genuine tendency of a book than those who read them: "if the moral be invented first, the author did not then know where the brilliant lights of his story would fall, nor of consequence where its principal power of attraction would be found. If it be extracted afterwards, he is often taken at a disadvantage, and must extricate himself as he can"' (Myers 628).

3. Myers points in this direction when he writes: 'The rewritten conclusion, like the book as a whole, is neither simplistic nor overly optimistic, but resonantly conveys Godwin's understanding of the equivocalness of innocence and guilt, love and hate, truth and appearance, and justice and injustice in the world as it is' (Myers 628).

impression that the concern with appearances is related to the genre and the age. This thesis investigates how eighteenth-century novels represent, disseminate, subvert and transform such concerns about appearances.

Emphasis is given to authors and novels published in England between 1700 and 1799, which are today considered to be representative of the eighteenth-century novel, such as Daniel Defoe (*Robinson Crusoe*, *Colonel Jack*, *Moll Flanders*, *Roxana*), Samuel Richardson (*Pamela*, *Clarissa*), Henry Fielding (*Joseph Andrews*, *Tom Jones*, *Amelia*), Tobias Smollett (*Peregrine Pickle*, *Ferdinand Count Fathom*, *Humphry Clinker*), Laurence Sterne (*Tristram Shandy*), Frances Burney (*Evelina*, *Camilla*), Ann Radcliffe (*The Mysteries of Udolpho*), Matthew G. Lewis (*The Monk*), William Godwin (*Caleb Williams*), and Mary Hays (*Emma Courtney*).

The purpose of this thesis is to explore a series of issues related to appearances in the eighteenth-century novel from today's perspective. Even if we can assume that the ideas about appearances contained in the novels were familiar to their eighteenth-century readers, we could be deceived by the image of the eighteenth century that appears in the novels. Similarly, to give an objective view of an existing reality beyond appearances, such as the reality of the positions regarding appearances in eighteenth-century society or in the novels, such presentation would conceal the component of their appearing. Like Alain Badiou, I believe that 'history itself in the end is a representation', that is to say an appearance, 'that depends on the new possibilities that a subject inscribes in the future of the past, its to-come' (Badiou 2006b 27.6). This thesis attempts to subvert the view that there is an eighteenth-century reality of such ideas and beliefs beyond their appearance, or 'as they appear' for us today. It aims to reveal the issues related to appearances that appear in the eighteenth-century novel, but it does not argue that such a set of issues was exclusive to the eighteenth-century novel.

A few critics have acknowledged the importance of the topic of appearances in the eighteenth-century novel. Heather Zias argues that Richardson's *Clarissa* (1747-1748) is 'a novel where one of the chief concerns of the characters is judging appearances' (Zias 101), while Hal Gladfelder states that the plot of Fielding's *Amelia* (1751) 'is, if

anything, a representation of unreason in human affairs —our inescapable vulnerability to unrecognised biases, unacknowledged desires, and the duplicity of outward appearances' (Gladfelder 204). According to Waldo S. Glock, in *Evelina* (1778) 'Burney is concerned with the most important theme of literature, that of the contrast between appearance and reality' (Glock 1979 130). For Leon Driskell, the point of Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* 'resides in the constant reiteration of the fact that the novel's characters are not what they seem'; the novel thus seems to propose that 'the equation of appearance with reality leads to disenchantment' (Driskell 1967 85, 90). Peter Brooks has also highlighted the role of appearances in Lewis's *The Monk* (1796):

> Lewis carefully and progressively makes his world receptive to the solicitations of the supernatural; the first half of the novel moves toward creation of an imaginative framework within which these forces can have a real existence. This movement is evident from the start, in the play of false appearances and dark realities, in the use of dreams as premonitions and, more, as discoveries about the true nature of things. (Brooks 253)

Marilyn Westfall seems to differ with regard to the importance of appearances when she draws attention to the fact that in Defoe's *Roxana* (1724) the protagonist is 'no longer concerned with preserving appearances, [since] she calls herself "Queen of Whores", a "Carcass", and even a swine' (Westfall 485), but that only applies to the time when Roxana appears to be writing her confession. As the 'no longer' implies, throughout most of Roxana's life, appearances were one of her main concerns. In the case of Defoe's *Moll Flanders*, Ira Konigsberg maintains that:

> [Moll Flanders's] early 'womanish' appearance and the fact that she is 'pretty' may not indicate an erotic nature in Moll, but they do tell us that Moll values herself in these terms and already sees the usefulness of her appearance; they also begin to suggest that we understand Moll's position in her world as all attractive object for others. [...] we are told of the importance of money for Moll, the realization of what it can do for her —and clearly the money referred to in the passage is very much related to her appearance, since it is her physical characteristics and demeanour which have earned her the financial reward, and it is the reward which allows her to dress 'very neat'. Earlier, Moll told us that she wished to be a 'gentle-woman', which for her meant a self-employed individual. Here she also shows an aspiration to appear genteel, a concern she will maintain throughout the work and which she will have to satisfy, for much of her life, with her physical person. (Konigsberg 24)

In that sense, Roxana is not much different from Moll Flanders, as she also uses her physical appearance to try to keep a 'genteel' appearance.

Despite their recognition of the importance of appearances in the eighteenth-century novel, these critics have only considered a limited aspect of appearances, as it relates to a particular novel and the topic they are studying. None of them have considered 'appearances' in themselves as a whole, within and through the eighteenth-century novel. The closest thing to a full-length study of appearances in the eighteenth-century novel is Will Pritchard's *Outward Appearances: The Female Exterior in Restoration London* (2008), but instead of novels or romances, Pritchard uses other textual sources to explore the reality of what was happening in London in the seventeenth century, in terms of the assumed legibility of women.

The lack of studies on the topic of appearances in the eighteenth-century novel is puzzling. One of the reasons seems to be a lack of interest for critics and publishers, which might be related to an empiricist legacy. Today, the concept of appearance does not seem to play a major role in literary studies. It is usually relegated to a criticism of 'reality and appearance', a form of criticism considered outdated, which tends to privilege reality over appearances. It is as if the concept of 'appearances' was too general for the study of literature. It is almost impossible to avoid touching on matters of appearance in any critical approach to the eighteenth-century novel —even if the word 'appearance' is never mentioned. However, most critics limit themselves to merely touching on the topic of appearances in so far as appearances relate to the topics they are examining. My research reverses such a procedure, considering other topics only in relation to appearances.

The definition of a series of issues regarding appearance in this thesis is influenced by three philosophers in particular: Jacques Derrida, Alain Badiou and Slavoj Žižek. Reading eighteenth-century novels alongside some of Derrida's works, I first became aware of the importance of appearances. At the time that I was starting to think about my research project, the relevance of the concept of appearances and its relationship to deconstruction could be inferred from a book such as *Adieu Derrida* (2007). Without constituting a topic, some matters of appearance appear —unexpectedly and recurrently— in many of the lectures,

originally delivered at Birkbeck College, University of London, in 2005: Badiou focused his homage to Derrida on existence as 'the appearance of a being in a world' (Badiou 2007 37); Jacques Rancière proposed that it is possible to approach the idea of democracy 'through the filter of the opposition between appearance and reality' (Rancière 94); Žižek took the opportunity to remind us that 'the fundamental lesson of Hegel is that the key ontological problem is not that of reality but of appearance' (Žižek 2007a 118).

In her review of the English translation of Derrida's *Demeure*, Rei Terada states that 'Derrida's thinking about the meaning of appearance, which has been gathering force since *Specters of Marx*, stands to become an important part of his philosophy' (Terada 136). In *Specters of Marx* (1994), Derrida addresses the apparent paradox at the heart of Marx, who appears to be against appearances and ghosts, but also obsessed with them, unable to avoid them. As we will see, a similar contradiction appears in many eighteenth-century novelists, through their novels, in the belief to know how to distinguish between real present objects and deceptive appearances.[4] This thesis then follows Derrida's call for a 'decisive return to the meditation on what one could term the simplest statements ("Being is", "Being is not"), [and] on words as apparently clear as "word", "appearance", "clarity"' (Derrida 1995b 177).

My interest in Badiou's work comes from his elaboration of 'a comprehensive formalisation of appearing' (Badiou 2009 167). After completing *Being and Event* (1988), it became clear to Badiou that a systematic development of a logic of appearances was necessary. In the preface to *Logics of Worlds: Being and Event, 2*, he explains the complementary character of his new project:

> What [*Being and Event*] did at the level of pure being — determining the ontological type of truths and the abstract form of the subject that activates them— [*Logics of Worlds*] aims to do at the level of being-there, or of appearing, or of worlds. In this respect, *Logics of Worlds* stands [...] [as] an immanent grasp of the parameters of being-there, a local survey of the figures of the true and of the subject, and not a deductive analytic of the forms of being. (Badiou 2009 8)

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4. According to Derrida, '[Marx] too will have tried to conjure (away) the ghosts', to dispel 'the re-apparition of an apparition that will never be either the appearing or the disappeared, the phenomenon or its contrary' (Derrida 1994 58) (my emphasis). Marx's 'hostility' is therefore not only towards ghosts, as if it was a question of no believing in the supernatural. The word 'ghost' designates in Derrida a relation to appearances and apparitions, as Derrida differentiates between the appearing (what appears in the phenomenon), the disappeared (as its contrary), and 'an apparition' that is neither. However, it is not only a question of such an other 'apparition' but of its 're-apparition', which seems to mark a temporal fold or a return, a coming back.

Such a development, however, disconcerted and disappointed some of his followers. Justin Clemens argues that in *Logics of Worlds*, Badiou's philosophy 'collapses into a "theory" of the logic of appearances', calling it 'an extra-philosophical work' (Clemens 103). Today, Badiou's thinking of appearances remains very little explored, almost ignored. It is as if critics still do not know what to make of it. At the London 2009 conference *Subject and Appearance*, which included Badiou scholars such as Peter Hallward, Alberto Toscano and Bruno Bosteels, despite the fact that the second part of the conference was intended to be on *Logics of Worlds* ('Appearance'), almost nothing was said about Badiou's thinking of appearances. The political, militant ('communist') aspect of Badiou's work consumed most of the time available. The omission of 'Appearance' in *Alain Badiou: Key Concepts* (Bartlett and Clemens 2010) seems to indicate that it is still not considered to be a 'key concept' in Badiou's work. Although Badiou's theory of appearances is about the appearing of truth, events, and 'the trans-worldly affirmation of subjects faithful to a truth' (Badiou 2009 37), this thesis borrows from Badiou's work the concept of degrees of appearance and his use of set theory to define the ideology of appearances in the eighteenth-century novel.

Žižek has continuously insisted on the importance of appearances to understand how ideology works. For Žižek, a critique of ideology seems inseparable from a thinking of appearances, as it can be seen from *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (1989) to *Less Than Nothing: Hegel and the Shadow of Dialectical Materialism* (2012).[5] As Kelsey Wood puts it —echoing Žižek's 'Appearances DO matter', from *The Art of the Ridiculous Sublime* (Žižek 2000)— for Žižek 'appearances matter' since 'the critique of ideology is never as simple as eliminating hypocrisy' (Wood 60).[6]

In addition to Badiou's use of set theory, my proposal of an 'ideology of appearances' follows Žižek's understanding of the concept of ideology as a 'generative matrix that regulates the relationship between visible and non-visible, between imaginable and non-imaginable,

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5. To mention just a few texts where Žižek develops a thinking of appearances: the article 'What Can Psychoanalysis Tell Us About Cyberspace' (Žižek 2004), the section 'Toward a New Science of Appearances' in *The Parallax View* (Žižek 2006), and chapter three of his book with Markus Gabriel, *Mythology, Madness, and Laughter: Subjectivity in German Idealism* (Žižek 2009a).

6. For Badiou, Žižek is 'the Lacanian most prone to injecting the notions of the master into the most varied "bodies" of contemporary *appearing*' (Badiou 2009 562) (my emphasis). One of those 'notions of the master' is that of Lacan's Master-Signifier. For Žižek, 'the same reversal that gives rise to a new Master-Signifier is at work in ideology' (Žižek 2006 37).

as well as the changes in this relationship' (Žižek 1994 1). In society, the elements of the set constitute a net or constellation, which works as a matrix. One of those constellations is what is usually known as 'ideology', in a restricted sense, as a dominant way of thinking.[7] Following Žižek's definition of ideology as a 'generative matrix' and Badiou's use of set theory, I propose the term 'ideology of appearances' to designate the set of all the common ideas and beliefs about appearances, shared by a society at a particular time.[8] It constitutes a figure of thinking and relating to appearances. The set is not a random collection of thoughts and positions about appearances with no relation between them and with no effect. The elements that constitute the set are all connected, although the connections between each element are not all the same; there are stronger and weaker connections. They are organised like a net or a system that maintains and reproduces itself. The set maintains itself by offering resistance to changes: the stronger the relationships between the components, the more difficult it is to change one or a few of them. It also reproduces itself through education and learning. An education in appearances, such as the one a young woman must undergo to become a lady, reproduces the set of ideas about appearances already in place in society. To be part of society, a character must share its ideology.[9] He or she might not entirely agree with some of ideological positions or ideas, but he or she must 'know' them, like a code —a knowledge that can be enunciated, put into words, but also a non-spoken, non-conscious knowledge, what one does not know one knows. As for its effects, it constitutes reality. Reality is an effect of the current ideology of appearances.

The set can be thought of as organised and divided into four subsets, which contain all of the common ideas and beliefs about: what appears, what does not appear, what can

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7. According to J. M. Balkin: 'Although people use the term ideology in many different ways, they are usually invoking one of two basic conceptions. The first sees ideology as a worldview, an intellectual framework, a way of talking, or a set of beliefs that helps constitute the way people experience the world. In this conception, ideology is a relatively neutral term. The second conception of ideology is distinctly pejorative. Ideology is a kind of mystification that serves class interests, promotes a false view of social relations, or produces injustice. Alternatively, ideology is a way of thinking and talking that helps constitute and sustain illegitimate and unacknowledged relationships of power' (Balkin 3).

8. In *The Plague of Fantasies*, Žižek proposes a similar conceptualisation, without reference to Badiou: 'The space for the ideological negative magnitude is opened up by the gap between collection and set. That is to say: at its most elementary level, ideology exploits the minimal distance between a simple *collection* of elements and the different *sets* one can form out of this collection' (Žižek 1998 105).

9. As Jorge Larrain reminds us, '[Louis] Althusser describes ideology as a "cement" which introduces itself into all the parts of the social building, making possible the adjustment and cohesion of men in their roles. Ideology does not only allow men to execute their tasks, but also helps them to bear their situation, be it the exploited, be it the exploiter. [...] Ideology is a structural feature of any society; its function is the cementing of its unity' (Larrain 154).

appear and what cannot appear. These four subsets are not mutually exclusive; they can have elements in common. Their intersections constitute the following logical matrix: what appears and can appear is the 'normal'; what does not appear and cannot appear is the 'impossible'; what does not appear but can appear is the 'possible'; and what appears despite it being considered that it could not appear is the 'unexpected', the supernatural. The set can also have an element and its contrary or negation. Something like a belief and a non-belief in the apparition of ghosts can be part of what can appear and what cannot appear, respectively. Depending on the position of the belief within the system, ghosts can be considered normal, possible, impossible or supernatural. It is not that if one position is ideological, its opposite is necessarily non-ideological. Both positions can be included in the set of the ideology of appearances. I do not understand such an ideology to be a dogmatic system that allows only one position that everyone has to share. It includes multiple ideological positions and it allows contradictions.[10]

There is also the passage from one subset to another: a coming into appearance or simply appearing, as the transition from non-appearance to appearance; disappearance, as the transition from appearance to non-appearance; including the possibility or impossibility of such appearance or disappearance, as well as the change from possibility to impossibility and vice versa. I therefore consider an ideology of appearances to be a logical matrix that defines reality between what appears and what does not appear, as well as regulating the possibilities ('futures') of reality, the possibilities of appearance or disappearance, and the changes between them. Everything that appears, along with the ideas or beliefs about its appearance, does so within a system, in relation to other appearances. For something to appear, there must be other appearances to support it. Conversely, if something cannot appear, this can be because of a particular set of dominant or strong appearances that make it impossible or resist the appearance of such a thing.

Such a set is not independent. There is not an independent eighteenth-century ideology of appearances. At the beginning of the eighteenth century —as well as at the beginning of the novel— such an ideology did not start from zero. There was a continuation of what

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10. As James Decker points out, 'ideologies rarely –if ever– function in a monolithic way, and they apply to far more than "traditional" politics. As the dialogic models of M. M. Bakhtin suggest, divergent ideologies often clash at the level of both discourse ("literal" or symbolic) and material action' (Decker 4).

was there before, which one could define as the set of 'the seventeenth-century ideology of appearances'. One set becomes another; one ideology mutates (and somehow survives) into another. But, like in mathematics, these sets of ideologies are not natural. They are not out there in history and clearly recognisable like natural phenomena. They come into existence by a definition, such as the one I propose under the name of 'the ideology of appearances of the eighteenth-century novel': a set constituted by all of the common ideas, beliefs and positions about appearances that appear shared in eighteenth-century novels.

This thesis does not aim to identify the similarities and differences between the seventeenth- and the eighteenth-century ideologies of appearances, nor to explain how the changes took place. It is not interested in establishing the origin of a set of beliefs about appearances as belonging to the eighteenth century, surviving from the seventeenth century or coming from antiquity. Such a study is not without interest, but it is beyond the scope of this thesis. Anyone wanting to undertake such a study, perhaps better suited to the history of ideas, could start by attempting to define the seventeenth-century ideology of appearances based on Pritchard's *Outward Appearances*, keeping in mind that his study is focused on the subsets of London, women, and three specific sites: the playhouse, the park and the New Exchange. Pritchard does not attempt to define the whole set as an ideology, but his study can be, perhaps, one of the best starting points. To define the eighteenth-century ideology of appearances, my own research here could be of some use. However, my focus is on the eighteenth-century novel, which cannot be assumed to accurately represent the reality of the eighteenth century.

I am well aware that the use of the term 'ideology' poses many difficulties, not least since, Žižek recognises, it can designate almost anything:

> from a contemplative attitude that misrecognises its dependence on social reality to an action-orientated set of beliefs, from the indispensable medium in which individuals live out their relations to a social structure to false ideas which legitimate a dominant political power. (Žižek 1994 3-4)

Nonetheless, the term continues to be widely used in the study of eighteenth-century novels, to designate a system of values and beliefs, such as mercantilism, individualism, patriarchy and capitalism. For John Bender, for example, 'realism, as it figures in the European novel

from the seventeenth century to the present, has profound ideological implications' (Bender

20). According to John J. Richetti:

> something like a rehabilitation of the concept [of 'ideology']
> might already be said to be established (if not always articulated)
> in the current intense reexamination of the origins and meanings
> of the British eighteenth-century novel, which in recent crucial
> reevaluations such as those of McKeon, Bender, Hunter, Davis,
> Mullan, Armstrong, and Warner is everywhere understood by
> these critics as an exploration of questions that are fundamentally
> sociocultural and thereby powerfully and essentially ideological.
> [...] For all of these critics, the emerging novels stand in a
> relationship (as a response, side effect, promoter and promulgator,
> and even as part of a constellation of causes or contributions)
> to cultural changes in British society that can only be called
> ideological. (Richetti 1999 33-34)[11]

Like many other questions in the study of the origin and meanings of the eighteenth-

century novel, the questions of appearances examined in this thesis are also 'fundamentally

sociocultural', and therefore ideological. Although the concept of ideology did not exist

at the beginning of the eighteenth century, that does not preclude the possibility of there

being an ideology of appearances already in place.[12] The contrary would be as absurd as

to think that there was no neurosis before psychoanalysis, or gravitation before it was

discovered and named. Following my definition of an ideology of appearances, it would be

equivalent to think that no common ideas and beliefs about appearances existed before, or

that they were free of all 'ideological' connotations. Like Žižek, I believe in the existence

of ideology as an 'elusive network of implicit, quasi-"spontaneous" presuppositions and

attitudes that form an irreducible moment of the reproduction of' the assumedly '"non-

ideological" (economic, legal, political, sexual…) practices. Ideology taps into the Real

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11. For a criticism of Richetti's idea of the need to 'rehabilitate' the concept of 'ideology' —while still in favour of the use of the term— see Lennard Davis's 'The Ends of Ideology: Politics and Literary Response' (Davis 1999). According to Davis, '[we must] avoid objectifying the study of ideology, which itself is a process that continues an enduring attempt to understand the rather complex *pax de deux* between creativity and historical demands, between the author's intention and the possibilities of genre and market, between freedom and necessity. In this sense, rather than reifying ideology as an object that then needs to be reviled, we might see it as a tradition of hermeneutics tied to types of political practice' (Davis 1999 252).

12. The word 'ideology' is generally attributed to the French aristocrat Antoine Louis-Claude, Comte Destutt de Tracy, in 1796. As Dany Nobus sums up, 'drawing on the works of Locke and Condillac, which he had studied during the time of his imprisonment, Destutt de Tracy coined the term "ideology" for a new sub-discipline of zoology, which would take as its object of scientific study the human faculty of thought, and more specifically the ideas that people develop in relation with the sensations they experience when interacting with their natural surroundings. As such, Destutt de Tracy, and the group of "Ideologists" which he created, advocated ideology as a superior, generic methodology for both the social and the biological sciences, which was designed to supersede the irrational foundations of metaphysics [...]' (Nobus 134).

insofar as it relies on those obscure presuppositions that "structure our perception of reality in advance"' (Vighi and Feldner 35).

I do not believe the concept of ideology to be of no use today, as if we have managed to leave behind all ideologies, the same way that during the eighteenth century 'commodity owners' 'could view themselves as autonomous', believe to 'made decisions freely in accord with standards of profitability', 'subject only to the anonymous laws functioning in accord with an economic rationality immanent [...] in the market' (Habermas 46). I share Badiou and Žižek's sceptical position regarding a post-ideological world and their belief in the need to still think about something called ideology.[13]

Also, I do not believe in the need to reconcile, or even the possibility of reconciling, all of the meanings of the term 'ideology' throughout history, but I believe that my definition of an ideology of appearances can be further developed, to include other conceptualisations, such as the one in Miklós Almási's *The Philosophy of Appearances* (Almási 1989). My use of the words 'common' and 'shared' to define the ideology of appearances in the eighteenth-century novel simply mean that the ideas, beliefs and positions that interest me here are not unique; they do not belong to only one novel, writer or social group. Even if original, I consider ideas, beliefs and positions about appearances to be shared by many eighteenth-century novels, writers and social groups. By publishing, authors share those ideas, beliefs and positions, usually in the hope of making them common, by agreement or popularity. Eighteenth-century novels need to reproduce the common, so that the readers can identify and recognise things as belonging to the same world. This thesis is less about the originality of a set of novels, their ideas, beliefs or positions about appearances, than what they share or have in common with other eighteenth-century novels, in relation to an ideology of appearances.

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13. In a very significative move, Badiou begins *Logics of Worlds* by addressing the question of general belief: 'What do we all think, today? What do I think when I'm not monitoring myself? Or rather, what is our (my) natural belief? "Natural", of course, in keeping with the rule of an inculcated nature. A belief is all the more natural to the extent that its imposition or inculcation is freely sought out —and serves our immediate designs. Today, natural belief is condensed in a single statement: "There are only bodies and languages." This statement is the axiom of contemporary conviction. I propose to name this conviction *democratic materialism* [...] [which] is in the process of becoming the enveloping ideology for this new century' (Badiou 2009 1, 3). For 'democratic materialism', there is, of course, no ideology. It believes itself to be beyond all ideologies. As Žižek puts it, 'the contemporary era constantly proclaims itself as post-ideological, but this denial of ideology only provides the ultimate proof that we are more than ever embedded in ideology' (Žižek 2009b 36).

The eighteenth-century languages of appearance as well as the discursive practices regarding appearances seem to have the advantage of designating more tangible objects than the term 'ideology'. Nevertheless, what I am defining as ideology cannot be reduced to a discursive practice or language, even if ideology seems to be more of a fabrication, a fiction or an illusion. As a set, ideology is an illusion (the set does not exist 'in reality', it is a 'construction'), but there is no outside (the set contains the whole of 'reality').[14] The ideology of appearances in the eighteenth-century novel is not less real and important as an illusion or a fiction. It is part of reality and it has real effects on reality. In that sense, one of the things that attracted me to the concept of ideology was its similarity to appearances. Ideology does not exist as a natural phenomena or an object one can touch or see, but it appears to exist as a social reality. It is an appearance, and as such it has no less effects upon reality.

The purpose of this thesis is not to unmask or reveal the ideology of appearances in the eighteenth-century novel (assuming that it appears masked, hidden, or concealed), nor to critique or argue against it. A certain revelation and critique is inevitable in any study of ideology, but my main purpose is to present the 'logic of destabilisation' of an ideology of appearances 'already on the move' in appearances themselves, to borrow some of the terms that Nicholas Royle uses to define 'deconstruction' as 'a logic of spectrality' (Royle 2000 11). In the spectral play of appearances in the eighteenth-century novel, appearances deconstruct the ideologies that try to define and neutralise them. The novel comes to accentuate the logic of spectrality of appearances. Here, novels and appearances are our spectres.

The problem with the ideology of appearances in the eighteenth-century novel is that, as it defines and regulates reality or what is there, it offers resistance to change and to

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14. According to Žižek, 'the concept of ideology must be disengaged from the "representationalist" problematic, since ideology has nothing to do with "illusion", with a mistaken, distorted representation of its social content: a political standpoint can be quite accurate ("true") as to its objective content, yet thoroughly ideological; and, vice versa, the idea that a political standpoint gives of its social content can prove totally wrong, yet there is absolutely nothing "ideological" about it' (Žižek 1994). However, I am not simply proposing that the eighteenth-century ideology of appearances was illusive, but that as a concept it is an 'illusion', without implying that we could just do without it and move beyond all illusions. As I argue through this thesis, the belief in the possibility of moving beyond all illusions is not different from the belief in the possibility of going beyond all appearances, to reach 'things in themselves'. This relates to the classic opposition between illusion and reality, which, as Vighi and Feldner point out, 'can only sound hopelessly obsolete to a Lacanian ear, in as much as Lacan ultimately conceives of "reality", the allegedly deeper level beyond ideological distortions, as "Real", a dimension which, in its final configuration, is more fictional than a representational system of ideologically binding fictions" (Vighi and Feldner 34).

the arrival of a new idea, belief or position about appearances beyond the conceivable as possible or impossible. An event cannot be predicted through what appears to be impossible; although there is also resistance to the passage from impossible to possible, events are not limited to what is conceivable, not even to a conception of the impossible. This thesis argues that appearances cannot be entirely contained within ideology; that there is something in appearances that escapes definition and enclosure. They remain open; what appears remains open, to new ideas, beliefs and positions to come.

It is not my purpose to extensively map out the ideological field of appearances in the eighteenth-century novel, which would be a monumental task, but to identify some of its main components, to demonstrate its existence. However, as a set constituted by ideas, beliefs and shared positions about appearances, the ideology of appearances is not confined to a place or section in an eighteenth-century novel. An ideology of appearances runs through the eighteenth-century novel. Consider, for example, the preface, introduction or foreword to the eighteenth-century novels, as they were assumed to repeat what the novel said or presented, according to the author's intention. In none of the prefaces to the novels under consideration in this thesis do the writers explicitly declare their ideology of appearances. However, even if they do not mention ideology or appearances, it is still possible to identify their general ideological position regarding appearances from their remarks on fiction and the novel, including the relationship of the preface to the text it appears to present, 'under the false appearance of a present' (Derrida 2004 6).[15]

In *Tom Jones,* for example, using a series of analogies between the writer as host, the novel as house, the reader as customer, and the preface as bill of fare, Henry Fielding starts by defining the purpose of the 'preface' as:

> To prevent [...] giving offence to their customers [...], it hath been usual with the honest and well-meaning host to provide a bill of fare which all persons may peruse at their first entrance into the house; and having thence acquainted themselves with the entertainment which they may expect, may either stay and

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15. As Derrida observes, 'from the viewpoint of the fore-word, which recreates an intention-to-say after the fact, the text exists as something written —a past— which, under the false appearance of a present, a hidden omnipotent author (in full mastery of his product) is presenting to the reader as his future' (Derrida 2004 6).

> regale with what is provided for them, or may depart to some other ordinary better accommodated to their taste. (*Jones* 35)[16]

Following such a purpose, Fielding thinks prefaces so important as to 'prefix not only a general bill of fare to our whole entertainment, but [...] likewise give the reader particular bills to every course which is to be served up in this and the ensuing volumes' (*Jones* 35-36). The preface appears as a genre that can hardly be avoided,[17] which is 'essentially necessary', in contrast to the 'historical matter' of the novel:

> Peradventure there may be no parts in this prodigious work which will give the reader less pleasure in the perusing, than those which have given the author the greatest pains in composing. Among these probably may be reckoned those initial essays which we have prefixed to the historical matter contained in every book; and which we have determined to be essentially necessary to this kind of writing, of which we have set ourselves at the head. (*Jones* 187)

Such a necessity is reinforced by the fact that the prefaces exist, despite being the parts that 'have given the author the greatest pains in composing' and that might be the ones that 'give the reader less pleasure'.[18] The function of a bill of fare then does not seem enough to explain the 'essential necessity' of prefaces. In the same 'preface', Fielding declares that he is going to 'proceed to lay before the reader the reasons which have induced us to intersperse these several digressive essays in the course of this work' (*Jones* 189). There, however, he only advances the 'formal' reason of allowing contrast:

> [...] which runs through all the works of the creation, and may probably have a large share in constituting in us the idea of all beauty, as well natural as artificial: for what demonstrates the beauty and excellence of anything but its reverse? (*Jones* 189)

Another reason is given in Book IX, Chapter I, 'Of those who lawfully may, and of those who may not, write such histories as this':

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16. The concept of 'preface' remains ambiguous in *Tom Jones*. Fielding also referred to such texts as 'introductory chapters', 'essays', and 'prologues'. Here, however, I am less interested in the preface as a genre —as opposed to, for example, introductions.

17. 'I have run into a preface, while I professed to write a dedication', Fielding wrote in the 'dedication', and wonders: 'But how can it be otherwise?' (*Jones* 6).

18. On the difficulty of writing prefaces, Fielding later added: 'I have heard of a dramatic writer who used to say, he would rather write a play than a prologue; in like manner, I think, I can with less pains write one of the books of this history than the prefatory chapter to each of them' (*Jones* 736).

> Among other good uses for which I have thought proper to institute these several introductory chapters, I have considered them as a kind of mark or stamp, which may hereafter enable a very indifferent reader to distinguish what is true and genuine in this historic kind of writing, from what is false and counterfeit. (*Jones* 428)

It is as if, thanks to such prefaces, Fielding could feel more secure about the recognition of the originality of his work, as they seem to make his type of writing more difficult to copy. As he declares, 'I have now secured myself from the imitation of those who are utterly incapable of any degree of reflection, and whose learning is not equal to an essay' (*Jones* 428-429). That does not mean, however, that Fielding intended to secure his novel from all possibility of copying. As he implies in Book XII, Chapter I, 'Showing what is to be deemed plagiarism in a modern author, and what is to be considered as lawful prize', there were some writers that would have been lawfully able to copy his style, beyond a mere borrowing.

Taking the preface as a form of appearance, this is a 'more interesting reason' because it links a matter of appearance to the law, institutions, mimesis and writing, beyond the figure of the bill of fare that presents the 'content' in advance, remarking the difference between the preface as an appearance and the content or reality behind it. For Fielding, it was not a question of copying reality 'as it appears'. In Book VII, Chapter I, 'A comparison between the world and the stage', he writes:

> [T]he theatrical stage is nothing more than a representation, or, as Aristotle calls it, an imitation of what really exists; and hence, perhaps, we might fairly pay a very high compliment to those who by their writings or actions have been so capable of imitating life, as to have their pictures in a manner confounded with, or mistaken for, the originals. But, in reality, we are not so fond of paying compliments to these people. (*Jones* 289)

His novels do not pretend to pass for a real history of real people. As he put it earlier, 'we have properly enough entitled this our work, a history, and not a life; nor an apology for a life, as is more in fashion' (*Jones* 73). One of the reasons for not being 'so fond of paying compliments' to writers who pretend to pass fiction for truth is that it would amount to the celebration of hypocrisy and the danger of confusing fiction with reality, taking the copy for what has been copied. Nevertheless, Fielding was not so naive as to condemn all mimesis

and to propose avoiding all copies. For him there were 'good' copies or 'good' mimesis, as he recognised in a great actor and two 'justly celebrated actresses':

> [A]s they have all *formed themselves on the study of nature only, and not on the imitation of their predecessors*. Hence they have been able to excel all who have gone before them; a degree of merit which the servile herd of imitators can never possibly arrive at. (*Jones* 431) [my emphasis]

It is 'imitation' —understood as 'copy of a copy'— that has a negative value:

> [O]n the real stage, the character shows himself in a stronger and bolder light than he can be described. And if this be the case in those fine and nervous descriptions which great authors themselves have taken from life, how much more strongly will it hold when the writer himself takes his lines not from nature, but from books? Such characters are only the faint copy of a copy, and can have neither the justness nor spirit of an original. (*Jones* 432)

> Vanbrugh and Congreve copied nature; but they who copy them draw as unlike the present age as Hogarth would do if he was to paint a rout or a drum in the dresses of Titian and of Vandyke. In short, *imitation here will not do the business. The picture must be after Nature herself*. A true knowledge of the world is gained only by conversation, and the manners of every rank must be seen in order to be known. (*Jones* 650-651) [my emphasis]

The writer must copy nature —in the case of *Tom Jones*, 'human nature' (*Jones* 36)— without mediations, close to the original source. A copy from a copy can only render a faint image, which lacks presence, spirit, truth or reality, as if such a 'presence' vanishes in a chain of copies, leaving only a ghost or nothing at all: nothing more than an appearance. But, if that is the case, what is the purpose of writing and reading novels? Is nature not enough, that it requires the supplement of writing? Fielding's possible answer to such questions can be found in his invocation of 'Genius', one of the necessary qualifications of a writer:

> [T]ake me by the hand, and lead me through all the mazes, the winding labyrinths of nature. Initiate me into all those mysteries which profane eyes never beheld. Teach me, which to thee is no difficult task, to know mankind better than they know themselves. Remove that mist which dims the intellects of mortals [...] Strip off the thin disguise of wisdom from self-conceit [...] (*Jones* 602)

Associated with mazes, winding labyrinths, mysteries, mist and disguises, nature neither presents nor reveals itself. The task of the writer is to present or expose the true nature 'behind'

the world of appearances; especially the world of 'society', the world for which Fielding wrote, since, as he seems to have thought, 'human nature' could more easily be found in the country, where it existed in a 'more plain and simple manner' than in the 'affectation and vice which courts and cities afford' (*Jones* 37), where 'all is vanity and servile imitation' (*Jones* 651). According to Fielding, 'no author ought to write anything besides dictionaries and spelling-books who hath not [the] privilege' to be 'admitted behind the scenes of this great theatre of Nature', 'thoroughly acquainted [...] with the several disguises which are there put on' (*Jones* 291-292). 'Beyond' what stands in front of the eyes, like 'behind the scenes', what appears visible seems more a curtain than a veil: another way of saying that one must go behind and beyond appearances. Appearances are 'opaque', non-translucent, and non-transparent.

Although there is 'something' in Fielding —something I am trying to identify here as an ideology— that cannot not be against appearances, holding certain ideas against appearances, he was not entirely against them. Fielding also recognised the importance and power of appearances:

> I must confess, that even I myself, who am not remarkably liable to be captivated with show, have yielded not a little to the impressions of much preceding state. When I have seen a man strutting in a procession, after others whose business was only to walk before him, I have conceived a higher notion of his dignity than I have felt on seeing him in a common situation. (*Jones* 139)

Fielding wrote 'histories' or fictions that, without trying to pass for real, must remain within verisimilitude. He also wrote prefaces to such 'histories' —as if they, like nature, were not clear enough by themselves, but required a supplementary presentation. He knew that, 'the excellence of the mental entertainment consists less in the subject than in the author's skill in well dressing it up' (*Jones* 36-37). Dressing, as in a meal or a body, is one of those occupations that Fielding also refers to as 'mak[ing] up the business' of the *beau monde*, so that 'the only epithet which it deserves is that of *frivolous*' (*Jones* 651-652).

The same logic is at play between the prefaces and the narratives they preface. Although 'essentially necessary', for Fielding, the prefaces could not be considered to have a higher, or the same, value as the 'historical productions' or 'mere narrative' they preface. Fielding

did not value the prefaces as much. Part of such 'devaluation' comes from the genre itself, but for Fielding the prefaces were also, basically, 'ornamental parts' (*Jones* 138). Despite the functions he argues they have in *Tom Jones*, he could not but recognise that the novel could well do without them, that a reader might well skip them, without loss:

> [If the reader] shall be of opinion that he can find enough of serious in other parts of this history, he may pass over these [initial essays], in which we profess to be laboriously dull, and begin the following books at the second chapter. (*Jones* 190-191)

In Book XVI, Chapter I, 'Of prologues', Fielding even contemplates the possibility that such prefaces could be detached, change places, or be used in/for other books (a 'rhetorical' practice imagined and condemned throughout history):

> [T]hese several initial chapters; most of which, like modern prologues, may as properly be prefixed to any other book in this history as to that which they introduce, or indeed to any other history as to this. (*Jones* 736)[19]

However, according to Fred Kaplan:

> Fielding cannot intend us to take seriously the gently ironic advice to disregard the prefaces if we 'can find enough of serious in other parts of the novel.' For throughout *Tom Jones* Fielding demonstrates the premise that there is no necessary distinction between the serious and the comic, and the novel in its entirety is both. [...] Fielding seems to imply in an ironic comic preface that the reader who does indeed skip the prefaces is a rather bad reader of *Tom Jones* who hardly knows how the book functions. (Kaplan 539)

But even if the prefaces can be said to contain as many comic elements as the narrative contains serious ones, for Fielding prefaces and narrative were not the same or equivalent; they were not even similar. Even if his argument about the necessary contrast provided

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19. As Derrida reminds us, 'the Latin authors confected prefaces any of which could be used to introduce a number of different books. Cicero confides to Atticus that he has set aside a whole collection of preambles, thinking they might come in handy some day'; 'this formal repetition without any link with the content, this purely "rhetorical" ornament, was something condemned by "good rhetoric" well before Hegel. This very condemnation was already a *topos*. But the rules of the genre had to reach a certain technical perfection and a certain procedural absurdity' (Derrida 2004 15 n17). In other words, it is a question of the 'parergonality' of prefaces. As Derrida explains, 'a parergon comes against, beside, and in addition to the *ergon*, the work done [*fait*], the fact [*le fait*], the work, but it does not fall to one side, it touches and cooperates within the operation, from a certain outside. Neither simply outside nor simply inside. Like an accessory that one is obliged to welcome on the border, on board [...] The *parergon* inscribes something which comes as an extra, *exterior* to the proper field [...] but whose transcendent exteriority comes to play, abut onto, brush against, rub, press against the limit itself and intervene in the inside only to the extent that the inside is lacking. It is lacking in something and it is lacking *from itself*' (Derrida 1987b 54, 56). Such a lack could be thought of, in *Tom Jones*, in terms of 'the serious', as opposed to 'the frivolous'.

by prefaces is not a very strong one (one can argue that there is already enough contrast within the novel), for him there seemed to exist a clear distinction between prefaces and narrative. Such a clear distinction was not, however, exclusive to Fielding's perception. It came with the genre and how the genre was perceived. As a type of essay, prefaces were considered a serious genre (serious enough to parody, as Swift and D'Urfey do), even if they contained many comic elements. Novels were seen as 'non-serious', or not as serious as an essay or preface, especially if close to 'romances', even if they contained many serious elements. Fielding then seems anxious about the possibility that his 'new species of writing' could be mistaken for a 'frivolous' romance, since, as he admits, *Tom Jones* contains many elements of romances. Also, there seems to be some anxiety about the serious aspects of the novel, since, mixed with the comic, the reader could fail to notice them. Under those circumstances, Fielding's repeated use of 'prefaces' tries to prove to the reader that his novel is serious enough, that the comic and the fictional can serve a non-frivolous function, beyond mere entertainment. Fielding can then be taken 'seriously', at his word, where Kaplan sees a 'gently ironic advice'. A 'gently ironic advice' might well 'contain' a truth, in all seriousness.

If readers can 'already' appreciate the serious aspects of the work, the prefaces seem to become redundant or unnecessary; even if the question of how to know in advance of the preface, of what is presented in advance, is paradoxical. However, this is not about justifying the existence of the prefatory chapters in *Tom Jones*. It is not a matter of 'getting rid' of them, skipping or ignoring them, as if they do not exist, or as if they are without importance. The interest is in the possibility that the novel could work well without them, that they are accessory and dispensable. That seems to be an idea that Fielding is unable to cast off or to exorcise, like a ghost, despite how necessary they also appear to him, while he inserts not just one for the entire novel (as was customary), but one for each book, relying on them, like a scaffolding to keep a 'serious' reading in place. In other words, my main argument with Kaplan hinges on an 'as if', which he seems to think one can do without, as if it did not exist. While for Kaplan 'Fielding feels that so adventuresome and bold is his fictional journey that he cannot permit the reader to be under any influence but his own' (Kaplan

544), for me it is only 'as if'. Despite how explicit Fielding's influence appears, it works more like a ghost. It is 'as if' Fielding 'himself' must make an appearance, appearing as the author —a 'figure' distinguishable from that of the narrator, not necessarily a different subject but in a different mode of appearing: like a ghost that keeps coming back to haunt the reader, warning against possible freedoms that could be taken with 'his' text, and pointing towards the 'right' reading.[20]

Although it is possible to infer the writer's general ideological position on appearances, a 'fore-word' such as a preface might not be fully indicative of the author's position and the ideological content in the novel, as it refers only to the ideological positions of the figure of the author in the preface, in relation to the novel. It is necessary, therefore, to get into the novels.

Given the amount of ideas, beliefs and positions contained in the eighteenth-century novels, I decided to group the main components into fourteen traits and develop one per chapter. The traits are defined in relation to the eighteenth-century meanings of 'appear', 'appearance' and 'apparition', as they appear recorded in Samuel Johnson's *A Dictionary of the English Language*, the *Oxford English Dictionary*, eighteenth-century novels and philosophical texts. However, the issues presented in each trait are not limited to the appearance of words such as 'appearances', 'appear' and 'apparition', or to their definitions. They are also influenced by concepts from Derrida, Badiou and Žižek.[21] Their connections and repetitions help to determine their order of presentation.

The traits function like a series of topics related to appearances, or what appearances seem to involve. They help to define the issues related to appearances in the eighteenth-century novel. Although based on the written text of the novels, they address what Tita Chico calls the 'languages of appearance':

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20. As the title of Book III, Chapter VII makes clear ('In which the author himself makes his appearance on the stage'), what we are dealing with here is the 'appearance/apparition' of the author in the text.

21. From the definitions, we know that an appearance can be an 'occurrence so as to meet the eye in a document' (*OED* 'appearance' 5) as when the word 'appearance' appears in eighteenth-century novels. However, the issues related to appearances presented in the traits are not tied to the appearance of the words 'appear', 'appearance' or 'apparition' in the novels. Matters of appearance can exist in passages in which those words do not appear.

> [A]s readers of eighteenth-century British novels well know, characters often come to understand and assess each other […] through the languages of appearance. An individual's clothing and body not only reflect rank, community, and nation, but they also increasingly serve as an index —even if unevenly or misleadingly— to that person's moral, emotional, and psychological character. The period's growing preoccupation with personal appearance takes on a special resonance in the genre of fiction, for here writers frequently spin narrative from the resulting opportunities for self-fashioning, performance, and misreading. (Chico 266)

The traits contain examples from different eighteenth-century novels. However, to maintain a sense of cohesion and development, I have chosen *Caleb Williams* to serve as a guide. Written and published towards the end of the eighteenth century (1794), it contains most of the issues related to appearances that run through eighteenth-century novels, from Defoe to Radcliffe.

The trait 'Ghosts' contains an analysis of the story of The Bloody Nun, as it appears in *The Monk*. Such is the story of a ghost, a self-sufficient ghost story,[22] which —though apparently marginal, confined to a subplot— can be found at the centre of the novel (Volume II, Chapter I), occupying a central place in the overall story. The importance of such a place is recognised by Brooks:

> [T]he most decisive representation of passage into a realm where the rational and social self must renounce its claims to the mastery and interpretation of life comes in the episode of the Bleeding Nun, in the narrative told by Don Raymond to Lorenzo. (Brooks 252-253)[23]

The thesis then concludes with a further reflection on *Caleb Williams*, which comprises the points that the thesis has sought to make about the existence of an ideology of appearances (and its deconstruction) in the eighteenth-century English novel:

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22. Julia Briggs observes that the ghost story 'has not always been characterised by self-sufficiency and some of the earliest ghost stories appeared as insets in longer tales: for example Walter Scott's "Wandering Willie's Tale" occurs within *Redgauntlet* (1824)' (Briggs 2001 138).

23. The importance of *The Monk* has also been highlighted by Brooks, to understand the ideological passage from the eighteenth century to modernity: '[*The Monk*] seems to give an especially clear and forceful symbolic representation of passage into a world —the Romantic and post-Romantic world, our world— in which the confident rationalism of the Enlightenment has been called into question, yet recognition of the force of the irrational is not accompanied, cannot be accompanied, by reestablishment of the Sacred as true *mysterium tremendum*. The epistemology of the irrational leads rather into ourselves, into the realm of dreams, spooks, interdicted desires' (Brooks 261).

1. That all eighteenth-century novels seem to share an ideological thinking according to which appearances are deceptive. Appearances are thought to conceal the truth of reality.

2. That one of the fundamental problems for the eighteenth-century novel was whether appearances equated to being, whether to appear could be the same as to be, or whether it was possible to become 'through' appearances, irrespective of being. The belief in the possibility of sustaining deceptive appearances, the possibility that truth might not ever appear, and that appearances could then seem to constitute being, is believed to put reality at risk, removing the security of any stable ground.

3. That there is, in the eighteenth-century novel, a desire to inhibit or cancel out the effects of appearances. It is a desire to make appearances disappear, to achieve an unmediated access to reality, bypassing the possibility of deception and error. In that sense, one of the essential fantasies of an eighteenth-century ideology, as it appears in the novels, is the possibility of a world without appearances.

4. That eighteenth-century novels made evident the difficulty of finding a stable ground for judgement. Although commonly similarities can seem enough to establish an identity, the eighteenth-century novel demonstrates that the similarity of appearances is not so secure, that in their similarity to truth or what is real, deception becomes possible.

5. That, through their representations, eighteenth-century novels show that reality cannot exist without appearances; that whatever there is, it must be supplemented by appearances, in order to appear as reality.

6. That eighteenth-century novels came to reveal that reality is not a thing of which appearances are merely an exterior manifestation, but more that it is like a fiction that hangs in the air, like novels themselves. Eighteenth-century novels made manifest the multiplicity and extent of fictions, allowing readers an increased degree of awareness of the fictionality of reality.

7. That the eighteenth-century novel came to grasp such a truth of appearances quite early, from the beginning, in the evolution of the genre, by locating appearances subjectively: concerned not so much with things as they are but as they appear to characters.

8. That with writing being a space of reflection and thought, and the novel being a type of writing that plays with appearances, the eighteenth-century novel became a privileged space in which to interrogate and think about appearances.

9. That eighteenth-century novels destabilise the relationship between appearance and being, revealing how things are not necessarily what they appear to be, and proposing the multiple appearances of beings and becomings.

10. And, finally, that in their structure and logic, appearances remain open, destabilising and deconstructing any ideology that tries to contain them. The deconstruction of an ideology of appearances does not mean the end of all presuppositions, but of their totalising effects, their foreclosure, keeping open the possibility of a freer enquiry, about what there is and the things to come.

It is in these terms that this thesis considers the novel to be the name of the event of appearances in the eighteenth century.

1. DECEPTION

According to Johnson's *Dictionary*, 'appearance' means 'semblance; not reality' (sense 4); 'to appear' is 'to seem, in opposition to reality' (sense 7); something 'apparent' is considered merely 'seeming; in appearance; not real' (sense 2); and an 'apparition' is 'something only apparent, not real' (sense 4). The *OED* also considers 'appearance' to be 'distinguished from reality' (sense 12a) or taken for an 'illusive seeming or semblance; concr. an illusion' (sense 13). Considering such an opposition to 'reality', it is not surprising that appearances are thought to imply deception, to create and sustain illusion. To oppose them to reality, taking what is real, what exists, as truth, they must already be considered deceptive. This works both ways. There is not first one without the other.

Warnings against the deceptiveness of appearances were common during the eighteenth century. As *Lives of the Most Remarkable Criminals* (1735) puts it, it was thought that 'too much care cannot be taken to sift the truth, since appearances often deceive us'. Part of the problem with appearances resides in 'often', which is not the same as 'always'. In the eighteenth-century novels, characters not only know that they cannot escape appearances, in part because appearances are part of who they are, but they also need to believe that they can trust some appearances. It is as if there must be a distinction between deceptive and non-deceptive appearances, or between deceptive and less-deceptive appearances, between deceptions that can be avoided and those that are impossible to avoid.

In *Evelina* (1778), after suffering disappointment about her perception of Lord Orville's character, the protagonist 'laments' to find herself 'in a world so deceitful, where we must suspect what we see, distrust what we hear, and doubt even what we feel!' (*Evelina* 259). Evelina writes to her friend:

> Oh, Miss Mirvan, could you ever have believed, that one who seemed formed as a pattern for his fellow-creatures, as a model of perfection, —one whose elegance surpassed all description, —whose sweetness of manners disgraced all comparison; —oh,

> Miss Mirvan, could you ever have believed that Lord Orville,
> would have treated me with indignity? Never, never again will I
> trust to appearances; —never confide in my own weak judgment;
> —never believe that person to be good who seems to be amiable!
> What cruel maxims are we taught by a knowledge of the world!
> (*Evelina* 256)

The indignity she refers to is the letter that Lord Orville has apparently taken the liberty of addressing to her, a letter that, she thinks, has come to reveal his 'real disposition' (*Evelina* 257). But the letter, as the reader knows, was not written by Orville but by the rake Sir Clement Willoughby. Paradoxically, therefore, it is based on her trust in a deceptive appearance (a signed letter) that Evelina decides she will never trust appearances again. Her guardian, Reverend Mr Villars, also comes to confirm that 'this is not an age in which we may trust to appearances' (*Evelina* 309).

In *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), St. Aubert instructs Emily 'to resist first impressions' (*Udolpho* 5). He does not ask her to avoid but to 'resist'. 'First impressions', as the appearances that constitute them, are, after all, impossible to avoid. What she must do is not trust them entirely, or let herself to be driven by them. They need to be checked against other appearances, impressions and judgements.

In *Caleb Williams*, the old servant Thomas declares himself distrustful of appearances: 'I will never take any body's word, nor trust to appearances, tho' it should be an angel', and tells Caleb that 'you will never be able to persuade people that black is white' (*Caleb* 176). Thomas believes that Caleb could deceive him with words or visible appearances. He thinks that he already knows the truth about Caleb, a truth that should be protected from misleading appearances. Although the distinction between white and black, as a maximum opposition, seems common enough for Thomas to use, 'white is not black' is also the example that John Locke gives in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), after defining 'knowledge' as 'the perception of the connection and agreement, or disagreement and repugnancy of any of our Ideas' (Locke 1690 467). Locke does not write there about perceiving something white or black (or 'as' white or black) but rests his concept of knowledge on the clear distinction between what appears to be two different ideas: the idea of black cannot be the same as the idea of white. By demonstrating that what

is perceived as 'white' can actually be 'black', eighteenth-century novels such as *Caleb Williams* question Locke's theory of knowledge, surveying the possibilities of deception. In terms of knowledge, one might believe to know the difference between one thing and another, when they clearly seem to be the opposite, but in reality remain deceived, believing in the opposite of what one believes to know. What appears as black can in reality be white; it does not matter how clear the difference between those two concepts appears to the mind.

Despite the fact that Thomas believes himself to be guarded against deceptive appearances, despite the revelation that 'it is all a flam', he remains under the spell of deceptive appearances, persuaded that 'black is white'. Thomas still believes in Falkland, who appears to him like an 'angel'. Thomas's distrust ('I will never take any body's word, nor trust to appearances, tho' it should be an angel') does not apply to Falkland, only to Caleb. However, Thomas is no hypocrite, and his position is neither entirely subjective nor intentional. It is not his intention to doubt Caleb. Such a position does not belong exclusively to him. Most characters in the novel share such a position, as part of their 'scaffolding of good and evil' (Scheuermann 144). What makes it easier to doubt Caleb and difficult to suspect Falkland can be seen in the juridical system at the time, which required more witnesses to convict a noble than to convict a commoner. This permeates the structure of the social order and even seems to constitute such an order, to the point of appearing that without it society would fall into chaos.

The eighteenth century was considered to be 'an age of plot and deceit' (Novak 2001 168-188). What Ira Konigsberg professes about Henry Fielding's novels —that their world appears as 'one of such pretence and false appearance, of such duplicity and double-dealing, that nothing should surprise us' (Konigsberg 131)— can be applied to many eighteenth-century novels. However, one also needs to keep in mind that deceptive appearances are a necessity imposed by the eighteenth-century idea of the novel. An eighteenth-century novel in which deception is not even possible is as difficult to conceive as a world without appearances. After all, it is because of appearances that deception is possible. Therefore, if, as Konigsberg maintains, 'what plot we have in the novel is concerned with righting the wrongs caused by misinterpretations and false appearances' (Konigsberg 191), it is no less

certain that, since there must be a plot, some appearances need to appear to be deceptive. On the other hand, if the eighteenth century was 'not an age in which we may trust to appearances', it is implicit that there could have been other 'ages' or worlds in which such trust seemed possible. In the eighteenth-century imagination, there was a strong desire for a world without appearances, or at least where not much deception occurred. In that sense, the characters are not just deceived by such and such appearance. They are also deceived by the belief that it is possible not to trust appearances, to keep a distance from appearances.

According to Christine Owen, the desire for a world without deception came from a sense of insecurity, due to the rise of credit, trade and paper money, things that did not seem to have value in themselves but merely an agreed value; which were 'invented or imagined' (Owen 71). The rise of credit, trade and paper money affected perceptions of status and reputation based on gold and land, things that until then had appeared secure and foundational, with an inherent natural value. For Defoe, according to Owen, 'the tradesman's rising status, in contrast to the land-holding gentry, was directly and problematically entangled with such intangible and shifting financial values' (Owen 71). According to John Pocock:

> [Credit] symbolised and made actual the power of opinion, passion and fantasy in human affairs, where the perception of land [...] might still appear the perception of real property and human relations as they really and naturally were. (Pocock 452)

The rise of credit was a 'rise' of appearances, a rise of a certain superficiality or 'levity'. Credit is based on appearances and probability. It is given not only to those who have enough to pay (they are the ones who need it less) but to those who seem to be able to pay in the future. It is based on the appearance of the probability that they will pay, which is based on other appearances, such as a good reputation, which nothing can fully guarantee. The rise of paper money was also the rise of an appearance, a representation of a value such as gold. The value of paper money is an appearance that must be believed in order for it to work. Nevertheless, the rise of credit and paper money did not necessarily make the foundation of the previous beliefs in the value of gold and land more conscious, to appear as beliefs.

One of the functions of the eighteenth-century novel seems to have been to warn against the deceptiveness of appearances, to make the reader a better reader of appearances, by

exploring all of the possibilities of deception and misunderstanding. Even if the reader already knew that appearances could be deceptive, he or she might have needed to be constantly reminded. But despite all the warnings against deceptive appearances expressed by some characters, they cannot be generalised. They are not necessarily the position of the narrator or the author. From Defoe to Burney, such positions were more complicated. The eighteenth-century novels 'play upon' the warnings against the deceptiveness of appearances that their characters display, differing from them in ways that are both obvious and subtle. Teasing and provoking, eighteenth-century novels encourage strategies of reading appearances that are far more complicated and self-conscious than any of the positions displayed by their characters. They neither simply embrace a moralist position against appearances nor take a simple-minded position in favour of appearances. Eighteenth-century novels not only display a warning about appearances but also manage to subvert part of that warning, without resolving it into a full celebratory embrace of all appearances, thereby maintaining a tension between concern and subversion.

In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, when discussing Emily's suitor Valancourt, Madame Cheron, another guardian, tells her niece '[you have] a great many of your father's prejudices, and among them those sudden predilections for people from their looks', as 'he was always judging persons by their countenances, and was continually deceived' (*Udolpho* 112, 125). Such 'judgments' and 'predilections' are related to appearances. Emily reminds her aunt that 'yet it was but now, madam, that you judged me guilty [of having a secret correspondence with Valancourt] by my countenance' (*Udolpho* 125). Such readings of appearances are unavoidable, but some characters are better at it, more 'penetrating', such as St. Aubert, despite what his sister thinks. However, even with his penetration, St. Aubert cannot be sure of his judgement. He still has doubts about trusting Emily to Valancourt, despite the good impressions that Valancourt has given him:

> At the commencement of their acquaintance, Valancourt had made known his name and family. St. Aubert was not a stranger to either, for the family estates, which were now in the possession of an elder brother of Valancourt, were little more than twenty miles distant from La Vallee, and he had sometimes met the elder Valancourt on visits in the neighbourhood. This knowledge had made him more willingly receive his present companion; for, though his countenance and manners would have won him

> the acquaintance of St. Aubert, who was very apt to trust to the intelligence of his own eyes, with respect to countenances, he would not have accepted these, as sufficient introductions to that of his daughter. (*Udolpho* 56)

Madame Cheron considers reputation and wealth to be more concrete facts, even if they are not always visible. Nevertheless, they still constitute appearances that can be feigned or misinterpreted, as she finds out with her new husband Montoni: 'who would have believed! who would have supposed, that a man of his family and apparent wealth had absolutely no fortune?' (*Udolpho* 280). There is some wisdom in her words, when she says that 'the most flattering prospects often change —the best judgments may be deceived— who could have foreseen, when I married the Signor, that I should ever repent my GENEROSITY?' Emily thinks that 'she might have foreseen it' (*Udolpho* 280), but even after Valancourt's report on Montoni's character (*Udolpho* 156), Emily cannot foresee his change towards her aunt and herself:

> She considered, that there was no proof of Montoni being the person, whom the stranger had meant; that, even if he was so, the Italian had noticed his character and broken fortunes merely from report; and that, though the countenance of Montoni seemed to give probability to a part of the rumour, it was not by such circumstances that an implicit belief of it could be justified. These considerations would probably not have arisen so distinctly to her mind, at this time, had not the terrors of Valancourt presented to her such obvious exaggerations of her danger, as incited her to distrust the fallacies of passion. (*Udolpho* 158)

In *Caleb Williams*, visiting Caleb in prison and seeing the condition to which Caleb has been reduced, Falkland's footman Thomas exclaims:

> Zounds, how I have been deceived! They told me what a fine thing it was to be an Englishman, and about liberty and property, and all that there; and I find it is all a flam. Lord, what fools we be! Things are done under our very noses, and we know nothing of the matter; and a parcel of fellows with grave faces swear to us, that such things never happen but in France, and other countries the like of that. (*Caleb* 202)

Thomas becomes aware of the way things really are in the prisons in England.[1] However, the state of the prisons is not only a part of the way things are. It can be taken to represent

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[1] For the state of the prisons in England in the eighteenth century, and the situation in other countries, such as France, see John Howard's *State of the Prisons* (Howard 1777), a reference that Godwin includes in *Caleb Williams* (Caleb 181). According to David McCraken, 'Godwin borrowed from [it] to torment

the whole. That is what makes Thomas declare that 'things are done under our very noses, and we know nothing of the matter'. Thomas's emphasis on 'liberty and property' can be interpreted to mean that what makes him aware that he has been deceived is not so much the state of the prison in which he finds Caleb, but his perception of the way in which Caleb has lost his freedom. After all, as the reader knows, Caleb is innocent. And if an innocent man can be sentenced to prison, anyone can. That is a point that Caleb seems to want to explain to Thomas, and that Godwin seems to want to get across to the reader. However, Thomas still believes Caleb to be guilty of stealing and betraying the trust of his master Falkland, a crime that is represented more in terms of appearances than as a crime against property, as Falkland delivers his accusation in the following terms: 'How gladly would I pass unnoticed the evil I have sustained; but I owe it to society to detect an offender, and prevent other men from being imposed upon, as I have been, by an appearance of integrity' (*Caleb* 164). For Thomas there is not injustice in Caleb having been sent to prison after such an accusation. As he says, 'Well, master Williams, you have been very wicked to be sure' (*Caleb* 202). Caleb's crimes justify prison. Thomas pities Caleb not because he has lost his freedom, but because of the deplorable condition into which the loss of that freedom has thrown him. For Thomas that situation seems worse than death, worse than the death penalty. However, it should not be necessary to think Caleb innocent for any eighteenth-century man to identify with him, to see in a prisoner the possibility of losing his own liberty and property. As Howard warns his readers in *The State of Prisons*:

> Those gentlemen who, when they are told of the misery which our prisoners suffer, content themselves with saying, 'Let them take care to keep out' [...] seem not duly sensible of the favour of Providence which distinguishes them from the sufferers [...] They also forget the vicissitudes of human affairs; the unexpected changes to which all men are liable: and that those whose circumstances are affluent, may in time be reduced to indigence, and become debtors and prisoners. (Howard 23)

It is not just a matter of what criminals suffer, but that there is a degree of probability that one could find oneself on that side of things, as a criminal, without deserving it. As Mona Scheuermann claims, 'the sense of danger in the novel, the apprehension that any mistake

his hero and to portray the "unwholesomeness" of prisons, "their filth, the tyranny of their governors, the misery of their inmates" —to prove, in short, that England does have a Bastille' (McCracken xiii).

may be quite fatal, is built on the probability of such mischance that Godwin sees as he looks around him' (Scheuermann 143). It is less about an unjust system of punishment for criminals and more about how a large number of members of society were living under such a regime and such a possibility.

Although Thomas is far from being able to perceive the entire problem of 'things as they are', his sudden awareness of a system of deception helps him to start unravelling the logic behind some 'things':

1. There is a situation in which certain things appear in a certain way. For Thomas, 'to be an Englishman' appears to be 'a fine thing' since liberty and property are guaranteed. Or so he has been led to believe ('they told me').

2. A revelation of the way things really are occurs. Thomas discovers that the English prisons are not better than those in France 'and other countries the like of that'.

3. Such a revelation can lead to a 'disbelief' in the system. Thomas then thinks that the entire system is deceptive ('it is all a flam'); that things are the opposite of what they appear. The opposite is thought to be the truth behind the false appearances: to be an Englishman does not guarantee one's liberty or property.

4. In the difference between how things are and how they appear there remains a belief in how things *ought to be*. Thomas remains convinced that liberty and property ought to be guaranteed, and that there ought to be decent conditions in prisons.

5. In the belief that the system ought not to be deceptive, there is in potentiality the possibility of changing it. As Mishra puts it, 'if things are what they are, then potentially, things ought not be what they are' (Mishra 139).

Thomas's distrust of appearances is not very different from the position of the other characters in the eighteenth-century novel. In terms of localised deceptions, it is possible to identify at least three broad groups: 1. the deceivers, who create and propagate deceptions; 2. the deceived, who believe in the deceptions or who do not suspect the deceptions that have been created for them; and 3. those with enough discernment and penetration to detect deception or see through deception. To the first group generally belong those in power —the 'ruling class'— such as Falkland and his neighbour Barnabas Tyrrel, and some of their agents, such as Caleb's pursuer Gines. For them, deception is necessary to preserve the system and their privileged position. Truth (things as they really are) might not be desirable, or not enough.

To this group also belong all of the characters that appear to be someone or something that they are not. It need not be deliberate or intentional, as in the case of Humphry Clinker, who initially appears to be a 'shabby country fellow', who had been 'a love begotten babe' (*Clinker* 111, 113), but who ends up being recognised as 'a surprising compound of genius and simplicity' (*Clinker* 220) and Matthew Bramble's natural son. In his case, it is not by an adoption that something appears transformed, but by recognition that something appears discovered and acknowledged. Nevertheless, to a degree, Clinker remains a 'bastard', even after Matthew Bramble recognises him as his son. Although his case is not very different from that of Tom Jones, his 'redemption' is different: whereas in *Tom Jones* the class difference seems to disappear in the end, in *Humphry Clinker* it is maintained. Nothing changes the fact of having been born out of matrimony and class.

Sometimes concealment can be intentional, although not necessarily with criminal intentions, for example, when characters need to conceal who or what they are, their name or 'situation', as in the case of Wilson, Lydia's suitor. According to Jery Melford, Lydia's brother, Wilson is 'a rascal, because, if he had really been a gentleman, with honourable intentions, he would have [...] appeared in his own character' (*Clinker* 261) and not as another, Mr Gordon. Nevertheless, later on Wilson reveals himself to be George Dennison, the 'only son and heir of a gentleman, whose character is second to none in England' (*Clinker* 378).

Outcasts —such as Mr Raymond, the 'captain' of a gang of robbers, and Caleb, pushed to the margins of society— generally belonged to the second group, of those with enough penetration to see through and sometimes dispel deceptions, even if discernment was widely preached and encouraged for all of society. The reason is twofold: their exterior or marginal position allowed outcasts a certain amount of distance and objectivity, that permitted them to see social deception for what it was, but their becoming aware of such deception was also often the reason why they had become outcasts. As Raymond puts it, 'Those very laws, which by a perception of their iniquity drove me to what I am, now preclude my return' (*Caleb* 227). Accordingly, their reintegration into society was only possible once the deception had been eliminated or society had become aware of it; when a change had occurred. Only then, their difference respect the rest of society seems to disappear. In other words, a return to deception seemed impossible. It was society that was required to come out of deception.

Most characters belong to the group of those who 'simply' believe, who do not suspect the deceptions that have been created for them. In *Caleb Williams* we find Emily (the orphan daughter of Tyrell's father's sister), Collins (Falkland's steward), Thomas, Laura Denison (a mother of four, who Caleb befriends when living in a small town in Wales), Mr Spurrel (one of Caleb's employers), the judges and the prison guards. A narrative in which most character are deceivers, or possess enough penetration to see through deceptions, cannot be very convincing. This is not because reality might not be like that, because there is always at least one who must be deceived, but, more importantly, because a plot —not matter how simple or almost non-existent it can seem to be— requires their existence, at least momentarily. This group is, therefore, as necessary as the other two.

However, hardly any characters belong exclusively to one group. Hardly ever does there appear to be a clear 'type' in the eighteenth-century novel. A character can have a place in the three groups, depending on the situation, as the groups are defined by the degree of intentionality to deceive and their ability to perceive deception. Characters can belong to two or three of the groups above, simultaneously within one situation, as there can be groups within groups. The deceivers can also be the deceived; the deceived, deceivers;

and those who fight deception, deceive and remain within deception. Falkland deceives himself from the beginning, in the game of reputation. Caleb is caught by deception in his use of disguises. The major deceiver comes from having deceived himself; the one fighting deception also becomes a notorious deceiver. However, it is the third group, the deceived, that is the most common and widespread, which contains the other two. The deceived to a degree are deceivers, even if they are unaware of it and can be said to lack any intention to deceive; they can also (and sometimes cannot but) help to maintain, reinforce and reproduce the deceptions they believe to be true, emerging as a moral authority. Some can even become conscious of their state of deception, or at least concede the possibility that they might be deceived, and justify the need or their desire to remain in such a position. As Collins tells Caleb, what will be gained from taking Caleb's position?

> At my age I am not fit for the storm, and I am not so sanguine as you in my expectation of the result. Of what would you convince me? That Mr Falkland is a suborner and a murderer? [...] And what benefit will result from this conviction? [...] If you could change all my ideas, and show me that there was no criterion by which vice might be prevented from being mistaken for virtue, what benefit would arise from that? I must part with all my interior consolation, and all my external connections. And for what? (Caleb 309-310)

Collins' position is equivalent to saying, 'I'm not so much deceived as not to see how things really are, but what would I gain by declaring it? It is better to pretend I remain deceived'. The group of the deceived often constitutes the general public, who are counted as all the rest. However, the public is an appearance, a 'construction' made possible by the appearance that everybody perceive more or less the same things. It is a generalisation of a perception, reflected onto the other. Without such an appearance, communication would be impossible, in the absolute degree of incertitude of what the other perceives. With it, there is also the assumption that a character's interiority (desires, needs, predilections) is very much like any other, common. Nevertheless, nobody fully believes that the other individuals that constitute the public are exactly the same, to the point that they perceive things exactly in the same way. There is still a belief in an exceptional difference ('I'm unique') and anxiety about the possibility of being misunderstood. It is a matter of a double-appearance: the appearance of a more or less homogenous other relies on the appearance of sharing a set of

perceptions, knowledge and beliefs, which seem to level out the differences. Such a space produces the appearance of facts, and as such opens the space for all types of deception.

One of the problems posed by the eighteenth-century novel is the difficulty of escaping such a system of deception, by discerning between things as they *appear*, things as they *are*, and things as they *should be*. It is not just about a will. The desire to escape all deception is hardly enough. Despite their best intentions, characters can always take deceptive appearances for truths, or for what they ought to be. It is possible to remain deceived, thinking that it is the best, or for the best. Nothing guarantees non-deception. As the case of Thomas proves, it does not matter how guarded one can think oneself to be against deception, or how many times one has escaped from a deceptive situation, one can always remain within deception.

Deception belongs to the realm of appearances. It can only happen in a world and it presupposes a system —of social, political and economic practices and discourses. But deception does not just happen within a system. It also has effects. It can even constitute the system. In other words, the system that makes deception possible is also supported and maintained by it. In that way, and within the eighteenth-century political system that appears in *Caleb Williams*, the false appearance of the reality of the prisons in England —an appearance assumedly given or told by those in power— allows the system to perpetuate 'itself' (it is perpetuated by those who are favoured by it).

Intention is not absolutely necessary for deception. Deception can happen all the same. Ideology is the best proof of it, in the sense of a general state of deception, a system of values and representations that constitute reality. These are representations in the sense of constructions, or 'fictions' about reality, not in a negative sense since there is not, and cannot be, direct access to reality. There is no reality without 'fiction', since reality is precisely a mediation and a construction, which generates itself through its representations; what makes things appear, while appearing itself. 'Reality' is an appearance, an apparition, which ideology makes appear. As such, it is not free or open to any possibility. Its appearance is determined (how things are and how they should be), in a set of deceptive representations

and beliefs promoted by those in power (the nobility, the church, the State) that helps to perpetuate what Badiou called 'the state of the situation'.[2]

Even without the authors' manifest knowledge, eighteenth-century novels make it possible to think about ideology, through appearance and deception. Eighteenth-century novels, more than any other narrative form until then, reveal the work of ideology as they represent realist, believable subjectivities, with which the reader can identify. Through a performance in which the reader is forced to take part, they 'show' how other subjects are engaged in a system of beliefs and deceptions. The performance is also a deception in which the reader is engaged. Such an engagement is possible not just through the figure of the first person narrator —not just listened to by the reader, but merging with the reader's own voice— but also as a representation with which the reader can identify, as part of his or her own world, as another possible life, with the risk of appearing as a substitute for his or her own.

Such an engagement is, however, not complete, and that is part of the advantage. The reader can always keep some distance, thinking it is just a fiction, an illusion, a lie; closing the book, thinking it can be contained within its covers; thinking that outside the novel there is the real world, a more real world than that of the novel. Such distance is what allows a certain revelation, to be able to see as such the works of deceptive appearances and ideology. If the reader could remain as deceived as a narrator or a character in an eighteenth-century novel, if there were no distance/difference from an ideological position, what appears would remain as reality. If the deception were perfect, complete, it would simply pass for part of reality, in the apparently free, natural order of thoughts, culture and discourses. It is only in the other that one can easily see or recognise ideologies. It is not possible to perceive deception as deception, while remaining within it. It is only other's deception that can be recognised as deception.

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2. For Althusser, 'the school (but also other State institutions like the Church, or other apparatuses like the Army) teaches "know-how", but in forms which ensure subjection to the ruling ideology or the mastery of its "practice" (Althusser 133). For Badiou, 'the state of the situation is the operation which, within the situation, codifies its parts or sub-sets. The state is a sort of metastructure that exercises the power of the count over all the sub-sets of the situation. Every situation has a state. Every situation is the presentation of itself, of what composes it, of what belongs to it. But it is also given as state of the situation, that is, as the internal configuration of its parts or sub-sets, and therefore as re-presentation. [...] the state of the situation re-presents collective situations [...]' (Badiou 2006 154-155).

2. Visibility

Appearances can refer to visibility, what is or becomes visible, what comes into sight, meets the view or presents itself to observation. According to Johnson's *Dictionary*, 'appearance' can refer to 'the act of coming into sight', 'the thing seen' or 'that quality of any thing which is visible' (senses 1 to 3); something 'apparent' is something 'visible' (sense 1); 'apparition' means 'appearance; visibility', 'the thing appearing; a form; a visible object' (senses 1, 2, 5); 'to appear' is 'to be in sight, to be visible', 'to become visible' ('as a spirit'), 'to be the object of observation' (senses 1, 2, 4). For example, when Humphry Clinker 'produces himself at an open window that looks into the courtyard [...] filled with a crowd of his vassals and dependents, who worship his first appearance', not longer appearing as a simple servant (*Clinker* 279), or when Jenkins writes from Bath:

> God he knows what havock I shall make among the mail [*sic*]
> sex, when I make my first appearance in this killing collar, with
> a full soot of gaze, as good as new, that I bought last Friday [...]
> (*Clinker* 72)

These appearances are of the order of the visible, of what appears to the eyes: Humphry Clinker as a saint and Jenkins as a sexual goddess that men could not resist. In the Preface to *Roxana*, Defoe refers to 'the Gayety of [Roxana's] appearance' (*Roxana* 36), which is also of the order of the visible. But when Roxana tries on a Quaker dress for the first time, the meaning of the word 'look' is split between appearances and the act of seeing. As her maid Amy tells her:

> [I]t is a perfect Disguise for you; why you look quite another-
> body, I shou'd not have known you myself; nay […] more than
> that, it makes you look ten Years younger than you did. (*Roxana*
> 254)

Later Roxana confirms that she 'look'd so like a Quaker, that it was impossible for them, who have never seen me before, to suppose I had ever been anything else' (*Roxana* 378). Some passages also bring together apparently contradictory meanings, such as when Roxana claims:

> [...] to have look'd back upon these things with Eyes unpossess'd with Crime, when the wicked Part has appear'd in its clearer Light, and I have seen it in its own natural Colours; when no more blinded with the glittering Appearances, which at that time deluded me, and, *as in like Cases, if I may guess at others by myself*, too much possess'd the Mind (*Roxana* 115).

Here we have the words 'appearances' and 'appear' in silent confrontation: something might appear 'in its clearer Light', and, on the other hand, 'glittering Appearances' can blind or delude. In some instances, the apparently dubious can almost be taken in an irrefutable sense, as in or after a demonstration. Nevertheless, there is scepticism at the heart of the use of the word 'appear', in relation to what is 'apparent', as if one could not ascertain the absolute truth of something, and should limit oneself to what is visible, what can be seen with the eyes. But, after further evidence, 'it appears' can become a synonym of something plain or clear.

In *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*, Locke declares that 'knowing is seeing' (Locke 2000 201) and in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* it is assumed as obvious that 'the Perception of the Mind' is 'most aptly explained by words relating to Sight' (Locke 1690 326). As Patey points out:

> Knowledge, Locke says again and again, depends on a *visible* connection of ideas. Vision and certainty are connected because, for Locke as for Descartes, we can be certain of those ideas we perceive clearly and distinctly, under the 'natural light' of the mind. (Patey 29)

To perceive clearly is synonymous with seeing clearly, under the 'natural light' of the mind. Despite the advances in the science of optics during the eighteenth century, there is not in Locke a sense of awareness of the effects of perspective, lenses, and a general state of illusion that can be derived from the eyes and spatial position. The problem of appearances does not seem to influence or even be considered by Locke. But Locke was not the only one. As Catherine Wilson maintains:

> Early modern empiricists like John Locke, contrary to what one
> might expect, have as little use for the puzzles and problems of
> the appearance-reality distinction that optics generates as they do
> for the notion of an 'inner light,' so determined are they to make
> experience, and experience alone, the source of our knowledge.
> Empiricism treats vision in a welcoming but on the whole rather
> uncritical and even unempirical spirit. (Wilson 117-118)

Such a thought must be searched for and found in the eighteenth-century novels, as they deal with what then can be taken as examples of probable cases, in terms of knowledge, visibility and appearances. In *Caleb Williams*, for example, 'when a peasant is brought before [Falkland], in his character of a justice of peace, upon an accusation of having murdered his fellow' (*Caleb* 125), there are at least two situations. With his knowledge and doubts, Caleb is in a different situation, in relation to Falkland, than the rest of the people present at the hearing. Falkland's self-exposure as a criminal is only visible from Caleb's position, which develops over time. As Caleb explains:

> [I]t must not be supposed that the whole of what I am describing
> was visible to the persons about [Falkland]; nor, indeed, was I
> acquainted with it in the extent here stated, but after a considerable
> time, and in gradual succession. (*Caleb* 7)

For the rest of the characters present at the hearing, Falkland remains an embodiment of virtue, although by that time he has also 'acquired the repute of a melancholy valetudinarian' (*Caleb* 125). What this shows is that there are positions of visibility from which certain things become visible. Such positions refer not only to physical locations in space, but also to contexts and situations. Taken as part of reality, a belief can make one see things that are not there, which are visible to other people. A subject's beliefs, experiences and knowledge constitute a field of visibility. During the hearing, Caleb's position enables him to see something he takes to be the truth about Falkland. However, positions of visibility also depend on the position of their object. The truth about Falkland is only visible when he occupies a certain point or position in relation to another situation or character, such as Caleb. But even those who do not see what Caleb sees have a position of visibility. Their position of blindness, from which the true Falkland and the true Caleb are not visible, is also, at the same time, a position of 'false' visibility, from which things appear different to what they are: Falkland as an honourable man, and Caleb as a despicable criminal.

In some cases, visual appearances can help in discovering the truth, by betraying the deceptive speaker. In the case of the lieutenant Lismahago, in his conversation with Matthew Bramble, according to Jery Melford, 'whatsoever his tongue might declare [trying to appear civil and moderate], his whole appearance denoted dissatisfaction'; more than the gentleman that Lismahago claims to be, to Jery he appears:

> a self-conceited pedant, aukward, rude, and disputacious —He has had the benefit of a school-education, seems to have read a good number of books, his memory is tenacious, and he pretends to speak several different languages; but he is so addicted to wrangling, that he will cavil at the clearest truths, and, in the pride of argumentation, attempt to reconcile contradiction. (*Clinker* 225)

Nevertheless, Jery's aunt Tabitha only seems to see the best of Lismahago. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, in contrast to the position of her maidservant Annette, who seems too quick to believe in stories of ghosts, Emily claims to believe only what she can see: 'Nothing probably upon this subject [of ghosts], but what I see' (*Udolpho* 255). But as the eighteenth-century novel demonstrates, the visible can be as deceptive as words and stories, especially in the case of ghosts. When Emily thinks she sees the ghost, believing what she sees, there is as much of a ghost as when early on she thinks she sees her father's ghost. The formula also works the other way: sometimes a character sees only what he or she believes. In the case of '[Montoni's] mansion at Venice, though its furniture discovered a part of the truth [about his financial situation] to unprejudiced persons, [it] told nothing to those who were blinded by a resolution to believe whatever they wished' (*Udolpho* 190).

These meanings of appearances make evident a visual component that can be opposed to language or to words. In *Humphry Clinker*, Wilson says to Lydia:

> [Y]ou put a favourable —perhaps too favourable a construction, on my appearance —certain it is, I am no player in love —I speak the language of my own heart; and have no prompter but nature. (*Clinker* 44)

Wilson claims that his love for Lydia goes beyond appearances, deceptive or not, through the language of his heart. However, Wilson is an appearance. Lydia has constructed a good appearance of him —or of a certain George, despite Wilson— and of his feelings for her. George then feels that he needs to reveal to Lydia the difference in relation to the

fictive appearance (Wilson) he has put in place. He then claims to speak the language of his 'heart', a common ideological 'figure' in the eighteenth-century novel, which is set against deceptive appearances. It was considered to be a truthful language, which had a close relation to nature, as it was assumed to communicate truthful feelings, interiority. In contrast, all the rest cannot but appear to be deceptive languages, languages of appearances.

In the opposition between deceptive visual appearances and spoken 'languages' lies a privileging of the voice over other forms of 'inscription'. Speaking is considered neither inscribed nor inscribing, not attached to any material, but springing from direct contact with the truth. As such, it promotes the belief that spoken words can go 'beyond' —traverse or circumscribe— visual appearances, as if language were not already caught in the logic of appearances. When Caleb is sent to the 'strong room', he declares: 'I had for some time learned not to judge by appearances' (*Caleb* 201). Although he seems to refer to the appearance of his 'dank and unwholesome' cell, and how bad his situation appears to be, this echoes the widespread position regarding appearances, of believing that one does not believe in appearances, believing one's judgement to be beyond the influence of appearances.

One of the interrogations posed by the eighteenth-century novel is, 'is it possible not to judge by appearances?' As *Caleb Williams* shows, such a question does not refer to minor misunderstandings. Caleb's first trial is essentially based on appearances. Appearances are what make him a criminal. As Caleb recounts:

> The two boxes that were first opened, contained nothing to confirm the accusation against me; in the third were found a watch and several jewels, that were immediately known to be the property of Mr Falkland. The production of this seemingly decisive evidence excited emotions of astonishment and concern; but no person's astonishment appeared to be greater than that of Mr Falkland. That I should have left the stolen goods behind me, would of itself have appeared incredible; but when it was considered what a secure place of concealment I had found for them, the wonder diminished. (*Caleb* 168)

A judgement against Caleb can be fabricated through a combination of appearances; as he puts it, 'the appearances combined against me' (*Caleb* 167). The apparently stolen objects are presented as evidence. They are presented as evidently stolen, making evident Caleb's crime. They make the judgment appear obvious, diminishing the responsibility of the judge

and witnesses. For those involved, the truth of the case appears obvious. There appears nothing to be left for them to decide. The appearances presented against Caleb seem to exclude the possibility that he could be innocent. The obvious appearance of Caleb's guilt also seems reinforced by a desire to find him guilty. The apparently stolen objects confirm a collective nightmare: if someone like Caleb, with his 'good appearance', can be so deceitful, so criminal, then nobody can be certain of anybody, nothing is secure, and deception is always possible. Falkland appearing to have an astonished reaction helps to reinforce the effect of the evidence. Falkland acts as if he has nothing to do with the sudden appearance of the stolen objects. He seems to expect them not to appear, as if he has some doubts about Caleb being guilty. In view of the apparent generosity of Falkland —as one of the most pitiful of victims— Caleb's crime appears worse. What under other circumstances might appear incredible, here appears like truth itself.

At Caleb's trial, almost everyone seems to clearly see something that is not there, Caleb's crime; they are taken in by the deception that Falkland has fabricated for them. At the hearing of the peasant accused of murder (*Caleb* 125-131), the people fail to see what clearly seems to be 'out there'. In part, such a failure is structural, due to the position that Falkland occupies. He is not the subject in question, but the one chosen to judge. However, the failure of vision is also ideological, due to a 'state of things' that privileges the higher classes. Falkland's guilt is invisible to most people, as it is difficult even to conceive. Nevertheless, it is apparently clear to anyone looking for the right signs, as Caleb has done. Through these two scenes of judgement, in which Caleb and Falkland switch positions from judge and judged, the situation seems to provide the light in which things become visible.

In classical terms, Ptolemy's *Optics* can further help to understand the relationship between appearances and the visible. Ptolemy defined three sciences, according to the relationship between an object and a point of observation:

1. Optics refers to the study of direct vision —cases where there is a clear line between a point of observation and its object (*a-b*). Only in such cases, appearances can be said to correspond to reality. Such apparent direct access depends on certain conditions of light and distance.

2. Catoptrics refers to the study of visual appearances arising from a complete rupture, break or reflection. There is not a straight line between a point of observation and its object. In a mirror, a subject *a* only sees the reflection of object *b* in the surface *c*. In *Tristram Shandy*, for instance, when Uncle Toby looks into widow Wadman's eyes, there is a subversion of the figure of the eyes as windows into the soul. This is not a simple *a-b* relationship, with Uncle Toby as term *a*, and widow Wadman's soul as term *b*; the eyes are part of the medium (*Tristram* 482). Uncle Toby sees less of her soul than his own reflection, while remaining self-deceived. He sees what he wants to see, which is part of his self and, as a result, he remains deceived about widow Wadman's intentions.

3. Dioptrics studies appearances arising from a partial breaking (or refraction) of the 'visual ray', such as in crystals or lenses: a sees b, but only through a distorting medium *c*: *a*-(*c*)-*b*. In the example above, it is usually assumed that the 'window' is open, or has no distorting glass. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho* we find that 'the thinness of the atmosphere, through which every object came so distinctly to the eye, surprised and deluded [Emily]; who could scarcely believe that objects, which appeared so near, were, in reality, so distant' (*Udolpho* 43).

For Ptolemy, dioptrics and catoptrics do not have negative connotations. They are also necessary and unavoidable, in explaining how reality appears. In the seventeenth century, a major reassessment of dioptrics took place, through the popularisation of telescopes and microscopes. Rather than distort reality, telescopes and microscopes seemed to bring it close, making reality more visible. The new theories of vision were then linked to epistemology. If before there seemed to be a more direct relationship between seeing and believing, it became more a case of what can be known from scientific observation, beyond the most direct and obvious appearances. Like microscopes and telescopes, the eighteenth-century novel came to allow the world of everyday appearances to be thought of (and experienced) differently (MacPhee 2). Through fiction, the novel allowed readers to explore the components of a situation, guaranteeing a certain knowledge by framing induction 'within tightly controlled

narrative structures' (Bender 54). It could give an overview or a 'picture'; someone's life could be contained in a book, or entire paragraphs could be dedicated to exploring a single issue. Any life or series of situations could be imagined and made 'visible'; made to appear through the eighteenth-century novel.

However, if we were to assume that all appearances are of the order of the visible —contained within problems of visibility— we would risk making them accessories to their own demonisation. They would appear to favour their own dismissal and eventual banishment, as vision aspires to go beyond appearances, in the desire to comprehend the multiplicity of appearances in a revealed totality. We would then risk falling into what David Michel Levin calls 'the fatal delusions of metaphysics' (Levin 412), by thinking that total visibility, beyond appearances, is actually possible.[1]

Visibility also applies to other things, beyond 'objective social facts', which can appear clearly visible for those who desire to see them. The appearance of such other 'things' has a necessary relation to social facts and the objects of science. Beyond being a support, materialisation or embodiment, appearances also constitute the space of the possibility of objectivity and science. Science cannot appropriate the entire field of visibility because it must exclude subjectivity, as limited to explain what is or what exists from the perspective of a general subject. But it would be inaccurate to reduce the problem to a matter of objectivity and subjectivity, as if between what everybody sees (the objective) and the idea that everybody sees their own version of reality. There remains the issue of what constitutes the field of visibility itself, whether it is culture or ideology; what constitutes not only the subject but the order of what is real.

As Philip Armstrong reminds us, in Lacan's version of the fable of Zeuxis and Parrhasios, the two painters held a competition to produce the most effective *trompe l'oeil*:

> Zeuxis' grapes were so deceptive that they even attracted the birds, but nevertheless his rival beat him by painting a veil 'so lifelike that Zeuxis, turning towards him said, *Well, now show us what you have painted behind it'*. Lacan describes this moment as 'A triumph of the gaze over the eye', because the veil represents

1. What Levin denominates an 'egocentric, possessive individualism', a 'will to power' and to 'dominate' (Levin 400), appears early on in the eighteenth-century novel, in *Robinson Crusoe*, for example. In that sense, the eighteenth century was also one of the sources of ocularcentrism, part of an early modernity leading to the technology-driven economy of the twentieth century.

> the enslavement of the subject within the economy of the gaze, always wanting to see more than it does. (Armstrong 78-79)

It is in such desire and enslavement that appearances come into existence. However, what makes one see things behind the 'veil of appearance' is not a mere subjective effect. As Žižek points out, in 'what Hegel says about the curtain that separates appearances from true reality', 'behind the veil of appearance there is nothing, only what the subject who looks there put it there' (Žižek 2010). What constitutes appearances makes of them a veil. There is a relation between 'seeing' and 'desire'. There are certain things, which are not the objects of physics, for which there is not a purely objective visibility. An objective (non-desiring) gaze cannot but fail to see them. Appearances might have to do more with such things than with the objects of science. That does not mean that all things appear subjectively. They involve a 'subject', but a subject does not guarantee all appearances. It is rather a matter of 'desire', which points to something beyond the subject, to a 'will' or position within a situation. In *Memoirs of Emma Courtney* (1796), for example, Augustus warns Emma about 'the illusions of the passions —of the false and flattering medium through which they presented objects to our view' (*Courtney* 87). For Mary Hays, however, there is truth in the medium. Eighteenth-century novels make things appear visible. They seem to blur the distinction between words and visible appearances, giving readers the sensation of seeing things and experiencing them firsthand.

3. Exterior

Understood as 'semblance; not reality', and 'outside; show' (Johnson senses 4 and 5),'appearance' refers to the distinction between outside and inside, exterior and interior. For example, when Roxana's daughter Susan:

> [...] was directed to [...] fit herself to appear as a Gentlewoman; being made to hope, that she shou'd, sometime or other, find that she shou'd be put into a Condition to support her Character. (*Roxana* 247)

She is asked to pretend, to give the appearance of a gentlewoman, an outward appearance, in contrast to the reality behind it (she is not a gentlewoman). It is a problem of false appearances, even if the intention is to traverse deception, to reach the real. Roxana's desire is to transform her daughter's external image from a false appearance to a true being, for her to become a gentlewoman. The false appearance is a temporary medium, a necessary accessory to the possibility of it becoming truth, similarly to Pascal's formula to believe: to get on one's knees and pray, even if —or precisely when— one does not believe, as if only such a pretence could make it possible that one could end up believing.[1] The gesture appears as the incarnation of a ghost and the becoming real of a possibility. Such a procedure appears like an inversion of what is expected from Susan's brother. Roxana dreams of her son's return to England 'in a good Figure, and with the Appearance of a Merchant' (*Roxana* 247). Such an appearance seems 'prosthetic', something that can be added, aggregated and taken off, an aspect of her son's being, rather than a 'becoming'. The stress is not on making of her son a merchant but on enabling him to acquire the appearance of one,

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1. Pascal: 'You would like to find faith and do not know the way? You would like to be cured of unbelief and ask for the remedies? Learn from those who were bound like you, and who now wager all they have. These are people who know the way you wish to follow, and who are cured of the illness of which you wish to be cured. Follow the way by which they began: they acted as if they believed, took holy water, had masses said, etc. This will make you believe naturally and mechanically' (Pascal 214). Also: 'The external must be joined to the internal to obtain anything from God; that is, we must go down on our knees, pray with our lips, etc. [...]' (Pascal 285).

although not necessarily a false appearance. The appearance goes with the becoming. The possibility of him becoming a merchant that does not appear to be one would not do for Roxana. For her, it could be as if he were not a merchant. He is sent to become a merchant, so that he can take on the appearance of one. Susan is asked to take on the appearance of a gentlewoman, so that she can become one. This suggests that the problems of appearances were not necessarily the same for men and women. There were different exigencies and expectations.

Another good example of the externality of appearances, and how it was different for men and women, can be found in the importance of honour and reputation in the eighteenth century. As Faramerz Dabhoiwala explains, the system of reputation varied according to rank and position; it was highly gendered, 'different for men and women'; it 'overlapped with and [was] contradicted by other patterns of thought' such as 'religious standards, notions of social order, and the like'; and it was subjected 'to considerable fluctuation over time' (Dabhoiwala 201-203). In the relationship between the self and the other, as 'the projections and the perception' of a character (Dabhoiwala 201), appearances appear to be essentially exterior. Reputation has to do with appearances, as it has to do with individual and collective perceptions. Such appearances are mostly considered to be external, given to us by other indivisuals, coming from an exterior 'other'. The attributes of the status of eighteenth-century characters appear to be exterior appearances, such as their dress, their manners and how they travelled, their 'carriage'. The perception of their reputation comes from the detour of an imaginary outside, through the eyes of other characters.

Reputation is very important to all of the characters in the eighteenth-century novel. Jenny Davidson notes that all of the characters in *Caleb William* 'are seduced by the ideology of chivalry'; 'Caleb himself is fatally smitten with the same ideas about honour that have destroyed Falkland' (Davidson 102). The 'undue degree of attention to appearances' that seems to have 'poisoned society far more extensively' than the ideas about women's chastity (Davidson 101), refers to the importance given to honour. According to Davidson, 'Godwin depicts a world entirely governed by the gendered logic of appearances' (Davidson 102). The reference to 'a gendered logic of appearances' implies the existence of multiple logics

of appearances. That such a logic was gendered, charged with sexual differences, or with the apparent blurring of such differences —men caught within a feminine logic of appearances or a logic of feminine appearances— is based on the assumption that appearances were essentially feminine, and therefore a woman's issue.

In *Caleb Williams*, Falkland's story appears as a cautionary tale of the devastating effects of an excessive regard for reputation. Falkland tries to preserve his reputation as if it were an image or external appearance. In the figure of Falkland, reputation is no less made from an inconsistent multiplicity of appearances, and it comes with his name, beyond his physical appearance. Falkland's position echoes that of Cassio in Shakespeare's *Othello*: 'Reputation, reputation, reputation! O, I have lost my reputation', says Cassio. 'I have lost the immortal part of my self and what remains is bestial' (*Othello* 2.3.246-248). As Falkland invests his life upon his reputation, in the belief that it will survive him, reputation appears as an economical problem, related to investment, capital and survival. As he explains to Caleb:

> I live the guardian of my reputation. That, and to endure a misery such as man never endured, are the only ends to which I live. But, when I am no more, my fame shall still survive. My character shall be revered as spotless and unimpeachable by all posterity, as long as the name of Falkland shall be repeated in the most distant regions of the many-peopled globe. (*Caleb* 282)

The importance of reputation for Falkland is understandable. And it was not entirely uncommon. Even if Falkland's behaviour appears to be excessive, one should not discard or underestimate it, or take it for a type of madness, stupidity, or an obsession with something superficial or merely accessory. What Falkland calls his reputation is an image that gives him cohesion as a subject. It is what helps him to keep himself together, with a sense and purpose to his life. Anything threatening such an image puts his self in danger, threatening him with his dissolution and possible disappearance. Anything threatening such an image, Falkland can only see as an attack to the very core of his being. He sees himself as a guardian of the image of his reputation. As he confesses to Caleb:

> Reputation has been the idol, the jewel of my life. I could never have borne to think that a human creature, in the remotest part of the globe, should believe that I was a criminal. Alas! what a deity it is that I have chosen for my worship! (*Caleb* 102)

Caleb, on the contrary, does not seem to care much for reputation. To him, such a cult of reputation appears foolish and frivolous:

> [Falkland] was the fool of honour and fame: a man whom, in the pursuit of reputation, nothing could divert; who would have purchased the character of a true, gallant, and undaunted hero, at the expense of worlds, and who thought every calamity nominal but a stain upon his honour. (*Caleb* 102-103)

Caleb recognises the importance of reputation for Falkland but underestimates its value, considering him a fool. Caleb threatens Falkland's reputation without suspecting the consequences. He seems to care for truth, not for appearances. If truth is what lies behind deceptive appearances, Caleb cannot care about Falkland's reputation, which appears to be a false appearance. He does not care about the effects or possible consequences that the knowledge of truth could have for Falkland's reputation.

Falkland does not care about the truth, only for the possible effects that it could have for his reputation. Falkland's confession to Caleb, when he admits murdering Tyrrel, is a way of saying to Caleb that if he wants the truth, he can have it, that Falkland will show him that he cannot use it against him, to hurt his reputation; that nobody would believe him, because Falkland's reputation is stronger than any truth coming from Caleb's position. However, to make sure that Caleb cannot use the truth against him, Falkland is going to ruin his reputation, and never allow him to build it up again. He is going to make Caleb pay for the knowledge of his secret, for not having left him alone. That is going to be Falkland's vengeance and his lesson to Caleb, so he will learn that reputation (appearance) is more important than truth.

Towards the end, Caleb becomes more aware of the importance and the fragility of reputation, although it is not entirely clear that that changes his position regarding truth. To Falkland's proposal of a settlement, Caleb replies:

> What is it that you require of me? that I should sign away my own reputation for the better maintaining of yours. Where is the equality of that? What is it that casts me at such an immense distance below you, as to make every thing that relates to me wholly unworthy of consideration? (*Caleb* 283)

For Caleb, more important than his name, reputation or even truth, there is a concern about social equality and injustice. For Caleb the problem is not just his name and reputation, not even that he has been asked to tell a lie, but the assumption that he is the one who is expected to tell a lie, to cover his master's hypocrisy. Caleb objects to the assumption that because of his social status he must be the one to sacrifice his name and reputation, as if they have less value. For Falkland, as well as for most of society, it is obvious that his name and reputation have more value, because of his social class. However, Caleb seems to believe that there is not much difference, or that there should be no difference. Caleb's position appears subversive, claiming social equality, and abolishing the difference between social classes.

Caleb does not seem to realise that Falkland does not need him to sign away his reputation. As Falkland has already demonstrated, he can destroy Caleb's reputation without his consent, and Falkland's reputation appears to be above anything Caleb could say. For Falkland, Caleb's signed declaration is only an extra guarantee, a supplement. It could stand for the definitive discredit to his reputation —by the curious paradox of taking his word for it. Caleb could always build a new reputation for himself. But his signed declaration has the advantage of making it unnecessary to keep destroying Caleb's reputation, as he has been doing with the help of Gines. As Caleb recognises:

> The employment to which this man [Gines] was hired, was that of following me from place to place, blasting my reputation, and preventing me from the chance, by continuing long in one residence, of acquiring a character for integrity, that should give new weight to any accusation I might at a future time be induced to prefer. (*Caleb* 304).

That perpetual loss of reputation makes Caleb's life very difficult. After all, as Solove writes, 'our reputation affects our ability to engage in basic activities in society' (Solove 30). Solove also notes the changes that the printed word 'brought': 'In the past, oral gossip could tarnish a reputation, but it would fade from memories over time. People could move elsewhere and start anew' (Solove 33). Writing is precisely what does not allow Caleb to start anew elsewhere, persecuted as he is by Gines and the written stories about him. Unable to

establish and maintain a social relationship, Caleb is practically deprived of the possibility of work. He is pushed to the margins of society, to live among thieves and criminals.

Caleb's case is not a fictitious exaggeration, with no resemblance to reality. During the eighteenth century many people experienced similar cases of persecution and the systematic destruction of their reputation. Godwin himself suffered a similar experience, due to his political and religious ideas. People worried about losing their reputation, as if only ruin and death could follow. One of the problems was that changes to one's reputation appeared beyond total manipulation. There is a certain amount of chance in the development of any reputation that widens the imaginary gap between a reality and its appearance, between someone's 'real self' and his or her reputation. Reputation defines a character beyond his or her control. But it is the belief in the indivisibility of reputation that makes characters apprehensive about its fragility. The fear or apprehension was very real, even if after a loss of reputation, ruin and death did not follow, as most social and economical relationships did not rely on a homogeneous reputation.

Assuming what Niall Lucy calls the 'absolute priority and "non-exteriority" of truth' (Lucy 71), appearances are conceived as essentially deceptive, concealing the truth: related to rhetoric, writing, and the sensible, in clear opposition to logic, speech and the intelligible. Accordingly, as a product of appearances, and appearing as an appearance itself, reputation can be deceptive. Eighteenth-century novels not only attempt to make the reader aware of the importance of appearances, as they seem to argue the importance of reputation; they also propose that, as Žižek likes to put it, truth is 'out there' (Žižek 2008a), in appearances themselves. 'Out there' means not simply a place exterior to us, outside us, but, rather, an effect of appearances. There is not a real 'us' to which appearances are merely exterior. It is because of appearances that there seems to be an 'out there', an exterior, even if appearances are also a retroactive effect of such a place.

Commonly, there is in the eighteenth-century novel the assumption that reality is the truth that appearances conceal, truth as the way things really are, and that what appears is not necessarily real. It is as if there are two realities, the one that appears to someone, and the real reality, the truth of things as they really are, which might never appear to someone,

which cannot appear without becoming an appearance as 'the other' reality. These two

positions are represented by Philonous and Hylas in one of George Berkeley's dialogues:

> What you call the empty forms and outside of things, seems to me the very things themselves. [...] We both therefore agree in this, that we perceive only sensible forms: but herein we differ, you will have them to be empty appearances, I real beings. In short you do not trust your senses, I do. (Berkeley 188)

However, according to Žižek:

> The truly difficult thing is to accept [...] the ontological incompleteness of reality itself. [...] If reality 'really exists out there', it has to be complete 'all the way down', otherwise we are dealing with a fiction which just 'hangs in the air', like appearances which are not appearances of a substantial Something. (Žižek 2007b 222)

Truth and reality are not the same. The truth of reality is what is out there, in the 'ontological

incompleteness' of reality. Reality cannot be 'all the way down', or fully exist without

appearances. It must be supplemented by appearances in order to appear as such. But

reality is not a thing, whose exterior manifestation is appearances. Reality is like a fiction,

which 'hangs in the air'. In a sense, there are *only* appearances but they can never be

'only'. An ontological thought is what makes them what they are, as exterior, standing

for an interiority or truth beyond. Therefore, as Markus Gabriel puts it, 'Reality is not out

there, but the result of an operation which distinguishes illusion and reality' (Gabriel 34).

Reality does not exist 'out there'. It is not an exterior thing but an effect of appearances,

determined as the sum of all appearances and the addition (if appearances are considered to

be part of reality) or the subtraction (if reality is what exists beyond appearances) of their

'supplement' —the supplement of the supplement, since appearances are the ones most

commonly thought to be a supplement.[2] However, it is precisely because of the apparent

externality of appearances that it is difficult to take as the truth what appears there. Such a

difficulty cannot be reduced to the fact that characters appear to be taught and seem to like

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2. To my knowledge, the idea of appearance as supplement or reality as a supplement of the supplement of appearances does not appear in Derrida's work. Although, it can be argued, it comes influenced by Derrida's *Of Grammatology*, among other works. For Derrida, 'writing is the supplement par excellence since it proposes itself as the supplement of the supplement, sign of a sign' (Derrida 1997 281). That does not mean that writing is the absolute or general 'supplement par excellence', since Derrida is there referring to the problem of language and the voice in the work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Nevertheless, it is possible to think of a relationship between appearances, writing and traces, with appearances/appearing as a form of reading/writing. See Chapter 13 'Arrival/Entrance' below, on what seems to appear in the eighteenth-century novel 'through' writing, what writing makes appear.

to think that to find the truth they have to go beyond appearances. There is something more powerful than a particular ideology against appearances, which impels people to try to go beyond appearances. It has to do with the metaphysical 'edifice' where truth appears, with the essence of truth appearing as 'interior'. If truth also appears 'out there' or if 'out there' is the real and truthful place of its apparition, it is not so much a 'something' that needs to be found but a 'something' that appears (to us).

Writing appears as an externalisation of appearances (everything is as it appears to the writer), creating the possibilities of appearances by a series of external marks, which a reader can then apprehend and internalise. In that sense, though seemly external, outside, appearances are permeated by an interiority. Without the interiority of a subject there does not seem to be appearance. Things can still exist 'out there', but without appearing (to anyone). The eighteenth-century novel as a genre does not propose that reality is subjective, or that appearances are all there is, no more than they reinforce the belief that there is a full reality made of appearances or beyond appearances. It teaches that reality needs to be written and read as a novel or a fiction that hangs in the air, even if it appears to be more than that. If an eighteenth-century novel appears to be real, to the point that it seems to be able to replace reality, it can make the reader see that what he or she takes for reality is like a fiction that hangs in the air. However, that hanging is just 'like a fiction' since eighteenth-century novels have no less foundation than reality; they are based on beliefs and ideas that are taken as real or truthful, even if those foundations can be thought to hang in the air as much as any other fiction.

The eighteenth-century novel contains three basic positions regarding the relationship to appearances: that of those who put more importance on appearances than on reality or truth, such as Roxana, Lovelace and Falkland; that of those who disregard appearance in favour of a higher truth (Tom Jones, Clarissa); and, between those two extremes, the novel warns against the dangers of appearances, the danger of being completely taken in by them, but also the danger of ignoring their importance. Eighteenth-century novels, such as *Tom Jones*, argue that it is not enough to be, but that one also needs to appear. That is often what the protagonists (and the readers) must learn; a lesson which also involves the genre of novel.

4. KNOWLEDGE

Something 'apparent' can be something 'plain; visible; *not doubtful*'; 'open; evident; known; not merely suspected'; 'certain; not presumptive' (Johnson senses 1, 4 and 5). 'To appear' can mean 'to be made clear by evidence' or 'to be plain beyond dispute' (Johnson senses 6 and 8). Following Locke's definition of knowledge (see page 45), the *OED* also defines an 'appearance' as a 'clear manifestation to the sight or understanding; disclosure, detection' (sense 7). However, even in what appears most obvious, there is a complexity that exceeds knowledge. Despite how clear something can appear —under the right conditions, under a clear light, in plain sight, given the sense of an evident knowledge— in terms of appearances nothing guarantees the truth. Accordingly, 'apparently' also refers to the limitations of knowledge. Appearances constitute a limited knowledge, as they leave a space for the possibility that things can be otherwise.

In the eighteenth-century novel, what appears as knowledge —the 'knowledge' that a character needs in order to function in the world— is constituted by a series of thoughts about appearances, which are maintained by a system of beliefs. Eighteenth-century novels helped to disseminate such theories, changing the common knowledge of society. In the eighteenth-century novel, everything points to the impossibility of knowing and judging by any means other than appearances. The stories seem to take place in a Kantian universe, in which the characters have 'epistemic access' only to appearances, in contrast to 'things as they are in themselves' (Hammer 72). Judgement is based on a knowledge limited to appearances. According to Berkeley in his *Principles of Human Knowledge* (1710): 'we see only the appearances, and not the real qualities of things' (Berkeley 62). From judgements such as Clarissa's regarding Lovelace —the judgement that he can be saved by their correspondence— to that of Caleb on his trials, judgements depend on appearances,

and they involve issues of witnessing, knowledge, probability or plausibility. It is because of appearances that interpretations and judgements are not only possible but necessary. Without appearances —with something like unmediated access to 'things as they are in themselves' and the transparency of truth, assuming that such 'a scene', the end of all scenes, could be possible to conceive— there will be nothing left to judge, interpret and decide upon. Things would be only what they are, an unbearable scene, despite 'appearances' to the contrary.

Caleb cannot but judge Falkland by appearances. That does not mean that all judgements are based merely on appearances. Caleb's judgement of Falkland is not free from the influence of feelings, for example. Caleb's judgement of Falkland springs from a transference, involving his feelings towards his master. However, if there is a 'beyond appearances', quite often this is 'only' an appearance in which other appearances seem to be beyond. Caleb's feelings towards Falkland are no less conditioned by appearances. As Joel Faflak notes, Caleb is also 'the subject presumed to know', the one that seems to know what he wants to find. Caleb 'yearns to learn' Falkland's secret —what is behind his secretive appearance. As his secretary and confidant, Caleb seems to be in a better position to discover the truth about Falkland than the rest of the world, which is kept at a distance. From such a privileged position, Caleb witnesses Falkland's two ways of appearing: as a melancholic gentleman and as a furious madman. Between those two apparently contradictory appearances, Caleb suspects that there must be a truth behind, which would allow him to understand and reconcile his perception of his master. Nevertheless, there is the belief that, as Pope tells Swift in a letter, December 19th 1734, one cannot have access to truth, only to 'appearances' of truth:

> Imagination has no limits, and that is a sphere in which you may move on to eternity; but where one is confined to Truth (or to speak more like a human creature, to the appearances of Truth) we soon find the shortness of our Tether. (Pope 445)

Pope makes a distinction between imagination and truth, and confines humanity to the world of appearances. There is a recognition that one cannot have access to truth (a platonic view of 'truth) but only to the appearance of truth. According to Donald Hall, such a position seems to come from Descartes, who defines human beings as 'struggling to know in spite of the futility of ever knowing completely' (Hall 3). This is not necessarily because there

is too much to know, but because knowledge appears limited to appearances. Knowledge seems only possible by approximation through appearances, which leaves the core of being (usually thought as the truth of the object) impossible to apprehend. According to Badiou, truth is not an original essence that lies behind appearances; in materialist terms, a truth is always 'situated in a world' (Badiou 2005a xii). Truth is apparitional, and as such, truth comes to appear through imagination and fiction. '[A]s we know from Lacan and from before,' Badiou reminds us, 'the truth itself is in a structure of fiction. The process of truth is also the process of a new fiction' (Badiou 2005b).

According to Fabio Vighi and Heiko Feldner, Žižek understands ideology as 'an elusive kind of knowledge' split between what can be considered 'proper' knowledge —'a rationally constructed and linguistically transparent set of ideas' that at the time can hardly be perceived as ideological— and a certain surplus, a 'knowledge' that we do not know, something like an unconscious knowledge (Vighi and Feldner 29). The first is the manifest, the explicit, the one that appears more clearly, while the second is referred to as an 'appearance beyond appearance', something that appears beyond the first. Such ideological knowledge is elusive. It must remain invisible, and therefore just a 'kind of' knowledge. It is what makes possible the knowledge that most eighteenth-century characters consider proper knowledge. In terms of appearances, there is a knowledge about appearances as enablers of knowledge, but also an ideological knowledge about appearances that cannot be articulated. The 'appearance beyond appearance' of knowledge consists in the enjoyment of appearances, against the knowledge of their dangers. It is a knowledge that must remain without recognition, disavowed as proper knowledge.

If we follow the standard formula against appearances, such a second knowledge is what appears as the very truth of knowledge, even if an appearance itself. However, the 'already here' of truth (Žižek 216) should not be confused with the place of the explicit manifestation of knowledge, assuming that such knowledge is the one first 'out there' and that the other is secondary. Such other knowledge as truth is the 'impossible standard' that comes from 'the decision to limit knowledge' to the phenomenal world; a 'decision' based on the recognition that the knowledge of the phenomenal world does not constitute all

knowledge. Beyond the knowledge of the phenomenal world, there is truth, as an effect and 'impossible standard'. It is 'impossible' because, despite the movement from knowledge towards truth, they can never be the same, as truth is essentially unknowable. It cannot be apprehended or reduced by 'a rationally constructed and linguistically transparent set of ideas' (Vighi and Feldner 29). It is also 'unknowable' in the sense of the first type of knowledge, in the materialist sense that an 'absolute' objective knowledge is impossible.

According to Žižek, 'materialism means that we should assert that "objective" knowledge of reality is impossible precisely because we (consciousness) are always-already part of it' (Žižek 2006 17). There cannot be an objective (in the sense of beyond appearances) knowledge of reality because we are 'always-already part' of reality. It is not that there is reality, and there is us, outside reality, looking at it. That is something that *Tristram Shandy* demonstrates in the apparent impossibility of telling a story objectively. Eighteenth-century novels soon seem to have grasped such a truth of appearances, by locating appearances subjectively: not of things as they are, but as they appear to a character. Even in the novels written in the third person, there is an emphasis on what appears to the characters. And like the characters themselves, readers are forced to 'judge evidence, probability, and the chain of cause and effect' (Bender 51).

Tristram Shandy makes evident the impossibility of an objective narrative, as Tristram tries to grasp his own story, as he keeps adding to it. Tristram's narration is not a confident, clear story told by a first-person narrator, who appears to know the truth of his or her own story. That is in part because it is not entirely his story. Tristram's story is not just his story but also the story of his parents, a story before his memory, and the story of his coming into the world. According to Rene Bosch:

> In the twentieth century it has been assumed that in *Tristram Shandy* Sterne wanted to convey a vision of knowledge largely similar to the one unfolded in *A Treatise of Human Nature*: Sterne and Hume both deny that cognitive concepts can be objective, and both emphasise the importance of the passions in social intercourse and as a means to come to terms —along sympathetic or associative lines. (Bosch 248)

In *Tristram Shandy*, the figure of the hobby horse is linked to a will to knowledge, a desire to understand and explain things: Toby tries to explain to his visitors, during his

convalescence, how he got injured; Walter tries to understand and explain the whole world (in part to predict and change the future); Tristram tries to explain how he came to be what he is. As John Smyth sees it:

> [T]he category of hobbyhorsical play [...] potentially includes everything left un- or overdetermined by Locke's theory of knowledge and might be defined as the reciprocal 'other' of all Lockean labour or work, an 'other' that would therefore go well beyond the mere opposition between 'seriousness' and 'jest'. (Smyth 45-46)

Tristram Shandy explores the fictionality of truth and the truth that can only be gathered or obtained through apparent fictions, as well as the subjective construction of objectivity. It produces a surplus of experience of the ideology of appearances, through the enjoyment of the 'other side' of the 'kind of knowledge' that ideology makes possible.

Appearances relate to knowledge, and the eighteenth-century novel is 'a genre that inquires into knowledge and knowing' (Bender 18). There is knowledge to be obtained from appearances and the novel. As Baldwin puts it, in reference to Adorno's *Aesthetic Theory*, 'knowledge is thus completed by art with what is conventionally excluded from knowledge [...] and this impairs the character of art as knowledge' (Baldwin 14).

5. BETRAYAL

As far as there are appearances, there is the possibility of misinterpretation and deception, and also of contradiction. Through contradiction, a character can get the impression of perceiving a false appearance, although without necessarily being able to see the truth behind it. In *Tom Jones*, although everything seems to indicate to the housekeeper Mrs Deborah that Jenny is guilty of having left a child in Mr Allworthy's bed, she seems to acknowledge that 'Mr Allworthy might have required some stronger evidence to have convicted her' (*Jones* 49). The 'reasons above shewn' are mostly circumstantial:

> Jenny had lately been often at Mr Allworthy's house. She had officiated as nurse to Miss Bridget, in a violent fit of illness, and had sat up many nights with that lady; besides which, she had been seen there the very day before Mr Allworthy's return. (*Jones* 49)

It is the apparent contradiction between her class and her 'understanding' and education that seems to have singled her out in the eyes of other characters. But what then appears evident to Mrs Deborah about Jenny, in the end is shown not to be the truth: Jenny is not the mother of the abandoned child, even if she confessed to be.

In *Humphry Clinker*, Lydia can perceive that there is a problem with Wilson's appearance: 'I am still persuaded that he is not what he appears to be' (*Clinker* 37). However, she cannot go beyond or behind that appearance. In *Caleb Williams*, Caleb thinks that he has found the 'master-key' to Falkland's truth, but he needs to confirm what otherwise cannot be but a mere suspicion. Caleb is confident that Falkland's 'secret anguish' would betray him (*Caleb* 126). During the examination of the peasant accused of murder, Falkland is aware of such visibility for Caleb, but that does not make him more able to repress, contain or disguise the appearances that are giving him away.

Caleb is far from being a passive witness. As Caleb recounts, 'I took my station in a manner most favourable to the object upon which my mind was intent' (*Caleb* 126). Such a privileged position seems to be compulsive, a trap from which Caleb does not seem to be able to escape:

> I perfectly understood [Falkland's] feelings, and would willingly have withdrawn myself. But it was impossible; my passions were too deeply engaged; I was rooted to the spot; though my own life, that of my master, or almost of a whole nation had been at stake, I had no power to change my position. (*Caleb* 126)

His privileged position has an effect on Falkland. As Caleb recalls, Falkland's 'countenance' was already 'embarrassed and anxious; he scarcely saw any body'. But:

> [T]he examination had not proceeded far, before he chanced to turn his eye to the part of the room where I was. It happened in this as in some preceding instances —we exchanged a silent look, by which we told volumes to each other. Mr Falkland's complexion turned from red to pale, and from pale to red. (*Caleb* 126)[1]

For Davidson,

> [K]nowledge of his own guilt causes Falkland to blush and blanch throughout the novel, and Caleb compulsively reads these physical symptoms in the manner of a jealous husband policing his wife's behavior. (Davidson 102)

However, Falkland's inability to suppress the signs that give away his secret is not simply the work of his guilty conscience. The peasant's case reminds Falkland of his crime, but what makes his situation unbearable is not the confrontation with such a distorted mirror.[2] Falkland does not betray himself by a mere remembrance of his crime, but *in relation* to Caleb. Caleb appears to be a terrible examiner who preys upon Falkland's every possible

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1. According to Caleb, the following are the signs of Falkland's self-betrayal: 'He at one time started with astonishment, and at another shifted his posture, like a man who is unable longer to endure the sensations that press upon him. Then he new strung his nerves to stubborn patience. I could see, while his muscles preserved an inflexible steadiness, tears of anguish roll down his cheeks. He dared not trust his eyes to glance towards the side of the room where I stood; and this gave an air of embarrassment to his whole figure. But when the accused came to speak of his feelings, to describe the depth of his compunction for an involuntary fault, he could endure it no longer. He suddenly rose, and with every mark of horror and despair rushed out of the room' (*Caleb* 129).

2. The two cases are not the same. There is only a 'sufficient resemblance'. According to Caleb, 'though the incidents were, for the most part, wide of those which belonged to the adventures of the preceding volume [Falkland's story], and there had been much less policy and skill displayed on either part in this rustic encounter [in the case of the peasant], yet there were many points which, to a man who bore the former strongly in his recollection, suggested a sufficient resemblance. In each case it was a human brute persisting in a course of hostility to a man of benevolent character, and suddenly and terribly cut off in the midst of his career' (*Caleb* 128-129).

mistake. That does not mean that both Falkland and Caleb were wrong. Caleb soon finds out that he was right. However, all of those appearances were hardly ever enough, despite how much they seemed to betray. A betrayal is not objective. They are appearances. It is another who sees those appearances as a betrayal. In other words, the betrayal is an appearance itself. That also reveals the need to sometimes assume a position, in order for things to appear. After all, those 'appearances', the most objective of them, were also open to other characters to see. Nevertheless, nobody else but Caleb seems to see them for what they are, or for betrayals.

What makes Falkland appear guilty is the consciousness of being observed and judged by Caleb, just as a character blushes in relation to another (even if a girl seems to be by herself, she can blush due to her conscience of how she looks to someone else). Even an innocent subject can appear guilty, due to a compulsion to behave in ways that seem to confirm false suspicions, by a conscience of how things make him or her appear guilty. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, a blush can originate from a feeling of 'conscious innocence', or it can be:

> [...] the blush of triumph, such as sometimes stains the countenance of a person, congratulating himself on the penetration which had taught him to suspect another, and who loses both pity for the supposed criminal, and indignation of his guilt, in the gratification of his own vanity. (*Udolpho* 120)

In the eighteenth-century novel there are many examples of innocent characters that appear guilty. In *Tom Jones*, there are the 'many iniquities' of which Tom Jones appears to be guilty, for which he is banished from Allworthy's sight (*Jones* 277). In *Count Fathom* we find an inversion of the figures of Tom Jones and Blifil in Fathom and his young master, with the hero being the deceiver and the other being the victim, as it appears in the incident of the translation of a chapter of Caesar's *Commentaries*:

> [T]he young Count went to work, and performed the undertaking with great elegance and despatch. Fathom, having spent the night in more effeminate amusements, was next morning so much hurried for want of time, that in his transcription he neglected to insert a few variations from the text, these being the terms on which he was allowed to use it; so that it was verbatim a copy of the original. [...] the schoolmaster chanced to peruse the version of Ferdinand, before he looked into any of the rest, and could not help bestowing upon it particular marks of approbation. The next

> that fell under his examination was that of the young Count, when he immediately perceived the sameness, and, far from imputing it to the true cause, upbraided him with having copied the exercise of our adventurer, and insisted upon chastising him upon the spot for his want of application. (*Fathom* 61-62)

When the young gentleman 'boldly affirmed, that he himself was the original, to whom Ferdinand was beholden for his performance', the schoolmaster, 'in the hope of vindicating his own penetration,' took the 'opportunity of questioning Ferdinand in private concerning the circumstances of the translation'. Fathom, 'perceiving his drift, gave him such artful and ambiguous answers, as persuaded him that the young Count had acted the part of a plagiary, and that the other had been restrained from doing himself justice, by the consideration of his own dependence' (*Fathom* 62).

In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, the porter Barnardine kept a 'countenance so steady and undaunted, that Montoni could scarcely believe him guilty [of having delivered the keys of the castle to his enemy Morano], though he knew not how to think him innocent. At length, the man was dismissed from his presence, and, though the real offender, escaped detection', while, in another incident, the servant who had the care of the wine ewers, 'whose face betrayed either the consciousness of guilt [of having attempted to poison Montoni], or the fear of punishment, Montoni ordered to be chained instantly' (*Udolpho* 276-277, 313).

Guilt or innocence —or at least an appearance of guilt or innocence— is established by other appearances. Characters do not just appear to be guilty or innocent, with a guilty or innocent look as their only appearance, especially if the appearance of self-betrayal is considered as well. Caleb, for example, at one point refers to:

> [...] these appearances I too frequently interpreted into grounds of suspicion, though I might with equal probability and more liberality have ascribed them to the cruel mortifications he [Falkland] had encountered in the objects of his darling ambition. (*Caleb* 109)

Falkland appears to be guilty not only because he confesses his crimes, but also because of many other appearances, particularly in his behaviour. A confession is not enough, since confessions can be as deceptive as any other appearance or evidence. After Fathom acquitted the young count, his patron still believed that, 'notwithstanding what he had said, the case

really stood as it had been represented' by the schoolmaster (*Fathom* 63). On the other hand, by suddenly retiring from society, Falkland seemed to be trying to conceal the truth about the crime. It is commonly believed that criminals prefer to avoid society, to avoid betraying themselves, as if their crime could be visible in their public appearances. Such a belief is not entirely unfounded, as keeping a secret or lying can lead to an excessive, pathological fear of betrayal (including self-betrayal), which can have evident effects on someone's behaviour. Eighteenth-century characters always judge; they cannot but judge, without enough evidence. Not to judge is what requires the major effort. What the eighteenth-century novel shows is that it is not easy to find a stable ground for such a judgement.

The eighteenth century tried to come up with a code to read appearances, to determine being through external signs. Manuals on teaching people how to read those signs or appearances were popular. According to the seventeenth-century French painter and art theorist Charles Le Brun (1619-1690),'commonly, whatever causes Passion in the Soul, creates also some Action in the Body' (Le Brun 13). That is not exactly the same as a cause-effect correspondence between 'Passions' and 'Actions', but that what has an effect on one must also have an effect on the other. Following Augustan physicians, by the middle of the eighteenth century such a belief was commonly used in an inverted fashion, reading bodily appearances as signs. Nevertheless, appearances remain appearances. They are unable to cast any light on their origins. Part of the problem is that any 'automatic and natural' reaction can be reproduced. Therefore, an apparent betrayal can also be false or feigned.

Eighteenth-century novels show that in some circumstances it is as if appearances do not completely conceal their object, which is given away by other appearances. In *Tom Jones*, for example, Sophia Western tries to conceal her feelings for Tom Jones. However, the narrator indicates:

> Notwithstanding the nicest Guard which Sophia endeavoured to set on her Behaviour, she could not avoid letting some Appearances now and then slip forth: for Love may again be likened to a Disease in this, that when it is denied a Vent in one Part, it will certainly break out in another. What her Lips therefore concealed, her Eyes, her Blushes, and many little involuntary Actions, betrayed. (*Jones* 194)

Sophia Western's 'language of appearances' communicates her feelings to her lover, as if against her will. For Juliet McMaster, this is one of the examples of what Fielding calls the 'lingo of the eyes', which reveals how the '[eighteenth-century] novelists make full use of the gestural tradition, often implying, and sometimes saying, that the look is more to be trusted than the word' (McMaster 131). Such a betrayal is common to most young women in eighteenth-century novels. Unable to conceal their feelings, it is as if young women cannot but betray themselves, due to their inexperience and innocence. In Burney's novels, the female protagonists always struggle to conceal their love, and try to protect themselves and hide behind social appearances. However, their external appearances always betray them.

In the eighteenth-century novel, the secret that most female characters would rather keep is their love. Women are assumed to maintain a non-desiring appearance. It is for the man to declare his love and for the woman to accept it. For women to reveal themselves to be in love amounts to open themselves to blackmail, if their lover must be kept secret from a father, family or husband. There is also a matter of pride, against the possibility of the embarrassment of nonreciprocal love. However, they must reveal their passion somehow; they must appear not to reveal it themselves but for it to appear to be revealed by men, while maintaining the impression of keeping something concealed. After all, as Philip Armstrong argues, it is concealment (the assumption that something is kept in reserve) and not disclosure that elicits and sustains desire, and such a desire is first and foremost scopic, based on visual appearances. Appearances elicit desire,as something is always imagined to be behind them, but also trick and frustrate desire, in the impossibility of grasping what is behind. If a woman fails to appear to betray herself, she risks becoming the target of a masculine obsession, such as Clarissa for Lovelace. The figure *par excellence* of the obsession with the mystery of women is perhaps Don Juan, who is trapped in an endless desire for uncovering and revealing. Lovelace, as a Don Juan, becomes trapped in the enigma that Clarissa appears to be, and attempts to make her betray herself and reveal what is behind her social appearance. But the figure of Don Juan is impossible; nobody can sustain it. It is as inhuman as the pure appearance of the woman that it seeks to destroy.

There is no escape from the possibility of being betrayed by external, bodily appearances. As Sigmund Freud once wrote, 'He that has eyes to see and ears to hear may convince himself that no mortal can keep a secret. If his lips are silent, he chatters with his finger-tips; betrayal oozes out of him at every pore' (Freud 77-78). Although some characters —such as Roxana, Tom Jones's stepbrother Blifil, Lovelace, Fathom, and Caleb— are better at deception than others, nobody is perfect in such an 'art'. Sooner or later they are all discovered. It is a question of 'style', as Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe adds, commenting on Theodor Reik's work:

> Style, as Reik knows, is double. It is first of all a phenomenon of diction or enunciation, whether oral or written (which also implies, as he repeats many times, handwriting). But it is also the 'character': the incised and the engraven, the prescribed (or pre- inscribed), the 'programmed' in a subject —in other words, he says, the unconscious, and the unconscious as a system of traces, marks, and imprints. This is why style *betrays*; it is, essentially, the *compulsion to confess*. (Lacoue-Labarthe 166)

Style betrays, conformed by unconscious external appearances, as a system of 'programmed' marks, which affects the subject beyond his will. The most revealing appearances are not independent from the subject, even if he or she is not aware of them. There is a suffering in the subject's relationship to his or her appearances, a suffering caused by an unwanted revelation or exposition, and the impotence of mastering one's own bodily appearances. Blushing, for example, involves a suffering at the border, at the level of the skin, a feeling of a lack of control, a sense of betrayal, in an impossible struggle between what the subject considers its interiority, and its outside, something that is beyond it. The body betrays and eighteenth-century characters appear eager to read those betrayals. According to McMaster, eighteenth-century readers were:

> [...] trained to be intensely conscious of the process of reading bodies. [...] Readers were alert to the mind/body connection, and took seriously the business of interpreting the one through the other. Far from registering the signals without thinking, like modern readers, they were thinking all the time. (McMaster xi)

Appearances were considered not just to conceal but also to reveal. After all, as Arons point out, 'the only way a person can make themselves "knowable" to the world (even as authentic, direct, and natural) is through exterior signs made visible on the body and face,

in gestures and in speech' (Arons 10). In the eighteenth-century novels, perhaps as much as in society, women were supposed to let themselves to be read by men. Expressive bodily appearances such as blushing were highly regarded in women as signs of virtue. Women were supposed to appear transparent, revealing their truthful character. It was a matter of 'seeing correctly', to apprehend things, an interest that, as Pritchard argues:

> [...] extended into scientific and artistic realms and helped shape literary production and social space. This desire to see correctly was exemplified by a lingering belief or hope that from close study of the 'possible appearances of things... we may perhaps be inabled to discern all the secret workings of Nature' [Robert Hooke]. (Pritchard 80)

In other words, it was a desire for possession and definitive understanding, a desire for a ground and security. In the eighteenth-century novel, characters seem highly conscious and apprehensive of their external appearances, knowing that they will be read and determined by appearances. There is a constant preoccupation with the possibility of being read and misinterpreted.

The eighteenth-century novel develops a discourse on the moral value of transparent appearances. The moral ideals of innocence and virtue belong to characters that appear open, their appearances seeming to clearly reveal their inner thoughts and feelings. If full revelation might not be desirable, it is because of the imperfections of society, because of other characters that might take advantage of it. The apparently legible was a virtue. Eighteenth-century novels also appear to be open to the public, like confessions and true histories, not hiding anything from their readers. Nevertheless, there is in the eighteenth-century novel, as much as in society, a codification of body and facial gestures, into a series of defined meanings. In part, this is shown as a natural activity that everybody must learn in society: how to read the other and tell when the other is sad, happy, angry, by looking at the face. It is a matter of reading, making indexes into signs, and being able to tell more about the other. There was a gestural tradition based on the belief in the existence of a series of 'automatic and natural' bodily expressions. One of those beliefs, for example, was that 'the face, and particularly the eyes and eyebrows, are affected most directly, because they are closest to the soul' (McMaster 75). Such a gestural tradition was especially useful

in the theatre, for actors and actresses to be understood by their public. It allowed the actor or actress to express the 'inner thoughts' of a character. They had to resort to visual conventions, reinforcing and sometimes creating the conventions, which were not limited to the theatre. In the eighteenth-century novel there is a theatricality of bodily appearances. That does not mean that they are simply false or exaggerated. They are in part conventional, to the point that any unconventional appearances had to be supported by an extra layer of signification and explanation.

Since the body 'speaks', silence and passivity can also betray. They can be interpreted and misinterpreted. As Cutting-Gray notes, Evelina 'admits that behaviour, mood, and other non-verbal gestures create a horizon of possible meanings for Orville to interpret' (Cutting-Gray 1992 14). They create a 'horizon of meaning' that exposes and occults her, with truthful and false appearances. This is what makes misinterpretation possible. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, after being accused of keeping a secret lover, Emily recollects 'that appearances did, in some degree, justify her aunt's suspicions' —of her keeping secret correspondence, receiving visits from a man, and blushing at the insinuation that he was her lover— despite considering her conduct 'so innocent and undesigning on her part' (*Udolpho* 111). Valancourt also becomes the victim of deceptive appearances 'mingled with truth', which puts at risk Emily's feelings for him:

> To the ignominy of having received pecuniary obligations from the Marchioness Chamfort, or any other lady of intrigue, as the Count De Villefort had been informed, or of having been engaged in the depredating schemes of gamesters, Valancourt had never submitted; and these were some of such scandals as often mingle with truth, against the unfortunate. Count De Villefort had received them from authority which he had no reason to doubt, and which the imprudent conduct he had himself witnessed in Valancourt, had certainly induced him the more readily to believe. Being such as Emily could not name to the Chevalier, he had no opportunity of refuting them; and, when he confessed himself to be unworthy of her esteem, he little suspected, that he was confirming to her the most dreadful calumnies. (*Udolpho* 653)

By the end of the eighteenth century, some elements of that gestural tradition had become stereotypical and laughable. A particular form of the gestural tradition developed into a 'language of feeling'. The code gave way to the development of a language, as many novels started to explore more what Miriam Wallace denominates 'language of embodied

emotions', with 'a concern with the surface signs of interior experience' (Wallace 4-5). Based on 'the display of emotional internal states through external signs from blushes to upward rolled eyes and fainting fits', such a language would define a major part of the eighteenth century as the 'Age of Sensibility' (Wallace 4-5).

In the shift from code to language there is a change from a reliance on appearances as clear, definitive signs, to an exploration and complication of such a position, exploring the difficulties and problems of their reading. As McMaster reminds us, the 'best body' is still considered to be 'the most legible body; but the legibility is problematised' (McMaster173). It is shown to be not so clear but open to misinterpretation:

> [L]ike many before her, [Clarissa] believes body language to provide a truer representation of the heart than words, because it is direct and unmediated, and less subject to control and manipulation. The faltering tongue, the downcast eye, the sigh, and the give-away blush, are signs spontaneous and reliable, and not to be counterfeited. For her, tears are 'beautiful proofs of a feeling heart'. (McMaster 103)

Appearances might appear closest to their source and more direct than words, whereas language gives the possibility of stating anything about one's visible appearances. There seems to be a style of being, which is defined by a person's character, what defines him/ her. A character, such as Clarissa, is constituted not only by her body and her thoughts, but also by a style or inscription, like a programme, which means that she does not have to think about every word and action, and how she confronts and experiences things at every moment. Bodily appearances were thought to be closer to revealing that style than words. But as the case of Lovelace demonstrates, there cannot be certainty about this. Bodily appearances (as actors demonstrate) can be feigned. Lovelace appears to have mastered his 'body language' so well as to be able to 'write' its appearances more than being 'written', betrayed and revealed by them. Nothing seems to escape Lovelace, as if there were no involuntary gestures in his persona. He appears to feign even what is considered most involuntary. Not that there is no unconscious, other style, which writes Lovelace without his consent, but it is at another level than one would have to find it. Clarissa still believes a discourse that tries to assure her that bodily appearances are a true reflection of the mind. That is why Clarissa cannot but wonder:

> how was it possible that even this florid countenance of his should enable him to command a blush at his pleasure? For blush he did, more than once: and the blush, on this occasion, was a deep-died crimson, unstrained-for, and natural, as I thought —But he is so much of the actor that he seems able to enter into any character; and his muscles and features appear entirely under obedience to his wicked will. (*Clarissa* 1003)

Lovelace knows the code well and uses it for his purposes. Like Lovelace, eighteenth-century novelists knew as much. To a degree, every novelist needed to be a Lovelace, to be able to write, put themselves in the 'bodies' of their characters and their reactions, and conceive them as natural or artificial. Eighteenth-century novelists did not limit themselves to reproduce a code. They show that it is important to know the code, so as not to be misunderstood and to read some basic gestures, but also teach distrust in a blind belief in what the code seems to reveal. They seem well aware that, as with any codification, any code can be used to conceal and deceive. As the eighteenth century progressed, novels problematised the code more and more. Nevertheless, eighteenth-century novelists still placed a higher value on the assumed transparency of characters such as Clarissa than on the play of appearances of characters such as Lovelace. Eighteenth-century novelists remained caught in an 'ideology of transparent subjectivity', opposing an assumedly 'virtuous and authentic antitheatrical mode of being' to a 'villainous use of deception and performance' (Arons 4, 38).[3] To propose the contrary, to embrace the multiplicity of appearances, with all of the possibilities of deception, is, if not unthinkable (since that is what eighteenth-century novels do), immoral and obscene, to be kept concealed under the 'moral' of the story.

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3. According to Arons, 'for many eighteenth-century moralists and philosophers, a key characteristic of the proper mode of being was transparency: the virtuous bourgeois subject was expected to be true to himself or herself and to act honestly, consistently, and forthrightly in his or her dealings with others. Such interpersonal openness stood in marked opposition to aristocratic forms of social intercourse of the early modern and baroque periods, in which the performance of social role as a role was expected if not encouraged' (Arons 4-5). In that sense, the conflict between Clarissa and Lovelace is not less about social classes and their relationship to appearances.

6. Subjectivity

The eighteenth-century novel came to propose a more 'rational' representation of the world, based on 'reason', one that appears to be more rational than imagination, tradition or other social values, which apparently underlie seventeenth-century romances. The truth of representation became one of the main issues for the eighteenth-century novel, as a narrative mode that produced the impression of reproducing reality. In order to achieve such a degree of representation, it became necessary to give voice to the characters, to have them tell their own stories, as far as they knew, as things seemed to them. That made less evident the narrative's fictionality, giving the appearance of a closer relationship to the truth of what was told, since the reader could more reasonably assume that —within the subjectivity that sprang from 'patriarchal conjugal family' (Habermas 43)— the narrator knows more about his or her own life than anything else.

Before the eighteenth-century novel, most narrative fictions hardly tried to pass themselves so close to the reality of an individual as a subject. How things appeared to the characters was not much an issue, since there was not considered to be too much of a significant difference. For the most part, things simply were, as described by the author/narrator. But for the eighteenth-century novel such power to make appear became problematic. It became evident that in a novel things did not have to be just what they are, but that they could appear different to different characters.

The realism was not too close or a mere imitation of reality. As Spacks reminds us, Johnson considered it 'neither useful nor appropriate for the novelist merely to imitate actuality' (Spacks 2). In the eighteenth-century novel, the reader is required to be captured by the illusion, through narrative techniques such as the figure of the editor and the epistolary form, within an ideological commitment to represent reality. By including impossible fictions

that readers can hardly take as real, romances did not seem to have such an aim, although they could still have an influence on the reader's perception of the world.

There seemed to be a greater danger in fiction, due to words making new things appear and contaminating the perception of reality. Reading romances started to appear more dangerous than listening to lies. In Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote*, one of the characters warns the protagonist against 'the kind of romance that disfigures the whole appearance of the world, and represents every thing in a form different from that which experience has shewn' (*Quixote* 379). Reading romances was assumed to make people incapable of distinguishing between illusion and reality, incapable of keeping the realm of the fiction they read separate from the reality of their lives. The reasons for such an appearance should not be dismissed as naive or based merely on conservative and puritan beliefs that have now been left behind. There are always risks in the possibility of confusing fictions with reality, when mixing reality with fictions. Such risks are always present. Fiction contaminates everything. It is part of language and culture. It is not limited to novels or the arts. But by appearing as the place of fiction, eighteenth-century novels made the risks more evident, promoting a more truthful perception of reality, creating more complex worlds and a richer reality.[1] Such contamination was adopted by many eighteenth-century novelists throughout their novels. The novel made the risks of fiction more evident. It revealed how fiction can appear to be real and made even more evident the possibility of confusing the one with the other.

In the eighteenth-century novel, there is always the appearance of a narrator. Even if it does not say 'I', and even if it does not seem to present itself, there is always the appearance of a human figure (alive with a voice) who tells a story. Such an appearance grants the novels a certain 'credibility' (Hunter 226). The readers are made to believe in the words that they read by virtue of that other that seems to address them. If there are inconsistencies, they are more likely to be attributed to the 'humanity' of the narrator's character (after all, human beings make mistakes) rather than to deceptive intentions. Readers are more likely

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1. According to John Bender, 'novels often were criticized in the eighteenth century because they were licentious or excessively absorptive: their fictional diversion of readers from work, education, or constructive social exchange appeared to be a threat. [...] Perhaps they produced not too much knowledge about vice but too many thought experiments and, with them, too great an expansion of experience and, with it, a potentially dangerous capacity for independent judgment' (Bender 43-44).

to doubt the coherence of the narrator's moral and psychological observations as well as his or her opinions than the coherence of the objective world that is represented as facts. It is difficult to declare a narrator 'unreliable' when there is only one.

Without a subjectivity that modifies them, 'facts' do not present or appear themselves. Despite how objectively clear some things can appear in the eighteenth-century novel, a subjectivity is always involved, enveloping every object as if things cannot be taken but in their appearance, to the seeming of someone such as a character, narrator or 'author'. The novel depended on this. An objective description that subtracts from itself every subject, a narrative description that appears to be written by nobody, can hardly be called 'a novel' during the eighteenth century. It is, therefore, as if eighteenth-century novels came to be constituted in their very essence by appearances, as subjective perceptions, ideas and notions of what things appear to be, to the unavoidable seeming of characters, narrators and authors; in other words, it is as if things had to appear necessarily for a subject and in the process constituting that very same subject.

To render the stories in the novel real, many eighteenth-century novelists like Defoe and Richardson made the stories appear as subjective accounts, hiding themselves under the figure of a mere editor, if the origin of the story seemed to require it. In *Evelina*, Burney comes to emphasise the subjective element by differentiating between the reality of the world and its appearance, declaring her novel to be more interested in such an appearance. As she wrote in her diary: 'I have not pretended to show the world what it actually is, but what it appears to a girl of seventeen' (Burney 51). The issue of subjectivity in the novel was taken further by Hays in *Emma Courtney*, which develops as an enquiry based on the author's personal experiences. According to Gina Walker, Hays 'refused to alter what she saw as the truth of what she wrote because it was based on her personal experience', ignoring what for William Godwin appeared as a problem, 'her self-absorbed heroine's point of view' (Walker 2006 133). In *Emma Courtney*, more than a matter of the protagonist's subjective truth, about the way things appear to him or her, it is the author's subjectivity that is made to appear as fiction, projected into a character, to externalise and think about the issues that concern such a subjectivity. To a degree, every novelist did more or less the same, but

in a more covert manner. The event of *Emma Courtney* lies in the interdependence of two subjectivities. It was not just a matter of the author's subjectivity —for which Hays could have found a more suitable genre, in the diary— or of an entirely fictional story, despite its claims to realism, but subjectivity through fiction, as another's subjectivity (the 'I' as the other).

In the eighteenth-century novel, reputation appears to be an essential part of the construction of the self as social: characters appear to be 'somebody' to the degree that they have a reputation. Without a reputation, good or bad, they seem to disappear from the social realm. They become 'nobody', as if they did not to exist. Reputation is the predominant social form of counting as one —what defines a subject's appearance. That does not mean that subjects without a reputation do not exist, or that they cease to exist as soon as they lose their reputation, since the self is not considered to be the same as reputation, only part of it. It is limited to what constitutes the subject's appearance in society, as a realm of appearances that is not the same as the real group of individuals. Reputation is the index of appearance of a subject in 'the world of society', which is essentially constituted by appearances, as relations between subjects. In that sense all characters have a reputation: some have more of a reputation than others, which means a higher or lower degree of appearance in that world. But a 'zero degree' of appearance is practically unthinkable in the eighteenth-century novel.

An equivalence between reputation and self appears only possible through a proper name that designates and maintains in memory the self as a 'fiction of continuity', an appearance of coherence to itself and to others, grouping the multiplicity of what appears to and from the subject. The proper name makes it possible to attach reputation to a self. Reputation adds to the name, defining the self. The self is still granted transcendence beyond appearances, but through the increased interest in appearances in the novel, it starts to appear to be —as David Hume suspected— not independent from appearances.[2]

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2. According to David Amigoni, Hume 'entertained the possibility that there was no transcendent entity called "the self" which was independent of the bundle of sensations that an individual subject was receiving through the senses. "Coherent" experiences of selfhood in time are maintained by conventions which produce fictions of continuity in the form of memory' (Amigoni 144). It is not that Hume did not believe in the existence of 'the self', but he entertained the possibility that its existence was tied to what appeared to it, while being itself an appearance (Hume 251-253).

A subject not only receives a name, but the name, like the subject attached to it, is socially constructed. The name and subject depend on other names and subjects. There is a matter of reputation. Recourse to a first person narrative, linked to a name and a reputation, is understandable, since in terms of verisimilitude an apparent subject such as Robinson Crusoe or Pamela has the higher authority regarding the experience of his or her own life. As characters who tell their own stories, narrators in the eighteenth-century novel manifest a subjectivity rather than an objectivity. The external world is filtered through their narration, as observed. Narrators do not attempt to describe the world as it is, but as it appears to them. Things and events appear 'transformed and recreated in the image of the narrator' (Starr 1974). What appears, appears to the narrator. Other things, one can almost be sure, exist in their world, but as they do not appear for the narrator, it is as if they do not exist in the world. In *Robinson Crusoe* there does not seem to be much difference between how things appeared to Crusoe and how they really were. This is not because there is not supposed to be a difference, but, rather, it is not something that concerns the novel. What narrators such as Pamela and Robinson Crusoe are interested in is expressing their individual experiences rather than an objective reality. Later eighteenth-century novels started to explore how an assumed same reality can appear different to two or more characters, through a more detailed analysis of how the reality appears to a character. Writers became more concerned with the possible differences. In *Tom Jones*, for example, the reader finds expressions such as 'as it appears to me' (*Jones* 87). In Bridget Allworthy's 'negative perception', the appearance of her husband Captain Blifil never being in the wrong, there is an emphasis on subjectivity: 'she was now in her Honeymoon, and so passionately fond of her new Husband, that he never appeared, to her, to be in the wrong' (*Jones* 71) (my emphasis). Such subjectivity does not necessarily come only from the perceiver, as the narrator indicates:

> For though the facts themselves may appear, yet so different will
> be the motives, circumstances, and consequences, when a man
> tells his own story, and when his enemy tells it, that we scarce can
> recognise the facts to be one and the same. (*Jones* 370)

The difference in relation to reality appears to be reduced to a matter of intention and a point of view: to tell how things really are, it is to tell how they appear to me. Facts hardly

appear 'to be one and the same' even when narrations appear to have many points in common and share a particular reality. There is in the novel an explicit awareness of the role of subjectivity in the perception and rendering of appearances through the narration. There are always motives, circumstances and consequences of what appears as fact within a narrative, depending of the narrator. As Pamela recognises, the truth represented through her writings is not necessarily what some people would agree is the objective reality:

> I think I have no Reason to be afraid of being found insincere, or having, in any respect, told you a Falsehood; because, tho' I don't remember all I wrote, yet I know I wrote my Heart; and that is not deceitful. (*Pamela* 200)

That her 'heart' is not deceitful means that her letters may represent not what other characters (such as Mr B) would acknowledge as the truth of what has happened but what she feels has happened; reality as she has experienced it. Reality, then, is not necessarily what is told. The reader only gets one version —as Mr B warns the reader against Pamela: 'she has written letters […] in which she makes herself an Angel of Light, and me, her kind Master and Benefactor, a Devil incarnate!' (*Pamela* 36). According to Christine Roulston:

> [in one of Pamela's first letters] the problem of self-representation is at its most acute, as the narration of the authentic self slips into the narration of the potentially desiring self, hence undermining the modesty that defines virtuous femininity. [...] There is, in fact, too much of Pamela's presence in the text through the transparent self-exposure of the first-person narrative. (Roulston 8)

It is not always possible to differentiate between facts and what the narrator makes appear as facts, which might not appear as such to other characters. Through their narration, characters also 'appear' themselves. However, first-person narratives are far from transparent. For Pamela the problem consists in maintaining a balance between a degree of appearance, appearing open to be read, and the risk of exposing herself too much as a desiring subject, undermining the figure of virtuous femininity that patriarchy imposed on young women. There is in Pamela the possibility that she might love and desire Mr B. She is not a purely passive subject who merely gives herself to Mr B when the terms appear to be the right ones. However, she knows that such a desire must be concealed; she can only allow it to appear briefly, to maintain Mr B's desire. Under a patriarchal system, the full exposure

of her desire might not be what Mr B desires in her. Nevertheless, Pamela appears to be a complex character in the possibility of her self-betrayal, which seems to reveal a more human character than the image she tries to maintain under the appearance of her innocence and morality. The possibility of self-betrayal is what gives her the appearance of depth. It is what gives the reader the impression that there is a real person 'behind' Pamela's character. The subject appears more real as she makes mistakes and doubts and betrays herself, as the reader can also more readily identify with his or her own subjective experiences.

The eighteenth-century novel was concerned with appearances that referred to subjectivity: the appearance of the subject who perceives the world, for whom things appear. The eighteenth-century novel conceives appearances as necessarily subjective. They require a subject. As a subject appears, matters of appearance become manifest, such as how the subject perceives the 'external' world and appears to others. Nevertheless, the subject did not appear first in the novel. Subjects had already appeared in other genres, such as chronicles, diaries and letters. The eighteenth-century novel started by following those forms, to make subjects appear. Despite the similarities, the novel is not the same as a chronicle, diary or letter, even if it seems to try to pass itself off for one and this might even deceive some readers. At the margin between appearing real and declaring themselves to be fictions, eighteenth-century novels work like appearances, which are imagined to be between the surface of things and the 'constructions' of such a surface as perceived by a subject. As such, novels have the advantage —over other narrative forms like the chronicle, the diary and the letter— of making more manifest the fiction of the subject. In the novel, subjects are made to appear, as if from nothing; subjectivity appears as a thing that can be feigned. To a degree, such fiction is part of every writing, but it can be more difficult to perceive, as in most texts there appears to be a direct correspondence between the subject that appears in the writing and the author as the real subject behind the text.

The apparent source or origin of the text (who writes, and how the text came to be written) is an important element that contributes to the realism of many eighteenth-century novels. Often the narrator appears to be the same as the protagonist or at least to have witnessed the events belonging to the same world. In the case of Humphry Clinker, for

example, although not a protagonist in the usual sense of the term, but at the centre of the novel that takes his name, Smollett might have considered it unrealistic for Clinker to write, due to the simplicity of his character. What readers get to know about Clinker is told by other characters who also talk about their own lives and the world. If a character merely seems to speak, disregarding how such a voice could have been 'recorded', apart from an omniscient writer, as the product of the writer's imagination, it appears more evidently to be a mere fiction. Its realism is diminished.

At another level, it is not only that everything that appears is necessarily pervaded by subjectivity, but, more radically, that subjectivity is essentially made of appearances. Subjectivity remains inaccessible from the point of view of phenomenology, as the essence of an object. It also remains inaccessible to the subject, whom is only able to grasp the core of his or her self through the fantasy of their appearance(s). The consciousness of subjectivity fractures the positive totality of the world into inside and outside, being and appearance, as things become for the subject. Things become what they are as they come to appear for a subject.[3] From the fullness of what exists, subjectivity appears as a fissure, a break in the totality, which becomes not double, but a void contained within totality. And with it, appearances appear. They appear in the relationship between that nothing, that void and the fullness of what exists (including appearances 'themselves'). In that sense, appearances are very much in a structural relationship with subjectivity. As subjectivity, they are also a void. In a way, they are nothing: a nothing that comes to fracture the world of what exists, between appearances and beyond appearances, 'reality itself', or what exists.

In the case of appearances as visible exteriorities, one could think that a character's looks do not have to represent anything, and that they are just what they are. But, as they are a character's form of appearing, they become representative of an interior self or subject, which is assumed to be more than the sum of the exterior appearances. They can even be taken as representative of his or her sexual gender and social position. Crusoe, Pamela, Clarissa, and Evelina, like many other characters as narrators, appear to create

3. According to Robert Sinnerbrink, Žižek understands subjectivity as 'the fissure of negativity inherent within the (fractured) totality, the self-differentiation of the singular within the concrete universal [...] [the subject] is the name given to this void or radical negativity that fissures substance from within; with the emergence of subjectivity, the void of the One becomes posited as For-Itself; virtuality irrupts into the order of actuality' (Sinnerbrink 74).

a self through their writing, becoming the product of their writing, a representation that could stand as a justification of their life. In the novel, contrary to the idea that there is first being, essence and presence —someone called 'Robinson Crusoe', 'Pamela', 'Clarissa' or 'Evelina'— and only then exterior appearances that disseminate that existence, appearances are the condition of the possibility that there could be an identity, someone called Robinson Crusoe, Pamela, Clarissa or Evelina.

The verisimilitude of fictional characters questions the certainty about the reality of a subject, as a 'being' beyond appearances. For the readers, characters in the novel come to appear as real subjects —as real as they themselves would appear when writing a letter, a diary, or a confession. The novel makes manifest that there is no essential difference between the appearance of a real subject, such as the reader, and a fictional subject, as it appears in the text. It does not prove that subjectivity does not exist but that it is in part constituted by appearances. It is a matter of belief and witnessing. As characters speak or write, they appear to ask their listeners or readers to believe in their words, as if they were their own appearance and testimony. To believe in what somebody tells us, something that only he or she declares to have experienced, their testimony, is close to believing in a fiction, which a narrator always asks of their reader. It is a belief similar to that of a miracle. According to Derrida:

> When one testifies, even on the subject of the most ordinary and the most 'normal' event, one asks the other to believe one at one's word as if it were a matter of a miracle. Where it shares its condition with literary fiction, testimoniality belongs a priori to the order of the miraculous. This is why reflection on testimony has always historically privileged the example of miracles. The miracle is the essential line of union between testimony and fiction. And the passion we are discussing goes hand in hand with the miraculous, the fantastic, the phantasmatic, the spectral, vision, apparition, the touch of the untouchable, the experience of the extraordinary, history without nature, the anomalous. (Derrida 2000 75)

Such a belief is not far from a belief in apparitions. The other appears like an apparition in which we believe. The true miracle is not a fantastic element in the other's story but that most of the time we believe rather than doubt the other's words. There is something in the other, as it appears in language, which predisposes belief. Despite the fact that there are no

reasons why we should believe the other, it seems that we cannot but believe in appearances and fictions, such as the subject that appears in front of us or a novel.

The eighteenth-century novel evidences the fiction of the subject in which we believe, by making appear at least one character as a real individual with the power to say 'I'. This seems to correspond with Žižek's argument that the 'self' is more a 'surface effect' than an 'inner kernel' (Žižek 1999 312). For Badiou, the definition of a 'subject' is based on its relation to an event, but here, what appears in the eighteenth-century novel can be interpreted as counting an inconsistent multiplicity of appearances as one. The sum of the appearances of a presupposed subject is taken as proof of its existence. Žižek's inversion of the standard assumption of external appearances and an internal self reveals the self to be an exterior appearance itself, a fictional interface that one must posit before and beyond appearances in order to interact with the other. To communicate with somebody, one needs to believe that behind the appearance of a subject there is a real subject. Even if we 'know' that there is not a real subject behind it (like in the case of a doll or a parrot), we must imagine that there is in order to communicate with it. If we know that behind the appearance of a real subject there is only a void, the purpose of trying to speak or listen to what it says would practically disappear. In a similar way, if the reader fails to believe in the fiction of a subject that appears to write 'I' —if the reader fails to forget that it is just a fiction, knowing that there is no Robinson Crusoe, Pamela or Evelina as real subjects, but merely Defoe, Richardson or Burney— the reader then remains at the level of the appearance of words written by the novelist.

According to Žižek, we should embrace the idea that behind the appearance of a subject there is nothing but a void, that the place where one would expect to find a subject is essentially empty. This is not because subjectivity is a just deception and there is no subject but because subjectivity is precisely a void that takes form in language through a body and its appearances. The bodiless appearance of a subject through writing, as it appears in most eighteenth-century novels, with a character who has no other 'body', reveals the importance of language and appearances in the construction of the self.

7. BECOMING

In the eighteenth-century novel, most things seem to appear at the end of their process of becoming. It is as if everything exists already, given with a full presence, more than in a process of development, change or becoming, coming into existence and appearance. Nevertheless, that seeming is an appearance ('as if') and it does not necessarily correspond to the reality of the eighteenth-century novel. Processes of appearing and becoming are still at work. It can be assumed that within the world that appears to be represented in the eighteenth-century novel most things have not just suddenly appeared; they must have gone through a process of becoming. However, the impression (appearance) of that 'as if ' is almost inevitable in any representation, as representations seem to make appear something that was already there or something that is still somewhere else. It is a matter of difference, spacing and repetition rather than of a first time or not quite yet, in a process of change between existence and nonexistence. As representations, they appear definitive, immutable —like in a snapshot that captures an image (an appearance), rendering it static and preserving it— giving the impression that the object that appears in the representation has reached the maximum degree of appearance allowed, and that it could only begin to disappear after that, its appearance surviving only in its reproduction.

For the eighteenth-century novel, in making worlds appear there do not seem to be degrees of appearance. It seems essential for the eighteenth-century novel that most things appear to exist, and in existence there are no degrees: something is or it is not. In *Joseph Andrews*, for example, 'Joseph bowed with obedience, and thankfulness for the inclination which the Parson express'd' (*Andrews* 79). That there exists a person named Joseph is not in doubt but assumed and implicitly affirmed. He does not appear to exist more or less, or to be an appearance or appear only to a degree. He exists as he is in the same way that 'the

Parson' seems to exist. His bowing 'with obedience' is also not presented as seeming or as an appearance. It is not that he appears to bow with obedience, as this could only be from the point of view of an external observer. Obedience was what existed in his bowing. This could be considered to be too obvious, as it seems to belong to the common use of language. It is not exclusive to the eighteenth-century novel. In most cases, the explicit declaration of the character of appearing of things seems superfluous, sometimes even irritating, taken as a lack of commitment or daring. It is often assumed that implicit in every declaration of existence there is appearance; that things are said to exist as they appear (assuming existence through appearance) or, if there seems to be direct access to existence, that things also appear as such for at least one other character (assuming appearance through existence). After all, everything that exists appears, and everything that appears can be said to exist. Nevertheless, that does not make existence and appearance equivalent.

In the process of appearing, between non-existence and existence, it is not always clear what it is that is appearing or becoming. Take for example a young girl in the process of becoming a lady, as it appears in *Evelina*. If she is in the process of becoming a lady, 'lady' is the target of existence, which defines her current existence as a 'non- lady' or a 'not-yet-lady', in terms of potentiality. From an external point of view, one might think that such a final stage is as clear as the word that defines it. However, most processes of becoming are not so clearly defined. The target is not always clear or it might lead to something else. Even with a term apparently as precise as 'lady', if such a state of being were so clear there would have been no need for so much didactic literature on the subject during the eighteenth century, defining what a lady was and teaching how a lady must behave in order to be one. For a subject in a process of becoming it can be even more uncertain; he or she may be plagued by self-doubt, as there can never be certainty of being this or that, only of being. On the other hand, certainty of being this or that does not guarantee anything, as there can always be self-delusion.

Part of the problem is that 'this' or 'that' constitution of being is made up of appearances. To be a 'lady' is defined by appearances, even if eighteenth-century society needed to believe that it was grounded in something deeper, which was more real than appearances.

Although it was recognised that a lady was not a lady if she failed to appear as one, it was also believed that even if someone appeared to be a lady, she might still not be or could never really be a lady. But if consistently appearing as a lady, with a maximum degree of appearance, how could it be possible to recognise one that is not?

To be and to appear as a woman could appear to be a more obvious or straightforward process. As girls become women, the category of what a 'woman' is seems less problematical. It seems to have fewer implications. There is nothing a woman needs to do in order to appear as one, since she already is one, and must therefore, whatever her appearance, appear as one. While if a lady one day appears not to be a lady, it will be thought to have never been more than a mere appearance. Just as with deceptive appearances, a change of character was seen as a change in disguise. Women, on the other hand, could not be inconstant in their appearing as women, even if inconstancy and duplicity, like appearances, were often attributed to women. This makes the subject relative and uncertain, open to suspicion. In part, this is because there are no natural 'women'. 'Women' is not a natural category but a cultural construction. To borrow Locke's terms, beyond an 'internal real Constitution', women are mainly recognised by their 'obvious appearances' (Locke 1690 403, 517). In a sentence apparently as simple as 'She is a woman' the 'is' makes being (woman) appear as a given presence, while implying that there can be a 'she' who is not (or not much of) a woman. Women were not to pursue scientific or philosophical studies. If they were to do so, they needed to be careful not to give the appearance of privileging knowledge over their 'natural' obligations, at the risk of appearing 'manly', 'unnatural' or 'monstrous'. According to Tassie Gwilliam:

> In the details of representations of femininity in the eighteenth century, we can see over and over again the attempt to settle unsettling questions about duplicity. The meaning of the female body is reorganised and reshaped [...] (Gwilliam 1991 105)

The appearance of a woman does not have to signify anything. It can be just what it is. Nevertheless, in language, there is a projection of meaning and intention. What appears is split between appearance and a veiled beyond. The restrictions to the possibility of duplicity and the codification of a limited number of appearances attempt to facilitate the

reading of women. This is an attempt to appropriate the other. It has to do with a fear or a desire to 'settle the unsettling', to dispel the possibility of duplicity and the multiplicity of meanings. It is a case of a desire for one reading, one sense, a desire, in other words, for security. That can be seen in terms of appearances in general, and the eighteenth-century novel in particular. The figure of a woman brings together issues of appearances related to patriarchy, heterosexuality and male desire, while making them appear as such, with a certain degree of homogeneity. It also relates to the problem of reading, including that of reading novels. Conversely, the reading of eighteenth-century novels brings together images of women, reading and appearances, including the possibility of men writing as women, women writing as men, novels appearing to be real, and giving something to be read.

To appear as a woman and a lady in the eighteenth century was not merely determined by biology and social class, but also influenced by ideology. Of all of the appearances of women, the appearance of what was considered to be a lady was most highly regarded. The lady was the one that appeared to have more to lose in the play of appearances, due to the major social investment in her appearance. Eighteenth-century novels reproduced the social ideal in the figure of the lady, illustrating how a lady should look in order for her to appear to be a lady. At the same time, there was a certainty about the being of ladies as being primarily dependent on being. While reinforcing the importance of appearances, in eighteenth-century novels ladies appear to have had a stable being based on their biology, social class and education. They were thought to appear to be what they were. This is a matter of the correspondence between being and appearance, rather than seeing their being as a mere product of appearances. There does not seem to have been a degree of appearance. A woman was either a lady, or she was not. Although there was a 'becoming woman' (from girl to woman) and a 'becoming lady' (a girl was not born a lady but had to become one, through learning the manners proper to her class), once a woman was recognised as a lady, she appears to have arrived at a final destination standing point. A lady was supposed to have stable appearances, according to her being —appearing once and for all. It was unthinkable that the appearance of ladies could vary, that they could appear to be less of a lady one day and back to their proper appearance the next. There were not supposed to be changes or

appearances of change, not even a 'constant' becoming —being more what they were (a logical impossibility)— but merely sustaining what they were and making sure that their appearance corresponded to their being. Or, if their 'being' was basically an appearance, it was a matter of sustaining such an appearance, and making sure that their appearances corresponded to the appearance of their 'being' as ladies. Nevertheless, the appearance of a woman or a lady in the eighteenth-century novel is an appearance neither more truthful nor false than some of the deceptive appearances that most eighteenth-century characters would have liked to avoid. Biological and physiological appearances were not enough to guarantee their appearance. They only seem to have 'installed' the potentiality of a destiny. An eighteenth-century ideology prescribed an entire set of appearances that a subject had to keep delivering, through a series of performative acts, in order to appear to be a proper woman and a lady, in the sense of a continuous, constantly reaffirmed 'becoming'. Although it was a matter of appearing as a constant being, as if the self were stable, there was also room for improvement, a process that was preached and encouraged. Women were required to keep delivering the right appearances as women and/or ladies, while trying to become better women and/or 'ladies'. It was a matter of a performance that had to be constantly played out.

On the other hand, many characters in the eighteenth-century novel give the impression that there was not much difference between them and the upper ranks. Such an impression seems to be generated by an awareness of the existence of many 'nobles', either merely due to their appearance, or by title and descent but without money or property. It is as if in the eighteenth century it had become more difficult than ever to recognise true nobility. The nobility appeared flawed. As Hamish Scott observes, although 'significant numbers of poorer nobles gave up the attempt to maintain their privileged status and declined into the ranks of the commonalty' (Scott 99), there were still many nobles that tried to hold onto their titles and appearance. At the same time, some of the 'commonality' tried to appear beyond their status.

To a degree, to some the difference between nobility and commonality appeared to be mainly about appearances and successful deceptions. Roxana declares a long list of appearances that could give the impression that she is a 'noble':

> I paid 60 l. a year for my new apartments, for I took them by the year, but then, they were handsome lodgings indeed, and very richly furnish'd; I kept my own servants to clean and look after them; found my own kitchen-ware, and firing; my equipage was handsome, but not very great: I had a coach, a coachman, a footman, my woman Amy, whom I now dressed like a gentlewoman and made her my companion, and three maids [...] (*Roxana* 206)

To 'seem' does not necessarily imply a deceptive intention. It is not necessarily that Roxana pretended to be a noble or used to put on a show as one. After all, anyone can give an impression of being something different to what they are, without knowing, wishing or having done anything to deserve it. Nevertheless, Roxana exploits such a 'noble' appearance and pretends that she has nothing to do with it; as if it were not her intention to appear like a noble but a mere product of chance. In other words, she has nothing to feel guilty about, using it to her advantage.

One of the fundamental problems for the eighteenth-century novel is whether appearances equate to being, if to appear can be the same as to be, if it is possible to become 'through' appearances, irrespective of being. In the novels there is no definitive answer. They explore different answers. Nevertheless, there is a belief in being beyond appearances, a firm core that is more than the simple sum of its appearances, which cannot but betray a subject who tries to appear to be what it is not. Part of that core is what was known as 'character', which worked like a style that marked the subject's every appearance. Such a belief was part of a more general one —that truth always appears in the end. It is the belief that eighteenth-century novels reaffirm and demonstrate, as no deception is left triumphant. Eighteenth-century novels appear to take on the role of bringing truth to light when everything else seems to have failed. In *Moll Flanders*, *Clarissa*, and *Caleb Williams*, the novel appears to be the true story. The possibility that the contrary might well be the case —that truth does not always appear, and that appearances can constitute being— is believed to put the entire system of reality in danger, that the world would collapse in anarchy, as there would be no foundations, certainty or security. Despite such a set of beliefs, in the eighteenth-

century novel deception is always possible and it can last long enough to ruin a character's life. There is also the possibility that in the long term the truth might not be of interest to society, as if it might not matter.

Direct access to the existence of things, bypassing appearances, seems only possible to an author as God. Only such a figure seems to have the power to decide that something is what he or she says it is, without the need to consider its appearance, since it is he or she that has brought it into existence, by a decisive affirmation, as 'This is...'. In the case of a narrator protagonist, even if appearing to be omniscient, it is assumed that everything is filtered through that subject, that things are 'as they appeared' to him or her. However, if writers do not need to refer to appearances, because they already know how things are, and if narrators do not need to mention appearances either, since everything is as it appears to them, what is the purpose of indicating the apparent or seeming aspect of some things? What could be the reasons for marking or remarking something as an appearance?

As fictions dealing with the appearance of a real world, between what appears as fully existing and what appears as a mere appearance, the eighteenth-century novel had to think appearances, take the side with appearances as if it were its own. To avoid appearances would have been like avoiding thinking its own form. Not that a consideration about appearances comes 'after' the novel, as if eighteenth-century novels could have appeared before it. On the contrary, the eighteenth-century novel is the thinking of such issues of appearance. There could not have been eighteenth-century novels, as we know them, without such a preoccupation with appearances.

Eighteenth-century novels destabilise the relationship between appearance and being, proposing the multiple appearances of beings and their becoming. They reveal how things are not necessarily what they appear to be, and tell the story of how things became what they appear. The eighteenth-century novel made to appear as real a fictional world, as no other textual genre had done before. Until then, in narrative fictions the world remained largely presupposed or implicit, as real as, or the product of the writer's imagination. In the eighteenth-century novel, the world appears in more detail, fuller, blurring the distinction between reality and fiction: the reader knows that it is the product of the writer's imagination,

but it appears with so much detail that it is easy to forget and to assume it to be a reproduction of a real world, not very different from the world the reader considers to be real. But, at the same time that the novel makes things appear to fully exist in reality, appearing as a novel, eighteenth-century novels also do not hide the fact that they are mere appearances, the 're-presentation' of a world that did not exist before. As such, it is neither this (reality) nor that (purely fiction), but both at the same time that define the event of the eighteenth-century novel. It is not that the world that appears in the eighteenth-century novel is or that it is not the real eighteenth century (assuming that there is only one world represented and one eighteenth-century world). It is —how could the novel have escaped its influence? And it is not —it would be a mistake to take eighteenth-century novels as faithful representations of the eighteenth century.

It is a case of degrees of appearances rather than of existence (what is or what is not). There is a degree of appearance of the eighteenth century mixed with a degree of appearance of fiction; reality and fiction appear mixed in such a way that it is not easy (and sometimes not even possible) to distinguish which is which. In logical terms, a mix of reality (true) and fiction (false) equals fiction (false). But, as eighteenth-century novelists argued, novels can reveal or make more evident some truths that are difficult to perceive otherwise in the real world. And, as we know, reality is not so easily defined in contrast to fiction; what we call 'reality' is a mix of fictions. However, that does not mean that they are the same, that there is no difference. Fiction constitutes reality; it is part of it, and (as such) it is no less real. Accordingly, there is not only a truth of fiction, but also truth in fiction, as it can reveal a truth about reality, such as its fictionality. For example, in relation to the realism of the eighteenth-century novel, as Bender proposes,

> [O]ur experience of the real as such is verisimilar and [...] realism is, thus, a way of proceeding in life [...] the real operates in the modern world as myth and [...] realism in the novel is not chiefly thematic and referential but rather deploys an arsenal of narrative techniques that permit language to mimic the experience of transparency through which we certify the real as such. (Bender 20)

There is not only a truth of the eighteenth-century novel in terms of fiction, which is inherent to its form and the worlds it opens —what appears as truth in the real world is not

necessarily the same as what passes for truth in a novel— but they can also appear to reveal a deeper truth about reality (what authors and narrators propose or 'argue', in prefaces and narratives, but not necessarily circumscribed to such forms of enunciation). After all, eighteenth-century novels are less about enunciating truths —which the pamphlet and the essay can do better— than about making them appear through a process of 'embodiment' and experience. Among those truths, or at a meta level of sorts, there is the fictionality (as appearance) of the eighteenth-century world; a truth by reflection, in which the eighteenth-century novel functions as a reverse mirror.

In the eighteenth-century novel, the reader gets an appearance of (a fictional) reality. The reader knows that what the novel presents is fiction. Such knowledge is partly suspended, as the reader is drawn into the fiction proposed, in part believing that the world that appears there is as real as it seems to appear for the characters that inhabit it. That seems to reflect on the reader's own life. As a subject in a world, the reader can see him or herself as a character, living in a world created not necessarily by God as an author but by himself and others, a reality-appearance that things are not, or cannot be, otherwise.

8. BECOMING PUBLIC / PERFORMING

According to the *OED*, to 'appear' can mean 'to come before the public in any character or capacity; to display oneself on the stage of action or acting' (sense 5); and an 'appearance' can be understood as 'the action of coming before the world or the public in any character' (sense 4a). For example, when Roxana confesses that she 'was afraid to make any publick Appearance in the World, for fear some impertinent Person of Quality shou'd chop upon [her] again' (*Roxana* 277). It is also a matter of performance as a gift: to give oneself —or part of oneself, such as one's image— to a public, as she does 'that publick Night when [she] danc'd in the fine Turkish Habit' (*Roxana* 248). To preserve or sustain an image, to create or maintain an impression, for a public, hiding or concealing truth, lying or falsifying, is a matter of performance.

In the eighteenth-century novel, 'keeping up appearances' is the norm, especially for the upper and middle classes. Characters appear to perform in a public sphere. Appearances are 'kept' for a public, similar to the representation of a role in a play. As Habermas points out, 'subjectivity, as the innermost core of the private, was always already oriented to an audience' (Habermas 49). The similarity between 'the world' and the 'theatre of the world' was common. McMaster argues that in the theatre as well as in real life, 'to a degree surprising today, the actions, or appropriate gestures, were regarded as comprising almost the whole art of acting' (McMaster 126). The figure of the world as a stage is not an eighteenth-century invention. In Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, Jacques declares: 'All the world's a stage / And all the men and women merely players: / They have their exits and their entrances / And one man in his time plays many parts' (*AYLI* 2.7.139-142). One can also find such a figure in Richard Bentley's sermons, which speak of men as 'spectators in this noble Theatre of the World' (Bentley 10-11). However, as Robert J. Mayhew notes:

> [F]ar more common [was] an image in which man is a moral actor
> in the landscape rather than overlooking it. [...] Johnson's point
> [in *Rasselas*] is that to survey life in a detached way is impossible
> for a human being. We are not viewing the theatre of life, but are
> actors on its stage; we cannot raise ourselves above the prospect
> because we are in it. (Mayhew 196, 208)

The position of the privileged 'spectator' was inherently assigned to God. Man could only be one among other spectators within a stage: man was not outside the world, but already included in it, part of it. Actors or spectators, the world was seen as a theatrical stage. According to Habermas, Sterne recreates such a position in the novel:

> [by refining] the role of the narrator through the use of reflections
> by directly addressing the reader, almost by stage directions;
> he mounted the novel once more for a public that this time was
> included in it, not for the purpose of creating distance but to
> place a final veil over the difference between reality and illusion'
> (Habermas 50).

As popular as the image of the 'theatre of the world' was that of the world as a masquerade. If people cannot have a privileged position, the 'represented' drama becomes a case of possible deceptive appearance, a play of appearances, where things are on display and hidden, just as in a masquerade. In 1774, an anonymous essayist in the *St. James's Magazine* declared:

> Poets and philosophers, both ancient and modern, have compared
> this world to a theatre, and considered human life as the grand
> drama thereof, but as mankind in general seem to act the impostor,
> I think we may with equal propriety compare human life to our
> modern masquerade. (*St. James's* 444)

Examples of such pronouncements can also be found in Fielding, who declares society to be 'a vast Masquerade, where the greatest Part appear disguised' (Fielding 156). Johnson was more critical of the higher classes, and wrote that 'the rich and the powerful live in a perpetual masquerade, in which all about them wear borrowed characters' (Johnson 356-357), which implicitly assumes a naturality of the lower classes. In *Ferdinand Count Fathom*, a 'metropolis' is described as 'a vast masquerade, in which a man of stratagem may wear a thousand different disguises, without danger of detection' (*Fathom* 200).

Like the reader, the character's position regarding the world was generally considered to be that of an spectator. However, it was not a matter of being a mere spectator in front of the 'scenes' of the world. Like with theatre, there was the suspicion that the 'scenes'

—made of appearances— were deceptive, and that the public was not just acting a role, as part of the drama, but hiding themselves behind a mask, even if not necessarily with the intention of deceiving other people. Such a play of appearances was not just an issue for women but also for men, for everyone who appeared in society. According to Sara Salih, in Burney's novels:

> The display of 'natural' gender roles [...] draws the reader's attention to the fact that men, no less than women in the novel, are acting, dissembling, engaging in social theatre —except when they cannot help involuntarily stepping out of character. (Salih 43)

Such social theatre is not necessarily consciously deceptive. To play roles is constitutive of any personality in relation to others,[1] as seventeenth-century aristocracy understood well. In the eighteenth-century novel, stepping out of character can be taken to be a mistake but also a betrayal that allows others to see through the mask of an assuredly consistent self, to perceive a 'self' at the core of the self, which appears more than what the subject takes as his or her self. For Wendy Arons,

> [I]t is precisely in the late eighteenth century that the 'performance' of self becomes an issue of both morality and identity (in ways that are recognizably modern) because of the shift to a conception of the self as 'natural' and 'essential,' and therefore not consciously or deliberately performed. (Arons 4)

The figures of the world as theatre and masquerade had an important influence on the eighteenth-century novel. Although the figure of the theatre of the world does not have as many negative connotations as the figure of the world as a masquerade, the analogy is curious considering the distance that the world of society wanted to put between their world and the world of theatre. Performing different roles or characters made actors and actresses morally suspicious. It made people think that they could be doing the same in real life.[2] An example of the danger of such characters can be seen in Richardson's Lovelace,

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1. In classical sociological terms, see Ervin Goffman's *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959), 'a book that breathed new life into the ancient "all the world's a stage" metaphor' (Smith 2006 42).

2. According to Elizabeth Eger, actresses 'were frequently open to accusations of immorality and tended to be associated with the prostitutes, or "public women", that frequented the pit [...] However, as the century progressed and more and more women of the middling classes attended the theatre, a gradual moralisation of the stage occurred so that women of virtue could perform and become respected as professional actresses' (Eger 34). Even today, as Wendy Arons points out, 'in the realm of everyday experience, there remains, even in the face of theories that position the performance of self as a liberating phenomenon, a queasiness about

who constitutes a danger for a virtuous woman such as Clarissa. Lovelace is not only a skilful actor in the theatre of the world. His roles also demand that he surrounds himself with other actors, making other characters play parts in his theatre, such as Mrs Sinclair and her 'nieces' Sally Martin and Polly Horton, who perform the role of his relatives and deceive Clarissa. Lovelace is not only an actor but also the writer and director of a 'reality-play'. He compares himself to a general planning a war, considering the advantages of the terrain and setting up the positions of his soldiers: 'But I will not tell thee all at once', he tells his friend Belford, 'Nor, indeed, have I thoroughly digested that part of my plot. When a general must regulate himself by the motions of a watchful adversary, how can he say beforehand what he will, or what he will not, do?' (*Clarissa* 473). Reality appears to him to be a play that can be rewritten, modified and influenced, although sometimes he complains of being 'forced' to play his part: 'What farces have I to go through; and to be the principal actor in them!' (*Clarissa* 941). As Roulston explains, 'Clarissa's world' is 'transformed into a theatrical space, in which she becomes both a participating player and an observer of the performances being acted out for her benefit' (Roulston 46). Lovelace is dangerous in the sense that he can create the illusion of other realities, giving the impression of their truthful existence.

According to Roulston, 'one of the goals of the sentimental narrative' in the eighteenth century 'was to move beyond appearances toward a more internalized conception of the subject' (Roulston xviii-xix). However, authenticity can also be a form of appearance. The display or revelation of the inner self, with passion and sentiment, became a matter of managing appearances, which befitted women more than men. Men were assumed to be ruled by a different regime of appearances. Such an exteriorisation of the inner self seemed contrary to the image that men were supposed to preserve or maintain within patriarchy.

Between the world and the stage, the eighteenth-century novel occupies an intermediary place, as a reflection or mirror of the world, but also containing a world created by an author in which the characters of the story appear to live. For Konigsberg, the world of Richarson's novels seems more complete than that of previous novelists:

performance, and a lingering suspicion that those who deliberately perform themselves in a nontheatrical setting are liars, hypocrites, or worse' (Arons 3).

> [T]he whole world appears before us with a fullness not known in earlier fiction, and this fullness creates for us a sense of completeness and independence, as if the world of the novel had all the elements needed to exist as a reality within itself. [...] *Clarissa* is the first example in fiction of the completely autonomous world, the self-contained illusion of reality that the modern novelist creates. (Konigsberg 51)

Such an autonomy and completeness is, nevertheless, an illusion, an appearance. Although for Konigsberg such a more credible world seems more complete and closer to reality, the characters in it appear 'dramatically, theatrically, as if they are posturing, as if they are displaying the external signals used by figures on the stage to convey their personalities and emotion' (Konigsberg 83-84). In *Clarissa*, all of the positions, the parts and the lines seem to be re-inscribed, from Lovelace's attempt at a comedy, to Clarissa's tragedy. Lovelace believes:

> [...] generally speaking, that all the men of our cast are of my mind —They love not any tragedies but those in which they themselves act the parts of tyrants and executioners; and, afraid to trust themselves with serious and solemn reflections, run to comedies, in order to laugh away compunction on the distresses they have occasioned, and to find examples of men as immoral as themselves. (*Clarissa* 618)

A few lines before, Lovelace recounts his invitation to Clarissa to accompany him to the theatre, to see the play *Venice Preserved*, acknowledging that 'yet, for my own part, I loved not tragedies; though she did, for the sake of the instruction, the warning, and the example generally given in them' (*Clarissa* 618). They do not yet suspect at that point that their lives will become a tragedy, for instruction, warning and example, as it is, according to the author:

> [...] one of the principal views of the publication: to caution parents against the undue exercise of their natural authority over their children in the great article of marriage: and children against preferring a man of pleasure to a man of probity, upon that dangerous but too commonly received notion, that a reformed rake makes the best husband. (*Clarissa* 36)

Although Clarissa's deathbed scene cannot be called false or deceptive as she is clearly suffering, it is nevertheless staged and imposed on society, her family and Lovelace. Clarissa's final scene comes to validate her earlier appearances as a general performance. Or as Jones

DeRitter puts it, 'Clarissa demonstrates the sincerity of her earlier performances by refusing to live in a body that has been violated' (DeRitter 113).

In the eighteenth-century novel the performativity of everyday life is pushed forward into evidence, as it becomes closer to theatricality. Even when characters do not clearly appear inscribed within a theatrical tradition, there is still an issue of performance, role-playing and acting. Although most eighteenth-century novels are concerned with the truthful representation of an authentic self, every representation involves a degree of performance, if the self is to present itself. According to Roulston:

> [In Richardson's *Pamela*] Pamela's language, like the clothes she wears and the ways in which her body reacts, becomes a way of performing her authentic self in the world. In this sense, the markers of her gendered identity always have the potential to be read as performances, as veilings rather than unveilings of the true self. (Roulston 12)

Everything in such a representation can be read as a deceptive performance that conceals the true self. There is the possibility that appearances are deceptive and things are otherwise. Richardson took extreme care to make Pamela's character irreproachable. However, some characters (such as Mr B) distrust her appearance, assuming her to have other intentions. Some readers also seem to have similar suspicions. The most famous example is that of Henry Fielding's *Shamela*, which makes explicit the possibility of such deceptiveness of appearances.

Pamela appears as a country maid who thanks to her education seems to be able to pass as a lady and become a lady. The 'country maid' and the 'town lady' are nevertheless roles, which are performed and linked to certain appearances. As Elaine McGirr explains:

> Because both town lady and country maid are performed roles, there is a fear that the appearance of moral propriety is merely put on to mask sexual liberties [...] Both the town lady and the country maid —and the men interested in them— exploit the gap between reputation and reality, seeming and being, so central to eighteenth-century literature. Generally, the town lady is accused of exploiting this gap to forward her own sexual predations, while the country maid is its innocent victim. (McGirr 106)

The issue here is that in the possibility that the town lady and the country maid could have effectively played each other, their own 'being' can be taken as a performing role.

For McGirr, such performativity 'can be seen in the frequency with which they imitate each other; as supposed opposites, each is fascinated with the character of the other, each puts on the other's character' (McGirr 106). Nevertheless, there is performance not only in the acting out of the other's character but also in the acting out of their own characters, even if they are less aware of it as acting, as it might appear simply natural, as the way they are. Actions are a form of 'acting out' roles or characters for someone, to the point that sometimes one can feel forced to 'play' one's own character. In fact, there is no such thing as the pure exposure (appearing) of 'oneself', since part of such a self is constituted by the roles it performs. Despite beliefs in the natural superiority of a social class, there is no 'essence' of the town lady or the country maid. What is defined as such are a series of elements that are very much acquired through an education in appearances.

A male fantasy is to imagine that the proper moral conduct of women is no more than an appearance that hides their desire, a desire imagined according to man's desire. Nevertheless, concealment is also part of the game of desire, which aims to provoke desire. Within that game, it is important not to reveal too much, but something must be revealed. If desire cannot be glimpsed, the other can assume that what appears is all that there is, that there is nothing behind the appearance. Lovelace's relationship with Clarissa is a two-way attempt to demonstrate that their external appearances are no more than an appearance. Lovelace succeeds in revealing Clarissa's desire, not so much because she was playing with him, hiding her desire, but because her desire was practically hidden to herself by her social and moral beliefs and conventions. Nevertheless, things are not that simple and Lovelace also finds himself trapped in a tragedy that he cannot control; he is in love with Clarissa's appearance. By destroying Clarissa's reputation, Lovelace destroys the woman he has fallen in love with.

A preoccupation with the possibility of distinguishing between appearances and reality, between being and acting, with the possibility of seeing beyond surfaces, disguises, and external appearances, is highlighted in relation to the issue of acting. This preoccupation appeared throughout most of the eighteenth century, in its literature, to the point that by the end of the eighteenth century, in Burney's *Camilla*, for example, we still see such a

preoccupation, in what Salih denominates 'the typically Burneyan questions raised in *Camilla*': 'how is it possible to tell when people are acting and when they are not?' (Salih 46). These suspicions were more commonly put on women. As Clarissa quotes approvingly, 'Miss Biddulph's answer to a copy of verse from a gentleman, reproaching our sex as acting in disguise':

> Ungen'rous Sex!—To scorn us if we're kind; / And yet upbraid us if we seem severe! / Do you, t' encourage us to tell our mind, / Yourselves put off disguise, and be sincere. / You talk of coquetry!—Your own false hearts / Compel our sex to act dissembling parts. (*Clarissa* 44)

The sexual behaviour of some actresses was seen as evidence for these suspicions, but its generalisation was more of a popular myth. Nevertheless, the threat of the general possibility of acting was very real in the eighteenth century. Society was aware that it was happening, for example in terms of fashionable clothes, and servants dressing like ladies. But despite the differences and the dangers, the similarities between becoming or appearing and public performance were there, revealing some of the aporias of appearances in the eighteenth century.

It is not difficult to imagine how threatening the general possibility of acting —as in the theatre, where anyone can be anything— was for the world of society, based on a regulated distribution of becoming into defined roles, such as the gentleman, the lady, and the servant. According to Elizabeth Montagu, 'it is the ton of the times to confound all distinctions of age, sex, and rank; no one ever thinks of sustaining a certain character, unless it is one they have assumed at a masquerade' (Montagu 269-270). Understandably, sustaining distinctions based on appearances was a preoccupation for those who enjoyed their privileges. For those less privileged by the distinctions, the eighteenth century afforded major mobility. There seemed to be more possibility of tasting some of the pleasures that it was imagined only the higher classes were able to enjoy, through a degree of 'indistinction': to imagine oneself to be able to take on a different appearance and class. The objection against such 'mixing', the lack or losing of distinctions, is seen by Wahrman 'as a clue to eighteenth-century presuppositions —about disguise and human nature, identity and fluidity— that gave specific meaning to the claim that "the world's all face"' (Wahrman 168). Such

preoccupation was at the centre of ideas and beliefs about appearances. The worst-case scenario was imagined as a world in which everything was based on appearances, where there was no longer secure ground to distinguish one from another.

In his search for the truth behind Falkland's innocent appearance, Caleb seems to be against all false appearances. Nevertheless, Caleb's unveiling of Falkland's secret was not motivated by a desire for truth and justice but by a masochistic fascination, a love/ hate relationship with the figure of his melancholy master, which manifests in compulsive curiosity. Initially, Caleb did not intend to expose Falkland's secret. He needed to know the truth, but only for himself, as a way of possessing Falkland. As Caleb confesses, 'the more impenetrable Mr Falkland was determined to be, the more uncontrollable was my curiosity' (*Caleb* 108). There is in Caleb an uncontrollable desire to penetrate Falkland's secret. The purpose of Caleb's narrative is declared to be to 'stab' Falkland 'with this engine, this little pen', to 'defeat all his machinations', to 'stab him in the very point he was most solicitous to defend' (*Caleb* 315). The 'very point' that Falkland 'was most solicitous to defend' is his reputation, which, like honour, also has sexual connotations.

Caleb also declares that 'I had for some time learned not to judge by appearances' (*Caleb* 201), as if fully sharing the general ideological position against deceptive appearances. However, Caleb repeatedly reminds the reader that 'from my youth I had possessed a considerable facility in the art of imitation' (*Caleb* 238). At one point, upon assuming the appearance of a Jew, disguising himself, Caleb declares it to be in part 'by the talent of mimicry, which I have already stated myself to possess' (*Caleb* 254). Such an 'exterior' appearance of a Jew was a stereotype. Caleb copies 'their pronunciation of the English language'. He moves to 'a quarter of the town in which great numbers of this people reside, and study their complexion and countenance', and 'discolours' his complexion, giving it 'the dun and sallow hue which is in most instances characteristic of the tribe to which I assumed to belong' (*Caleb* 254-255). But part of the stereotype of the 'Jews' is also the ability to blend, to pass themselves off as others, different from themselves, a mimicry of survival not dissimilar from Caleb's. Thanks to such a talent, Caleb is able to elude the authorities for some time, making his adventures more credible. However, Caleb then shares one of

the very 'vices' that he later comes to regret and deplore. Caleb is made no less guilty of the state of things that he condemns, making false appearances seem necessary.

Caleb is not a good investigator turned innocent victim, against Falkland as the evil criminal turned persecutor. He is not just someone who tries to unveil the truth behind false appearances, against Falkland as someone who only wants to keep the appearance of his reputation. There is something very credible in the figure of Caleb as a criminal, the thief of a secret, in the use of his disguise to steal and discover such a secret and escape justice —or what society calls 'justice' but Caleb refuses to acknowledge as such, which appears to him rather as 'injustice and arbitrary power' (*Caleb* 253). For Falkland, Caleb's actions look like not only a betrayal of his trust, but also a violation of his privacy.

Caleb's 'facility in the art of imitation' did not preclude effort. He needed to study and learn how to copy the appearances that constitute his models.[3] In what, then, consists his talent for mimicry? It is possible to conceive Caleb without such a 'facility'. His efforts to copy appearances could have been enough. Why then did Godwin decide to give him such an innate talent, coming from Caleb's youth rather than being developed by necessity in his battle against Falkland? The point here is not so much to discover Godwin's real intention, but to interrogate the meaning of such a for copying appearances could involve. Before starting to work on his disguise as a Jew, Caleb considers how to optimise his 'art', and the particular difficulties associated with it:

> It was my first and immediate business to review all the projects of disguise I had hitherto conceived, to derive every improvement I could invent from the practice to which I had been subjected, and to manufacture a veil of concealment more impenetrable than ever. This was an effort to which I could see no end. In ordinary cases the hue and cry after a supposed offender is a matter of temporary operation; but ordinary cases formed no standard for the colossal intelligence of Mr Falkland. [...] Whether life were worth accepting on such terms I cannot pronounce. I only know that I persisted in this exertion of my faculties, through a sort of parental love that men are accustomed to entertain for their intellectual offspring; the more thought I had expended in rearing

3. As Caleb recounts about his disguise as a beggar, 'I had been aware for some time before that this [disguise] was a refuge which events might make necessary, and had endeavoured to arrange and methodise my ideas upon the subject. [...] and when I quitted my retreat in the habitation of Mr. Raymond, I adopted, along with my beggar's attire, a peculiar slouching and clownish gait, to be used whenever there should appear the least chance of my being observed, together with an Irish brogue which I had had an opportunity of studying in my prison' (*Caleb* 237-38). Similarly, when he feels 'induced to assume' (*Caleb* 254) the appearance of a Jew, Caleb must study his models and work on his disguise.

it to its present perfection, the less did I find myself disposed to
abandon it. (*Caleb* 253)

Caleb defers responsibility for his acts of disguise. He refers to them as 'the practice to

which I had been subjected', which has been imposed on him, rather than chosen freely.

However, it can be argued that the purpose of his disguises is not so criminal. His purpose

is not to appear as someone else, to take advantage or to usurp that person's relationship

with others. His purpose is to avoid appearing as himself, to cover and hide his own regular

appearances, upon which his identity is based.

The first time he takes on a disguise, when he dresses as a beggar, Caleb believes his

disguise to be 'so complete, that the eye of Mr Falkland itself could scarcely have penetrated

it' (*Caleb* 237). Caleb wishes 'to manufacture a veil of concealment more impenetrable than

ever' (*Caleb* 253). In the end, Caleb is discovered, but his disguise as a Jew is successful

enough to cause Falkland's 'private eye' Gines, to have doubts. Gines is not so sure of

what he is seeing; he is unable to recognise Caleb, even on close inspection.[4] But, if before

Caleb had suspicions that life was not worth living under such conditions, later he regrets

having been 'reduced to artifice and evasion' (*Caleb* 316):

> I was seized with so unconquerable an aversion to disguise, and
> the idea of spending my life in personating a fictitious character,
> that I could not, for the present at least, reconcile my mind to any
> thing of that nature. (*Caleb* 288)

Immediately after those words, Caleb adds: 'The same kind of disgust I had conceived for

the metropolis, where I had spent so many hours of artifice, sadness, and terror' (*Caleb* 288).

The metropolis is London, which has previously appeared to Caleb as 'an inexhaustible

reservoir of concealment to the majority of mankind' (*Caleb* 253). Therefore, it appears to

be the best place for him to hide. Later, however, he recognises that it has 'brought no such

consolatory sentiment to my mind' (*Caleb* 253). We should also not forget that earlier he

declared that, 'the practice of perpetual falsehood is too painful a task' (*Caleb* 248) and that:

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4. 'Gines looked eagerly in my face, with a countenance expressive alternately of hope and doubt, and
answered, "By God, and I do not know whether it be or no! I am afraid we are in the wrong box! [...] our
errand is with one Caleb Williams, and a precious rascal he is! I ought to know the chap well enough; but
they say he has as many faces as there are days in the year. So you please to pull off your face; or, if you
cannot do that, at least you can pull off your clothes, and let us see what your hump is made of"' (*Caleb*
272).

> My life was all a lie. I had a counterfeit character to support. I had counterfeit manners to assume. My gait, my gestures, my accents, were all of them to be studied. I was not free to indulge, no not one, honest sally of the soul. (*Caleb* 256)

Nevertheless, Caleb still declares that, 'I was contented, if that would insure my peace, to submit to the otherwise unmanly expedient of passing by a different name' (*Caleb* 305). The sexism of such a remark seems to imply that 'passing by a different name' is proper for women but not for men: it is unmanly for men, but not unwomanly for women. The sexism is implicit in the pairing of false appearances with women (as 'natural' for them), a common cultural and ideological belief. It would have been a different matter if instead Caleb had referred to, 'the otherwise unmanly expedient of having to submit to passing by a different name'. Despite the difficulties of its phrasing, this could be seen as a more objective reference to the compulsory submission of women having to pass by their husband's name, as this was the social practice. Caleb seems to assume that taking on a different name is not another form of disguise; at least not at the same level as false appearances, as it does not tamper with the visible exterior. However, it could be argued that it is actually more criminal. Copying someone's visible appearance is not considered a crime, but assuming his or her name is.

In the eighteenth-century novel the predominant mode of appearance is defined by a logical function according to which everything that appears in the world appears for a subject, who therefore must also appear to him/herself. That is why the figure of the narrator is as important as the presumed existence of a public or a reader. Without a narrator, the eighteenth-century novel seemed as unthinkable as a world without God. Although, as Badiou has argued, 'appearance does not depend on the presupposition of a constituting subject', since 'it is of the essence of being to appear' (Badiou 2006a 170); eighteenth-century novels presuppose the existence of God as a 'subject' for whom everything appears. For Robinson Crusoe 'if a thing exists [...] [it] is being perceived' (Cope 2007 280). As the English philosopher Samuel Clarke once explained to Leibniz, 'nothing is done without [God's] continual government and inspection' (Clarke 6). Such a view presupposes the existence of a God, who is infinitely different from everything else, which 'he' creates.

The implications of the opposite view, of there being no God, only finite difference, would become clear towards the end of the nineteenth century, with Friedrich Nietzsche. As Alan Bass explains:

> [For Nietzsche] infinite difference would be the difference between the world and a God outside it. [...] Just as infinite difference would imply a God *outside* world, only such a God could be infinitely self-sufficient. Finite difference implies the openness of all phenomena to each other. (Bass 9)

The openness of all phenomena to each other, the dissemination of all appearances, was unthinkable in the eighteenth century, which is one of the reasons why God had to exist. God's existence was the guarantor of the unity of sense and truth. Even if there are references to different 'worlds' in the eighteenth-century novel, they all appear to be contained within one world. In *Tristram Shandy*, for example, referring to the 'world' defined by the midwife's reputation, Tristram rhetorically asks:

> [B]y which word world, need I in this place inform your worship, that I would be understood to mean no more of it, than a small circle described upon the circle of the great world, of four English miles diameter, or thereabouts, of which the cottage where the good old woman lived is supposed to be the centre? (*Tristram* 12)

'The great world' is the world of what exists, within which there can be other 'worlds'. Even if references to 'this' world seem to imply that other worlds outside this world are possible, the world appears as a totality, containing all of the others. The world —what exists— is essentially one. Part of that unity is granted by the subject. It can be assumed that 'the world' here is Tristram's world, that he can only see his world as 'the world'. To perceive 'the world' is necessarily to make it one's own, limited by the self, even when trying to imagine a beyond it.

The eighteenth-century novels bring the emergence of perspectivism —creating perspectives— first with one point of view (Robinson Crusoe, Moll Flanders), and later with the introduction of multiple points of view (Pamela, Clarissa, Humphry Clinker). They seem to make up the world, but that world is always assumed to be one reality, as created by God (or the author). For the eighteenth-century novel, things need to appear to someone. Someone, usually the narrator, is made to appear as a witness, testifying to the reality of

what he or she tells or writes (the narrator is always human and gendered).[5] For eighteenth-century novelists, it was important that things did not appear to be a mere product of their imagination, while, nonetheless, still appearing as fiction. It was not a simple matter of trying to differentiate themselves from romances, but about pursuing —along with some of the functions of romances, such as entertainment and a didactic purpose— other possibilities and dimensions, which were to do with appearances and the perception of reality.

In most eighteenth-century novels, the narrator seems to stand for the author of the text. The text is made to appear to have been written by a narrator —composed from a series of letters, diary entries or a confession. The narrator is made to appear as the origin of the text, and also ideally the protagonist of what he or she tells, appearing as a direct source, with direct knowledge. It is a matter of belief and verisimilitude, of what appears credible and probable. A protagonist seems more authorised to tell his or her own story than anyone else. It seems more probable that such a story will be accurate, or if it disagrees with the reality that most people seem to share, it can still be accepted as his or her very own 'reality' or perspective. A power of right as authority is granted in an assumed association with origin as truth. As an 'author', the narrator protagonist is considered the originator: the truth —what really happened— seems to come directly from him or her, without distorting mediations. However, such an authority —as much as the probability that seems to ground it— is neither real nor true itself; it is an appearance. It is based on an appearance (of the most probable, obvious, natural or logical) and it is an appearance itself. Someone (here the narrator) appears to have the authority, the right and the knowledge, but there is always the possibility, which must not be disregarded or taken lightly as inevitable, that he or she might be telling a lie. Every narrative is an invention, as it is practically impossible to tell the real, or what really happened, without distortion. 'What happened' is not only temporal but also subjective. It happens to someone in a certain way. People experience it in different ways, and it becomes even more different in their telling, in their inventions. It

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5. According to Bender, 'surrogate observation in novels by witnesses who stand in for readers' parallels 'the practice in early modern science of placing a single experiment at the foundation of a generalizing inductive process even though this unique experiment could not have been witnessed by the wide audience required for assent to newly defined general principles, or indeed witnessed by anyone or any but a very small group present at the experimental site. [...] [It] demands that we place our trust in accounts of the historical experience of others and use their accounts to extend our own experience to the point of assent— despite the potential for deceit or fictionalization' (Bender 52).

is not one thing experienced from different points of view but a multiplicity that appears to be one. There is not one, but a multiplicity that cannot be dissociated from its apparition. It is in the distortions of appearances that reality is constructed, rather than being what lies beyond. In that sense, every narrative is an account of apparitions. That applies not only to the reality of the present, to what exists, but also to the representation of a past, through the work of memory. Every representation is an invention through memory of the difference of what appears, including what seems to appear in the present. Such issues of authorship and authority, origin, verisimilitude and belief, haunt the eighteenth-century novel. In the establishment of its new form, it is as if the novel could not ignore them.

9. Similarity

There is a question of similarity at the heart of appearances: how to tell apart deceptive and non-deceptive appearances. It is not so much that appearances are deceptive, but deception is only possible because of the similarity of appearances. In *Caleb Williams*, if people believe the stories fabricated by Gines more than Caleb's other appearances, such as his true self or his own disguises, it is because they take advantage of resembling features from the true appearances of things, exploiting other possible interpretations, and rendering things under a different appearance. Gines's stories and attempts to discredit Caleb are another form of Caleb's appearance —how he is made to appear. They render a different appearance than the one that could have been naturally inferred —for example, that Caleb was merely a victim of 'circumstances accumulated against' him (*Caleb* 169)— while keeping the real or true appearances the same. In other words, Caleb still looks like himself, but instead of appearing to be a victim, he is made to appear as a fabulous criminal.

In *The Monk*, the image of 'the Madonna' that Ambrosio worships is not meant to give a false appearance of the Virgin Mary (*Monk* 40). However, he later discovers that the young novice Matilda resembles the image of the Madonna:

> What was his amazement at beholding the exact resemblance of his admired Madonna? The same exquisite proportion of features, the same profusion of golden hair, the same rosy lips, heavenly eyes, and majesty of countenance adorned Matilda! Uttering an exclamation of surprise, Ambrosio sank back upon his pillow, and doubted whether the Object before him was mortal or divine. (*Monk* 81)

According to Matilda, she made an artist paint the portrait of the Madonna based on her own features, so that Ambrosio would fall in love with her:

> In Matilda de Villanegas you see the original of your beloved Madonna. Soon after I conceived my unfortunate passion, I formed the project of conveying to you my Picture: Crowds of

> Admirers had persuaded me that I possessed some beauty, and I was anxious to know what effect it would produce upon you. I caused my Portrait to be drawn by Martin Galuppi, a celebrated Venetian at that time resident in Madrid. The resemblance was striking: I sent it to the Capuchin Abbey as if for sale, and the Jew from whom you bought it was one of my Emissaries. You purchased it. Judge of my rapture, when informed that you had gazed upon it with delight, or rather with adoration; that you had suspended it in your Cell, and that you addressed your supplications to no other Saint. (*Monk* 81)

According to the devil, however, he made an evil spirit to assume the form of Matilda, to tempt Ambrosio: 'I observed your blind idolatry of the Madonna's picture. I bad a subordinate but crafty spirit assume a similar form, and you eagerly yielded to the blandishments of Matilda' (*Monk* 440). It is due to the 'similar form' assumed by the 'crafty spirit' that the deception is possible. Leaving aside the fantastic elements of the story, such a deception is also possible due to the probable similarity between the imagined features of the Madonna and Matilda's face, which also looks like the face of a young man, which in turn makes it possible for her to be admitted to the monastery as a novice.

Perhaps the most obvious example of the similarity of appearance refers to family resemblances, such as between a mother and her daughter. As Lynch reminds us, 'for Locke, birth involves, above all, the perpetuation of a family resemblance and the transmission of the human form' (Lynch 123). A family resemblance is often seen as a corroboration of a family tie by descent, through the sexual reproduction of a set of physical appearances. In *Evelina*, for example, Evelina is encouraged to seek her father's recognition, mainly because of her resemblance to her mother: 'without any other certificate of your birth, [but] that which you carry in your countenance, as it could not be effected by artifice, so it cannot admit of a doubt' (*Evelina* 337). It is her mother's 'appearance' in Evelina's 'countenance' that makes possible her claim to be his daughter. It is Evelina's resemblance to her mother that seems to make possible her father's recognition and her right to inheritance. According to Joanne Cutting-Gray, Evelina '"posts" a likeness of her mother that lacks' any of the common 'patrilineal seals of legitimation' (Cutting-Gray 1990 55). But it is precisely because it is her father's recognition —his 'patrilineal seal of legitimation'— that Evelina is aiming for, that she cannot be legitimised by his discourse as the real daughter of Carolyn Evelin. The

similarity of appearances between her and her mother is what appears as proof or evidence, the authorising fact. However, the resemblance is not a unique form, but is composed of a set of common features, such as the shape and colour of the eyes, lips, skin, nose and hair. It is the combination of such a set of features in one face and body that makes Evelina's father exclaim, 'never was likeness more striking! —the eye, —the face, —the form [...] Oh dear resemblance of thy murdered mother!' (*Evelina* 385-386).

Evelina's resemblance to her mother functions like an appearance that contains an uncontaminated truth or presence: the mother appears in the daughter. Evelina's resemblance to her mother is presented as one of those transparent appearances that she and Villars would like the world to be made of. Nevertheless, that does not prove that she is the daughter of the man she thinks is her father. Not all daughters resemble their mothers, in the same way that Evelina is said to resemble hers. All Evelina knows about her mother is what Villars and Mrs Selwyn have told her: that her mother used to look just like her. Mrs Selwyn assures Evelina that she has 'too strong a resemblance' to her 'dear, though unknown mother' (*Evelina* 316). In that sense, Evelina only 'knows' her mother through herself. She can only picture her mother's appearance through her own image. Therefore, the assurances of some characters become for Evelina 'the certainty I carried in my countenance' (*Evelina* 374), that she is Carolyn's daughter. Even if Evelina had been lucky enough to have a painted portrait of her mother, that would not have been much of a guarantee, as portraits do not necessarily try to capture with objectivity the image or appearance of a person. As Sir Joshua Reynolds declared in one of his discourses, December 10th 1771:

> If a portrait-painter is desirous to raise and improve his subject, he has no other means than by approaching it to a general idea. He leaves out all the minute breaks and peculiarities in the face [...] if an exact resemblance of an individual be considered as the sole object to be aimed at, the portrait-painter will be apt to lose more than he gains. (Reynolds 71)

Despite containing a degree of resemblance or similarity, painted portraits were often idealised, representing more how the subject would like to be remembered and following certain artistic parameters. The guiding principle of art, including portraiture, was the 'perfect form', the ideal, which could only be produced 'by leaving out particularities'; it was less

a matter of objective reproduction. On the other hand, in science no law of inheritance dictates that a set of features necessarily has to reproduce itself from mother to daughter. As Horowitz explains:

> [H]eredity and variation are today considered as two sides of the same coin. Thus variation among sibs results from the varied commingling and expression of the hereditary determinants from two parents. Spontaneous changes in the hereditary material (mutations) give rise to variations, and these are inherited. In other words there is heredity, variation, and the heredity of variation, and they belong together. Prior to the latter half of the nineteenth century this conceptual framework did not exist. (Horowitz 896)

That does not mean that the eighteenth century could not account for variations between what otherwise should have been a perfect reproduction, but that they had not yet discovered a pattern of hereditary reproduction in the variations. With heredity taken to be the reproduction of a type or a set of characteristics, differences were seen as being due to the mixing of types (the mother's and the father's), elements from the environment and the humours. A perfect hereditary reproduction was not entirely expected. They knew it to be imperfect in two senses: a child might very well not resemble his parents, and two people could resemble each other without being connected by blood. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, sister Agnes (Lady Laurentini) tells Emily, 'you need only look in that mirror, and you will behold [the Marchioness de Villeroi]; you surely are her daughter: such striking resemblance is never found but among near relations' (*Udolpho* 645). Radcliffe plays with the possibility of adding a mystery to Emily's birth, taking advantage of the fact that Emily's mother is practically absent from the novel, relegated to the first chapter. Emily is proved not to be the Marchioness' daughter but her niece, but still a 'near relation'.

In *Evelina*, Polly Green, on the other hand, demonstrates that a daughter does not have to resemble her mother in order to be considered legitimate. Before meeting Evelina, Lord Belmont thinks that Polly is Caroline's daughter. But in reality Polly is the daughter of Dame Green, a wash-woman and wet nurse (*Evelina* 378). Polly Green's case also seems to demonstrate that there might not be too much of a difference between a lady's daughter and a servant's daughter. The novel still maintains a distinction between Evelina and Polly

Green —a distinction that seems closer to a fairy tale— but the father seems to accept as normal the possibility that Polly Green could be his daughter, to the point that he then:

> [...] was equally disturbed how to dispose either of the daughter he had discovered, or the daughter he was now to give up; the former he dreaded to trust himself with again beholding, and the latter he knew not how to shock with the intelligence of her disgrace. (*Evelina* 377)

If family resemblances were stronger, clearer and unique, there might not have been a need for a strict a value on chastity as a way of assuring men that their name and property would follow their 'natural' line and go to the 'rightful' descendant. Corrinne Harol observes that:

> [T]he idea that virginity matters because it regulates 'legitimacy' and the inheritance of property is perhaps stronger in the middle of the eighteenth century than at any other time in modern Western history. (Harol 1, 6-7)

The increased value of virginity and chastity during the eighteenth century can be linked to the preoccupation with appearances and the reproduction of capital. The entire patriarchal system seems to have been at risk, due to the changes occurring to a whole set of appearances, that until then had seemed secure: changes relating to the reproduction of images, deception and the difference between reality and fiction.

A less extreme but no less problematical case was the possibility of ladies and middle-class women being mistaken for servants. The possibility of such confusion was there, not because they could look like servants, but because servants and other lower class women tried to pass themselves off as ladies or middle class. Although social class could be distinguished through certain appearances, appearances could always be reproduced and falsified. Dress was a major element in the elaboration of those appearances. As Kathleen Oliver reminds us:

> [I]n eighteenth-century England, the blurring of social station occasioned by dress affected not only the upper station, but the middle station as well. If those from the upper station were concerned about shopkeepers and their wives dressing like gentlemen and gentlewomen, like lords and ladies, then those of the middle station were concerned with servants dressing like shopkeepers and their wives. (Oliver 69)

During the eighteenth century, dresses and textiles became more affordable for women. Although not enough to blur the difference between the higher and the lower ranks, as a servant could still not afford the latest fashion, it became easier for the classes in between to change their appearance: the middle class could appear to be aristocracy, the lower classes could appear middle class, and the lower-middle class could appear higher-middle class. According to Jerry White, 'dress and fashion were preoccupations of the age for all ranks and it was not always easy to spot class difference by judging appearances alone' (White 103). That is what made it possible for a maid servant like Amy in Roxana to 'put on her best clothes too' and appear 'dressed like a gentlewoman' (*Roxana* 65). Her mistress, Roxana, passes from 'poor, even misery,' to 'very rich' (*Roxana* 86), thanks to her lovers. Roxana then has access to dresses that she could never have afforded otherwise:

> I dress'd to the height of every mode; went extremely rich in clothes; and as for jewels, I wanted none; I gave a very good livery laced with silver, and as rich as anybody below the nobility could be seen with: And thus I appear'd, leaving the world to guess who or what I was, without offering to put myself forward. (*Roxana* 206)

The practice of ladies giving old dresses to servants was common. There was an implicit understanding that the servants would be able to modify the clothes, according to their status. In *Moll Flanders*, Moll tells how when she was young:

> The ladies also gave me clothes frequently of their own or their children's; some stockings, some petticoats, some gowns, some one thing, some another, and these my old woman managed for me like a mere mother, and kept them for me, obliged me to mend them, and turn them and twist them to the best advantage. (*Moll* 15)

Pamela's father also recounts that her lady 'for three or four years past, has always been giving you clothes and linen, and every thing that a gentlewoman need not be ashamed to appear in' (*Pamela* 27). However, it was inappropriate for a maid to wear one of her lady's old dresses, as if she herself were a lady. If a maid could appear as a lady, this makes evident that a part of being a lady or a servant was a matter of appearance, beyond an essential difference between the social classes. Such a possibility of appearances contains a radical democratisation and eroding of the class distinctions. This is still a thought that is

too radical for the eighteenth-century novel to propose explicitly or openly, but it is there, and is implicit in the possibility of mistaking a servant for a lady.

When Roxana remarks that, 'there was indeed, not great Difficulty, to make Amy look like a Lady, for she was a very handsome well-shap'd Woman, and genteel enough' (*Roxana* 236), this also raises the question of what a lady should look like. According to Roxana, to look handsome and genteel seems to be enough. However, these are not exclusive attributes, as Roxana also seems to recognise, since Amy is already handsome and 'genteel enough' without being a lady. For Defoe that was a problem, not because of the embarrassing misunderstandings that such an apparent blurring of social distinctions could provoke, but because it could have effects on reputation and credit, and therefore serious effects on someone's life. Owen argues that:

> [A]rtifice in terms of misleading appearance was a problem for Defoe, because he knew the social status of successful tradesman and his family depended not only on wealth but also on status. He did not want them to be mistaken for servants in disguise, for this might fuel prejudice, affecting their ability to obtain credit. He observes that 'the tradesmen's wives now claim that title [ladies] as they do by their dress claim the appearance', and insists that the tradesman's transition to gentleman must be free of all such artifice. (Owen 60-61)

For Defoe, if a tradesman's wife could appear as a lady, she also risked being taken as a servant or a maid, passing herself off as a lady or a tradesman's wife. Such possibilities seemed an unnecessary complication for an honest tradesman. Defoe believed that there could be a transition, if not between classes, then at least in terms of title, from tradesman to gentleman. However, the transition seemed to be less guaranteed by work and more immediate and real through mere appearances. One must also consider the aspect of performance —the pleasure of pretending to be what one is not. Only someone who was not a servant could consider the possibility of briefly appearing as one as an entertaining possibility. Nevertheless, as far as 'being a lady' remained an ideal, any exceptions to the norm could be explained away as 'not real' ladies. Imitation requires that the object to be imitated maintains its essence. It is necessary to maintain the belief that appearances are not enough, that no matter how much a maid could make herself look like a lady, if she was

not a lady, it would come to appear so. As Lady Bellaston puts it, 'I have always observed there is a something in persons well born, which others can never acquire' (*Jones* 647).

According to most eighteenth-century novels, under certain circumstances it was possible for a prostitute to appear to be a lady and vice versa. Eighteenth-century novels do not propose that ladies and prostitutes are the same, but how a confusion between the two could be possible is an issue that seems to trouble many novelists. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, when Annette sees the 'fine ladies' who have come to visit Montini after the death of his wife, she thinks 'that all those fine silks and fine veils [...] boded no good — I guessed what they were!' (*Udolpho* 389). Annette has to guess 'what they were'. To be a prostitute or a woman of 'loose' morals is not a clear appearance. In *Evelina*, while walking in Marybone-gardens one night, Evelina lost her group and ran:

> [...] hastily up to two ladies, and cried, 'for Heaven's sake, dear ladies, afford me some protection!' [...] in a drawling, ironical tone of voice, they asked what had frightened my little Ladyship? I told them my adventure very simply, and intreated they would have the goodness to assist me in finding my friends. O yes, to be sure, they said, I should not want for friends, whilst I was with them. (*Evelina* 233)

Later, when Evelina finds her party again, Madame Duval also takes the two women for 'real fine ladies' (*Evelina* 236). At the root of the problem are the similarities allowed by appearances. Since neither ladies nor prostitutes had a unique set of features that the other could not replicate, they were open to interpretation and misinterpretation. In this context, the men in Marybone take Evelina for a young prostitute, and even Orville can doubt her character when he sees her in the company of the two women mentioned above. There were also ladies who behaved like prostitutes, or who simply did not behave in accordance with social conventions, such as Lady Bellaston in *Tom Jones*. Sophia asks Tom Jones:

> [H]ow is it possible! can everything noble and everything base be lodged together in the same bosom? Lady Bellaston, and the ignominious circumstance of having been kept, rose again in his mind, and stopt his mouth from any reply. (*Jones* 642)

The narrator, however, does not plainly condemn Lady Bellaston, whom he calls an 'intrepid character' among those 'upon whom Passion exercises its tyranny, and hurries them far beyond the bounds which decorum prescribes' (*Jones* 651). Miss Mathews, in *Amelia*, also

recollects 'that it is possible for a woman to appear to be what she really is not' (*Amelia* 36). The confusion between a lady and a prostitute could appear to be more probable at masked balls, in which a mask covered the real identity of the wearer, allowing the assumed characteristics of one or the other to appear more prominently. However, it is not that prostitutes pretended to be ladies to the point that men could not tell the difference. As Terry Castle contends:

> It is far more likely that male masqueraders were entirely aware of the prostitutes in their midst, and often attended specifically with the intention of finding sexual partners. The acknowledged presence of prostitutes, one may assume, was part of the masked assembly's allure. (Castle 1986 32)

Apart from allowing them to gain entrance to more exclusive events such as masquerades, and to access wealthier customers, such similarities and possible confusion were not encouraged or maintained. Nevertheless, Castle disregards the problem of the similarity of appearances, of the possibility of taking one for the other. What is of interest here is not the eighteenth-century reality but the liminal border of the moment of similarity, in which a man might not be able to distinguish a lady from a prostitute. Even if in reality these cases were rare, eighteenth-century novels considered it to be a real possibility. Masquerades contributed to this possibility, and prostitutes knew this as much as ladies. As White points out:

> The masquerade was often designed as a truly exclusive public entertainment –restricted nominally to 'subscribers' who bought tickets in advance– but even then it too proved subversive of hierarchy and order. The mask self-consciously satirised a society based so very much on appearances. It could turn a rake into a bishop, a kept woman into a nun, a man into a woman. It was a place of great sexual danger for virtuous wife and maid alike, the scene of downfall in novels throughout the century. (White 295)

Without the possibility of being taken for a prostitute, a masked ball could have been a very monotonous affair. The absolute guarantee of the impossibility of a mistaken identity would have rendered masquerades superfluous. On the other hand, the similarity between ladies and prostitutes was not limited to a common set of features, established by the eighteenth-century novel. A similarity between the two, beyond the possible physical resemblance, can also be found in other eighteenth-century texts. According to Oliver:

> [P]rostitutes become property circulated among men, yet the world of the brothel mirrors the so-called normal world, where young girls are sold as property to the highest bidder [...] with parents and relatives acting the parts of pimps and madams. The difference is merely one of the relative value placed on the female body: The marriage market sells new, 'undamaged' goods; the brothel sells second-hand, 'used' goods, recycling them endlessly until such time as all worth and value have been eradicated. Neither market (marriage or prostitution) values the soul or mind, merely the body and its relative worth as a source of profit or pleasure. (Oliver 98)

Under the eighteenth-century patriarchal system, the figure of the lady could appear as a silent or empty sign, a pure signifier or ornament that derived its social value and meaning in relation to men (father, suitor or husband). However, marriage was mostly a matter beyond certain bodily appearances. It was not enough for a woman to be valued highly in terms of beauty without having any practical skills and a dowry, for the reproduction of capital.[1]

One of the 'lessons' of *The Monk*, as well as of many other Gothic and eighteenth-century novels, is —as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick claims in her interpretation of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*— that not every similarity is an identity: 'there is a danger in establishing identity through similarity' (Sedgwick 262). If the guarantee found in similarity is proved unreliable to establish an identity, what else is left to differentiate between beings? Although the similarity of what appears seemed a strong fundament in establishing identity, sometimes even the only fundament, the eighteenth-century novel demonstrates that the similarity of appearances is not so secure.

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1. According to Habermas, 'the contractual form of marriage [...] was largely a fiction [...] to the extent that the family owned capital, [and] could not remain unaffected by considerations regarding the latter's preservation and augmentation' (Habermas 47).

10. To Stand Before (the Law)

'To appear' can mean 'to stand in the presence of another, generally used of standing before some superior; to offer himself to the judgement of a tribunal', or 'to exhibit one's self before a court of justice' (Johnson senses 3, 5). An 'appearance' can mean an 'exhibition of the person to a court' (Johnson sense 8); 'the action of appearing formally at any proceedings; *esp*. formal presentation of oneself in a court to answer or prosecute a suit or charge, called *making* or *putting in* an appearance' (*OED* sense 2).

In most eighteenth-century novels, characters appear as real subjects, narrating their own stories through their writings, addressing their letters, diaries or confessions to a subject who is supposed to read them, a place which the actual reader must occupy. As such, the character narrator appears him/herself and makes a world appear, in front of the reader, making the reader appear. A reader is an apparition conjured by the text. For everything that appears in an eighteenth-century novel, the reader is in a position of witness or judge. Eighteenth-century novels come to 'stand' before the reader, as if before the law.

Narrations look for approval. The eighteenth-century novel sought the approval of the reader more than any other textual genre had appeared to do until then; except, perhaps, for written plays. A play is written to be represented before a public. In a novel, such a public is always in the future. The text is written not to be represented but to be read, an apparently more direct relationship between the writer/narrator and the reader, bypassing actors and a stage director. It is an invitation to listen and to be accepted, but like a gift, it connotes obligations. Eighteenth-century novels summon and commit the reader to judge and bear witness, offering themselves to be judged, looking for approval and the promise of justice.

Novak reminds us that 'Charles Lamb praised Defoe's fiction as "Appearances of Truth," producing a reading experience similar to "reading evidence in a court of justice"'

(Novak 1983 122). Many eighteenth-century novels present themselves like a story told in a court of law, for readers to judge. The narratives of trials were a very popular genre at the beginning of the eighteenth century and one of the earliest influences on the eighteenth-century novel. The relationship between reading, witnessing and judging is implicit in all eighteenth-century novels. The reader must keep answering the question: 'can the other be believed?' It is not entirely up to the reader to decide his or her belief; a judgement is implicit. The other is judged in every belief. A suspicion, a fear to be deceived, does not precede belief, but is there precisely because the reader is compelled to believe in the narrator; the narrator's words and voice mingle, seeming to become one with the reader's.

In the eighteenth-century novel, many characters appear before the law. Some characters never appear in a court of law, but the law is very present throughout the novels. In *Moll Flanders*, the possibility of being caught, brought before a magistrate and condemned to prison (or hanged) is a constant preoccupation for Moll. In *Amelia*, we find 'Jonathan Thrasher, Esq., one of the justices of the peace for that liberty [Westminster]', before whom the watchmen 'brought several persons whom they had apprehended the preceding night' (*Amelia* 14). In Smollett's *The Life and Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves*, Mr Fillet 'appeared in the judgment-chamber of Justice Gobble' to 'bail' for Sir Launcelot Greaves 'and his two friends, who had been imprisoned contrary to law, without any cause assigned' (*Launcelot* 133). But not all matters were brought to a court of law, and many landlords and squires were also considered representatives of the law. Pamela tells Mr B: 'have I robbed you? Why then you are a justice of peace, and may send me to gaol, if you please, and bring me to a trial for my life!' (*Pamela* 63). As a Justice of Peace, it is the duty of Mr Allworthy to conduct 'examinations concerning bastards, and such like' (*Jones* 55).

Submitted to a legal injunction, and exposed to judgement, the subject that is made to appear seems reduced to a stationary position, like Jenny, who is first 'summoned to appear in Person before Mrs Deborah' (*Jones* 49) and then 'convened before' Allworthy as 'before justice' (*Jones* 57). On Partridge's 'trial' the reader also finds:

> At the time appointed, before Mr Allworthy himself, at Paradise-Hall, came as well the said Partridge, with Anne, his wife, as Mrs Wilkins his accuser. And now Mr Allworthy being seated in the Chair of Justice, Mr Partridge was brought before him. Having

> heard his accusation from the mouth of Mrs Wilkins, he pleaded
> not guilty, making many vehement protestations of his innocence.
> (*Jones* 91)

Whoever appears also has the power of a legal injunction, forcing a subject to be 'its' witness or judge. However, the characters made to appear before the law do not necessarily appear (as) themselves. They do not necessarily reveal themselves. In Defoe's *Colonel Jack* (1722), Jack is called to appear before his master 'like a malefactor [...] carried before the Justice', although he claims, 'I never was before a court of justice in my life' (*Jack* 133, 135). As Richetti comments, Jack is not a passive subject made to appear, but plays the role of 'repentant unfortunate' to his advantage (Richetti 1975 167). Like Jack, characters can remain wrapped in appearances. That is the way they appear to judges and witnesses. There is an element of performance in their appearance before the law. Sometimes this is because they wish to maintain a secret or conceal some of their truth. Jenny, for example, keeps the secret about Tom Jones's real mother, appearing herself as what she was not: as Tom Jones's mother, guilty of fornication and of trying to get rid of her child.

In *Joseph Andrews*, the 'lawyer' Scout assures Lady Booby that:

> the laws of this land are not so vulgar to permit a mean fellow to
> contend with one of your ladyship's fortune. We have one sure
> card, which is, to carry him before Justice Frolick, who, upon
> hearing your ladyship's name, will commit him without any
> farther questions. (*Andrews* 248-249)

The narrator immediately explains that:

> This Scout was one of those fellows who, without any knowledge
> of the law, or being bred to it, take upon them, in defiance of an
> act of Parliament, to act as lawyers in the country, and are called
> so. They are the pests of society, and a scandal to a profession, to
> which indeed they do not belong. (*Andrews* 249)

Nevertheless, such a representation of the partiality of justice was not improbable. If not entirely real, eighteenth-century novels show a common belief in the partiality of some representatives of the law. In *Tom Jones*, after Jenny returns home 'well pleased with the reception she had met with from Mr Allworthy [...] every person made some malicious comment or other on the occasion, and reflected on the partiality of the Justice' (*Jones* 57).

In order to understand some of the implications of appearing before the law, in a court of justice, in the eighteenth century, some historical background is necessary. Otherwise, one risks reading such appearances in the eighteenth-century novels as absurd, exaggerated or satirical. It is not that there are not exaggerations and caricatures in the novels but in relation to the law this is only true to a degree. As Novak observes, 'an impartial system of justice was utopian speculation' (Novak 1983 135).

According to Dana Rabin, 'until the 1730s defendants could not call on legal representation [...] a prisoner's unmediated, unsworn response to the charges was considered the strongest defence' (Rabin 25, 29). The accused needed to appear as transparent as possible. It was believed that if the accused were innocent, the truth should be able to be perceived without major help; it should be evident. The accused was required to appear him/ or herself, directly, without mediation. Legal representation, beyond counselling in matters of the law and procedure, was considered a form of deception; in the popular imagination, lawyers were mostly deceivers. Legal representation was considered a form of making appear what already appeared (a re-presentation), introducing the possibility of distorting an evident truth. The eighteenth-century novel, although essentially representative in its claim to realism, shares a similar assumption, by introducing not a 'lawyer' arguing the defence of the accused but the accused himself, presenting his or her version of the story. In eighteenth-century novels, most lawyers are shown as caricatures, pedants who use their knowledge of language to steal from people. One of the strongest caricatures of the law and lawyers can be found in *Gulliver's Travels*, when Gulliver explains to his Master Horse:

> [T]here was a society of men among us, bred up from their youth in the art of proving, by words multiplied for the purpose, that white is black, and black is white, according as they are paid. To this society all the rest of the people are slaves. [...] in all points out of their own trade, [lawyers] were usually the most ignorant and stupid generation among us, the most despicable in common conversation, avowed enemies to all knowledge and learning, and equally disposed to pervert the general reason of mankind in every other subject of discourse as in that of their own profession. (*Gulliver* 231-233)

Eighteenth-century novels are also mostly based on the assumption that the facts of the story will speak for themselves better than arguments, as if a story (such as a confession) could be the best argument to prove one's innocence.

As Patey notes, within a 'quasi-mathematical system for evaluating testimony', the 'mere appearance before the court was presumptive evidence of guilt worth half a point', with a total of three points being found 'guilty' (Patey 7). Appearing in court was taken as acceptance of the accused's position before the law; a degree of guilt was assumed. To appear before the law was to already appear guilty, but refusing to appear was not much better. Trials in absence took place if the accused refused to appear in court, due to not recognising the accusation. In the apparent certitude of his or her innocence the accused avoided half a point of presumptive guilt but at the cost of losing the opportunity to present his or her defence and version of the facts. On the other hand, belonging to a higher social class was linked to a degree of innocence. It was taken as evident that the higher the class, the less propensity there was to commit crimes as there seemed to be a higher system of values and less of a need or motive. It was an appearance sustained by privileges. Consequently, more witnesses were required to prove a nobleman guilty. In *Caleb Williams*, one of the earliest examples of the inequality of the eighteenth-century legal system appears in the form of Tyrrel's case against one of his tenants:

> Hawkins, beside a farm which he rented under the above mentioned squire [Tyrrel], had a small freehold estate that he inherited from his father. This of course entitled him to a vote in the county elections; and, a warmly contested election having occurred, he was required by his landlord to vote for the candidate in whose favour he had himself engaged. Hawkins refused to obey the mandate, and soon after received notice to quit the farm he at that time rented. (*Caleb* 66)

In the end, Tyrrel 'prevailed upon the justices, by the picture he drew of the obstinacy and insolence of the Hawkinses, fully to commit [Hawkins' young son] upon' the charge of felony, condemned to death, and took 'the earliest opportunity of seizing upon' the father's property (*Caleb* 74-75). It is not just that Tyrrel predisposes justice in his favour, but, as Caleb puts it, that he does it in such a way as to predict his own ruin:

> Nothing could have been more easy to predict, than that it was of no avail for [Hawkins] to have right on his side, when

> his adversary had influence and wealth, and therefore could
> so victoriously justify any extravagancies that he might think
> proper to commit. [...] Hawkins had hitherto carefully avoided,
> notwithstanding the injuries he had suffered, attempting to right
> himself by a legal process, being of opinion that law was better
> adapted for a weapon of tyranny in the hands of the rich, than for
> a shield to protect the humbler part of the community against their
> usurpations. (*Caleb* 72-73)

Part of the problem is that what is judged, what appears before the law, is an appearance of

the crime, as it appeared to the witnesses, taking their oath as a guarantee of truth. Tyrrel has

the resources to make the facts appear to his advantage, to gather witnesses, and to use his

knowledge of the system of the law for his purposes. In a trial, it is a matter of listening to

a series of statements that deal with what appears to have happened, since the judge cannot

have unmediated access to the truth of the crime. It is a matter of reason and probability

(what it appears probable to reason), as an appearance of reality and truth. Even if there can

be two points of view, at least, in opposition —that of an accused who might think himself

not to have done anything wrong, and that of the accuser or witness who might have the

opposite impression— reality and truth cannot be taken as subjective and multiple in terms

of justice and the law. To establish the guilt or innocence of the accused, the judge must

rely on the appearance of a unique reality or truth while appearing to disregard his own

subjectivity. Like facts, the appearance of proof is proportional to the number of witnesses.

Although every witness is unique, if there is only one, his or her perception can more easily

be doubted. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, 'Emily would almost have doubted her own

perceptions, had not those of Dorothee attested their truth' (*Udolpho* 536).

The position of the eighteenth-century novel in relation to courts of law can be seen to

be represented in Clarissa's refusal to appear in one, to do herself justice against the way

she has been treated by Lovelace: 'I would sooner suffer every evil [...] than appear publicly

in a court to do myself justice' (*Clarissa* 1019). According to Roulston:

> [Clarissa] knows that an accurate form of self-representation
> cannot take place in a space Lovelace has the potential to dominate,
> such as a public court of law. [...] It is not the making public
> of Clarissa's narrative that the novel resists (indeed, Clarissa
> publicises her story out of a window), but the way in which this
> publication is played out. Clarissa can signify, in other words,
> only through the novel form itself, through an aesthetic, rather
> than a judicial, dimension. [...] the private experience of reading

is pitted against the public court of law as the more validating access to truth. (Roulston 67-69)

Towards the end, Clarissa does not seem to have any hope of being able to represent herself truthfully in a court of law and have Lovelace convicted. She has learned that he has the power of performance, to represent himself favourably and misrepresent her. Clarissa suspects that a court of law is not necessarily a place where truth appears and justice triumphs but a place of representation and play, where social farces can be reinforced.

In *Caleb Williams*, Caleb pledges his case and solemnly swears to its truthfulness, as if making a case in front of a court of justice constituted by his readers. He also attempts to reveal Falkland in a court of law, in front of a magistrate, appearing in front of justice and the law. Nevertheless, Caleb is found guilty and condemned, despite all of his protestations and arguments. For most of the novel, Caleb is unable to find justice in a court of law. After writing and publishing 'poetry and morality and history' for a living, Caleb then thinks that he can write his own story:

> I began to write soon after the period to which I have now conducted it. [...] The writing of these memoirs served me as a source of avocation for several years. For some time I had a melancholy consolation in writing. I was better pleased to repass in my mind the particulars of calamities that had formerly afflicted me [...] I conceived that my story faithfully digested would carry in it an impression of truth that few men would be able to resist; or at worst that, by leaving it behind me when I should no longer continue to exist, posterity might be induced to do me justice. (*Caleb* 302-303)[1]

Caleb Williams appears then to include its own fictitious point of origin. Clarissa, on the other hand, is not much of a reader and writer of stories like Caleb. Caleb swears that he is going to write a tale: 'I will unfold a tale! [...] I will tell a tale!' (*Caleb* 314), but 'tales' seem to be below Clarissa. She will publish her story but only as truth, as signed letters, every single one addressed to someone in particular. However, through the figure of the editor, it comes to appear as the novel that it is. In both cases, the novel appears as the medium of a truth that cannot be otherwise told, appearing for the judgement of the reader.

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1. These words, written towards the end of the novel, in the chapter before the last, and the postscript, repeat some of the sentences from the opening paragraph at the beginning of the novel: 'I am incited to the penning of these memoirs, only by a desire to divert my mind from the deplorableness of my situation, and a faint idea that posterity may by their means be induced to render me a justice which my contemporaries refuse' (*Caleb* 3). The story practically ends with the origin of its writing.

With Defoe and Richardson, the eighteenth-century novel begins with a character narrating his or her own story, as if standing before a public, to be judged by the reader. The narrator's position is similar to that of an accused in a court of law, but the eighteenth-century novel seems to claim to allow better access to the truth than what can appear in a court of law. Eighteenth-century novels appear as supplements to a court of law, not only as any writing can do —any accused can write their version of the story, to find absolution or recognition of their innocence in a future reader— but also in the multiplication of fictitious cases. The eighteenth-century novel makes its case with the multiplication of cases, similar to how the system of the law is built. However, the novel is less limited to the reality of the appearance of a case than a court of law. The novel can bring into existence other cases, improbable or unrealistic cases that appear to require exceptions to the law or new laws. Eighteenth-century novels seem to appropriate another law for themselves, to give themselves rights above the current laws of society. They put themselves 'under' a higher law, which does not submit or make a temporal judgement, and which is not limited to a single judge.

11. PROBABILITY

'Appearance' can mean 'probability; seeming; likelihood' (Johnson sense 11). It also refers to the 'semblance of truth or certainty', 'verisimilitude' (*OED* sense 9). Probability is a matter of appearance. According to the mathematician John Craig, probability is 'the appearance of agreement or of disagreement of two ideas through arguments whose conclusion is not fixed, or at least is not perceived to be so' (Craig 2-3). Although it is difficult to conceive a time without appearances and probability, mathematical theories of probability only started to appear in the seventeenth century, with Pascal, Huygens, Leibniz, Hudde, de Witt, Wilkins and Graunt.[1] There is a connection between the development of theories of probability at the end of the seventeenth century, the suspicions about appearances in the eighteenth century and the 'birth of the novel'. The development of theories of probability increased suspicion about appearances. It was in this climate of probability and suspicion that the eighteenth-century novel was born, a genre that was mainly concerned with verisimilitude as the sum of appearance and probability.

For the eighteenth-century novel, there was a need to stay within probable appearances. Eighteenth-century novelists tried to distance the genre from romance, and to write more probable —less fantastic and more 'realist'— stories. For Samuel Richardson, for example, 'the work of fiction should possess the characteristics of probability and naturalness' (quoted by Ball 17). According to Elizabeth Brophy:

> Richardson, then, because he thought that verisimilitude was important in engaging his reader's interest, tried to give his novels the appearance of historical reality by making the collection of letters seem plausible at the same time that he was working to make the characters themselves credible. (Brophy 34)

1. According to Patey, 'it would appear that the mathematical theory of probability came into being in only about 1660. Despite the inevitable success of the intellectual historian's search for precursors [...] the decade of the 1660s remains a turning point in mathematical history. [...] the late emergence of mathematical probability is to be explained by reference to previous contingent impediments to its discovery, impediments which began to disappear only in the mid seventeenth century' (Patey 266).

Fantasies and romances were still popular during the eighteenth century, but something changed with the novel and the reading public became more engaged with a realist verisimilitude than with fantasy, romance and legends. The enormous success of Richardson's novels shows that he was right in his appreciation of the reading public's desire for the appearances of historical reality. It is not that the readers wanted to be deceived into believing that something was real when it was not, but they wanted to enjoy the possibility of believing to be real something they knew was not. In the eighteenth century, the possibility of believing became hinged on probability as a mix of reason and verisimilitude.

Although some eighteenth-century novelists such as Fielding would emphasise that the novel was a work of fiction, in which things are created by the author's imagination, there was still the claim of aiming for a higher truth of reality, to make more evident what otherwise might not appear so clearly in the everyday. Therefore, it was still a matter of probability and realism, more than advocating the pleasure of fantasy and the imagination. The eighteenth-century novel appears as a series of probable appearances or it does not appear. In *Tom Jones*, the narrator declares:

> Man [...] is the highest subject [...] which presents itself to the pen of our historian, or of our poet; and, in relating his actions, great care is to be taken that we do not exceed the capacity of the agent we describe. Nor is possibility alone sufficient to justify us; we must keep likewise within the rules of probability. [...] It is by falling into fiction, therefore, that we generally offend against this rule, of deserting probability, which the historian seldom, if ever, quits, till he forsakes his character and commences a writer of romance. (*Jones* 354-355)

For Smollett, probability also appears to have been a constant preoccupation. In *Count Fathom*, the narrator uses the expression 'in all probability' 26 times. In *Peregrine Pickle*, he uses it approximately 90 times. The narrations are constantly remarked on as being based on probability. In Burney's novels probability is also essential. For her, it constitutes the 'realistic' novel in opposition to romances. In the 'Introduction' to *Evelina*, Burney writes that romances appear as the space in which 'fiction is coloured by all the gay tints of luxurious Imagination, where Reason is an outcast, and where the sublimity of the *Marvellous* rejects all aid from sober Probability' (*Evelina* 8). Narratives of less probable

stories were not considered to be proper novels. In the case of *Gulliver's Travels*, for example, Hunter argues:

> Quite a few features [...] including the conception of Gulliver himself as a narrator [...], make emphatic anti-novelistic statements [...]: the episodic structure and lack of narrative development, the gross exaggeration of subjectivity and character inconsistency, the excessive recounting of irrelevant 'realistic' details [...], the sour and bathetic ending in which Gulliver, unlike the buoyant Crusoe, finds it impossible to rejoin humanity after his alienating experiences abroad. (Hunter 225)

Later writers such as Lewis and Radcliffe had to resuscitate the 'romance' in order to introduce more fantastic aspects into their fictions. Although their views about the role of the fantastic were different, Radcliffe wrote, among other things, *A Sicilian Romance* (1790) and *The Romance of the Forest* (1791), while Lewis's *The Monk* (1796) was declared 'A Romance' immediately after the title, on the front page, as was Radcliffe's answer to it, *The Italian* (1797).

In the eighteenth-century novel, the characters are concerned with the probability of appearances, and reading appearances through probability. Clarissa makes her decisions based on probability, judging the probability of appearances. She considers her family's 'vehemence' against Lovelace to be 'beyond all bounds of probability' (*Clarissa* 49), and ponders about her current position within her family:

> Upon the whole, then, what have I to hope for, but a change in my father's resolution [for her to marry Mr Solmes]? —And is there any probability of that; such an ascendancy as my brother and sister have obtained over every body; and such an interest to pursue the enmity they have now openly avowed against me? (*Clarissa* 235-236)

In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Emily constantly blames herself 'for suffering her romantic imagination to carry her so far beyond the bounds of probability', and determines 'to endeavour to check its rapid flights, lest they should sometimes extend into madness' (*Udolpho* 342). Despite her sensibility and appreciation of poetry, there is a very rational mind at work in Emily and most eighteenth-century characters, who are afraid of letting themselves fall into fantasies, unreasonable passions and madness.

In the eighteenth-century novel most characters do not read novels. One would have to wait for Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* (1817, written between 1798-1799 and revised for publication in 1804) to find a positive depiction of characters reading novels. According to the narrator:

> [Catherine and Isabella] shut themselves up, to read novels together. Yes, novels; for I will not adopt that ungenerous and impolitic custom so common with novel-writers, of degrading by their contemptuous censure the very performances, to the number of which they are themselves adding —joining with their greatest enemies in bestowing the harshest epithets on such works, and scarcely ever permitting them to be read by their own heroine, who, if she accidentally take up a novel, is sure to turn over its insipid pages with disgust. (*Northanger* 30)

In the eighteenth-century novel, most characters do not even appear to read fiction at all. Others confess to have read too many romances and fear the influences of such reading or their judgment being questioned because of such reading. None seems to be explicitly writing the novel they narrate. If they write, they appear to be writing more realistic texts, such as diaries, letters or confessions. It is as if eighteenth-century novelists did not feel confident enough to deal with novels within the novel, between romances and true stories. It is as if the novelists were unsure about the advantages or disadvantages, for a character, of reading novels. In the second volume of *Pamela*, Pamela writes to Lady G.:

> I remember my lady used often to observe, there is a time of life in all young persons, which may properly be called the romantic, which is a very dangerous period, and requires therefore a great guard of prudence; that the risque is not a little augmented by reading novels and romances. (*Pamela* 2449)

In Frances Burney's *Camilla*, we find an example of Pamela's warning, in the figure of Mrs Berlinton:

> She had been an orphan from earliest years, and left, with an only brother, to the care of a fanatical maiden aunt, who had taught her nothing but her faith and her prayers, without one single lesson upon good works, or the smallest instruction upon the practical use of her theoretical piety. All that ever varied these studies were some common and ill selected novels and romances, which a young lady in the neighbourhood privately lent her to read [...] Brought up thus, to think all things the most unusual and extraordinary, were merely common and of course; she was romantic without consciousness, and excentric without intention. Nothing steady or rational had been instilled into her mind by others. (*Camilla* 487-488)

In contrast to Eugenia, the character of Mrs Berlinton:

> Having read no novels, her imagination had never been awakened to scenes of this kind [love]; and what she had gathered upon such subjects in the poetry and history she had studied with Dr Orkborne, had only impressed her fancy in proportion as love bore the character of heroism, and the lover that of an hero. Though highly therefore romantic, her romance was not the common adoption of a circulating library: it was simply that of elevated sentiments, formed by animated credulity playing upon youthful inexperience. (*Camilla* 315)

In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Emily reads mainly poetry and classics, which seems to give her sensibility and wisdom. Caleb Williams gets closer to writing his own novel, as an answer to Gines's *Wonderful and Surprising History of Caleb Williams*, but opts for the genre of memoirs, which in the end constitute his novel. Among his reasons for writing, Caleb mentions:

> I conceived that my story, faithfully digested, would carry in it an impression of truth that few men would be able to resist; or, at worst, that, by leaving it behind me when I should no longer continue to exist, posterity might be induced to do me justice; and, seeing in my example what sort of evils are entailed upon mankind by society as it is at present constituted, might be inclined to turn their attention upon the fountain from which such bitter waters have been accustomed to flow. But these motives have diminished in their influence. I have contracted a disgust for life and all its appendages. Writing, which was at first a pleasure, is changed into a burthen. (*Caleb* 303-304)

Caleb establishes a link between his 'disgust for life' and the fact that writing has 'changed into a burthen'. This idea was ideologically popular. Writing was generally seen as close to a vice, an unhealthy activity, which is implied by its association with a 'melancholic satisfaction'. For Caleb, writing appears to be an immediate consolation or distraction; paradoxically, since it is a 'distraction' from what constitutes the focus of his writing. This paradox is resolved through a separation or difference between writing and everything else (the world, reality, and history, which constitute the subjects of Caleb's writing), beyond the issue of temporality as the past, of memories displacing the past, allowing him to forget the present and envisage the future.

The difference between appearance and reality is more evident in Caleb's preoccupation with his text carrying 'an impression' of truth (an appearance), which will be able to seduce

the reader ('that few men would be able to resist') into believing it. Caleb is aware that it is not enough to tell the truth (things as they truly are) but that it is even more important to give the appearance of telling the truth. He is aware that his narrative is not the same as things really are. At the beginning, he states, 'my story will at least appear to have that consistency, which is seldom attendant but upon truth' (*Caleb* 3). Commenting upon that sentence, Mishra explains:

> In writing out my life as my story, the subject I/my as history—as in 'my life'—now enters the realm of fiction. The truth that is history is always fragmented, and lacks consistency; the truth that is fiction (a paradox) will 'appear' to have a consistency, since art can 'fake' concordances or unities, impose a design, that the lived experience of 'my life' cannot. It becomes clear that through 'writing,' then, Godwin/Caleb invokes a totality that is missing from life. But he can only reflect on that totality, since the act of writing will be anything but unified. Clearly 'appear to have' is the crucial corrective to Caleb's conception of the writing of 'my story'. (Mishra 148)

There is a temporal gap between real life and the telling of that life in a story, with the apparent impossibility of remembering everything. It is, therefore, not life as lived but as remembered, as reflection and appearance. In the eighteenth-century novel, such representation is given the appearance of consistency, in the belief that life has a meaning, even if such a meaning fails to appear in life.

Consistency appears to be the fundamental difference that allows the narrative and the truth of things (as they really are) to be thought about together, in opposition to the inconsistent world of things as they appear. All narratives grant a certain level of consistency to a series of events that might have lacked any consistency in terms of logic or reason. In fact, according to Bender, 'realism and its accompanying fictionality are [...] ways of imparting order and decipherability to the flux of data conferred by our perceptual faculties' (Bender 16).

As Mishra reminds us, it is a matter of 'appearing to have' consistency and meaning rather than the certitude of having these. Writing and reading are, after all, as part of life, not necessarily consistent. They are also made up of improbable elements, although most of the time they can appear probable. In his writing, Caleb tries to make his story look consistent. He writes under the assumption that every truth must be consistent. That is

one of the reasons for appropriating Collins's version of the story: 'to avoid confusion in my narrative, I shall drop the person of Collins, and assume to be myself the historian of my patron' (*Caleb* 9-10). By dropping the figure of Collins as narrator, Caleb gives more credibility to his account. The contrary would have been to declare that all he knew about Falkland had come from what Collins had told him. However, even assuming that Collins is a reliable source, he could not have had direct knowledge of what he tells Caleb. Most of Falkland's previous history seems to have been put together from a series of hearsays, assumptions, memories and interpretations. Caleb follows a similar method. He reveals that the apparently consistent story he has just written was put together from a heterogeneous multiplicity of sources:

> I have stated the narrative of Mr Collins, interspersed with such other information as I was able to collect, with all the exactness that my memory, assisted by certain memorandums I made at the time, will afford. I do not pretend to warrant the authenticity of any part of these memoirs, except so much as fell under my own knowledge, and that part shall be given with the same simplicity and accuracy, that I would observe towards a court which was to decide in the last resort upon every thing dear to me. (*Caleb* 106)

There is also a consistency of interpretation woven into the story, which appears to be of the time of the events. Caleb recognises that:

> It will also most probably happen, while I am thus employed in collecting the scattered incidents of my history, that I shall upon some occasions annex to appearances an explanation which I was far from possessing at the time, and was only suggested to me through the medium of subsequent events. (*Caleb* 118)

Caleb claims that he does not pretend to 'warrant the authenticity of any part of these memoirs' *except* for what 'fell under my own knowledge' *and* is presented with simplicity and accuracy. The claim of simplicity is equivalent to that of plain-speaking, considered to be 'the best language for advancing truth-claims' in the eighteenth century (Loveman 38). According to the introduction of *Colonel Jack*, in it, as in many other novels by Defoe, 'all artifice is artfully concealed; it has every appearance of being a frank, ungarnished autobiography, written by a plain man for plain readers' (*Jack* 7). The problem is that, as the eighteenth-century novelists make evident, 'plain-speaking' is also an appearance and a performance, just like the appearance of unity and consistency. Therefore, there is no

easy way of distinguishing real knowledge from the rest, based on appearances. Hume had already stated that 'all knowledge degenerates into probability', as 'we transfer our experience to instances, of which we have no experience' (Hume 180, 105). Although seeming to endorse the belief that appearances can never be as important as what is beyond or behind them (truth itself, which is not supposed to be of the order of appearances), Caleb concedes enormous importance to appearances, opening the interrogation, 'how can things be otherwise?'

Tristram Shandy subverts the issue of probability in writing. Although not appearing to be a realist novel, it is realist to a higher degree, as it reflects on the gap between life and writing. According to Swearingen, in *Tristram Shandy* 'the old dichotomy between reality and appearance —events-in-themselves and events-as-they-appear— has been obviated by the ontological character of the events of understanding (Swearingen 14). Things exist as they come to appear, in thought and writing, as understanding. In the 'understanding', there is no difference between being and appearance. *Tristram Shandy* makes explicit that relation, while other eighteenth-century novels presuppose the existence of a reality, which the words or the narration try to reproduce in their appearance. Other probable forms are also possible, such as the construction of narrative time, shaped by the experience of the passing of time and memories. The deferrals and digressions are the most realist in the sense of a succession of ideas. Time is experiential, Tristram argues, responding to criticisms of his apparent break of a linear narrative time; time is subject to the perception of it, and influenced by a 'train of ideas':

> If the hypercritic will go upon this; and is resolved after all to take a pendulum, and measure the true distance betwixt the ringing of the bell and the rap at the door; —and after finding it to be no more than two minutes, thirteen seconds, and three-fifths,---- should take upon him to insult me for such a breach in the unity, or rather probability, of time; —I would remind him, that the idea of duration and of its simple modes, is got merely from the train and succession of our ideas. (*Tristram* 84)

The improbable is, however, 'part' of the probable: it helps to define and reinforce the probable, based on appearances. For example, the Quaker tells Susan that:

> [B]y thy Account, thy Mother must be extremely young, or this Lady [Roxana] cannot be thy Mother; for thou seest […] and any

one may see, she is but a Forty Years old, if she is so much, and is
now big with-Child. (*Roxana* 355)

Although Roxana was young when she gave birth to Susan (probable), she is not as young
as the Quaker assumes her to be then, pregnant (improbable). Roxana's false appearance —
looking pregnant and young enough to be pregnant— renders improbable ('extremely young')
the possibility of her having given birth to Susan. A case can be made for verisimilitude in
terms of probability, possibility and appearances. As Patey reminds us, there were at least
two positions, represented by George Campbell and Thomas Warton:

> Campbell complicates the connection between consistency and
> belief by allowing that 'fiction may be as plausible as truth. A
> narration may be possessed of this quality to the highest degree,
> which we not only regard as improbable, but know to be false'.
> Warton, more a rationalist, disagrees: 'In the best-conducted
> fiction, some mark of improbability and incoherence will appear'.
> (Patey 317 n70)

Based on a belief in the absolute difference between reality and fiction, Campbell thought
that a fiction could pass for truth, in a successful deception, through the use of probability.
That is why, he argued, fiction could be more dangerous, because it could make opposite
things seem the same, making the reader believe it to be true even when they 'know' it to be
false. Warton, on the other hand, believed that in fiction a necessary degree of improbability
could not but appear, so perhaps the danger was not so serious, as fiction could always be
detected by such improbability.

In part, because of the subjective reading of appearances, it is practically impossible to
avoid all improbable elements in an eighteenth-century novel. In other words, probability
itself is apparent. It is a matter of what appears probable. The image of the character-narrator
and writer makes the text appear more probable, as if the reader is reading not a fiction but
real facts. Eighteenth-century novels such as *Clarissa* and *Evelina* appear more probable,
as their main characters appear to have written their own stories. Nevertheless, following
Warton's position, there are always improbable elements, even in the most 'realist' of the
eighteenth-century novels, such as Richardson's *Clarissa*. According to Castle:

> [I]n a way [Clarissa's escape from the brothel in which Lovelace
> has sequestered her] is the most laboriously 'plotted,' artificial, and
> implausible event in the whole novel —a piece of sheer authorial

wish-fulfillment. As Lovelace says, there is little 'probability' in it. Common sense alone, gleaned perhaps from an age in which Yorkshire Rippers and Hillside Stranglers flourish, suggests that Clarissa's escape is stunningly improbable: women persecuted in the theatrical, obsessive, and ultimately necrophiliac manner that she is seldom —in reality— get out alive. (Castle 1995 65)

Castle's example is of particular interest because it shares a position similar to Lovelace, an improbable character according to critics. According to Thomas Twining, translator of Aristotle's *Treatise on Poetry*:

Shakespeare has made the character appear probable; not certainly to reason, but to imagination; that is, we make no difficulty about the possibility of it, in reading. Is not the Lovelace of Richardson, in this view, more out of nature, more improbable than the Caliban of Shakespeare? The latter is, at least, consistent. I can imagine such a monster as Caliban: I could never imagine such a man as Lovelace. (Twining 184)

One way of understanding such a criticism is in relation to Lovelace's theatricality, his ability to assume different appearances, a skill that appears improbable to most people. Twining's commentary refers to Aristotle's claim that, 'The Poet should prefer *impossibilities* which *appear probable*, to such things as, though *possible*, appear *improbable*', from his *Treatise on Poetry* (Twining 184). Twining seems to think of 'probable' in terms of consistency, but inconsistency is also probable —some might even say more probable. But even if some degree of certainty is given to appearances, certainty as a higher degree of probability makes evident the impossibility of attaining absolute knowledge. According to Margaret J. Osler:

[W]hereas the physicists believed themselves to be approaching the position of Laplace's omniscient intelligence, the philosophers came to abandon the hope that scientific methods can lead to certainty or even penetrate the veil of appearances. (Osler 3)

In the eighteenth century, one of the forces that drove science was the belief in the possibility of attaining total knowledge, to be able to understand and explain the world. Paula Backscheider observes that with 'rapid developments in the physical sciences, accompanying the desire to know more came the desire to assign degrees of certainty or credibility to statements of belief lacking statistical content' (Backscheider viii). Scientific methods are based on probability. What appears as knowledge is what experience keeps delivering as probable, until the certainty is broken or weakened. However, from a philosophical perspective,

attaining such total knowledge appears impossible, even through statistics as a way of measuring and counting appearances as 'observable' data. For philosophy, the knowledge of appearances is necessarily linked to personal experiences, ideas and time, as appearances are in relation to at least two terms.

For eighteenth-century novelists, it was rather a matter of probability. What seems possible according to some appearances makes more evident the limitations of other sets of appearances. Nevertheless, the reading public as much as the critics, seemed to assign more importance to the 'moral' aspect of the work (its exemplarity, the values it encouraged and disseminated) than to its aesthetic form (its style, use of language, and narrative devices). Lennard Davis reminds us that when the critics discussed 'form' in the eighteenth century, 'it was not so much to explicate the subtle and complex plan of the author as it was to make a snap judgment about the probability of the plot or other issues around verisimilitude' (Davis 1999 242). There was a relation between probability, verisimilitude and morals. A work with no probability was considered immoral. Such a judgement was not a mere exercise in evaluating realism, but a moral judgement on the function and form of the novel. In *The Life and Surprising Adventures of D—— De F——* (1719), Charles Gidon denounced what he saw as errors of 'probability and religion' in *Robinson Crusoe* (Seidel 171). Errors of probability were considered to be errors against religion. By the end of the eighteenth century, not much had changed in that respect, as can be seen from the critics' reaction to *The Monk*. Robert Donald Spector recounts:

> In a single-paragraph review, the *British Critic* proclaims *The Monk* as a misapplication of 'good talents,' a monstrous production without 'probability, or even possibility' [...] Less fervid in their responses, but not less dissatisfied with Lewis's subversion of moral standards, the critics in the *European Magazine* and *Monthly Review* raise strong objections to the morality of a work the author of which has obvious talent. Noting Lewis's superior style and energy and approving of the poetry in his novel, the reviewer in the magazine nevertheless attacks *The Monk* and deplores its popularity. He regards the work as subversive to established order and warns that it resembles the anti-religious writings that preceded the French Revolution. Acknowledging the evidence of Lewis's 'genius and talents,' the critic condemns the novel's lack of '*originality, morals,* [and] *probability*'. (Spector 154-155)

The concern about the verisimilitude of *The Monk* had less to do with its irrational or supernatural elements than its overall 'morality' in terms of religion. For Lewis the moral implications of the story do not appear to have been one of his major concerns in trying to render it credible. However, despite the fact that the text appears to be in the tradition of a romance rather than a novel, it could not escape criticism; even Richardson ran into problems in that regard, despite his moral approach. In terms of 'morals', fiction was tolerated rather than encouraged, to the extent that it was realist or probable, and proposed moral examples as models for the instruction of the young. The novel, however, had the power to increase the extent of what appeared probable, and undermine a static system of knowledge and morality. Through the eighteenth-century novels' play of appearances, there is an element of probability that undermines the apparent certitude of other appearances. In the eighteenth-century novel, the reader cannot even be sure that there is always probability in its appearance. After all, it is not an issue of what can be known for certain but of what is probable.

12. GHOSTS

An 'appearance' can also be an 'apparition' or 'supernatural visibility' (Johnson sense 7) such as a ghost, a spectre, a 'walking spirit' (Johnson sense 3) or a 'phantom', 'that which appears without being material' (*OED* sense 14b). However, following the dictates of the Enlightenment, one of the tasks of most eighteenth-century novels appeared to be to educate their readers against the widespread belief in supernatural apparitions. When ghosts, spectres and other supernatural apparitions appear in the novels of Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, Smollett and Radcliffe, they are exposed as mere false appearances, deceptions made possible by the victim's superstition. As Walker reminds us, *Emma Courtney*, a novel that makes no reference to ghosts and apparitions:

> [...] ends with Emma's prayer that through fearless inquiry by courageous women and men, prejudice will be dispelled, the human mind will be emancipated from superstition, and people will acknowledge that 'true dignity and virtue, consists in being free. (Walker 148)

The belief in ghosts was not allowed in the eighteenth-century novel, as a type of fiction that the writer wanted to be considered as serious. Even Fielding, who did not have much of a problem with declaring his fictions the product of the imagination, in *Tom Jones* 'advises' future novelists:

> The only supernatural agents which can in any manner be allowed to us moderns, are ghosts; but of these I would advise an author to be extremely sparing. These are indeed, like arsenic, and other dangerous drugs in physic, to be used with the utmost caution; nor would I advise the introduction of them at all in those works, or by those authors, to which, or to whom, a horse-laugh in the reader would be any great prejudice or mortification. (*Jones* 353-354)

It is as if a different role had been reserved for the novel. As Samuel Johnson pronounces in *The Rambler*:

> The works of fiction, with which the present generation seems more particularly delighted, are such as exhibit life in its true state, diversified only by accidents that daily happen in the world, and influenced by passions and qualities which are really to be found in conversing with mankind. (Johnson 15)

Implicit in Johnson's words is the fact that those works of fiction with which the 'present generation' seemed 'particularly delighted' were not the only works of fiction around. Other works of fiction were also being published, which might not have been to the 'delight' of those whom Johnson describes. Clery identifies one of the possible reasons why the prevalent critical climate could hardly have authorised such other fictions:

> [F]or the enlightened reader, ancient romances are at once fictions *and* historical documents. The same standard that allows for the depiction of irrational impossibilities in works from the distant past must therefore disallow it in modern fictions. [...] For modern fictions are also historical documents, and self-authenticating modernity has a stake in their sustained realism. Description gives rise to prescription: a nation guided by reason, in an age of reason, will not produce modern literary works which could be mistaken for the products of the age of superstition; if such a work does appear, it must not be countenanced. (Clery 54-55)

This explains why ghosts were only allowed to appear in translations and compilations of ancient stories or myths, in which the historical and cultural distance appear to guarantee that the 'translator' or 'editor' could not be accused of believing in superstitions. Writers could pass themselves off as mere historians, attributing the beliefs represented as those of other ages. Such a strategy was deployed to grant enough protection to the reader. This explains why there does not seem to have been a development of the ghost story as a literary genre in the eighteenth-century novel. The genre had to wait until the arrival of the gothic novel, even if fantastic literature continued to develop throughout the eighteenth century.[1]

Such an apparent lack of appearance of ghosts in the eighteenth-century novel remains rather curious, considering that, as Clery has argued, something was changing in that belief. Without becoming the simple non-belief that the Enlightenment dreamt of, a different attitude

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1. For Handley, 'just as *A True Relation* presented Mary Veal's appearance in the most realistic way possible, so the essence of the eighteenth-century novel was to present fiction in the most realistic way. *A True Relation*, and Defoe's subsequent work, therefore helped to negotiate a place for ghosts within this new literary form. As a result, this relation eased the assimilation of ghost stories into novels, verse and works of gothic fiction in the later eighteenth century. Nonetheless, if this work helped to sustain the long-term prominence of ghost stories by relocating them into fictional spaces, this process was gradual and uneven' (Handley 99-100).

or 'mentality' was emerging, not only in relation to ghosts and appearances in general, but also to belief itself. It was an ideological change. For Clery, such a change has to do with an emergent culture of spectacle and consumption:

> [F]reed from the service of doctrinal proof, the ghost was to be caught up in the machine of the economy; it was available to be processed, reproduced, packaged, marketed and distributed by the engines of cultural production. All spirits, whether spuriously real or genuinely fictional, will from this time be levelled to the status of spectacle. (Clery 17)

The change has to do with a growing permeability and widespread spectralisation of appearances, in a path open to new forms of belief in the supernatural, and the novel. The two are connected. Clery recognises this point, and acknowledges its possibility when she writes:

> It seems that the category of the 'real' supernatural, as elaborated in the factual form of the apparition narrative, was always, irresistibly, on the way to becoming a 'spectacular' supernatural, a species of fiction. (Clery 24)

Nevertheless, it is possible to affirm that no real supernatural apparitions appear in any of the major eighteenth-century novels; at their most extreme, they could only be called 'preternatural'.[2] Even Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) could not have appeared as a 'novel'. It had to be published under another appearance: as a romance, and —within the frame of romance—as a translation of an ancient manuscript.[3] And even then, as E. J. Clery notes, it would take 13 years for another successful novel to include a supernatural apparition —Clara Reeve's *The Champion of Virtue* (1777; republished in 1778 as *The Old English Baron*) (Clery 83-84). But even then, Reeve's novel appeared as a corrective to the excessive 'wonders' of *Otranto*. For Reeves, as Clery points out, 'a ghost is acceptable'; even 'an enchanted sword and helmet are credible within limits, but not a "sword so large

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2. As Sasha Handley explains, '*supernatural* refers to something above the power of nature, whereas *preternatural* denotes something irregular, or out of step with the natural way of things. This distinction is especially important for understanding the fluctuating legitimacy of ghost stories in intellectual discourse throughout the long eighteenth century, which took place amidst wrangles over the correct identification and classification of natural and spiritual phenomena. Preternatural wonders should be located somewhere in between the natural and supernatural worlds, as something out of the ordinary, yet potentially explicable by a combination of natural law and divine agency' (Handley 9).

3. However, George Haggerty reminds us that 'Walpole told his readers in the preface to the second edition of The Castle of Otranto (1764) that he had attempted "to blend the two kinds of romance" in the novel. What Walpole called "the two kinds of romance" are what literary critics now call the "romance" and the "novel"' (Haggerty 220). It is in that sense that I will be considering some other 'romances', such as *The Monk* and *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, as novels.

as to require an hundred men to lift it; a helmet that by its own weight forces a passage

through a court-yard into an arched vault, big enough for a man to go through'" (Clery 84).

As Handley remarks, in the case of *The Castle of Otranto*:

> [B]y rooting the story within 'the darkest days of Christianity',
> Walpole assigned real belief in ghosts to a bygone age when the
> Catholic Church and its popish impostures reigned supreme. In
> so doing, Walpole effectively dismissed the idea that enlightened
> and sophisticated Englishmen could bear witness to real miracles,
> visions and ghosts. (Handley 200)

Nevertheless, according to Ellis:

> [I]t would be a credulous reader who found Matilda's magical
> theatrics convincing, or who failed to detect the whiff of ironic
> insincerity in [*The Monk*'s] final sublime pages. The consistent
> attitudinal pattern of *The Monk*, building on its credulous
> novelising form, suggests its allegiance to Enlightenment
> principles and politics: anti-clericalism, sceptical satire, and the
> simulacra of supernaturalism. (Ellis 91)

In *The Monk*, in Don Raymond's story of his encounter with the Bleeding Nun, there is a

clear opposition between superstition and scepticism, between a world of superstitious beliefs

and two sceptical lovers, Agnes and Alphonso.[4] Asked if she believes in the apparitions of

the Bleeding Nun, Agnes replies, 'How can you ask such a question? No, no, Alphonso!

I have too much reason to lament superstition's influence to be its Victim myself' (*Monk*

141). She also makes clear that:

> All my knowledge of [the Bleeding Nun's] History comes from
> an old tradition in this family, which has been handed down from
> Father to Son, and is firmly credited throughout the Baron's
> domains. Nay, the Baron believes it himself; and as for my Aunt
> who has a natural turn for the marvellous, She would sooner doubt
> the veracity of the Bible, than of the Bleeding Nun. (*Monk* 139)

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4. I use Alphonso's name to refer to Raymond's 'character' within his tale. To refer every time only to Raymond —as if Raymond and Alphonso were exactly the same, as the narrator in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* does with 'Agnes, who may now be called the Lady Laurentini' (*Udolpho* 647)— would ignore the issue of his appearance in the events he is telling (in *Udolpho*, 'Laurentini' is made to appear as the truth hidden under the appearance of 'sister Agnes'). Alphonso is the name under which Raymond used to appear. As he later confesses, 'a childish vanity had led me to conceal my real name even from my Mistress; I wished to be loved for myself, not for being the Son and Heir of the Marquis de las Cisternas' (*Monk* 165). As Vighi and Feldner remind us, for Žižek, 'while man is convinced that he should be loved for what he really is (his positive characteristics, the "social mandate" he ascribes to himself), woman, as Lacan puts it, wants to be loved for what she is not, for the contingent masks she wears: "A man stupidly believes that, beyond his symbolic title, there is deep in himself some substantial content, some hidden treasure which makes him worthy of love, whereas a woman knows that there is nothing beneath the mask — her strategy is precisely to preserve this 'nothing' of her freedom…"' (Vighi and Feldner 204). Such remarks also help to explain some women's concealment of their true names in eighteenth-century novels such as *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana*. Although at one level this gesture appears the same as Raymond's, the logic behind it is practically the opposite.

The Baroness's 'turn for the marvellous' is reinforced by her taste in reading romances. This is an ironic criticism if it is one, since The *Monk* appeared as a romance itself, even if of a completely different type. Such self-reflexivity was not entirely strange in romances, the most famous case being that of *Don Quixote*, as Lennard Davis reminds us (Davis 1996 16-19). On the other hand, the narrative makes the sceptical characters Agnes and Raymond pay the price for their lack of belief. The narrative is compelled to diminish with a warning the possible scepticism of the reader regarding the story, and points out that, like fantastic fictions, the 'supernatural' exists, and it can have serious consequences for those who do not believe in it. In that sense, it is not surprising that ghost stories were promoted by Catholics and Protestants during the eighteenth century, as a way of reinforcing belief.

Alphonso's scepticism is implicit in his approval of Agnes's plan, a plan which, upon hearing it, Cunegonda, her governess, exclaims: 'What impiety! What incredulity!' (*Monk* 150). Raymond also starts his story by telling Lorenzo, Agnes's brother, 'You cannot but be aware that your Parents were unfortunately Slaves to the grossest superstition' (*Monk* 130). Raymond sees superstition as an obstacle to his relationship with Agnes: 'The superstition of the Parents of Agnes, aided by her Aunt's unfortunate passion, seemed to oppose such obstacles to our union as were almost insurmountable' (*Monk* 137). It is not clear what 'the grossest superstition' is, to which Agnes's parents are said to be slaves. Perhaps Raymond is referring to their religious beliefs, as he recounts the origin of what would become the obstacle to the love between Agnes and himself —which in other times someone would have believed to come from destiny or fate:

> Donna Inesilla vowed, that if She recovered from her malady, the Child then living in her bosom if a Girl should be dedicated to St. Clare, if a Boy to St. Benedict. Her prayers were heard; She got rid of her complaint; Agnes entered the world alive, and was immediately destined to the service of St. Clare. (*Monk* 131)

If that had not happened, he and Agnes might not have suffered major difficulties in being together. To believe in God's help, and to keep a promise in return, is not necessarily superstition or fanaticism. However, Raymond equates religious belief with fanaticism and superstition, as if they were the same thing. According to his story, the fact that Donna Inesilla's

'prayers were heard' discards the possibility of her recovery being a mere coincidence.[5] And if that were God's intervention, in reply to her prayers, was Donna Inesilla then not supposed to keep her promise? A possible answer to this question lies in understanding Raymond's position as one of religious moderation or moderate beliefs. While still Catholic (or a 'closet Anglican', to use Emma McEvoy's expression), what amounts to belief in a certain amount of dogmas beyond reason and nature, from within his 'moderate' position the religious behaviour of Agnes's parents cannot but appear as superstition.[6]

Superstition is, therefore, a matter of subjective appearances: from Raymond's ideological position, Agnes's parents cannot but appear to be superstitious. From another point of view, they could have appeared to be true believers. And from their point of view, Alphonso's moderate beliefs might have looked insufficient and lacking in commitment. One also needs to remember that in the eighteenth century, superstition and religious fanaticism were mainly attributed to the low social classes, such as peasants, servants and traders. Irrational beliefs were thought to be the product of ignorance and lack of education. Not surprisingly, women and children were considered the main targets of such beliefs. In the case of Antonia, for example:

> [H]er Nurse, who believed firmly in Apparitions, had related to her when an Infant so many horrible adventures of this kind, that all Elvira's attempts had failed to eradicate their impressions from her Daughter's mind. (*Monk* 316)

In the world represented in *The Monk*, there is not much difference between the social classes in terms of beliefs. Belief in the apparition of the Bleeding Nun —which is said to be confirmed by many visual witnesses— is taken as a fact. Even if neither Agnes nor Raymond initially believe in the real existence of the Bleeding Nun, they cannot deny that there are people who believe they have seen such an apparition. However, despite the fact

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5. It is possible to see here indirect narration: Raymond relating from the point of view of Agnes's parents, while retaining his belief that everything was just a coincidence that was going to have fatal consequences for Agnes and him, and all because of the religious beliefs of Agnes's parents. This possibility, however, is not supported by much else in the text.

6. For McEvoy, 'the Catholics in *The Monk* —supposedly all the characters, but everyone who is more tolerant and possesses powers of rationality is really a closet Anglican— are constantly starting at ghosts' (McEvoy xxix). However, there is something utterly 'superstitious' in the eighteenth-century Protestant speculation and condemnation of Catholic 'superstition'. As Derrida explains, 'speculation always speculates on some specter, it speculates in the mirror of what it produces, on the spectacle that it gives itself and that it gives itself to see. It believes in what it believes it sees: in representations. […] speculation is always theoretical and theological. […] theology *in general* is "belief in ghosts" (Gespensterglaube). One might say belief *in general*' (Derrida 1994 183).

that a similar belief in ghosts was widespread in eighteenth-century Britain, the stories of gothic 'romances' such as *The Monk* were 'forced' to take place in a distant time and place, such as Spain, at a time associated with religious fanaticism. It was as if only such a double distance could allow eighteenth-century readers to confront or sublate their own superstitions.

The recurrent apparition of figures of 'ghosts' and 'spectres' in most eighteenth-century novels remains curious since, as Handley notices, at the time 'countless ghost stories were exposed as frauds, impostures or as mental delusions of the weak and credulous as a result of an obsessive drive to distinguish fact from fiction' (Handley 4). This is also curious given that what Lennard Davis has described as 'an uncertainty as to the factual or fictional reality of the work', 'one of the major components in the phenomenology of reading during the early eighteenth century' (Davis 1996 24), could have allowed writers to openly explore the subject of ghosts in their fictions. Most eighteenth-century novelists preferred to not even try, while at the same time they could not stop themselves including in their texts the figures of ghosts and spectres. Perhaps the situation is not so curious, if we think that some novelists accused writers of romances of the very crimes of which they themselves could have been guilty (writing mere fictions, promoting superstitious beliefs, such as a belief in the existence of ghosts), as if that could have protected them against romances and ghosts. In that sense, ghosts and romances share a similar status; they fascinate writers, who seem to feel the need to expose their pernicious influence in order to gain authority for their own serious work.

The belief in ghosts was so firm and widespread that Defoe did not see any point in arguing their existence in his *Essay on History and Reality of Apparitions* (1727). For him, it was a fact that spectres could appear. In a similar way, as Briggs claims:

> [A]s long as the belief in ghosts was widely accepted at a popular level —and as late as 1778 Dr Johnson could declare that 'All argument is against it, but all belief is for it'— ghosts remained of limited interest in themselves, and what stories there were about them tended to dwell on why they had come, rather than on the mere fact of their existence. (Briggs 1977 27)

Rather, what sometimes were doubted were certain accounts of the apparitions of ghosts; in other words, not that ghosts could appear, but some particular apparitions. And, although there was also some rational skepticism, quite often this was accompanied by a fascination with the possibility of their existence —almost a desire to believe.

An early example of an apparent 'supernatural' apparition can be found in Roxana's 'visions' of her daughter Susan, whom she thinks Amy has killed:[7]

> As for the poor Girl [Susan] herself, she was ever before my Eyes; I saw her by-Night, and by-Day; she haunted my Imagination, if she did not haunt the House; my Fancy show'd her me in a hundred Shapes and Postures; sleeping or waking, she was with me: Sometimes I thought I saw her with her Throat cut; sometimes with her Head cut, and her Brains knock'd-out; other-times hang'd up upon a Beam; another time drown'd in the Great Pond at Camberwell. And all these Appearances were terrifying to the last Degree. (*Roxana* 374)

Roxana calls her visions of Susan 'appearances' not 'apparitions', which correspond to 'an unreal object of thought; a phantasm of the brain' (*OED*). Although this meaning usually appears in the singular, here the plural 'appearances' is justified, as it refers to a series of appearances, each one —each time that Roxana sees Susan, 'with her Throat cut', 'with her Head cut, and her Brains knock'd-out', or 'hang'd up upon a Beam'— being a singular act of appearance. In the multiplicity of her appearances, Susan resembles a ghost that keeps coming back to haunt Roxana. This is only 'in appearance' because at that point in the story Susan is still alive. Later on in the novel, however, rather than any assurance of her death (the reader is never told or shown that Susan has been murdered), the reader can merely suspect it. The only certitude is that of her disappearance.

In the recurrence of her appearing, Susan resembles a 'revenant' or ghost. She keeps coming back to haunt Roxana's guilty conscience. The 'ghost' of Susan is Roxana's 'own' ghost: a ghost that not only bears her secret name, but that was her 'product', as her daughter, victim and product of her imagination. Roxana is the only one who can see such 'appearances'. That those appearances can be just the product of Roxana's imagination does not make them

7. A more famous story is 'A True Relation of the Apparition of One Mrs Veal' (1705). For an account of the history of the text, see (Baine 1968). However, according to Novak, 'Mr Baine's concept of evidence and proof is much in question' (Novak 1970 217). More recently, Starr has argued against the idea of continuing to attribute that story to Defoe (Starr 2003). The reason for not considering such a text here has less to do with its authorship than because it is not a novel, and —like many other stories of the apparition of ghosts, that circulated in eighteenth-century England— it was not considered a fiction.

less 'real', although ghosts necessarily, inevitably, contaminate any definition of 'real', to the point of practically neutralising the word as an adjective. According to Castle, between the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century:

> The rationalists did not so much negate the traditional spirit world as displace it into the realm of psychology. Ghosts were not exorcised —only internalised and reinterpreted as hallucinatory thoughts. Yet this internalisation of apparitions introduced a latent irrationalism into the realm of mental experience. If ghosts were thoughts, then thoughts themselves took on —at least notionally— the haunting reality of ghosts. The mind became subject to spectral presences. (Castle 1995 161)

Despite including a chapter on Defoe's *Roxana*, Castle does not mention Susan's ghostly appearances, but the apparent marginalisation of supernatural apparitions in the eighteenth-century novel reinforces Castle's claim about the internalisation (or 'psychologising') of ghosts. Passages such as the one quoted above from *Roxana* seem to encourage psychoanalytical interpretations. In *The Monk*, Raymond can be seen as a case of 'suggestion'. He knows the story of the Bleeding Nun. He is 'impressed' by Agnes's drawings of the scene of her apparition, and, even if he is not superstitious, he seems to experience a sense of profanation, as a player in Agnes's plan to impersonate the ghost. Added to that are anxiety and a propitious setting associated with 'melancholia' (a word that appears recurrently, preceding his encounters with the Bleeding Nun). These elements constitute the perfect conditions for Raymond to be able to see the ghost and to become haunted by it. The 'wandering Jew' considers Raymond's case as that of an influence, suggesting that the exorcism must take place 'on the hour when the Sabbath Morning breaks', since then 'Spirits of darkness have least influence over Mortals' (*Monk* 168). As he explains to Raymond, it is not a simple case of a recurrent apparition, since 'though to you only visible for one hour in the twenty-four, neither day or night does She [the Bleeding Nun] ever quit you; Nor will She ever quit you till you have granted her request' (*Monk* 169). However, extending Castle's thesis to all eighteenth-century novels is problematic. In *Tom Jones* and *Humphry Clinker* there are other mechanisms in place, to explain away what appears against or in spite of reason. *The Castle of Otranto* and *The Monk* also resist rational explanations,

without becoming absurd: there are 'reasons' that justify the supernatural, even if they appear against the logic of the world proposed by the Enlightenment. As Patey observes:

> Walpole did not justify his deviations from 'the appearances of Truth' by invoking a notion of internal probability, as very soon others would (to argue that marvels reveal passionate truth would hardly have been in his character); but neither did he finally give naturalistic explanations of them, as Mrs Radcliffe was notoriously to do. To a Romantic such as [the critic Jean Paul] Richter, who observed his German contemporaries making concessions to novelistic probability like Mrs Radcliffe's, the explained marvellous was a kind of trivial 'juggling'. (Patey 160)

The Monk also does not promote rational or psychological explanations of what appears as supernatural; but neither does it argue in favour of a belief in the apparition of ghosts. If we were forced to define the position of the novel towards the supernatural based on the story of the Bleeding Nun, it appears to be more like a warning against dismissing too quickly the belief in the supernatural. That does not mean that gothic novels escape the ideals of the Enlightenment. Markman Ellis points out that:

> [I]n recent years the gothic novel has been located as a participant in the rationalizing project of Enlightenment. Clara Tuite, for example, has argued that *The Monk* 'is not a reaction to the Enlightenment [...] but a form of Enlightenment discourse', in which the novel's 'unmasking, revelation and rending the veil of church hypocrisy' has the effect of 'opening superstitious church institutions to the light of reason'. (Ellis 78)

In the case of *Tom Jones*, although no ghosts appear, references are made to ghosts several times. In Book XVIII, Chapter II, 'Containing a very tragical Incident', the reader is told that:

> Partridge came stumbling into the Room with his Face paler than Ashes, his Eyes fixed in his Head, his Hair standing an End, and every Limb trembling. In short, he looked as he would have done had he seen a Spectre, or had he, indeed, been a Spectre himself. Jones, who was little subject to Fear, could not avoid being somewhat shocked at this sudden Appearance. (*Jones* 813)

The passage contains a paradigmatic description of the physical symptoms of someone who has seen a ghost, identified by analogy ('as he would have done had he seen a Spectre'). At that moment in the story, without knowing what has happened to Partridge, it is possible to think that he has actually seen a ghost. But, as the reader soon finds out, there was no ghost. Unless the 'ghost' was Tom Jones's apparent mother, Jenny Jones, appearing then as Mrs

Waters, and 'the horror' was Partridge's suspicion that incest has taken place between her and Jones. However, the reader already knows that all that happened between them was a long conversation, which 'ended at last with perfect Innocence' (*Jones* 811); and, as the reader finds out towards the end of the novel, she is not Tom's mother. What the reader is not told is what Partridge was supposed to have seen or imagined. Therefore, it is possible to think, initially, that he has seen a ghost. James Burgh provides a similar description of 'Fear' in *The Art of Speaking* (1763):

> Fear, violent and sudden, opens very wide the eyes and mouth; shortens the nose; draws down the eye-brows; gives the countenance an air of wildness; covers it with deadly paleness; draws back the elbows parallel with the sides; lifts up the open hands, the fingers together, to the height of the breast, so that the palms face the dreaded object, as shields opposed to it. One foot is drawn back behind the other, so that the body seems shrinking from the danger, and putting itself in a posture for flight. The heart beats violently; the breath is fetched quick and short; the whole body is thrown into a general tremor. The voice is weak and trembling; the sentences are short, and the meaning confused and incoherent. (Burgh 17)

Burgh's description was close enough to the standard appearances of 'fear' to recognise when someone (such as a character in a play) sees a ghost —a particularly useful technique when the ghost is not represented in a play, to make it appear so. By codifying the supposedly natural appearance of someone who sees a ghost, *The Art of Speaking* also made possible (and seemed to encourage) the reproduction of the code, to create the false impression that a ghost has appeared.

Partridge's 'sudden Appearance' as someone who has seen a ghost also resembles a supernatural apparition: he appears looking like a ghost. Interestingly enough, the existence of spectres is not explicitly put in doubt. On the contrary, if Partridge looks like someone who has seen a ghost, there must be people who have seen ghosts; and if Partridge also looks like a ghost, the narrator appears to be one of those people, someone who knows what a ghost looks like. But such logic is not perfect. It is 'contaminated' with the iterability of appearances, with formulas such as 'as if' and 'looking like'. Nevertheless, no 'real' ghost or spectre appears in the story, as if, apart from inhabiting the popular imagination, they do not exist.

In *Humphry Clinker*, ghosts are mentioned in terms of belief and superstition. For example, Lydia, one of the main narrator-characters, declares: 'Since we came to Scotland, [Jenkins] has seen apparitions, and pretends to prophesy [...] —If I could put faith in all these supernatural visitations, I should think myself abandoned from grace' (*Clinker* 298). The apparition of 'ghosts' appears to be related to the possibility or impossibility of 'prophesy' and the belief in 'supernatural visitations', in contrast to a religious scepticism. Interestingly enough, it is the 'superstitious' Jenkins that resumes the 'philosophy' of appearances in the novel, when she states that 'a scalded cat *may* prove a good mouser, and a hound be staunch, thof he has got narro hare on his buttocks' (*Clinker* 139) (my emphasis). In other words, things can be deceitful.

Lydia's scepticism comes from religion. Procedures of disavowal and rejection have been wellknown throughout history, as religions appear to fight superstition, promoting their own system of beliefs in the supernatural. In the case of ghost stories, Handley reminds us that 'churchmen often credited these relations because they offered proof of the most fundamental Christian beliefs' (Handley 28). According to Wolfgang Neuber:

> Catholics required spirits as a chance to liberate some poor souls from purgatory, and so they would have been less inclined to construe them in texts; their approach would seem to be rather practical or pragmatic. Protestants, on the other hand, required spirits as signs warning against the ways of the devil; they would need repeated empirical evidence of demonic apparitions and would therefore be inclined to construe spirits in recurring exemplary narratives. Literature in this Protestant context also serves to differentiate the empirical casuistry of spirits. (Neuber 9)

Not surprisingly, it is Jenkins, not Lydia, who appears to be more fervently religious. Lydia is more a product of the Enlightenment than merely Catholic or Protestant. However, the relationship between the Enlightenment, religion and a belief in ghosts was not one of simple opposition. It is worth remembering that most members of the Royal Society were religious, and many also believed in ghosts or were fascinated by the idea of the existence of ghosts. If one considers 'the sheer amount of ghost stories that was produced and purchased between 1660 and 1800' (Handley 5), it is also evident that there were many writers who believed in the existence of such apparitions, or who at least exploited such a

belief, publishing chapbooks, almanacs, pamphlets, and other texts that attempted to pass for truthful accounts. Therefore, it is not exactly true that 'people stopped seeing ghosts in the eighteenth century because they "were losing their social relevance" and were rendered "intellectually impossible" by the progress of Enlightenment thought and practice', as Handley argues, quoting Sir Keith Thomas in his influential *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (Handley 4). That was what most people also wanted to believe.

As for the Bleeding Nun as a ghost or spectre, it does not appear directly but through a secondary narration, which constitutes a sort of detour in the middle of the novel. As Raymond recalls:

> [Agnes] was occupied in drawing, and several unfinished sketches were scattered round her. [...] I [Raymond, then as Alphonso] took up some of the drawings, and cast my eye over them. One of the subjects struck me from its singularity. It represented the great Hall of the Castle of Lindenberg. A door conducting to a narrow staircase stood half open. *In the fore-ground appeared a Groupe [sic] of figures*, placed in the most grotesque attitudes; *Terror was expressed upon every countenance*. Here was One upon his knees with his eyes cast up to heaven, and praying most devoutly; There Another was creeping away upon all fours. Some hid their faces in their cloaks or the laps of their Companions; Some had concealed themselves beneath a Table, on which the remnants of a feast were visible; While Others with gaping mouths and eyes wide-stretched pointed to *a Figure, supposed to have created this disturbance. It represented a Female of more than human stature, clothed in the habit of some religious order. Her face was veiled*; On her arm hung a chaplet of beads; Her dress was in several places stained with the blood which trickled from a wound upon her bosom. In one hand She held a Lamp, in the other a large Knife, and She seemed advancing towards the iron gates of the Hall. 'What does this mean, Agnes?' said I; 'Is this some invention of your own?' [...] 'Oh! no,' She replied; ''Tis the invention of much wiser heads than mine. But can you possibly have lived at Lindenberg for three whole Months without hearing of the Bleeding Nun?' (*Monk* 138-139) [my emphasis]

Within Raymond's narration, the Bleeding Nun also appears mediated, through another set of representations: some drawings representing the subject of the stories told by some people who are said to have seen the ghost. The first thing that catches Alphonso's attention in one of the drawings[8]—or at least the first thing he mentions, as it appears in the foreground— is

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8. It is not without interest that Agnes is the 'author' of that drawing, an apparition, a spectre in itself, the 'intermediary site of a ghostly visitation' (Baldwin 11). In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, the drawing appears to be revelatory: 'Their figures seemed so well suited to the wildness of the surrounding objects, that, as they stood surveying the castle, she sketched them for banditti, amid the mountain-view of her picture, when she had finished which, she was surprised to observe the spirit of her group. But she had copied from

not the ghost itself, but its assumed effect upon a group of figures, a group in which 'terror was expressed upon every countenance'. The ghost is almost absent (not appearing) from that first paragraph, which works as an introduction to Alphonso and Agnes's own story in relation to the Bleeding Nun. And when the ghost appears in the following paragraph, there is some ambiguity between the figural and the representation: To what 'figure' is Raymond actually referring to as representing a 'female' ('a Figure, supposed to have created this disturbance. It represented a Female')? To the drawn figure, or to the figure represented by the drawing? What represents the figure as a female? Is the ghost a representation of a female figure, or was Agnes who (also?) represented the ghost as such, despite the fact that she had not actually seen it? Or is it just Alphonso who interprets the figure as that of a female?

These might seem like rhetorical questions, since we know that the ghost is that of the Bleeding Nun, who was a woman, so the ghost must assume a female figure. In an 'ideal' communicative situation Beatrice de las Cisternas would have had a female figure that her ghost would reproduce, a figure that would get passed to Agnes by her governess, and that her drawing skills would have been able to reproduce, so that Raymond could decode the signs, accordingly. But such a chain of reproductions contains too many assumptions, such as that all women have female figures, that the ghosts of women reproduce their 'living' figures, and that everyone knows how to read or recognise such figures. In other words, there is no room for misinterpretation. But just as 'a letter can always not arrive at its destination' (Derrida 1987a 444), this chain of representation of an assumed female figure could have been broken at many points, even if there seems to be success (it having arrived) in the end.

Raymond deduces a female figure merely from the clothes (habit) that he recognises as belonging to a nun and not to a friar or monk, as if those clothes were 'female' enough to make and guarantee a female figure, to deduce that there must be a woman underneath. Her habit is her armour and her appearance (appearances can work like armours), which prevents a clear identification. Just as a woman is not necessarily where one expects to find her, in the socially assumed 'proper' place and appearance of women, we know that under female

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nature' (*Udolpho* 276). Although the narrator later explains that they are not, technically, 'banditti', the sketching appears to reveal something about them, which until then Emily had difficulty defining.

clothing (such as a nun's habit) a man can also hide. Such 'knowledge' was not entirely new in the eighteenth century. As Castle explains, in eighteenth-century masquerades, 'when the domino was worn with a mask (or sometimes a little hood known as a *baout* or *bahoo*), the shape and sex of the person beneath were virtually obscured'; ecclesiastical dress and transvestite costumes were 'often mentioned together in contemporary descriptions, perhaps because they were generally perceived as the most scandalous forms of disguise. (In some cases, the types overlapped: men dressed as nuns, women as priests or cardinals)' (Castle 1986 59, 63). Also, we should not forget that —as Susan Staves puts it— 'a good number of eighteenth-century male writers, from the most distinguished to desperate hacks, at one time or another —for a great range of reasons and with various degrees of sobriety and levity— on occasion published as women' (Staves 164).

In the case of the figure of the Bleeding Nun, this does not seem to be much of an issue, as under such a figure seem to appear only the 'cinders' (remnants) of Beatrice de las Cisternas. This is an important issue throughout the novel, as much of the story depends on a woman (Matilda) being able to appear as a young man, wearing the clothes or habit of a male novice. Reading appearances also becomes an important issue later on, when, in a very similar procedure, Raymond acquires a ghost where he is expecting to embrace a woman, as he assumes Agnes to be under the figure of the Bleeding Nun that comes to encounter Alphonso.

On the other hand, the first apparition of the Bleeding Nun in the story occurs through a drawn tableau of a scene whose origin is declared to be not the artist's invention (not Agnes's intention) but that of her governess:

> As to Dame Cunegonda, my Governess, She protests that fifteen years ago She saw the Spectre with her own eyes. She related to me one evening how She and several other Domestics had been terrified while at Supper by the appearance of the Bleeding Nun, as the Ghost is called in the Castle: 'Tis from her account that I drew this sketch, and you may be certain that Cunegonda was not omitted. (*Monk* 141)

Dame Cunegonda appears not only as the origin of the scene represented (which she maintains to have experienced in reality) but is also made to appear in that scene, exaggerated, portrayed by Agnes in a distorted way. For Agnes, the story of the apparition of the Bleeding

Nun is an invention, an exaggeration, and the product of superstition, which makes the subject experience as supernatural phenomena what could 'otherwise' be explained by reason. Accordingly, she decides to include an exaggerated version of Cunegonda in the inventions of her drawings.

From the story of the Bleeding Nun, as it is retold by Agnes 'in a tone of burlesqued gravity' (*Monk* 139), I want to stress two points: first, that 'till after her death She was never known to have existed' (*Monk* 139); and, second, that 'according to the tradition, this entertainment commenced about a Century ago' (*Monk* 139). After claiming that the scene represented in her drawing is a mere invention, the first point emphasises that the story and the ghost are no more than products of fiction. After all, even if 'She' does not refer to the ghost but to Beatrice de las Cisternas, the real 'Bleeding Nun' behind the ghost (the one that bled and died, and which was required to die in order for her ghost to appear), they are made *to appear* as one. Agnes ignores not only the name but also the full story of such a hypothetical real human being, the origin(al) of the ghost. Raymond will have to wait until meeting 'the wandering Jew' for the Bleeding Nun's identity to be revealed. Nevertheless, in her use of the pronoun 'She', Agnes refers to Beatrice de las Cisternas, even if it is only to put into doubt her existence. If there is no-body behind a ghost, if the ghost is not of someone who existed, the ghost cannot be real. Therefore, it must be a mere invention, a fiction. In the same way as for Agnes there is no difference between Beatrice and the Bleeding Nun, there seems to be no difference between her apparitions and the stories of her apparitions. Not surprisingly, as she is not a believer, Agnes cannot conceive the existence of such apparitions beyond the stories. For her, there are only stories of apparitions; despite 'accepting' (but one must keep in mind her 'burlesqued' tone) that the Bleeding Nun 'was seen by different People, who all describe her appearance as you [Alphonso] behold it here [the figure in the drawings, represented]' (*Monk* 140).

The second point (in 'According to the tradition, this entertainment commenced about a Century ago') reinforces the idea of the apparitions of the Bleeding Nun as stories, fictions, or inventions, by recognising their function as entertainment. Superstition is explained as a form of popular entertainment, as if people have to invent and tell themselves stories, to

frighten and entertain themselves. But if the Bleeding Nun is only an entertaining fiction, how can the reader understand what happens between Agnes and her lover Alphonso? The ghost of the Bleeding Nun happens to them. Even if the ghost only appears to Alphonso/ Raymond and not to Agnes, it affects them both. It has an effect on their relationship as lovers. First, the Bleeding Nun appears as a convenient popular belief that can make it possible for them to be together (Agnes's plan), but then the real ghost appears between them, as a barrier. It replaces Agnes, leaving her behind, reaching Raymond first, in her place, symbolising perhaps the impossibility of their sexual relationship. This is perhaps not an absolute, structural impossibility, since in the end they will get married, but marriage does not guarantee union and by then they lack the sexual passion of the first promised encounter. At another level, one could also consider their situation bearing in mind Žižek's contention that 'the couple can be reunited in "real life" only if, on the phantasmic level, they have gone through a double suicidal gesture, and accepted the loss. This allows to supplement the standard notion according to which there is no reality without its phantasmic support' (Žižek 2008a 185). In that sense, the Bleeding Nun can be read as symbolising 'the phantasmic level' of the relationship between Agnes and Alphonso/Raymond.

The belief in ghosts served different social functions. The Bleeding Nun gives form to the customary wish or search for justice: through her ghost, 'though [Otto's] crime was unpunished by Man, God's justice permitted him not to enjoy in peace his blood-stained honours' (*Monk* 175). But after the death of her killer, Beatrice's spirit must suffer for her own crime, repeating for a century the sequence of actions that led to her death, finally condemned to appear:

> [...] once on every fifth year, on the same day and at the same hour when She plunged her Knife in the heart of her sleeping Lover: She then visited the Cavern which held her mouldering skeleton, returned to the Castle as soon as the Clock struck 'Two,' and was seen no more till the next five years had elapsed. (*Monk* 176)

This recurrence of the Bleeding Nun as revenant, a ghost that returns, appears senseless or absurd (it bears some resemblance to the myth of Sisyphus) until her burial has been properly accomplished; something that psychoanalysis could read as a compulsion to repeat in the collective imagination. But even more interesting is the fact that not only is Beatrice

Raymond's ancestor —the great-aunt of his grand-father (*Monk* 173), sharing with him the family name 'de las Cisternas'— but also the ghost recognises Raymond's true identity, beyond the mask of Alphonso, as her first words to him are 'Raymond! Raymond! Thou art mine!' (*Monk* 160). Those first words mirror Raymond's verses, as if binding him legally by citation, and ignoring the name of Agnes, to whom such words were initially intended. Also, it must be noted that Raymond's mask is not visual but discursive, an appearance that he constructs in his discourse with other characters, and in his first encounter with the Bleeding Nun there is hardly a discourse for such an appearance to be constructed or maintained. But, could the ghost have been deceived by a visual or discursive appearance? Ghosts seem to have direct access to more inner truths, like the true identity of one's soul, beyond any deceptive appearances.

All of the above makes the encounter between Raymond and the ghost too much of a coincidence to ignore. The Bleeding Nun could be read following Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok's theories.[9] Such an interpretation, however, might produce more questions than the text of *The Monk* can provide answers to. The reader will have to determine, for example, whether the Bleeding Nun is a lying ghost. For Colin Davis, this constitutes one of the main differences between Abraham and Torok and Derrida:

> Abraham and Torok's crucial theoretical and therapeutic innovation is their designation of the phantom as a liar, a purveyor of falsehood in the psychic life of the subject rather than an apparition which restores the truth. For Derrida, the spectre neither lies nor tells the truth in any conventional sense because it does not belong to the order of knowledge; yet Derrida's spectres command respect in a manner that Abraham and Torok's lying phantoms never could, so that their versions of haunting are very different from those of popular culture and from each other. (Davis 2007 73)

We have no examples of lies told by the Bleeding Nun, but if it had not been for 'the wandering Jew', who forced her to tell the truth about her identity and funerary requests, the ghost could not have revealed any of it and would have continued haunting Raymond. But even if a case for the Bleeding Nun as a lying ghost can be put together, there is still a chance that her ghost might not conform to what Abraham and Torok would define as a

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9. As Colin Davies states, for Abraham and Torok the ghost 'is a figure through which the subject may come to be haunted by secrets which do not in any direct way relate to its own experience [...] ghosts are the mediation in fiction of the encrypted, unspeakable secrets of past generations' (Davis 2007 78, 80).

phantom for Raymond; after all, she is more like 'an apparition which restores the truth'.

All the same, the story of the Bleeding Nun can still be read as containing a tomb, a crypt or secret, *and* a ghost, in a cryptonymic reading.[10] However, according to Derrida:

> [W]hen it's a text that one is trying to decipher or decrypt using these concepts and these motifs, or when one is looking for a ghost or a crypt in a text, then things get still more difficult, or let us say more novel. I say a ghost and a crypt: actually the theory of the 'ghost' is not exactly the theory of the 'crypt,' it's even more complicated. Although it's also connected to the crypt, the ghost is more precisely the effect of another's crypt in my unconscious. (Derrida 1985 59)

In that sense, it will be not so much to destroy the crypt, reveal the secret and exorcise the ghost, tasks that are not only problematical for today's literary studies 'after deconstruction', but also recognised as practically impossible, and also not entirely desirable (imagine a life without ghosts, purged of all spectrality).[11] Rather, it will be better to invoke or conjure the ghost to appear. Here I am proposing 'conjuration' more in the sense of 'the magical incantation destined to *evoke*, to bring forth with the voice, to *convoke* a charm or a spirit' (Derrida 1994 41), although one cannot ignore the other meanings also implied by the word, as when Emily exclaims: 'O no, Theresa, tell me all, while I have the power to hear it [...] tell me all, I conjure you!' (*Udolpho* 621). And is it not the 'privilege' of literature —here the novel— to do precisely that, 'tell all' (Derrida 1995a 279) and 'say everything' (Derrida 1992 36)? Every reader conjures the novel to it. It is better to invoke and conjure the ghost to appear, to address and listen to it, as Derrida encourages us to do in *Specters of Marx*:

> Can one, in order to question it, address oneself to a ghost? […] Could one *address oneself in general* if already some ghost did not come back? If he loves justice at least, the 'scholar' of the future, the 'intellectual' of tomorrow should learn it and from the ghost. He should learn to live by learning not how to make conversation with the ghost but how to talk with him, with her, how to let them speak or how to give them back speech, even if it is in oneself, in the other, in the other in oneself: they are always *there*, specters, even if they do not exist, even if they are no longer, even if they are not yet. (Derrida 1994 221)

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10. For some of the uses and procedures of cryptonymic readings, see (Rashkin 1988).

11. The expression 'after deconstruction' is proposed here after Royle's *After Derrida*; understanding by 'after' not deconstruction as a thing from a past to which one could return or leave behind, but 'something' that somehow 'has taken place' in literary studies, that has 'happened' (as an event) and is still 'to come' (Royle 1995 2, 5).

In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, addressing a ghost appears as a necessity. Emily wonders,'what reason had they to conclude it was a spirit, unless they had approached, and spoken to it?', and a few times 'she almost resolved to address the figure, if it should appear again' (*Udolpho* 238, 357; see also 360, 373). However, addressing the apparition is not done in order to listen to what it might have to say, but in the belief that it will dispel its mystery. How exactly that could work is not clear. In practice, it has a point, since there are no ghosts. Everything that appears to be a ghost can reveal itself as human —to answer the question of 'who, or what' (*Udolpho* 357)— when addressed. Nevertheless, none of them do. Therefore, as a method of making ghosts disappear, it does not seem to work. Nevertheless, what appears in a text, in front of our eyes and ears, is ghostly, spectral: a text's apparitions —ghosts from the past, the present and the future.[12] As such, it requires the invocation/conjuration of the reader. Such an invocation/conjuration has being developed by Derrida under the pseudo-concept of 'counter-signature'. As Derrida remarks, 'everyone reads, acts, writes with his or her ghosts, even when one goes after the ghosts of the other' (Derrida 1994 194). And the same applies to other appearances, in their 'ghostliness' or spectrality.

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12. Quoting Henry James ('People enough, first and last, had been in terror of apparitions, but who had ever before become himself, in the apparitional world, an incalculable terror?'), Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royle comment: 'Of course —and this is where fiction is itself most manifestly a haunt— this 'apparitional world' to which James refers only appears through writing. The very strangeness of fiction may be said to consist in this idea of a 'medium', a text, in which the apparitional and non-apparitional are made of the same stuff, indistinguishable' (Bennett and Royle 137).

13. Arrival / Entrance

Many appearances are in the sense of 'arrival' or 'entry into a place or company' (Johnson, sense 6). Roxana, for example, makes her 'perfect appearance' wearing some of her best clothes out of her 'Dressing-Room, which open'd with Folding-Doors into [the Prince's] Bed-Chamber' (*Roxana* 107). Humphry Clinker makes his first public appearance to 'a crowd of his vassals and dependents' by producing 'himself at an open window' (*Clinker* 279). Evelina makes 'her first appearance upon the great and busy stage of life' at a fashionable ball (*Evelina* 7); in fact, the entire novel is presented as the 'history' of Evelina's 'entrance into the world' of polite society.

To enter a world is to come to appear in it, by making a first appearance. To remain within a world, it is usually required to sustain an appearance (a name and a reputation), such as that of a lady or a gentleman. In the eighteenth century, novels were the public form of appearance of characters, through the history/story of how they came to appear in their world. Through what appears as their own diaries, letters and confessions, some characters come into existence and appear to the reader. Nevertheless, this is a seeming appearance, since they cannot present themselves. They are made to appear through the novel.

Through the text, the general appearance of a subject narrator holds together the narration. Everything in the text adds up to at least one subject. For the eighteenth-century novel there cannot be a world without the subject for whom it appears. Even if the narrator remains anonymous, 'it' appears as human ('he' or 'she'). In other words, there cannot be narration without a narrator and narrators must be human. That is not a necessary appearance of writing, but more of a logical influence from spoken narrations, diaries and criminal biographies. In Smollett's *The History and Adventures of an Atom* (1769), the atom is practically made

into a subject as it is given a voice. However, the 'history and adventures' cannot come directly from it. It seems they must have a human intermediary, in addition to the author.

Most eighteenth-century novels stand for the appearance of a character. A character appears to the reader through 'his' or 'her' novel, such as Robinson Crusoe, Moll Flanders, Roxana, Tom Jones, Pamela, Clarissa, Evelina, and Cecilia. Godwin even decided to replace the original title *Things As They Are* with *Caleb Williams*. Giving a novel the name of its main character is not something that novelists just did, it is something that society recognised, in the similarity between the text and the character, between the appearance of a subject and the fiction that bears its name. Like many other character-narrators in the eighteenth-century novel, Caleb's 'person' is almost indistinguishable from his narrative. Caleb can only be known and judged through his narrative. However, it is not only the main characters that appear to the reader through the text, but also through them every other character, object and situation. In fact, even if an eighteenth-century novel seems to stand mainly for the character that appears as a narrator, such a subject, as much as any other writer, must disappear in its writing, in order to make appear the (other) self that he or she has been. The narrator can hardly sustain a reflective narration about itself, in the act of writing such a narration. Writing is always about something else, even when it seems to touch on itself, in a fleeting comment about the current act of writing. Each 'I am writing' is always about a third person. As 'experiments with the subjectivity discovered in the close relationships of the conjugal family', according to Habermas, 'the diary became a letter addressed to the sender, and the first-person narrative became a conversation with one's self addressed to another person' (Habermas 49).

In *Sir Charles Grandison* (1753-1754), Harriet Byron writes to her cousin Lucy, 'shall I tell you what I imagine each person of the company I am writing about (writing in character) would say of me to their correspondents?' (*Grandison* 48). In those three instances of 'I', Harriet represents herself as other, writing and conceiving the possibility of writing 'in character', as other people writing to others about her ('me' also as the other). There is an 'I' that can tell what an 'I' imagines others writing about and an 'I' that represents itself writing about others writing about it. The play of possible representations can easily

multiply in a sentence. The subject represented in the writing is essentially different from the subject who writes, or the one that appears through the writing (the narrator or implied author), even if they seem the same, and correspond to the same subject. Here, the reader gets the appearance of the existence of someone called 'Harriet Byron' in 'her' letter, an appearance that presumably her cousin Lucy should be able to recognise as Harriet's 'voice'. It is usually assumed —unless there are clear signs to the contrary— that the subject who seems to appear in the writing is the same as it represents itself to be, when writing 'I', and that it also corresponds to a real subject beyond the writing, to the subject who wrote the text. But, beyond the letter, there is not Harriet Byron but Samuel Richardson.

After 'the directly or indirectly audience-oriented subjectivity of the letter exchange or diary' (Habermas 49), the recurrent appearance of a fictitious subject, the making appear in fiction of a subject, is what was new in the eighteenth-century novel. The appearance of the author and the subjective particularities of novelists, although not without interest, had been less apparent and more difficult to differentiate from other writers until then. The appearance of characters was already common in writing. The difference between the appearance of the writer and a character is also not exclusive to the eighteenth-century novel. It appears in every kind of writing. Its study is better covered by linguistics and psychoanalysis. One of the particularities of the novel is giving voice and making appear a fictional character as a real subject, although this was not necessarily an eighteenth-century invention. Outside fiction, such making appear was a crime (deception), but textual frauds were not new. However, it was not a matter of passing a fiction off as real, but making it appear to be between fiction and reality, making a subject appear as real as possible. As such, they make appear more clearly, in their liminality, some issues of appearance. In an eighteenth-century novel, there is no real deception, as the novel declares itself, from the beginning, to be fiction. In a successful deception, the 'fictional character' is simply made to appear real as if it were a transparent appearance, and as if there were no difference between appearance, existence and being.

It is not a matter of existence, as if such subjects clearly exist in the text. Nothing exists in the text —there are only 'marks'. They cannot be located in a particular passage

or word. They are not limited to the passages where they are more manifest or to words such as 'I' and 'me'. They haunt every word, every mark, like the figure of the author. They are apparitions, 'mere' appearances, which 'appear for' the reader, which arrive for the reader, like a letter.

The eighteenth-century novel takes among its forms —such as the diary and the confession— that of the letter, to the point that it becomes one of the paradigms of the origin of novel writing. For Mark Seltzer, 'the link between literature and letters could not be more explicit: the novel originates as private letters made public, or, more exactly, as love letters designed, or designated, for interception' (Seltzer 197). The novel is a matter of care, a passion for the other. Those who do not care for the other, do not write. According to Habermas,

> It is no accident that the eighteenth century became the century of the letter: through letter writing the individual unfolded himself in his subjectivity [...] the letter was considered an 'imprint of the soul,' a 'visit of the soul'. (Habermas 48-49)

One must 'love' the other in order to address to him or her an intimate letter, the story of a life, or a novel, knowing that despite the intimate nature of the transaction, love letters always end up somewhere else. They can even end up being incorporated in a novel, as Hays did with 'letters of real people with close personal relationships to her' (Walker 2006). However, according to Tom Keymer:

> [M]ost eighteenth-century epistolary novels stage a cautious retreat from the potential complexity of their own form, preferring safer theories of epistolary transparency to any more troubling recognition of the letter's capacity to distort, transform or conceal. It is no surprise, equally, that such novels are now unread. (Keymer 18)

A 'cautious retreat' is hardly surprising in the desire to contain and keep hold of an intention and meaning. However, if eighteenth-century novels copied the form of letters believing them reassuring, in the apparent simplicity of their communication between writer-sender and reader-receiver, they actually increase the complexity of the text, fragmenting and multiplying its fictions, such as the figure of a master narrator. That does not necessarily mean that real letters were more complex or simple than the ones that appear in the eighteenth-

century novel. The advantage of the eighteenth-century novel is that it made more manifest the implication of the appearances of letters: the trust, belief and possibilities of deception in the assumption of the letter as an extension of its writer, of the assumed appearance that the signature belongs to its writer, that there is a clear correspondence between intention, written words and their meaning, that there is a guarantee of communication between sender and receiver. As eighteenth-century novels show, letters distort, transform and conceal, like appearances. But despite appearances to the contrary, there are no more possibilities of deception in a letter than in a face-to-face conversation.

Like letters, novels and appearances can be sent, received, intercepted, read and interpreted. A novel and its appearance are like a public letter. Like letters, eighteenth-century novels address their readers, delivering characters, stories, ideas and beliefs through the figure of the novelist or author in the guise of a narrator. The author and narrator are always present, through the writing as their only form of appearance, even if such an appearance is also always fleeting, as most of the time they appear (briefly) to disappear, to give place to other voices, and other characters. Just as letters in an epistolary novel, eighteenth-century novels are posted and published. Their publication is their public appearance, their 'entrance into the world'; they are addressed to nobody and everyone. The novel is 'posted' to its readers, like an adestinal letter. Like a son or daughter, it no longer belongs to its author. It escapes control. Just as Evelina no longer belongs to her mother, guardian, father, or even her husband, despite some eighteenth-century beliefs to the contrary, the novel that bears her name and was once published, was beyond Frances Burney's control, in terms of its 'life' or reception. Like the eighteenth-century novels in which they appear, characters and their appearances are letters, which are destined to go to places that exceed the intentions of whoever sends them. By publishing a novel the author makes it public and open to everyone, open to be read and interpreted. The author puts it beyond his or her power to choose its reader or to control its interpretation. Similar to a son or daughter as he or she appears in a novel —every character is a son or daughter and every eighteenth-century novel tells the story of their post and arrival (or non-arrival), their entrance into the world— letters are open to a future over which parents and guardians can only have limited control. They are

similar to a character's appearances, which are never entirely their own. Even if they have some control over their appearance, like authors and parents can have a degree of control or influence over their work and children, appearances exceed them. Appearances are beyond their control. An appearance can be the origin of a general misperception becoming truth. In a letter, the receiver can get the impression of not just reading a message, the content, but it is as if the writer has come to visit. In the eighteenth-century novel, however, the author does not come his/herself in full appearance. He/she remains behind, sending someone else, his/her representative (sometimes the narrator subject seems to stand for the figure of the author or writer within the text).

An appearance is an arrival. What appears arrives. But for an eighteenth-century novel to arrive to its reader, it must not only arrive in his hands and be read, it must also be believed. If the reader cannot believe in the fiction proposed —if the text fails to take the reader beyond the 'surface' of its words— the novel becomes practically unreadable. For the reader sometimes the world of the novel can appear with such an intensity as to lose the distinction between his or her world and the world of the novel. Therefore, it is not only an eighteenth-century novel that is posted as such but with it also the world(s) it contains, like a letter and its 'content'. That way, characters arrive and enter the world of the reader; they come to appear for the reader, as they had come to appear for the writer. As Habermas reminds us, 'Richardson wept over the actors in his novels as much as his readers did' (Habermas 60).

Within an eighteenth-century novel, characters are also posted; they arrive, enter and come to appear. Evelina has the potentiality of her 'destiny', which sends her like a posted letter to someone or something in a future. The word 'destiny' is, after all, linked to destination, finality, end and arrival. She is destined from birth to become a lady and to marry someone like Orville. The destination is 'granted' by ideology, which is like a postal system, through which all letters are posted.[1] Ideology determines a visible horizon of possibility, and with

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1. This idea comes perhaps too obviously influenced by Derrida's *The Post Card*. I think, for example, of what Derrida writes in 'Envois': 'If [...] I think the postal and the post card on the basis of the destinal of Being [...] then the post is no longer a simple metaphor, and is even, as the site of all transferences and all correspondences, the "proper" possibility of every possible rhetoric' (Derrida 1987a 65). However, those words are inscribed in a play of conditional 'if', in an imaginary dialogue with Heidegger. To my knowledge, Derrida never proposed such a similarity between ideology and a postal system.

it the possibility of arrival. It constitutes the system through which a young girl like Evelina is destined to become a woman and a lady. Of course, Evelina's destiny is not shared by every young girl, just as not all letters are sent to and arrive at the same address. Moll Flanders, for instance, appears destined for Newgate's gallows, despite her early efforts to escape her destiny and become a gentlewoman. But Evelina's 'destination' is not secure. It only works as a potentiality —to become a lady and marry someone like Orville— through the ideology of her social class, as a birthright. There is the possibility that things will be otherwise: the 'letter' can always fail to arrive at its 'destined' destination. Between such a potentiality and the possibility of its failure, eighteenth-century novels sustain the reader's interest, in the suspense of what will happen.

In *Caleb Williams*, the purpose of the narrative is to reinstate Caleb's reputation and to reveal how things really are, since Falkland seems to have the power to destroy Caleb, in court and everyday society. In the impossibility of a duel or a resolution through a court of justice, because of the difference in social class, writing appears to be the only way of attaining justice. Caleb invests his last hopes in writing the truth:

> His [Falkland's] fame shall not be immortal as he thinks. These papers shall preserve the truth; they shall one day be published, and then the world shall do justice on us both. Recollecting that, I shall not die wholly without consolation. It is not to be endured that falsehood and tyranny should reign for ever. (*Caleb* 315)

It can be argued that the conflict between Falkland and Caleb is a war between orality and writing. Most tales about Caleb are oral, or appear in types of writing closely related to orality, such as chapbooks and criminal biographies. Caleb's attempts to give a full, 'rational' and 'realist' (as opposed to sensationalist) account of what has really happened seem only achievable through a type of writing removed from orality. Thanks to writing, Caleb thinks he has a chance of winning his battle against Falkland. It does not matter that he can only imagine his victory arriving in a hypothetical future. The 'novel' that Caleb writes, his story, is for the future, like a letter destined to arrive with a future reader who can do him justice. His hopes are based on the belief that truth reveals itself in the end, that it cannot remain hidden. Such a belief is not 'gratuitous' but a fetish, because the opposite reality —'things as they are'— 'is not to be endured'.

The eighteenth-century novel enters the scene of literature. It arrives with a preoccupation about appearances as arrivals and entrances as it tries to define itself against other fictions and genres. The 'father recognition' as one of its recurrent scenes of arrival appears symptomatic of its search for arrival at its destiny; to become what it can become. What in the eighteenth-century novel appears as a matter of inheritance and name is also no less a matter of authorship. During the eighteenth century, to publish anonymously, or under a pseudonym, was a practice as common as that of bringing bastards into the world. Frances Burney decided to publish *Evelina* anonymously to keep her father's name (which was already well known, and had a honourable reputation) from being associated with the popular, low form of the novel. It was like giving birth to an illegitimate child, which could not be publicly recognised. For the second edition, however, Dr Burney encouraged his daughter to acknowledge her authorship. Without such recognition, she risked losing her copyright and the heredity that every author has from having his or her name associated with his or her work. Richardson had a similar experience, even if his reason for publishing *Pamela* anonymously was not only because of his name and reputation but also to enhance the appearance of the reality of the work. However, when he felt that his intentions were being threatened by plagiarism, he made his authorship public.

In this chapter I have shown the connection between eighteenth-century novels and their characters, as the form of the appearing of a protagonist, who usually appears to write his or her own story, like a letter or a novel. Such a character usually appears posted by his or her parents, to his or her destiny, to become and to arrive somewhere, like a letter or a novel, posted to a reader. The connections between self, subjectivity, writing, stories, letters, novels and readers are, therefore, not a coincidence. They involve a conception of an internal self and writing as a form of externalisation, of exposure and concealment, towards an other as a reader of appearances.

As a product of Roxana's imagination, Susan also seems to arrive as an apparition or appearance, similar to the way in which Annette appears to Emily in *The Castle of Otranto*, as an 'ordinary' appearance, and similar to the way in which the Bloody Nun arrives at the agreed meeting point between Alphonso and Agnes in *The Monk*, as if by

coincidence. Rational, psychological, ordinary or supernatural, from a call, as requested, or by coincidence, every arrival appears between the ordinary and the miraculous. Things appear to arrive all the time, and every arrival is close to a miracle. It is in that sense that appearances arrive through the eighteenth-century novel.

14. THE OPEN

Appearances remain open. They defy the closure of definitions. They keep what exists, or what there is, open to interpretation. They keep open the space for the subject to exist. They open worlds within the world. Without appearances there would be no worlds. A closed system of certainty as pure objectivity, where things appear self-present, evident, transparent, cannot be but an appearance itself. The idea of direct (objective) access to things themselves, the thought that things can appear as they really are, beyond the possibility of any deceptive appearance, is one of the 'fantasies' of the eighteenth-century novel. Even if a character believes only his eyes, the most obvious visible appearances, believing to avoid deception, he is already caught in a necessary deception, the symbolic fiction that structures his reality, which allows him to perceive things as such, including himself.

There is a gap between how things 'really are' and how a character perceives them, what appears to him or her. In order for a character to function in the world, he or she must perceive things in a certain way, which is not necessarily the same as how they know they are —or the way they truly are. Appearances are influenced by their need to 'function' (an instrumentality) in relation to the external world. The knowledge of the truth or the real is not a priority of their perception, no matter how much they try to make it a priority. What appears to be reality is a necessary fiction but not in the sense of there being only one that nobody can escape from but in the sense of there always being at least one that constitutes every character. Despite their distrust of appearances, eighteenth-century characters must believe in the fiction of their reality, and assume that what appears to them is real, in order to function in the world, even if they know that the truth can be different. It is not about escaping all fiction or appearance.

Just as a character needs to assume that the 'fiction' of appearances is real in order to function in the world, a novel reader must assume the reality of what is read —despite 'knowing' that it is a fiction— in order to perceive the world that is proposed. However, the perception of an object (a chair, for example) is not of the same 'order' as the perception of a chair that appears in an eighteenth-century novel, even if both are constituted by language. In the novel, there is a superposition of fictional appearances: what appears to the characters, according to what appears to the narrator and/or author, according to what appears to the reader. For the reader as much as for the writer, this implies an opening towards another configuration of the world, as if becoming other. Such an opening comes not only from the reader (readers with a strongly closed world, with a certitude or strong belief about what is real or true find it difficult to read fiction) but also from the novelist, open to the possible 'worlds' of his/her time as much as to those of the characters. That means that there is not only an openness of appearances but also towards appearances, open to 'things' to (come to) appear. Although the openness of appearances also affects those who are most 'closed', guarded against them, events are different in the sense that one does not have to be open to receive them. They 'break through' into the world, transforming it. In other words, events come to appear through appearances but not every appearance constitutes an event.

Reality presupposes the existence of another (which is always exterior) as a total position, such as God or an author. Without the other, without the appearance of an external position, reality appears uncertain. According to Thomas Brockelman:

> Reality emerges from the Real precisely when the world of human existence is conceived *as the perspective of an omniscient subject* —as what Žižek follows Lacan in calling the 'Other'. In order to conceive of the world as 'ontologically closed' we imagine a 'viewpoint' *from which* it appears as totality. Reality is always conceived from and for such a totalising view, such an outside. As a result, reality per se is a product of an omniscient subjectivity we imagine. (Brockelman 56)

For eighteenth-century characters reality is constituted by the appearance of things. Even if a character is aware that the way in which things appear to him/her is only part of a totality, to be taken as part of reality, it needs to be thought about in relation to other characters and guaranteed by an omniscient 'other' who can see everything and for whom everything

appears. The reality of appearances is not just his or her own, but he or she must assume that they are the same or similar for other characters. The characters' field of experience, what appears to them, is assumed as a totality that is shared by everybody. The way such a generalisation works is by assuming that there is another that sees what the character sees. In more general terms, it assumes a viewpoint from which all the appearances of that world/reality appear as a unified totality. But such a 'fundamental fantasy' must assume a social aspect. The projection of the social is two-fold. All characters are already part of the social; they see what the social allows them to see, and they assume that what they see is what everybody sees (the social reality), at least in terms of exterior appearances, since a character's interiority is supposed to be more 'his' or 'hers', even if no less social.

In the eighteenth-century novel, the totality is posed or assumed. In that sense, even if there are worlds, as each person or group can constitute a world, and the novels include references to worlds, in plural, there is the assumption that they are contained within one world. It is the assurance of an ultimate ground for all experience, on which appearances depend. Such a conception depends on the belief in a God as the creator and omniscient spectator, rendering the world closed. The world is what it is, as created by God. If there are differences regarding the world, it is not because there are other worlds but because of an imperfect way of perceiving it, which is limited to a point of view. Most conflicts are about different perceptions of reality, with characters assuming that things appear in the same way for the other. To Lovelace, Clarissa appears as a paragon of virtue; to Clarissa, Lovelace appears as a rake; to Lovelace, their relationship appears as a conquest; to Clarissa, a possible redemption; and their relationship is also in relation to God, society and friends. But since the world is assumed to be only one, two different perceptions of reality can only coexist as imperfect approximations of reality and truth.

In the eighteenth-century novel, the characters as well as the novelists presuppose the existence of a world, which they can only try to reproduce. One must also not disregard the influence of a religious (Catholic-Protestant, Judeo-Christian) ideology in the assumption of an omniscient other (God) for whom everything appears. This was an influence that even the most declared atheist seems to have found difficult to escape. Even for a writer

who appears to be an omniscient narrator, there is a certain conservatism regarding what it is possible to narrate; as in having respect for God and not trying to take or usurp his position, which might seem like impiety or madness. Authors basically reproduce part of God's world as the real, in the possibilities of fiction, but they fail to take on the position as God. The most fantastic stories remain the product of a writer's imagination, more than an alternative reality that defies God's creation. Paradoxically, even then, one of the scandals of the eighteenth-century novel was its claim to realism, as every novelist seemed to create a world as God created the world, replicating God's position. They create copies of the real. And there is the danger that the reader will take such worlds as more real than the world that God has created (reality itself, outside the novels). Although they do not go far enough as to appear as God, they still seem to represent a world according to God. Such representations constitute alternative worlds, which can come into conflict with the real world. For a reader, it might be preferable to live within the world of the novel rather than in his/her own world. Or at least it appeared to be so, to individuals excluded from that relationship; as if fictions and worlds did not exist, novel or no novel. But eighteenth-century novels made them more manifest; they brought them to the surface. Even if they all seem to replicate or reproduce one world —the eighteenth-century real world— it is not just another world or a limited number of worlds that can easily be integrated into the world, but the multiplication of worlds. The danger of novels and appearances is that they can appear as another reality, another world. What seems to be innocuous when it is clearly fictitious. The problem is when it becomes difficult to distinguish between the real and the copy, between the real and a 'mere' appearance of reality. Every novel must accomplish that possibility, so there is the risk of escapism.

Ontology has to do with what is, not with what appears. There is a space for the belief that things are one, even if they are perceived differently, from different points of view. Ontologically closed means that the difference resides only in the appearances; it is a difference that stands then for the deceptiveness of appearances. They fail to give us the full real picture of what is; they only give us what appears to be one. It is in that sense that the world can appear closed. It is not open to the sudden existence of something new. In

religious thinking, it is assumed that the world was created. God is not conceived as still creating new things. Similarly, in scientific thinking, it is less about creating something new than understanding that which already exists. However, it is in terms of appearances that such a world —although still assumed to be one, to be consistent— is not just one but becomes a multiplicity. Within a world, appearances open new worlds.

In psychoanalysis, Žižek understands 'fantasy' as an attempt to close the gap between what appears as reality and a beyond that, a 'more fundamental' level of reality (Brockelman 56; Žižek 2000 57). It is not a mere dream or a simple wish but at the core of the subject's belief; it is what drives subjects in their perception of reality. Such a fantasy is fundamental. It is what keeps the subject together. The subject cannot perceive reality as it is, beyond or before such a fantasy, without risking their own 'sanity'. That things can appear as they really are, in the pure transparency of appearances, with direct access to reality, is therefore a 'fundamental fantasy', an appearance that cannot appear as such. It is an 'unconscious' fantasy, which 'cannot appear to consciousness without dissolving it' (Brockelman 32). For such an appearance to appear to us as what it 'is', it will require the disappearance of consciousness, and therefore it will fail to appear. The symbolic fiction that structures reality does not appear less, although it cannot appear as such. God, the author, is then 'outside' of a closed universe in the sense of outside time. As Brockelman notes:

> Žižek reminds us of Descartes' and Malebranche's version of the divine as simply the arbitrary and irrational author of a closed time. As Žižek puts it, 'the properly modern God is the God of predestination'. (Brockelman 151 n16)

Beyond the theological problems that such a position implies, what is of interest here for us is the position of authorship, the relation between the author/creator and the world created. Such a world can be considered closed but it remains open to the emergence of something new. Appearances create a space, which is open to an indeterminate degree. As such, they allow room for the arrival of the other, who is open to a freedom to interpret and decide.

The eighteenth-century novel appears as a privileged place of appearances, containing an openness that defies most educational purposes. In Fielding's *Jonathan Wild*, for example, according to Kevin Lee Cope, 'Wild's maxims are always ambiguous and always full of

open semantic space', due to Fielding's attempt to test and show 'the potentialities and the limits of advice in *context*' (Cope 2007 245). But can such an opening be identified with an 'advent of justice' for the text, enough to make us think of appearances as messianic? That does not mean that justice has not yet been done to eighteenth-century novels. But in terms of reading, the possibility of justice is never closed. It remains a possibility to come. The injustice would be to consider the justice of a novel's meaning already completed, as if the only responsibility left were to recover it.

Appearances can be considered closed, as in one truth or reality. But as appearances, in the possibility of deception, interpretation and misinterpretation, they remain open to other futures. As such, they cannot be anticipated and predicted. Their future remains uncertain. There is no guarantee that things will come to appear with a maximum degree, that someone will do them justice or that there will be no misinterpretation or devaluation. Therefore, to simply try to reproduce the real meaning of an eighteenth-century novel would be to assume that it is possible to get back to it, that such a meaning can be determined as a single one and will be more truthful than any other possible interpretation. If such a thing were possible, that would mean the foreclosure of the future of our readings, as well as the readings of those that will come after us. Despite some authors' desire to control the reception of their work, there is a degree of openness in what appears in the eighteenth-century novels, which refuses the 'clarity' of a unique meaning. It is not a matter of an absolute freedom of interpretation, and forgetting the meanings that there could have been. Although, contrary to what Bosch believes, the possibilities of interpretation can be 'so numerous', 'a reading of historical contexts' can open other possibilities of meaning, rather than closing the text with the appearance of a static truth (Bosch 19).[1] They are not only inevitable —we are already trapped in many historical contexts— but necessary for the opening itself. Without an openness to the past, the reader risks remaining trapped in a circle, paralysed, not even in an 'eternal return', but only open to a degree, since the open requires something that limits it.

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1. Bosch's 'I do not believe the possibilities of interpretation to be so numerous that a reading of historical contexts makes no sense at all' (Bosch 19) is directed against Wolfgang Iser, although Iser does not argue against reading historical contexts.

A given appearance is not open to all interpretations. The possibilities are not unlimited, nor do they have the same truth-value. According to Patricia Ann Meyer Spacks:

> [For Godwin] the notion that 'truth' depends on interpretation [...] possesses eighteenth-century authority. 'It seems that the impression we derive from a book, depends much less upon its real contents, than upon the temper of mind and preparation with which we read it'. Godwin believes that books have 'real contents,' but that different ways of reading in effect create different books. (Spacks 4-5)[2]

Godwin believes that novels have 'real contents', that the writer's intentions, ideas and meaning are contained in them, beyond their appearance. Nevertheless, he does not assume the text to be closed or to contain a unique interpretable meaning. Godwin assumed that the 'impression' the reader would get would depend on his or her own circumstances, that the way things appear to the reader can be stronger that the way things are —'put there' as contents by the writer. As such, eighteenth-century novels remain open to different interpretations. Despite their stability as written texts (assuming the text remains the same), they are not entirely closed worlds.

One could say then about eighteenth-century novels what Jan Jagodzinski writes about art: they too remain 'autonomous, stubbornly "free," in a state of constant becoming, and open to continual interpretations —potentially inexhaustible' (Jagodzinski 60). For Jagodzinski, there is a 'shift' from 'closed to open systems of thought, from "objectivity" (positivism) to "subjectivity"' (Jagodzinski 4). Something similar can be said of the apparent shift from the seventeenth century to the eighteenth century. In contrast to the seventeenth century, the eighteenth century appears to have been more open. However, without proposing a relativisation of all epochs, it is difficult to argue the 'closedness' of a system as varied and difficult to contain as an 'age'. For Jagodzinski such a shift is not necessarily for the best. Here, I am not proposing a shift to absolute openness, but to argue that appearances not only appear as closed systems (which are thought to be immutable) but also contain the possibility of an opening.

Open to interpretation means open to misinterpretation. In that sense, for some characters it seems easier to decide beforehand that all appearances are more likely to be false than

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2. Spacks quotes from Godwin's 'Of Choice'.

truthful, to avoid being deceived. This fear is understandable, since in the eighteenth century

a misinterpretation could have serious effects. As Virginia Cope explains:

> [A] woman's virtue could be destroyed not only by physical
> violation but social misinterpretation. Maintaining reputation
> required community assent. A woman's reputation signified
> society's willingness to honour her ownership over her body;
> a rake's sly comment could destroy that right. Concern for
> community opinion in *Pamela* does not suggest the specious
> pursuit of reputation alone —of appearance rather than reality, of
> cunning rather than virtue— but a realisation that proprietorship
> is a social relation, not an individual assertion. (Cope 2009 38)

'The pursuit of reputation alone' is seen by Cope as a choice of appearance over reality,

subtracting appearance from the relation between subject and society, as if such a social

relation can be established by means other than appearances. However, it is a question of

how someone appears to society, and how such an appearance defines his or her reality.

Reputation is a social appearance rather than an objective reality beyond the misinterpretation

of appearances. It is also not subjective. A woman could consider herself to be a lady but

she was not if she did not appear as such in society. And the same applies to her reputation.

Her 'being' as well as her reputation depended on social appearances. This dependence on

social appearances could turn into fear of misinterpretation, limiting life based on the safest

appearance, and delegating responsibility to others. Characters come to behave in a certain

way because of what other characters might think if they do not. However, eighteenth-

century novels show that there is no safe way. What appears as the safest behaviour is

always at risk and open to misinterpretation.

The opening of appearances can be thought of in relation to Badiou's 'modalities of

the subject', such as when a 'body of truth' opens a new possibility, although close to the

possibilities of 'the old world':

> [One of the 'modalities of the subject'] takes the form of
> continuous adjustments within the old world, of local adaptations
> of the new subject to the objects and relations of that world. The
> second deals with closures imposed by the world; situations
> where the complexity of identities and differences brutally comes
> down, for the subject, to the exigency of a choice between two
> possibilities and two alone. The first modality is an opening: it
> continually opens up a new possible closest to the possibilities
> of the old world. The second modality [...] is a point. In the first
> case, the subject presents itself as an infinite negotiation with
> the world, whose structures it stretches and opens. In the second

> case, it presents itself both as a decision —whose localisation is
> imposed by the impossibility of the open— and as the obligatory
> forcing of the possible. (Badiou 2009 82)

Badiou's *Logics of Worlds* promotes 'points' over 'openings'. At first glance, eighteenth-century novels work mostly in terms of 'openings': within their realism, they 'continually open up a new possible', through their fiction, which is 'closest to the possibilities of the old world' (Badiou 2009 82). The reader adjusts his or her world to the world of the novel; there is a constant negotiation with the past, reality and the genre. In that sense, in the eighteenth-century novel, appearances remain open to interpretation and to being negotiated, stretching and opening the structural consistency of a world.

Eighteenth-century novels do not impose the closure of the world, forcing the reader to make a choice between two possibilities. Nevertheless, most eighteenth-century novels hinge on a point: confronted with the closures imposed by a world, a character makes a decision —rightly or wrongly— due to an impossibility. Examples are Robinson Crusoe's decision to embark and leave England, Clarissa meeting Lovelace, Moll Flanders abandoning her role as a servant, and Pamela's decision to serve Mr B. after the death of her lady. A 'point' is like a more radical, more forceful 'opening' leaving behind a world and opening a new one. As such, the eighteenth-century novels are the presentation of an event that can be actualised and resurrected by the reader. Such an event is no less that of a relationship to appearances, which affects the reading of the novel itself.

Conclusion

According to Pamela Clemit, *Caleb Williams* appears to have been Godwin's attempt to translate his *Treatise Concerning Political Justice* into a more popular form, 'the literary genre of widest social circulation' (Clemit xiv). In 1794, Godwin wrote in the Preface to *Caleb Williams*:

> It is but of late that the inestimable importance of political principles has been adequately apprehended. It is now known to philosophers that the spirit and character of the government intrudes itself into every rank of society. But this is a truth highly worthy to be communicated to persons whom books of philosophy and science are never likely to reach. Accordingly it was proposed in the invention of the following work, to comprehend, as far as the progressive nature of a single story would allow, a general review of the modes of domestic and unrecorded despotism, by which man becomes the destroyer of man. If the author shall have taught a valuable lesson, without subtracting from the interest and passion by which a performance of this sort ought to be characterised, he will have reason to congratulate himself upon the vehicle he has chosen. (*Caleb* 312)

For Godwin, the novel appears to have been mainly a vehicle to communicate a truth, for non-readers of philosophy and science. The novel was considered to have a different appearance to the treatise, for the delivery of a truth that it was assumed remained the same. Although it is almost impossible to infer the successful delivery of a truth based on the number of readers or published editions, it seems that Godwin was not wrong in believing that the form of the novel had more chances of reaching more readers. Godwin's aim to 'comprehend' fits the definition of the problem it contains, as a set limited by 'the progressive nature of a single story'. The 'modes of domestic and unrecorded despotism' it presents are linked to how 'the government intrudes itself into every rank of society'. However, according to Davidson, something seems to have changed in translation, in the passage from a treatise to a novel:

> Though the goal of *Political Justice* is to show that a revolution
> in truthfulness will change everything, *Caleb Williams* suggests
> otherwise: that chivalric manners [or 'the false logic of sexual
> reputation'] are here to stay. (Davidson 103)

In comparison to *Political Justice*, *Caleb Williams* appears pessimistic. There seems to be lack of belief in the possibility of a 'revolution in truthfulness' against a background of widespread presuppositions that make people think that their current social and political reality is the best there can be, or that there is not much that can be done to change it. Towards the end of the novel, after Caleb's efforts appear to have been in vain, it seems impossible to 'disengage the minds of men from presupposition'. In despair, Caleb exclaims: 'it too plainly appears in my history that persecution and tyranny can never die!' (*Caleb* 309). The second version of the ending of the novel, in which Godwin attempts a reconciliation between Caleb and Falkland, appears forced and improbable, and leaves Caleb feeling guilty and ashamed to see the result of his 'persecution' against Falkland, while the rest remains the same.

If hypocrisy and insincerity are the norm in society and any attempt to change that state of things appears to be doomed to failure, *Caleb Williams* could be said to reinforce nihilism. For John Rodden, *Caleb Williams* constitutes 'the fictional answer' to Godwin's own question about the effect of omnipotence, assuming that 'power has a tendency to corrupt' (Rodden 119). However, novels are not necessarily written to provide answers. Like most eighteenth-century novels, *Caleb Williams* seems to have been intended to reveal a problem rather than to proclaim an answer. Some possible answers appear in the novel, in the characters' positions in relation to the 'state' of 'things', but the novel as a whole does not seem to proclaim any of them.

Caleb's position might seem like the proposed solution, as he is the hero with whom the reader can more easily identify. If so, it has to do with remaining faihtful to a truth: through the novel, Caleb remains faithful to the truth he discovers, which is less about Falkland's murdering of Tyrrel than how the system of society allows Falkland such a power over appearances. Falkland's crime is a way of showing how the system of deception, inequality and injustice works. The problem is not Falkland, but what he represents, which enables

the revelation, in Caleb's struggle against him, of an ideology of appearances manifest in honour and reputation, which leads to duels, murders, false imprisonment, persecution, and exclusion from society. The only utopia that *Caleb Williams* seems to contain —life in the countryside, far from the corruption of the metropolis— is shown to be already under the influence of appearances and therefore easily poisoned. But even if novels do not seem to propose a solution, that does not mean that there cannot be one. As Baldwin points out, the artwork is 'only a "relative truth" in relation to the false reality it must sublate' (Baldwin 16).

Although I have defined an ideology of appearances as a set, it is localised, embodied, and not neutral but biased, unbalanced. Such an ideology is embodied in the eighteenth-century novels, and, as the novels show, localised and embodied in ideas and beliefs, institutions and customs, about appearances. The elements that constitute the ideological set have intensities (degrees of appearance) according to their connections. Some elements and subsets exert forces over others. The problem occurs when a way of thinking appears as the totality of the set, forcing differences to disappear, foreclosing the possibility of change.

Within the set of the ideology of appearances there can be another sense of 'ideology', like the production of a 'universal belief' (Caleb 287). The set is not neutral. There is an orientation in which a subset of elements and relations becomes dominant, operating as if it constituted the entire set, as if there were no difference or opposition beyond itself. The non-included elements and relations beyond the dominant subset still exist —their existence is confirmed by a pressure towards their non-existence— although with a weak degree of appearance. It is in that sense that 'ideology' can be understood here as the political state of deception that Godwin was denouncing under the title of 'things as they are'. Another name for it is what Badiou used to call the 'state of the situation'. It is also a matter of deceptive appearances, in the concealment of the truth of the situation.

What the dominant set does is count as one. It appears as what there is, making the rest appear as 'non-appearing' or not counting. It is a false appearance in terms of its concealment of the openness of what there is, of the possibilities of appearances. What could be the solution to such a problem? Caleb seems to believe that increasing the awareness of the deceptive concealment of injustice can lead to change. However, Thomas's position is still

that it is better to stay within the system. Within the types of subjects possible according to Badiou in relation to an event, the answer would be a fidelity to the truth of an event, understanding the event as an irruption within the system. It will be a matter of fidelity to an idea, belief, or position, despite the general ideology as 'universal belief'.

To a degree, eighteenth-century novelists appear to have had more pressing issues than these of appearances, since none of them addresses appearances explicitly in the preface. However, as this thesis has shown, appearances are not an independent issue. A thinking of appearances cannot be separated from the most explicit ideas and beliefs contained in the eighteenth-century novel. To leave the problem of an ideology of appearances out of consideration, as if it did not exist, as if it were only a matter of coincidences, would allow for many presuppositions and prejudices to remain unthought, affecting anything proposed.

As this thesis has argued, in an eighteenth-century ideology, as it appears in the novels, there was a desire to inhibit or cancel out the effects of appearances, to render appearances secure, transparent, and ineffective. It was a desire, in the end, to make appearances disappear, in the dream of unmediated access to reality, bypassing subjectivity and the possibility of deception and error. The existence or at least the possibility of a world without deceptive appearances is one of the essential fantasies of an eighteenth-century ideology. It appears in eighteenth-century novels, in the form of what Geoffrey Bennington has defined as 'sententiousness'. According to Bennington:

> [S]ententiousness inevitably exceeds its situation in novels, not only cutting across generic boundaries, but challenging the distinction between true or false sentences on the one hand, and fictional sentences on the other. By disqualifying the predicate 'fictional', the sententious proposition accords itself a privilege with respect to 'truth' to which no narrative-descriptive sentence can pretend. The 'always' and 'everywhere' implied in the sententious proposition lifts it out of the text in which it appears, and in this important sense it is impossible to speak of sententiousness 'in' the novel. (Bennington 8)

There is a sententiousness about appearances in the eighteenth-century novel, waved into the text, but at the same time it seems to exceed the space of the novel, as if it could not be contained by its fiction. When a narrator tells that a character did this or that, such actions appear limited to the world of the novel. But when a character, such as Villars in *Evelina*,

declares that all appearances are deceptive, that seems to go beyond the fictionality of its proclaimer, as a warning to the reader, for his or her education.

A preoccupation about appearances, which belongs not just to a few eighteenth-century novelists but to their society, gave rise to the need of a sententiousness about them. It influenced not only the writing of eighteenth-century novels but also their publication and reception. One can imagine what could have happened to an eighteenth-century novel that did not concern itself about appearances, declaring that appearances do not matter, or that one should trust them completely, or that appearance is all there is. In the eighteenth century, such a novel would have appeared mad, irresponsible and amoral.

Eighteenth-century novels contain a few warnings about the importance and the dangers of appearances, in what concerns deception, knowledge, performance, subjectivity, and other issues. Even if not explicitly recognised in the prefaces, the proposed functions and purposes of the novel are linked to a set of issues about appearances. However, in the eighteenth-century novel, this thesis has argued, appearances put into deconstruction the very ideological sentences that can be stated about them. Appearances remain open to change over time. There is in the eighteenth-century novel an aporia of appearances, making the reader believe in an appearance (a fiction) that seems to warn against trusting appearances.

Through the form of the eighteenth-century novel, the reader can then see how an ideology of appearances works. Eighteenth-century novels show that belief, experience and knowledge constitute positions of visibility, from which something becomes visible or evident. That does not mean that such a position is absolute, that there are not blind spots. Every position of visibility is also a position of blindness, that forecloses some appearances, making some things seem not to exist. Nevertheless, every eighteenth-century novel includes at least one position of visibility, as it makes things appear to the reader. Through such representations, eighteenth-century novels show that reality does not exist without appearances, that whatever there is it must be supplemented by appearances, in order to appear as reality. Eighteenth-century novels come to prove that reality is not a thing of which appearances are merely an exterior manifestation, but that it is more like a fiction that hangs in the air (like a novel). Eighteenth-century novels seem to say that any

truth beyond appearances is also an appearance. This does not mean that there is no truth and that every opinion is valid, but that if truth appears, it must do so through fiction.

What is the role of appearances within that event? The 'infinite multiplicity of the world' (Badiou 2003 31) does not necessarily manifest itself in every appearance. Appearances work within the system, by resisting and subverting an ideology that attempts to define and limit them. Eighteenth-century novels destabilise the relationship between appearance and being, revealing how things are not necessarily what they appear to be. They show how, in their structure and logic, appearances remain open, destabilising and deconstructing an ideology that tries to contain them.

In the eighteenth-century novel, there are three levels of events. First, at the level of the story, in terms of what appears to the characters, eighteenth-century novels often present at least one event. Such an event can be actualised by the reader, through the act of reading, 'resuscitated' in his or her present. Second, at a more general level, every eighteenth-century novel can constitute an event. From the point of view of the novelist, he or she should —'perhaps', as Godwin writes— assume the writing of a novel to be the constitution of an event:

> I will write a tale, that shall constitute an epoch in the mind of the reader, that no one, after he has read it, shall ever be exactly the same man that he was before. [...] such perhaps ought to be the state of mind of an author, when he does his best. (*Caleb* 350)

Third, the novel is also the name of the eighteenth-century event that took place between writers, publishers, critics and readers. With its unprecedented treatment of fiction and reality, becoming widely available, and disseminating its preoccupation about appearances and their effects in a way that had been unthinkable until then, the novel constituted the event of its form. As a genre dealing with the appearance of the world, between what appears as reality and mere appearance, the eighteenth-century novel was compelled to think about appearances and take the side of appearances, as if it were its own. The eighteenth-century novel then became a privileged space in which to interrogate and think about appearances. It became the event of appearances in the eighteenth century.

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